



11 February 2011

## **To Parents and Guardians**

Dear Parent/Guardian

### **The change from Foundation to Academy Status for Challney High School for Boys and Community College**

At its meeting on 9 June 2010 the governing body, following extensive discussion, unanimously passed a resolution to make a formal application to the Secretary of State for approval for Challney High School for Boys and Community College to acquire academy status. On 17 August the Secretary of State made an Academy Order to enable our school to be converted to an academy under the provisions of the Academy Act 2010. Due to uncertainties about site issues following the end of the BSF programme, we had to put the conversion process on hold but are pleased that we are now in a position to proceed with a view to becoming an academy from 1 April 2011.

We are writing to give parents an opportunity to comment on this proposal so that the governing body can consider their views on this matter. This letter explains how to find out more and make a response.

#### **Why become an academy?**

Academy status is intended to promote innovation and educational entrepreneurship by giving school leaders greater freedom to decide how best to meet the needs of their pupils, parents and wider communities. A vital part of the Government's vision is to create a more diverse school system offering excellence and choice, where each school has a strong ethos and sense of mission and acts as a centre of excellence for specialist provision. We believe academy status will help us to achieve this vision in such a way as to benefit the local area.

As a school, we are confident that we have the experience and expertise to use the additional freedoms as an academy to continue to raise standards in the area through closer partnership with the local community and services for young people. Academy status will also enable us to share experiences with other schools across the country and internationally and learn from each other as we develop strategies and processes for improvement. We see these greater freedoms as a logical progression from becoming a foundation school in September 2009.

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Our governing body is committed to exercising the increased autonomy associated with academies within the framework of fair funding and fair admissions. Our relationship and collaborative working with our partner primary schools and other partnerships will continue to operate as they do currently.

### **Tell us what you think**

On 14 June 2010 we sent letters to staff, parents and other stakeholders informing them of the Governing Body's decision. This information is a continuation of our consultation process.

The consultation process ends on Monday 14 March 2011 at 10.00am and all responses must be received by then. The next step will be a meeting of the governing body on Wednesday 16 March 2011 to consider any responses to this letter.

We welcome any comments you might wish to make in writing or by email using the address at the top of the front page of this letter. If you would like to find out more about what it means to become an academy, the Chair of Governors and other school representatives will be available to discuss this on Thursday 3 March between the times of 4.30 and 5.30 pm when any views you might want to make in person will be welcome. It would assist our organisation of this if you could inform the school by phone or email if you are proposing to attend so that we can give you an appointment time.

This information is also published on the school website.

### **Information about academies**

More information about academies can be found on the academies section of the Department for Education website. The address is: [www.education.gov.uk/academies](http://www.education.gov.uk/academies)

Yours sincerely



David Wilkinson  
Chair of Governors



Dame Yasmin Bevan DBE  
Headteacher and Executive Principal