

## Appendix A

### COMMENTARY FROM DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND DIRECTOR FOR FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

1. The consultation was conducted between 12 October and 9 November 2015. Those consulted were: the Governing Body of Dove First School; Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education; the families of pupils at Dove First School; teachers and other staff at Dove First School; Staffordshire, Local Authority; teachers, staff and the families of pupils at any other school who may be affected by the proposals including all the Uttoxeter schools; trade unions; MPs and councillors in the Uttoxeter district. The school's staff and governors are in support of the proposal. A public meeting and separate staff consultation meeting was held at Dove First School on 15 October (see Appendix 2).
2. By the closing date, 22 responses were received to the formal consultation: all in support or with no strong view. Of the 22 responses all provided written comments (see Appendix 2).
3. The majority of responses favoured the proposals, with one of the most popular comments being that the Christian values are most important. As one respondent stated, "Christian values are important whether religious or not and encouraging children to be kind and selfless and respectful of all backgrounds is important". Several respondents made more general statements, such as "fully support the proposal" or "we assumed we were already a church school due to the close links with the church".
4. There were no written objections to the proposals, with two responses indicating they had no strong view. One parent questioned the need to become a church school during the consultation meeting.
5. It is considered that the formal partnership with the Diocese, the mutual support from a network of Diocesan schools and academies, together with the expertise and support of The Church of England Central Education Trust (CECET) will help to further enhance standards and benefit students. The county council believes it is vital that schools build strong and formal networks and partnerships that promote the sharing of expertise, experience, capacity and resources to drive forward school improvement.

6. With regard to inclusivity and admissions, Church of England schools in Staffordshire have long maintained their tradition as inclusive, neighbourhood schools, providing places first and foremost for local children. The school must always allocate places to statemented children and looked after children, whether or not of faith, and the school has a defined catchment area which gives priority to local children. The county council will remain the admission authority for the new school and would continue to determine the school admission arrangements and oversubscription criteria. The Dove First School has confirmed that the admission arrangements for 2016/17 will not change and will continue to welcome applications from all families and offer places to as many children as possible who apply. The Planned Admission Number (PAN) will remain at 20.
7. The school's focus on teaching and learning would continue as it does now; the staff review the curriculum annually, and teach according to the needs of the individual, regardless of faith. Staff would be retained and recruited on the basis of the quality of teaching not the faith of the school. The governing body of a voluntary controlled Church of England school comprises of up to 25% of "foundation governors" (including parents) who are appointed by the church. The Governing Body would be reconstituted and the Diocesan Board of Education would therefore appoint up to 25% of the foundation governors, and will consult the current governors on appointments to the new governing body. We would expect many of the existing governors to transfer to the new entity.
8. The Dove First School operates currently with a Christian ethos, religious education is already a core element of the school's curriculum and would continue to be at its heart, and the school would continue to use the locally agreed syllabus for RE.