

## **Introduction**

### **Background to the consultation**

The Governing Body of Fortismere School is consulting with current and prospective parents, carers, students, staff, other schools, the local authority and other stakeholders regarding its proposal, first tabled last year, to consider a change in the status of Fortismere School to become a foundation school.

When we announced this informal consultation last summer, we said that we were doing so because we:

- were keen to explore whether a change in status could help to ensure that Fortismere's assets are secured as part of a long term strategy for developing the school; and
- wanted to explore the full range of options for funding much-needed improvements to the school buildings and for improving standards throughout the school

We promised to provide an opportunity for a wide range of stakeholders to be consulted as part of our own decision-making process, to enable those stakeholders to consider the different aspects of foundation status and to have an opportunity to understand how a change to foundation status might affect Fortismere.

### **The consultation process**

The responsibility and accountability for making a decision to change to foundation status rests solely with a Governing Body. At this stage, no decision has been taken. The purpose of this document is to initiate a consultation process whereby we, as governors, can listen to and consider the views of as many stakeholders as possible before making a decision on whether or not Fortismere should change status. We are keen to ensure that as many people as possible have an opportunity to express their views. We therefore welcome any written comments you may wish to make by email or post, using the contact details below. No decision for a change will be made without considering all the views presented during this initial informal consultation period and any subsequent formal consultation, should we decide as a Governing Body to proceed to that stage.

**Please ensure that any written comments reach us by 18<sup>th</sup> May 2007.** Any comments sent elsewhere, or received after this date, may not be considered.

### **All comments should be addressed to**

The Foundation Status Working Group  
Fortismere School  
South Wing  
London N10 1NE

Email: [foundation.consultation@fortismere.haringey.sch.uk](mailto:foundation.consultation@fortismere.haringey.sch.uk)

### **Surgeries**

We are also holding open surgeries for individual consultations, at which at least two governors will be present. The purpose of the surgeries is to enable individuals (or pairs of individuals) to express their views having reviewed this document. The dates and times of these surgeries are given below. We hope that a wide representation of stakeholders will use the surgeries as an opportunity to express their views.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Attendees</b>
23 April	6pm to 8pm	Anyone
25 April	8am to 9am	Students
27 April	4pm to 6pm	Anyone
1 May	4pm to 6pm	Staff
8 May	6pm to 8pm	Parents
9 May	4pm to 6pm	Anyone
10 May	8am to 9am	Parents
11 May	4pm to 6pm	Anyone

The surgeries will be open to individuals on a first come first served basis. No more than 10 minutes will be allocated to each individual (or pair of individuals) in order that we can listen to as many people as possible.

All surgeries will be held at 13 Tetherdown in the South Wing, Fortismere School.

The process after completion of the informal consultation

Following this informal consultation process, the Governing Body will consider all comments and hold a meeting during the summer term to make a formal decision whether or not to continue with the foundation status process. If the governors decide to proceed there will be a further statutory consultation lasting one month before any decision is taken by the Governing Body to convert to foundation status.

## **Section 1 – What is being considered?**

*Throughout this document, the expression “LA” means Haringey Council, our Local Authority. The expression “GB” means the Governing Body of Fortismere School.*

The Government sees greater autonomy for schools as the next stage in the development of the education service and wants schools to become more proactive in developing their individual strengths in response to the needs of the local community. There is an expectation from Government that schools themselves will take a lead in delivering the *Every Child Matters* agenda and the vision of Extended Schools.

There are 950 foundation schools in the UK today of which 85 are former community schools. The responsibilities accorded to foundation schools are not new – similar flexibility has been accorded to Voluntary Aided schools since 1944. In essence, changing status to foundation alters five things about a school:

- The school has full legal ownership of its physical assets (land and buildings)
- The governors become the direct employer of the school's staff
- The governors become the school's admission authority
- The governors have additional but limited power to publish statutory proposals for certain other changes
- The school can set its own dates for terms and holidays

Things that do not change under foundation status include the following:

- A foundation school and its governors must exercise their autonomy within the statutory framework of fair funding and fair admissions.
- Governors are subject to exactly the same regulations and laws as they, and their local education authority, are subject to prior to changing status.
- A school's relationships and collaborative working with its feeder primary schools and other partnerships continue in the same way as they do prior to foundation status.
- Parents and staff would continue to elect the majority of the Governing Body.
- Existing funding arrangements will not change, as the school will remain a LA maintained school and will remain fully part of the planning process for capital spending, including Building Schools for the Future (BSF).
- The school will be bound by the Race Relations Act and the Disability Discrimination Act, and would be under a duty to promote community cohesion and good race relations.

