



1<sup>st</sup> February 2016

Dear parent/carer

In 2011, Hodgson, in partnership with Blackpool Sixth Form College, was designated one of the country's first 100 National Teaching Schools. Since our designation as The Fylde Coast Teaching School we have built up a national profile for excellence in 'school to school support', leadership development and teacher training. In line with the continued excellent achievements of Hodgson Academy and our Teaching School, the Department for Education (DfE) approached us to consider the sponsorship of a small number of local academies in the Fylde Coast area. The governing bodies and the leadership teams of both Hodgson and Blackpool Sixth Form College agreed to this request and proceeded to create Fylde Coast Academy Trust (FCAT). This is a legal entity entrusted by the DfE to take responsibility for at least one other academy and is known as a Multi Academy Trust.

FCAT has now grown to encompass 4 academies in the Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre area including Hambleton Primary Academy, an outstanding local primary academy as well as three Blackpool academies Montgomery, Aspire and Unity. The Trust is also involved in discussions surrounding a new all through school in Blackpool to meet the demand for school places within the area.

Hodgson is in the unusual position of significantly contributing to the running of FCAT but not actually being one of the academies within the Trust itself. The direction of travel from the DfE is for all academies to be a full member of a Multi Academy Trust so that they can benefit directly from the skills and expertise of all of the members of the Trust.

To a large degree Hodgson already benefits from the collaborative work undertaken with the academies in FCAT and we will continue to do so. The Governing Body is now considering whether it is appropriate to be a full member of FCAT as well as continuing to provide the drive and leadership that is contributing to the success of all of the academies in the Trust.

Underpinning this consideration is the governing body's determination to secure the very best on-going and future provision for Hodgson Academy students. There will be no change to our current leadership team that contains very able and highly committed senior leaders. Membership of the Trust will see even greater sharing of best practice and expertise with Hodgson having access to an even wider group of incredibly successful and experienced leaders of education.

Further details on FCAT can be found at <http://www.fcat.org.uk/about-us/> and at <http://www.fcat.org.uk/about-us/our-senior-leadership-team>

/pto



We very much share FCAT's mission to transform the lives of young people on the Fylde Coast and across Lancashire by raising aspirations and achievements.

The Governing Body is opening discussions with representatives of FCAT to determine the terms and conditions that Hodgson would be subject to. Given Hodgson's existing role in the Trust this may seem a little odd but it is crucially important to us that any changes to our constitution that we may embark upon are the right ones for Hodgson.

It is very important to us that parents / carers are kept fully informed as to these developments. We recognise that the terms used within this letter may at times be a little confusing as much of it relates to different Trust arrangements. We would be happy to receive details of any questions / concerns that you may have at this stage so that we can ensure that they are brought to the attention of the Governing Body and ensure that they are taken into account in the discussions to come. We will of course answer specific queries as best as we are able to. Additionally, our parent forum in February will be devoted to this topic and you are cordially invited to attend where we hope there can be a very constructive question and answer session. Details of the Forum which will be held on 24<sup>th</sup> February will be issued a little nearer the time.

Once the Governing Body has had the opportunity to consider everything it will reach a decision as to what it believes to be the best way forward. At that point a formal consultation will take place with all stakeholders of the academy. We are taking the opportunity at this very early stage to gather as much information as we can to help guide us through our forthcoming discussions and deliberations.

Thank you for taking the time and trouble to read this letter. We will continue to keep you advised as to any further developments.

Yours sincerely

**CHRIS McCONNACHIE**  
Chair of Governors

**TONI ROETHLING**  
Principal