



Dear Parents/Carers,

11th November 2021

Update for stakeholders of Castle Carrock Primary School from the Governor Body

We want to thank all parents, carers, and staff for their patience with us and the process we are undertaking currently. We thought it would be helpful to share some background information as to where we are at currently.

As governors we are responsible for the strategy and direction of the school and, as part of this, we have been looking for some time at how we can future proof our lovely school.

As a small village school with fluctuating pupil numbers, we will always struggle with funding and certain expectations from Ofsted and the DfE, for example with things like having named staff as leads for subject areas. So, we have been looking at options to support our staff as they work to ensure pupils have the best opportunities, and to ensure our school enjoys a long and happy future.

The options we had been exploring include looking at whether our single academy trust status would be stronger and better supported as part of a multi-academy trust (MAT), rather than stand alone as we are currently. This would mean joining other schools in an existing MAT which would have a similar ethos to our school.

As part of this process, we needed to be clear about our school's ethos and strategy, so we undertook a large stakeholder engagement earlier in the year to find out what was important to parents, staff, and the wider community. Once that was completed, we drew up a long-term strategy and then began looking into which MAT, if any, might be a good fit for our school.

It is important to us that our lovely rural school maintains its originality and links within the community. We are passionate about supporting our staff to help our pupils reach their full potential while maintaining their love of learning, and the friendly family feeling of Castle Carrock School.

As we were undergoing this work, we had the sad news that our headteacher Ms Stacey would be leaving us at Christmas. This led to us contacting Cumbria Education Trust (CET) – a local MAT which runs several primary and secondary schools in the area including William Howard and Yanwath, Tebay and Longtown primary schools and with whom we had already held talks - to see what support they may be able to provide.

They have offered to support us with the recruitment of a Headteacher and Class 4 teacher and can provide support in other ways too. They are looking at our needs currently.

As governors we recognise the importance of stability for all our pupils during this period of change and especially those in Key Stage 2 and Class 4. We would like to assure you that this process is well underway, and we will communicate how things will look in January as soon as we possibly can.

In the background further work is ongoing regarding the long-term future for the school, and as soon as we can share information and involve you all in the discussions we will.

We have written up our strategy, with agreed ethos, mission statement and values which can be found on the school website.

We have a Governing Body AGM next week Wednesday 17th Nov at 6.30pm and would be happy to discuss any of this with parents/carers who would like to attend the online meeting, register your interest with the school office: finance@castlecarrock.cumbria.sch.uk. Please come and talk to us, and we will share what we can. We don't want anyone to worry at this time of transition. If you have any specific concerns, please don't hesitate to contact our us at: clerk@castlecarrock.cumbria.sch.uk.

Castle Carrock School Governors - Nov 21