### **What exactly is being considered?**

Fortismere currently has what is legally termed “community” status. The GB is now considering whether to change the school's legal status to “foundation”. This does not mean that the school will no longer be a school that serves the local community. Nor is the GB considering whether Fortismere should become a trust school<sup>1</sup>. Foundation status does not mean that Fortismere would become less ‘comprehensive’.

### **Why is the GB considering a change at this time?**

A change to foundation status needs to be part of a long-term vision for Fortismere. We are exploring whether, by becoming a foundation school, we would be better able to influence and control future direction of the school to improve standards and the educational and other experiences of our students.

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<sup>1</sup> A new category of school introduced by the Education and Inspection Act 2006 - both trust and foundation schools have charitable status, however in the case of a trust school there is a trust that appoints the Governing Body (this is not the case for a foundation school).

It has become clear over the past 3 - 4 years that the school is operating in an increasingly complex environment in which it may make sense for the school to have greater autonomy in relation to such fundamental issues as ownership of land, employment of staff and administration of admissions, each of which can have enormous influence on the quality of teaching and learning available in a school.

The autonomies of foundation status could be important elements in enabling the school to develop and implement a longer term strategy within the existing statutory framework (which includes fair funding and admissions) without having to comply with additional Local Authority agendas that may run counter to or may not recognise or prioritise fully the school's particular needs or the needs of the school's local community.

By definition, the LA is entitled to make decisions which may not always be in the school's best interests or which may be influenced by a wider agenda. Some examples of these decisions are:

- Nearly three years ago, the LA disposed of Strathlene House, which was part of the school. The proceeds of this sale went directly to the LA, as is Council policy, with only a part share recently being made available to the school. Under foundation status, the school would have had greater control over the proceeds of the sale.
- The school's recent bid for BSF funding did not secure a sufficient amount to renovate the current premises to an acceptable standard for the future, nor indeed to fund the school's plans for a new performing arts centre or allow long overdue development of the sixth form provision. The GB believes there is a risk that the LA may in future sell part of the land at Fortismere in future to fund development or renovation costs. If that occurs, the school may have no say in the decision and may not benefit fully from any proceeds of sale.
- The GB is also concerned that recent legislative changes which permit Admission Authorities to introduce admission by "lottery" or selection by "banding" may pose a threat to Fortismere's position as a highly regarded local community school. Adoption of banding by the LA is unlikely to prioritise the interests of the community local to Fortismere.

It is within this context that the Governing Body believes that it should now be considering whether a change to foundation status might provide the platform for a more appropriate long-term strategy for the school.

#### What do other foundation schools say about foundation status?

In general, the Foundation & Aided Schools National Association (FASNA) reports that many foundation schools believe that the greater sense of 'ownership' is a considerable benefit. Their members report that they have found that:

- Foundation status leads to a sharper and more focused decision making process
- There is an energising effect on the school community
- The relationship with the LA becomes more one of equals
- The greater control of admissions means that the school's own admissions appeal panel is more sympathetic to the local community and mindful of the school's actual position
- The school is better informed regarding admissions and the waiting list, thus enabling better planning and more responsive admissions management
- Foundation schools are often able to establish a more effective relationship with parents
- Governing bodies tend to become more engaged in the running of the school

#### What are the disadvantages of becoming a foundation school?

The Foundation Status Working Group has not yet identified any material disadvantages to foundation status. Over recent months, however, there has been a local campaign (under the

name “Keep Fortismere Comprehensive”) to undermine the GB’s consideration of foundation status. Whilst we recognise that some people may be opposed to foundation status from an ideological standpoint, a significant amount of inaccurate information has been given out regarding foundation status – for example, the campaign name itself misleadingly implies that a change to foundation status would alter Fortismere’s comprehensive nature. A number of criticisms have been made which are factually or legally incorrect. We encourage our stakeholders to review the facts carefully. To address a few frequent misconceptions, in the event that Fortismere takes on foundation status:

