

West Tyne Church Schools



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Dear Parents/Carers

End of the threat to Greenhead Primary School

What a day yesterday! What an unexpected outcome!

I am delighted that the threat to Greenhead Primary School has been lifted by the announcement of the report to Cabinet of the Northumberland County Council Consultation. It is a relief to the school, the church and the community and it gives us as Governors an enormous boost to think positively and energetically about the future. If you have not yet seen the consultation report you can find it on our School website using the following link:-

<http://www.henshaw.northumberland.sch.uk/website/news/94586>

I thank all those who expressed their feelings, often passionately, in support of the school and its place in the community. Your commitment has been rewarded with this amazing U-turn today. Your responses to the local authority and the representation of councillors have helped in this.

This report by local authority officers now goes to NCC Cabinet on the 8th May and that is another hurdle to be got past, but from the interviews that we have seen with Wayne Daley, the Cabinet post-holder, it looks likely that the Cabinet will adopt this report, meaning that Greenhead – and every other first/primary school in the West Northumberland area – is safe from closure. Exactly how the Local Authority is going to address the challenges of surplus places and deficits, which they were so anxious about in January, is not yet clear. What I can assure you is that the West Tyne Church School Governors will be working full tilt on the three-year recovery plan which the report identifies.

The strong and vocal support for the school – it has been truly amazing to hear the testimony – expressed during the consultation meetings leading up to Easter need now to convert into action: action that is now more certain to be effective since the safety and security of the school has been assured.

What does this mean in practice?

- **Fundraising**
 - We need to ensure that fundraising strategies aimed at securing for the children currently in school the very best learning opportunities possible this and next year is given full support
 - In addition, the many ambitious and imaginative suggestions about how we could meet the demands of the school deficit – the fighting fund - now need to swing into action, and we will be calling a meeting of parents and community to see how we can best organise this
- **Roll**
 - We now need to ensure that every child who lives in our catchment area comes to our school for the duration of their primary school career. Only by having everyone expressing their support for the school in practical, not just verbal ways, is vital for our future
 - In short this means that we need to increase the school roll by about 50% - 33 pupils up to 50. Everyone can help to do this by talking about how great the school is, how much this school adds to children's learning,
 - We shall be returning wholeheartedly to marketing the school in every way possible. Now the goalposts have moved, we need to change from defence to attack!
 - Part of this will be the joint action with the Greenhead Pre-School. Their strength is our strength; our strength is theirs. A meeting has already been planned for next week to explore this, and we shall be holding a joint open day soon
- **Staff**
 - The staff of Greenhead and Henshaw Primary Schools have shown their amazing dedication and commitment to the children of the Federation. We owe them a huge debt of gratitude for sustaining the work of the schools, led by Sarah Hutchinson, through this difficult period. Why not pop in and say how much you value them, as we as Governors do?

As Chair of Governors I pledge full support for every initiative to take us forward into a time of security and viability, of growth and development, and of return to the friendly and constructive relationships which make Greenhead . . . the best school it can be.

Yours

Mr David Ratcliff – Chair of Governors

25.4.18