



13.11.15

Dear Parents and Carers,

Alnwick Partnership

On 10.11.15 the Council's cabinet decided to approve the publication of statutory proposals in relation to the 10 community schools. These were published yesterday and opened a four week period of statutory consultation when representations for or against the proposals can be submitted. These include proposals to extend the age range at Hipsburn First School from 2016 and to extend the age range of the Duchess's Community High School from September 2017. Details of the proposals are in the Northumberland Gazette this week and also on the County Council website.

In effect, this means that we at Hipsburn will become a Primary School from September 2016, absorbing Y5 children in 2016 and Y6 children in 2017.

Governing Body

Parents, guardians, governors and staff met last night with me and other Governors to discuss the implications of the outcome of the consultations and the way forward. I tried to give an overview of the current position and possible future developments. It is true to say that the Governing Body has been preparing for the school to become a 2-11 Primary in anticipation of this decision, as we needed to ensure that there are secure foundations in place for this period of change.

Changes

- After 20 years at Hipsburn, I am sad to say that Dot Charlton our Headteacher is retiring at the end of April 2016. This will obviously add to the burden of change but I'm sure that we all thank her for her loyal and steadfast support over many years.
- Dot will be a hard act to follow but the Governors will recruit someone who will lead the school from being an outstanding First School to being an outstanding Primary School. This process has already started and next week adverts will appear to start the recruitment process off. It is hoped that the successful candidate will be offered the post before Christmas and to take it up after the Easter holidays.
- Our staffing levels are under continual review, the added year groups will inevitably lead to further recruitment, we must of course ensure that every opportunity is given to staff in the Alnwick Partnership who are 'vulnerable' during this transition.
- We will endeavour to involve as many groups as possible in the recruitment process, involving children, parents, and staff.
- Another main focus will be on our building needs, how to extend our facilities to accommodate the new year groups. Discussions are underway and I will let you know in due course what progress is being made.



How families can help

- Reassure children - the teachers and staff will assure children that Mrs Charlton will not be retiring until next year, they will be encouraged to voice their opinions and help Governors to choose a new Headteacher.
- Parents will also be involved and their needs addressed. There will be another meeting for parents with governors in December and next term.
- Staff will be consulted and involved throughout this period of change.
- The Governors will hold regular surgeries to keep everyone up to speed.
- Contact the Chair of Governors if you have any issues that are critical.

Regards,

Roger Styring
Chair of Governors
Hipsburn First School