- **Fortismere would not become selective**
  - We would not become a selective school and would continue to accept children with statements of special educational needs as we do today. Section 39 of the 2006 Education Act prohibits the introduction of selection policies other than by banding.
  - The Admissions Code enshrined in the 2006 Education and Inspections Act requires that all Admissions Authorities operate in a fair way that promotes social equity and community cohesion. The GB would be required to comply fully with the Admissions Code.
  - Fortismere’s GB is committed to ensuring the implementation of a transparent, equitable admissions process that strengthens its links with its local community and serves in the best interests of the school and its pupils.
- **LA funding would not change**
  - There would be no change in the way in which Fortismere receives funding and we would be funded according to the agreed LA scheme in the same way as all other schools in the LA.
  - Fortismere would still receive the formula amounts determined by the size and type of school and would have access to other funds through the LA.
  - Fortismere would also receive some additional funding to reflect the fact that it would incur an additional cost in managing its own admissions.
- **The LA would not treat Fortismere differently**
  - The LA is legally prohibited from treating Fortismere unfavourably.
  - Fortismere would still be able to purchase (as it does now) useful services and facilities from the LA or elsewhere, for example, employment advice.
  - Staff would continue to be entitled to join and remain in existing pension arrangements.
- **Fortismere would not ‘opt out’ of the LA and be isolated**
  - Schools, as a group, are represented on a number of Statutory Bodies e.g. the Admissions Forum, the Schools Forum and the School Organisation Committee. These often play a key role in determining LA policies and procedures. As a foundation school, Fortismere is entitled to be a member of these bodies.
  - Foundation schools are still LA schools – in fact some LAs (e.g. Brent) have entirely foundation secondary schools and others have a mixture of community and foundation schools.
- **There would not be a new GB and it would remain representative**
  - The GB would still have a majority of elected parent and staff governors. Any existing governor would have the right to complete their term of office on the foundation school GB if they so wished. This would give us continuity.
  - The governors of a foundation status school are subject to significant legal controls as regards, for example, appointment, term of office, conflicts of interest and transparency of meetings and decision-making.

One potential risk factor that the Foundation Status Working Group has identified is the need to guard against any improper use of the increased accountability given to the GB to manage the school’s affairs. We would aim to address this by strengthening governance on the GB. We acknowledge the need to build and maintain a strong, transparent, accountable GB that reflects the diversity of the school community. The GB is already working to strengthen its procedures, raise standards and improve the dialogue with stakeholders in the school by introducing parental and student surveys to help inform decisions and formalising a Code of Conduct.

## **Section 2 – Admissions**

### **The current situation**

Fortismere is not currently involved in any stage of the admissions process; it simply receives the names of pupils that the LA has allocated to the school. The LA is fully responsible for:

- Admissions criteria
- Admissions coordination
- Application process
- Admission appeals
- Casual admissions
- Waiting list
- Changing school preference

By law, any admissions authority must prioritise applications from children who match the following criteria:

- Children with a SEN statement or who are the subject of an Education Supervision Order under the Children Act 1989
- Children with exceptional medical, social or educational needs

Once these children's applications have been considered, an admissions authority will apply further criteria. Our LA currently publishes the following as third and fourth criteria:

- Children with a sibling (residing at the same address) already at Fortismere
- Children living closest to Fortismere (distance from the child's home in a straight line)

Any decision determining a pupil's admission to Fortismere should therefore currently be based on these criteria.

Fortismere currently has no visibility on how the LA reaches certain decisions under its admissions policy. We observe however that the LA's implementation of the criteria has resulted in a growing number of pupils who do not come from the local area and there have been frequent instances where children living in the immediate vicinity are not admitted to Fortismere whilst other pupils living further away are. We are also concerned about the way admissions are currently being managed by the LA. The current processes are not transparent and the school is unable to challenge LA decisions or to plan effectively what resources might be needed for a particular intake.

### **Impact of a change of status**

Should the GB decide to change Fortismere's status from that of a community comprehensive to a foundation comprehensive, its decision would result in the following changes:

- The GB becomes Fortismere's admissions authority and must develop and agree an admissions policy. The admissions policy would be finalised following consultation with the LA, other adjacent LAs and the Schools Admissions Forum, with ultimate power in the case of disagreement being in the hands of the Schools' Adjudicator. The policy would be published. Any admissions policy would continue to prioritise children with statements of special educational needs, looked after children, children with exceptional needs, siblings and those children living closest to the school. A number of legal safeguards will ensure that the school complies with its published admissions policy.
- Fortismere would oversee its own admissions in accordance with its admissions policy, not that of the LA.
- There would be an increase in workload as the school would process, access and inform parents in relation to admissions. The school would receive additional funding for this.

