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Burnhope Primary School  
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16 November 2021

Dear Parent/Carer

On behalf of the Board of Governors, I would like to share important information about Burnhope Primary School as we embark upon a new and exciting chapter.

You will no doubt have read or heard recent reports about a significant number of schools across the country becoming academies or joining a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). In doing so, they are funded directly by central government; accountable to them rather than the local authority. Traditionally MATs are innovative, forward-thinking schools with a shared ethos, committed to achieving the highest possible standards for their children.

Over recent months, the Board of Governors has carried out extensive research into a MAT conversion. In the main, our research has focused on what new benefits and opportunities this will offer our children and how it will further improve the standard of education we can offer them. We have also carefully considered the impact this will have upon staff and how it will give them greater opportunities to share their knowledge and expertise with like-minded colleagues as well enabling them to develop their talents further.

In October, the Governing Body of Burnhope Primary School independently passed a resolution to apply for academy status and earlier this month the Department for Education Head Teachers' Board met and approved this application.

This means that we will now begin the process of converting to academy status and as such become part of SLP Multi-Academy Trust.

SLP is a primary MAT not linked to any secondary schools, based in Stanley, Co Durham and was established in 2017 by Greenland Community Primary School and South Stanley Infant & Nursery School. Since then, it has grown to include, South Stanley Junior School, Bloemfontein Primary School, Annfield Plain Infant School, Annfield Plain Junior School, and East Stanley School with Langley Park Primary School formally joining in Spring 2022.

Having considered several other Multi-Academy Trusts, we feel the vision and ethos of SLP compliments that of our own. They believe that every child can achieve, irrespective of their ability or background, and are committed to providing fully inclusive learning. SLP endeavours to meet the needs of all of their children to ensure they reach their potential every day, creating an environment that encourages them to develop their talents both in and outside the classroom, individually and collectively.

SLP not only values the individuality of each child and member of staff in their trust but also the schools themselves. The history and heritage of every SLP school are held in very high regard and are embraced fully into the trust.

The approval to convert to an academy and become part of SLP means that our temporary federation will cease on 31<sup>st</sup> December. Subsequently, Mrs. Templeton will end her position as Executive Headteacher with Mrs. Bryson taking up the post of Acting Headteacher as of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2022.

I am sure you will join me in formally thanking Mrs. Templeton for her hard work and commitment over recent months and wish her every success in the future.

We would like to assure you that this is only the beginning of the process and one of the most important elements of the conversion, is parental consultation. Over the coming months, we will share more information with you as to how and when this will take place. All stakeholders will be invited to ask their questions or share any concerns with both the Governing Body and the SLP team. As always, we look to you for your invaluable input and support.

We must stress that throughout these changes, together with SLP, we will continue to focus on meeting the needs of every pupil of our school, placing them at the heart of the learning process and striving to remove any barriers to their learning and success. Most important of all, together we are all committed to ensuring the distinct ethos and character of our school is maintained. If you have any immediate questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me via the school office. In the meantime, I would like to thank you for your unwavering support and look forward to a very bright and exciting future at Burnhope Primary School.

Very best wishes

Alan Gibson  
**Chair of Governors**

