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## Message from Chair of Governors

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff and Community Stakeholders

### Cotham School: Academy Articles of Association

Firstly, I hope that you and your families are safe and well. I would like to thank you for your support and understanding as we have navigated our way through the pandemic keeping the school open, providing remote learning and now welcoming all students back to school.

I am writing to let you know that the Governors have decided to seek to change the Articles of Association of the school (the Articles).

When Cotham School converted to become an Academy in 2011, having initially adopted the Standard Articles, the School adopted the Co-operative Articles of Association from January 2012. The Governors were keen to ensure that in becoming an Academy, the school did not lose its commitment to being a school at the heart of its community.

The Co-operative Articles (the Co-op Articles) were agreed, based on guidance from the Co-operative Society and their requirements to have specific 'constituencies', that elected governors to run the School. The constituencies are parents, staff and community. There was also provision for co-opting governors. The Co-op Articles also set out the requirements for a Forum that has special duties towards the governance of the school, which includes members of the community constituency. The Co-op Articles also require the overall operation of the School to be overseen by the Members of the Academy.

Since 2012, the school and its community has changed and it has become progressively more difficult to meet the legal requirements of the Co-op Articles. After careful consideration the Governors decided, at their meeting on 25 February 2021, to move to the Department for Education's Standard Model of Academy Articles of Association. The Governors are very clear that they do not want to lose the spirit and ethos of a Co-operative school, a school at the heart of its community and wish to retain the different categories of governors, including staff, parents, community and co-opted governors. The Governors are very clear that the governance arrangements need to be streamlined.

The proposed new Articles based on the DFE's Standard Model are attached [here](#). The operation of the Academy has to be ultimately overseen by Members of the Academy and it will fall to the Members to agree to adopt the change in Articles in due course.

In summary the new Articles will mean;

- The School would retain its Co-operative ethos, it would be 'a Co-operative Academy at the heart of its community' and adopt the Co-operative Values.



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- The Articles would require the Members of the Academy, to oversee the operation of the School and to hold at least one General Meeting per year, i.e. the Annual General Meeting.

There must be a minimum of 3 members, as at present. This is broadly similar to existing, but the members have more powers.

There would be up to 20 Governors, as at present, comprising:

- 4 governors selected by a recruitment process for their skills, expertise and commitment to Cotham School, these would be appointed by the Members
- 3 staff governors, elected by staff
- 6 parent governors, elected by parents and carers
- 6 co-opted governors, selected by Governors
- The Headteacher, appointed by the Members to be a Governor

All other parts of the Articles remain as before in dealing with all matters of governance of the School.

I hope you will agree that the proposed changes to the Articles will be in the best long-term interest of the school. If you have any comments please respond by 23 April 2021 by getting in contact with me via [articlesconsultation@cotham.bristol.sch.uk](mailto:articlesconsultation@cotham.bristol.sch.uk)

May I take this opportunity again to thank you for your support of the School and wish you, your friends and family a very Happy Easter.

Best wishes

**Sandra Fryer**  
**Chair of Governors**



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