- Fortismere would be eligible to join the Schools Admissions Forum that oversees the admissions procedure for schools in Haringey. Currently we have no place on this Forum and are unable directly to put our views across in relation to decisions that impact Fortismere.
- The GB would need to decide if a separate admissions committee should be created with delegated responsibility for school admissions.

#### Selection by banding and admission by lottery

Fortismere is a local school whose primary purpose is to serve the needs of the local community. We believe there is a risk that if the LA remains our admissions authority, it could in future introduce selection by banding or admission by lottery, as has recently happened in Brighton and Hove. This could potentially result in an increase in the number of non-local pupils. With banding, students would be admitted to Fortismere in (typically) blocks of 20% by ability, based on either the national or borough average. Given that the average student ability profile is higher in the west of Haringey than in the east, students from our catchment area could find themselves being denied places at Fortismere whilst more students living further away could be allocated places at Fortismere. As a foundation school and as our own admissions authority, we would be afforded protection from an LA decision to introduce banding and lotteries across the community schools in the borough.

The GB is keen to make sure that Fortismere serves the needs of its local community. Our view therefore is that by making the GB responsible for the admissions process, we could be better placed to weigh up these conflicting priorities in a more balanced, effective and transparent way, taking into account the resources of the school to manage each new intake.

### **Section 3 – Staff**

#### Overview

Our aim as a school is to be able to attract, develop and retain talented staff at all levels who share a common vision of Fortismere as a high performing comprehensive school dedicated to serving all its students. We face an increasingly competitive labour environment. Having reviewed the implications for recruitment, development and retention of staff resulting from a changeover to foundation status, we believe that foundation status may offer Fortismere a greater level of flexibility as the school becomes the employer of its staff without in any way diminishing the terms and conditions of current or prospective staff.

#### Current situation

Today, the situation is as follows:

- The LA is the legal employer of all Fortismere staff.
- The Statutory Pay and Conditions apply to all teaching staff. This regulates entitlement to salaries and allowances, the pay scales for all teachers and the conditions of employment of all teachers.
- There are no national agreements for non-teaching staff in England and Wales. Haringey as employer has implemented local agreements.
- All teachers qualify for a pension under the national Teachers Pension Scheme (TPS). The scheme is administered by the LA who has a crucial role to play in helping members understand their pension provision and in making them aware of the benefits of the TPS throughout their careers.
- Non-teaching staff are currently eligible for the pension scheme run by the LA.
- Fortismere buys into the Haringey Schools Personnel Service under a service level agreement that is renewed annually. This service includes the administration of payroll, staff recruitment services and advice on employee relations. The GB can opt to purchase personnel services elsewhere but to date has not done so.
- The LA funds redundancy pay for any school staff made redundant. Currently under the service level agreement we have with the LA, they are involved in advising the school and are kept informed during any redundancy process.

#### Impact of a change to foundation status for current staff

The rights and conditions of employment of existing staff would remain unchanged. A change of school category would result only in a change of legal employer; all the employer's rights, powers, duties and liabilities transfer from the LA to the GB. Anything previously done by the LA in respect of employee becomes the responsibility of the GB. The effect of this is to protect fully an individual's employment rights on transfer. Any agreements entered into by the LA or GB with unions or with individual staff members prior to foundation status would be honoured by the GB as the new employer.

Fortismere can continue to purchase the services of Haringey Schools Personnel under a service level agreement. There would be no difference in the cost to the school. As under community status, the GB could opt to go to another provider of personnel services.

#### TUPE

The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ("the TUPE regulations") will apply to the transfer of staff. The regulations require employers to inform and consult appropriate representatives of any affected employees where there is a transfer of an undertaking. The GB would ask the Haringey legal department to support the GB in administering TUPE and would allow enough time to consult with staff about the implications of a change of category to foundation status.



The TUPE Regulations ensure that employee representatives will be informed about:

- How the transfer (in this case, the change of category from community to foundation) is to take place, when it is to happen and why.
- The legal, economic and social implications of the transfer for the affected employees.
- Whether the GB envisages taking any action, such as reorganisation, in connection with the transfer that will affect the staff, and if so, what action is envisaged.

Impact of a change to foundation status for new staff

- The Statutory Pay and Conditions continue to apply and new teaching staff would have to be recruited on this basis.
- For new non-teaching staff, the school has greater flexibility. For example, the GB could appoint support staff on different salary scales and on different contractual arrangements e.g. term-time only contracts. This may provide the school with greater flexibility to attract and retain non-teaching staff.
- New teaching staff will continue to qualify for a pension under the TPS. For the purposes of administering the TPS, LAs are deemed to be the employer for all teachers employed in all schools maintained by them, including foundation schools. The LA will therefore continue to help members understand their pension provision and make them aware of the benefits of the TPS throughout their careers.
- We would expect newly appointed non-teaching staff to be allowed access to the LA pension scheme arrangements.

