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## **St Mary's RC First School and St Joseph's RC Middle School**

Dear Parent/Carer,

### **School Developments**

The governors would like to share two significant upcoming events with you all, which will bring change to our schools in the period ahead.

Firstly, Mrs Conley has decided it is time to retire and we have reluctantly accepted this. Mrs Conley will retire at Easter, and Mrs Seddon will take up the position of Acting Executive Headteacher for the Summer Term, whilst we along with the Diocesan Director of Education progress a permanent appointment and leadership structure for September 2020.

We would like to thank Fiona for her complete dedication to making our schools what they are today. Mrs Conley successfully oversaw the federating of Governing bodies for both schools and took on the role of Executive Head for both schools, so we could better deliver on our joint purpose in education with one vision, and management team serving all of our children. We owe Fiona a great debt of gratitude for this service.

Secondly, following many years of planning, which was interrupted by the proposals for "Changes in Education in the West", some 18 months ago, and more recently the possible changes due to the General Election the Diocese has published their Diocesan Academy Policy.

This can be found on the Diocesan website -

[http://www.edurcdhn.org.uk/school/support\\_docs/support\\_schpolicies.php](http://www.edurcdhn.org.uk/school/support_docs/support_schpolicies.php)

The Diocesan Academy Policy has been revised with the aim that our Diocesan schools will become academies within one of four Diocesan education trusts by July 2022. Underpinning the Diocesan Academy Policy is the desire and need to ensure the promotion, preservation, protection and future development of Catholic education within the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle so that it is fit for the mission of the Church.

The Governors of St Joseph's and St Mary's will be working towards this goal with the Diocese over the coming period to join the Trinity Catholic Multi Academy Trust.

Change may naturally bring some concerns; however, we are confident in the positions of our schools due to the fantastic work done by staff and all stakeholders over the past few years. We can confidently look forward to building further on the work we have done to provide the best Catholic education in the Tyne Valley for the years ahead.

If you have any questions on this, please do get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

Chair of Governors