



LETTER TO PARENTS

August 2010

Dear Parent

We are writing to you to explain what becoming an academy would mean for your child's school.

The Government is initially encouraging all schools judged 'outstanding' by Ofsted to become academies. The decision to apply for academy status is made by the school's governing body. Originally, the Government intended for the decision to be made without any need to consult with parents and the local community. The trade unions and others managed to make them concede this point and there is now a requirement on schools to undergo a consultation exercise before governors make the decision to convert – though this may be just a paper exercise.

Our members are committed to continuing to provide your child(ren) with an outstanding education, but we have grave concerns about the proposed academy model. Academies were originally set up to improve the educational attainment of secondary school pupils in disadvantaged communities and under challenging circumstances. There is no evidence to suggest that converting an outstanding school into an academy will make any difference to pupils' educational attainment, nor is there any evidence to suggest benefits for pupils in primary or special schools. In fact, we believe that the risks involved in academy status, in particular, the loss of support from the local authority, far outweigh any of the suggested advantages of obtaining academy status. Once a school has become an academy, there is no way back.

We strongly believe that we can only remain an outstanding school with the support and trust of our parents. Any decisions affecting the future of your child(ren)'s education in such a fundamental way must be taken jointly by parents, staff, governing bodies and the community. If you share our concerns, we urge you to contact your parent representatives on the governing body immediately to make your voice heard. You may wish to use the enclosed petition to show the strength of parents' views on this matter.

Yours sincerely

Mary Bousted
ATL General Secretary

Paul Kenny
GMB General Secretary

Chris Keates
NASUWT General Secretary

Christine Blower
NUT General Secretary

Dave Prentis
UNISON General Secretary

Derek Simpson/Tony Woodley
Unite General Secretaries