## **Section 4 - Ownership of Land**

### **Overview**

We want to secure the best possible learning environment for children. The prolonged negotiations on funding under the BSF programme has resulted in a 1% allocation to Fortismere of Haringey's £165m total BSF monies, to be used for building works. Even with a further £2m pledged outside of the BSF allocation, this is far from sufficient to transform the school. Although being a foundation school would not in itself change this, there is a risk that without foundation status the LA would be able to sell off parts of our site and use some or all of the proceeds elsewhere in the Borough. An example of this was the sale of Strathlene House, which could have generated significant funds towards, say, a new Performing Arts block. However, a significant part of the proceeds were returned to the LA.

As a foundation school the GB would own the freehold of all the land at Fortismere and could therefore ensure that:

- The school has control over any site decisions (in some cases subject to the consent of the Secretary of State).
- Proceeds from any sales are channelled directly back into creating new accommodation at Fortismere.

Although not the only way, this could be very significant to realising the dream of a new Performing Arts Centre, a new Sixth Form centre and proper eating and social areas.

We are also concerned about the future of the Blanche Nevile School for Deaf Children. We are keen to explore the possibilities of some sort of federation between Fortismere and Blanche Nevile. As a foundation school we would be in a much stronger position to negotiate this. Remaining a community school would allow the LA to impose its own plan, regardless of our (and Blanche Nevile's) views.

### **Current Situation**

Today, the LA owns the freehold of the land that is occupied by Fortismere. However, under the PFI agreement, the land was leased back to the LA-appointed PFI contractor (Jarvis) for a period of 25 years. The PFI contractor is responsible for maintaining the land and the buildings and currently has the right to let the land for secondary uses outside school hours. Thus whilst the GB will become the bare freeholder, the PFI arrangements will continue in the current form.

The GB believes that the PFI contractors have failed in their duty to maintain the school properly. Fortismere was unable to influence the content of the PFI contract or to take any steps to enforce Jarvis' contractual obligations.

### **What are the advantages for Fortismere in owning the freehold to its land?**

- The school would have more control over the use of school buildings, lettings and particularly the use of currently redundant buildings.
- It would be possible to sell surplus land subject to the Secretary of State's approval and with the consent of LA. Conversely, the LA would not be able to sell off any land (as it recently did in the case of Strathlene House). This protects against future sale of assets which is not in the interests of the school.
- Fortismere could publish its own proposals to expand or make other alterations to the school.
- The school would pay 20% of rates, which may mean a slight addition to individual school budget or school's block, depending on the LA formula.
- The school would have to prepare its own accounts and these would be audited and available for public scrutiny.
- It may be possible to have a greater influence in the PFI contracts being negotiated with the LA as part of the BSF programme. This is particularly relevant to Fortismere,

which has been poorly served by the current arrangements and has no ability to influence the PFI contractor to improve performance.

What happens if the GB approves the change of status?

On the implementation date, all land held and used the LA for the purposes of the school would transfer by statute to the GB<sup>2</sup>. Land may be excluded from transfer by agreement between the parties with the prior written approval of the Secretary of State, or by order of the Secretary of State on application from either party. This might include, for example:

- Part of the site that is not used entirely for the school's purposes, or a self-contained facility such as the sports centre;
- An area of "surplus" land, playing fields or other land, that might at some time be needed for another school or community facility;
- buildings not currently essentially needed by the school, but which it is occupying.

Disposal of the land by the GB after acquiring foundation status

The School Standards and Framework Act 1998 covers the disposal of land (including buildings) by governing bodies of foundation schools. In certain cases the GB would have to obtain consent. Stiff restrictions for the disposal of playing fields continue to apply to foundation schools (the Secretary of State's approval is required), and foundation schools can only sell assets to invest in improving education provision; the LA can object and if necessary the Schools Adjudicator will rule on any disposal.<sup>3</sup>

What happens to the PFI Contract?

A change in category to foundation is unlikely to have any impact on the operation of, or the school's obligations under, the existing PFI Agreement, which lasts until 2025. The GB is dependent on the LA to enforce performance standards under the PFI Agreement. This applies regardless of whether the school changes category.

