9th July 2018

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Update on the Academy Order**

We wrote to you in June to set out the background to the Academy Order for The John Roan School and to explain the decisions that the Governors had made to that point. We want to continue to ensure that you are as fully informed as possible on this important and complex situation and process. This letter contains more information about the situation and the process. As you know, there is further information available on the school website. Please do email any questions that you have.

**Reminder about the process**
It is worth a quick reminder about the process. The school was issued with a Directive Academy Order, as required by the Education Act and Adoption 2016, following an Ofsted report that found that the school to be inadequate. University Schools Trust (UST) has been named as the sponsor for the school.

We now go through a process of due diligence in order 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 the UST, under an established legal process known as a TUPE. This process should take no more than nine months. 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’.

*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 Borough of Greenwich (RBG):* The school remains the responsibility of the RBG until conversion. Under the Education Act the RBG is required to facilitate the transfer of the school to UST.

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2 Source: https://www.ust.london/s/AcademisationQA27-6-18.pdf
3 Source: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2016/6/section/10/enacted

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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 RBG until the transfer. They too have a responsibility to facilitate the transfer of the school to UST under the Education Act\(^4\). They will continued as a Local Governing Board once the school has been transferred.

Staff Unions: Two of the staff unions, NEU and GMB, have decided to take strike action. The NEU has taken industrial action because they believe that their terms and conditions of employment will change\(^5\). Other unions, such as the NASUWT, NAHT, ASCL are not taking industrial action.

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\(^6\). 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\(^7\).

Taking strike action cannot help the school improve its performance and so cannot lead to the order being revoked on performance grounds.

A group against the academisation stated that the Education Act allows for the order to be revoked if "another potential approach to improvement is identified"\(^8\). The Education Act does not state this\(^9\).

Of the 18 schools that had their order revoked following an Ofsted inspection, 14 were Primary or Junior schools, four were Secondary schools\(^10\). 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\(^11\).

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.

We believe we need additional funding to improve the school. The Department of Education have funds for school improvement which can be applied for by Trusts and Teaching School Alliances to support their work with schools in need.

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\(^5\) Source: letter to parents dated...


\(^7\) Source: [http://gna-files.parliament.uk/gna-attachments/917375/original/150191_Schools_that_have_had_their_academy_orders_revoked.pdf](http://gna-files.parliament.uk/gna-attachments/917375/original/150191_Schools_that_have_had_their_academy_orders_revoked.pdf)

\(^8\) Source: letter to governors from NEU representative dated 25 June 2018


\(^10\) Source: [http://gna-files.parliament.uk/gna-attachments/917375/original/150191_Schools_that_have_had_their_academy_orders_revoked.pdf](http://gna-files.parliament.uk/gna-attachments/917375/original/150191_Schools_that_have_had_their_academy_orders_revoked.pdf)

Acting under our obligations to promote ‘high standards of educational achievement’\textsuperscript{12} we are working to stabilise and improve the school as quickly as possible. Transfer to an academy under UST sponsorship to release the necessary funding and thus the support, is, in our view, the best way of doing that.

\textbf{Your response}
We have to accept that the school was judged as inadequate at the Ofsted Inspection in March. Parents, pupils and all staff need to work together to support the Headteacher, Cath Smith, to implement the post-Ofsted Action Plan. We are extremely appreciative of the support many people have shown at this difficult time. Your continued support of staff and students, focused on improving standards at this wonderful school, will be equally appreciated.

Yours faithfully,

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Linda Karlsen
Chair of Governors

\textsuperscript{12} http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/20