



11 January 2022

Proposal for St Wilfrid's Church of England Primary School to join the Hurst Education Trust (HET)

Dear St Wilfrid's,

Our Church of England primary school is a good school. As a good school we are always striving to be even better. We are always looking for further opportunities to fulfil our vision to enable our children to be the best they can be in every way and prepare them for the next stage in their learning journey, socially, emotionally, academically, morally and spiritually. The Governing Body and Mr Hateley were exploring options for our school to further develop, prior to the announcement made by the Government on 28 April 2021¹ that it wishes every school to be part of a strong multi-academy trust.

We are pleased to inform you that an exciting opportunity exists for us to join the **Hurst Education Trust** and we are giving this serious consideration. This Trust has been established as a partnership between the Diocese of Chichester and Hurstpierpoint College. It is a diocesan academy trust, co-sponsored by the Diocese of Chichester. After investigation and due diligence, we have identified that joining Hurst Education Trust would significantly benefit the children and staff at our school. The Trust's strong team of professionals would work in collaboration with our school team to enable us to provide greater opportunities and experiences for our children and staff. This partnership would provide further resources to enable the school leadership to move the school even further forward, securing exceptional experiences and outcomes for our children, without losing our unique identity and what makes us special.

If we join Hurst Education Trust, we would:

- Keep our school name
- Keep our school uniform
- Maintain and enhance the school's Christian ethos
- Keep our vision and values
- Keep our own school curriculum
- Continue to have a local governing body, including representation from staff, parents, our parish churches and the local community, as we do now.

Benefits to children and staff would include:

- Strong focus on improving experiences and outcomes for all children, including Greater Depth.

¹ Secretary of State for Education <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/education-secretary-speech-to-the-confederation-of-school-trusts>

- Children benefiting from access to some of the extensive facilities at Hurstpierpoint College, including astroturf pitches, swimming pool, theatre, science labs, music, art, specialist design technology and use of minibuses.
- Children having opportunities for joint activities with other schools in the Trust and the College.
- Comprehensive support services provided by Hurst Education Trust will free up senior management and governor time, enabling greater focus on improving education.
- Economies of scale achieved with some sharing of resources between Hurst Education Trust schools, and also with Hurstpierpoint College, together with some financial savings will ensure that we will be able to put more resource into the classroom.
- Staff receiving outstanding training and development opportunities and access to professional expertise at Hurstpierpoint College. Hurstpierpoint College has already started helping us in the delivery of Modern Foreign Languages and swimming for Year 4.

Following the Governing Body's decision to proceed to consultation, we want to share this proposal with you and what it would mean for our school. We are doing so at this stage in its development to give you the fullest opportunity to help develop our thinking. We invite you to ask any questions that you have. Our proposal is to join the Hurst Education Trust by converting to academy status. The school leadership see this as a positive way forward for the school and we hope that you will agree. It is important to emphasise that no final decision has yet been made as we are still carrying out due diligence.

As a medium-sized primary school, joining the Hurst Education Trust offers our staff a range of opportunities for enhanced professional development. They would be able to work with colleagues in other schools that join the Trust to develop their practice, sharing the good practice that exists in our and other schools. On conversion to academy status all staff remain in post and have their terms and conditions protected. All children in, or due to join the school, remain fully part of the school as they are now.

A survey, which can be found using the following link <https://bit.ly/3t5Bkvl> or in the QR code below, provides opportunities for you to ask any questions that you have. This survey will remain open until 8 March 2022. There will be a meeting held at the school on 18 January 2022 at 6.00 pm where a short presentation will take place and this will include an opportunity to ask questions of the school leadership, together with the Hurst Education Trust team. In order to keep numbers manageable, please register using this link: <https://bit.ly/3taSI1P> or use the QR code at the bottom of this letter. If there is demand, we will arrange further meetings so that more parents and community members can ask questions and hear the answers. Separate arrangements are being made for staff.

Some answers to common questions are attached to this letter and we will publish answers to all the questions raised during this process – including those raised at meetings – on the school website. There is an opportunity for you to ask for a personal response to any individual question you have about the impact on you or on your child, but otherwise we intend to publish answers so

that they can be seen more widely. No question is too straightforward. Later we will issue a separate survey link asking whether you support the school moving forward in this way. We look forward to receiving your questions and to hearing what you think about this proposal.

Yours sincerely

Jill Garraway
Chair of Governors

Simon Hateley
Headteacher



QR Code to register
your attendance



QR Code to submit
questions or comments