This is because even though the freehold is transferred to the school, it comes subject to a lease on the land that the LA has granted to the PFI contractor for the length of the contract. In other words, the PFI contract continues to enjoy the leasehold benefit of the land, with the school occupying the land under the terms of the licence to occupy.

Further, as Fortismere's GB will remain the same corporate body as it is today, it continues to have the benefits and liabilities of any contracts it has entered into. This will include the agreement which Fortismere's GB has made with Haringey to be included in the current PFI project, which will in turn include its commitment to contribute to the unitary charge. Change of status does not allow a school unilaterally to withdraw from, or alter the terms of, any contract, including a PFI contract, that its GB has entered into.

Foundation status will not affect Fortismere's participation in Wave 4 of the BSF related PFI contracts although we may have a stronger position to negotiate the terms of the agreement.

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<sup>2</sup> Schedule 6 to the Regulations and Section 198 and Schedule 10 to the Education Reform Act 1988 (as modified by the Education (New Procedures for Property Transfers) (Regulations 2000) (SI2000/3209) contain the relevant provisions

<sup>3</sup> a summary of the complex provisions is available at [http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/\\_doc/7971/ACF1697.doc](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk/_doc/7971/ACF1697.doc)

## **Section 5 – Change in Constitution of the GB**

Under foundation status there would be continuity in the membership of the school GB and there will still be elected parent and staff governors. However, with a change of status comes a change in the constitution of the GB. In summary:

- The GB will benefit from the participation of Partnership Governors nominated by the local community.
- The GB can take more control over employing its clerk and the agenda for meetings.
- The school will obtain charitable status.

The total number of governors must be not less than nine and not more than twenty. Parents or staff would elect the majority of governors. The types of governors who would be on the new GB are:

- **Partnership Governors**  
A new type of governor has been created for foundation schools. The GB appoints these governors in a transparent manner from eligible nominees. The GB must seek nominations from parents of registered pupils at the school and from such other persons in the community served by the school as it considers appropriate. An existing governor may not nominate a person for appointment as a partnership governor. A partnership governor may not be a parent of a registered pupil at the school, eligible to be a staff governor at the school, an elected member of the LA or employed by the LA in connection with its functions as a LA. Partnership governors must number at least two but may not form more than one quarter of the GB
- **Community Governors**  
Community governors are appointed by the GB and must live or work in the community served by the school or be a person who is committed to the good governance and success of the school. Community governors may not be registered pupils at the school, eligible to be a staff governor of the school or an elected member of the LA. Community governors must form at least one tenth of the GB.
- **Parent Governors**  
Parent governors must be parents of a student currently registered at the school and must retire if the student leaves. They must form at least one third of the GB. In Fortismere's case, there would be seven parent governors, as now.
- **Staff Governors**  
Staff governors must number at least two but no more than one third including the head. Where there are three or more in this group, one must be a non-teacher. In Fortismere's case, there would be four, as now.
- **LA Governors**  
These are appointed by the LA and must number at least one but represent no more than one fifth of the total GB. In Fortismere's case there would be four, as now.

The GB would still maintain student involvement with two associate governors drawn from the student body, as is the case today.

### **Moving to the new constitution**

If a category of governor exists in the new constitution, e.g. parent governor, any existing governor in that category has the right to complete their term of office. If a category of governor ceases to exist or there are fewer of that type of governor in the new constitution and the reduction cannot be achieved by amicable means, the GB may decide to operate a 'last in, first out' rule to reduce the number.

We believe the GB may well be strengthened by the addition of Partnership governors who would be nominated by parents and the local community. Together with the introduction of

parental and student surveys, greater interaction of the staff governors (via feedback meetings) and Student Council, and the formalising of a Code of Conduct, we believe that the staff and a reconstituted GB would have the experience and expertise to use the additional autonomies of foundation status to continue the development of the school and raise standards.

Further, if Fortismere moves to foundation status, governors would be able to participate more fully in various Forums - for example, the Admissions Forum - that consider and advise on aspects of LA education policy. Through collaboration with other members of the Forum (other heads and governors) we would hope to extend our understanding of the issues being addressed and thus strengthen the governance of the school.

If the GB decides that Fortismere should become a foundation school, we would review the ways in which we undertake our responsibilities and work with the school, including our role in formulating the school's strategic vision, our accountability and governance. We believe that the development of a strong team ethos throughout the whole school community will have a positive impact on standards. As one of our priorities, we would consider the most appropriate ways in which we can interact with students, staff and parents to further this aim.