Dear Parents and Carers,

Reminder on the academy conversion process

Following my letter before the half term break, I received a few emails from parents that are new to the school with questions about the conversion process. To help all new parents I have provided some details below. Some of this information was provided in a letter from Linda Karlsen, then Chair of Governors, to parents on 9 July 2018 so it may be familiar to you. Please continue to email any questions you have: governors@thejohnroan.greenwich.sch.uk, you may also find some of your questions answered here: https://johnroan.s3.amazonaws.com/uploads/document/The-John-Roan-School-Academisation-FAQs.pdf?ts=1541624370. I have attached a letter from UST from 13 June, this may also help new parents understand more about UST.

One of the questions I received was about any changes to the provision for children with special educational needs (“SEN”). The Academies Act 2010 requires Academies to follow the same statutory framework for special needs as Local Authority schools. Schools will receive funding for children with Education and Health Care Plans (EHCP) in the same way, whether they are Academies or Local Authority schools. If children have an EHCP with an enhanced package of support, both types of school will get additional funding directly from the Local Authority, again, in the same way. Where children have special needs, but do not have an EHCP, once again, Academies are required to have regard for the Code of Practice on SEN, in exactly the same way as Local Authority schools. This means that in both types of school, children will be supported according to the level of need and involvement of external agencies.

Background to the Academy Order

Following its inspection in March, Ofsted issued its report and an ‘inadequate’ rating in June this year. Because of this rating the school is required by law to transfer from Local Authority control to an academy sponsor – this is set out in the Education and Adoption Act 2016. As a community, we have lost the right to maintain the school under the Local Authority. The University Schools Trust has been named by the Department for Education as sponsor. The Governing Body supports the selection of the University Schools Trust because of the strong track record of its people, for example, turning around St Paul’s Way Trust; its strong educational values for all children, including those facing disadvantage and its respect of the values and character of The John Roan School. The Local Authority and Governing Body are required by law to facilitate the transfer.

Following the Academy Order, the parties involved enter into negotiations to agree the terms on which the school will be funded and how the assets owned by The John Roan Foundation will be used. All staff employment contracts will be transferred over to the UST, under an established legal process known as a TUPE. Both during and after the legal process the school will continue to operate as normal.

Parties involved in the transfer

Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC): Dominic Herrington is the local RSC. He is empowered under the Education Act 2016 to issue the Academy Order and facilitate the transition to a new sponsor. He also has the power to withdraw the order but only in ‘very exceptional circumstances’.

1 Source:

EXECUTIVE HEADTEACHER: Cath Smith
Maze Hill, London, SE3 7UD
www.thejohnroan.greenwich.sch.uk

EMAIL: info@thejohnroan.greenwich.sch.uk
TELEPHONE: 020 8516 7555
**University Schools Trust**: The UST will negotiate a funding agreement for the school and it will oversee the running of the school. It has made the following statements about the transfer of The John Roan:

- The school will keep its name and uniform
- Staff will keep their jobs and terms and conditions of employment
- Council admissions policies will continue to apply
- It will prioritise improving teaching and learning, behaviour and communication

**Royal Greenwich Council**: The school remains the responsibility of the RGC until conversion. Under the Education Act, the RGC is required to facilitate the transfer of the school to UST.

**The John Roan Foundation**: The land and buildings owned by the Foundation will be lent to the UST under terms that will be agreed between the two parties.

**School Governors**: The school governors continue to oversee the running of the school on behalf of the RGC until the transfer. They too have a responsibility to facilitate the transfer of the school to UST under the Education Act.

### Can the order be revoked?

From 18 April 2016 to 1 May 2018, 426 academy orders have been issued to inadequate Local Authority maintained schools like The John Roan. Of these 426, 21 (or 4%) have had their academy orders revoked.

For 3 of these 21 schools the order was revoked because the school closed. For the other 18 the order was revoked because Ofsted found improved performance.

Of the 18 schools that had their order revoked following an Ofsted inspection, 14 were Primary or Junior schools, four were Secondary schools. Of these four schools, one was revoked following the relatively quick remediation of a safeguarding issue, and the other three schools were not matched to a sponsor and performance improved over a period of between 21 months and 3 years.

### Governor response

Our research shows the likelihood of the order being revoked is very remote. We are in a different position to those that had their orders revoked: there are no ‘very exceptional circumstances’ to the school’s position and we have a willing sponsor. The RSC’s office has told us that there are no grounds to revoke the order.

Acting under our obligations to promote ‘high standards of educational achievement’ the Governors have been working to stabilise and improve the school as quickly as possible. Undertaking our legal obligations and facilitating the transfer to the University Schools Trust, is, in our view, the best way of doing that.

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3 Source: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/6/section/10/enacted
4 Source: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/6/section/10/enacted
6 Source: http://qta.files.parliament.uk/qna-attachments/917325/original/120191_Schools_that_have_had_their_academy_orders_revoked.pdf.
7 Source: http://qta.files.parliament.uk/qna-attachments/917325/original/120191_Schools_that_have_had_their_academy_orders_revoked.pdf.
8 Source: Ofsted website and https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-question/Commons/2018-02-23/129413
Your response

To move forward we have to accept the Ofsted judgement and that we have lost the right to operate the school under Local Authority control. We are extremely appreciative of the support many people have shown. Your continued support of staff and students, focused on improving standards at the school, will be equally appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

David Skinner
Interim Chair of Governors, The John Roan School

Enc. UST Letter 13.6.18