



Ref: 042

13 November 2019

Dear Parents & Carers,

Possible formation of a Multi-Academy Trust with The Knights Templar School, Baldock

We are writing to you to seek your views on a proposal being considered by the Governing Body relating to the formation of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) and, in particular, the formation of a MAT with The Knights Templar School (KTS) in Baldock. The Governors have always wanted to provide the best possible education for current and future pupils, a satisfying and exciting place to work for all staff and to be a valued part of the community of Hitchin and the surrounding area. We believe that this proposal to form a MAT with The Knights Templar School will provide us with increased opportunities to continue this aim.

Hitchin Girls' School became an Academy in August 2011 and has been operating very successfully as a single academy trust (SAT) for eight years, providing exceptional educational experiences for students with examination results that are consistently well above national figures. As an Academy, we have also successfully obtained additional capital investment from the government which has allowed us to enhance our buildings and facilities, including the construction of the Sixth Form Centre and Sports Hall.

Governors, including the Headteacher, have been considering the possible formation of a MAT for some while, but there has not, until now, been a school which has presented as a natural partner and good fit for us. Following recent conversations with The Knights Templar School (KTS) in Baldock, we believe that we should actively consider and evaluate the benefits that would be available to the school by forming a MAT with them.

We want your views on this proposal before a final decision is taken. Please read this letter and the accompanying FAQ carefully, and let us know what you think, or any questions you have, using the email address at the end of this letter.

A MAT is a single entity comprising two or more schools which collaborate closely to raise standards for all students and to provide enhanced opportunities for all stakeholders. It has a single legal and moral purpose: To advance education for public benefit. The MAT would operate with a new governance structure, with a Board of Trustees assuming overarching accountability and responsibility for strategic issues in all schools within the MAT, and with a Local Governing Body in each school.

An increasing number of schools are forming or joining MATs and this opportunity to work with KTS will allow us to design the optimum structure in which we can continue to meet our core obligation to provide an outstanding educational service to our local community.

We envisage that this would be a smooth transition, in the same way that our conversion to Academy status in 2011 had no noticeable effect on our teaching and learning and from the outset would be 'business as usual' for students, staff, parents & carers and the wider



community. Hitchin Girls' School would retain its name, uniform, site, policies and drive for excellence, as well as its local governing body.

We would continue to work in partnership with local schools and the Hitchin Post-16 consortium, and maintain our admissions policy with its priority parishes to ensure the school continues to serve our local community.

There are three key questions the Governors want to answer as part of the consultation and decision process:

- Is this right for our school?
- Is this right for our students?
- Is this right for our community?

This letter and the attached 'Frequently Asked Questions' are part of our consultation process which ends on Tuesday 10 December 2019 at 3.30 p.m. and responses must be received by that date. We welcome any comments you may wish to make. These can be made in writing to Chris Hall, Chair of the Governing Body, using the address at the top of this letter or by email to [consultation@hgs.herts.sch.uk](mailto:consultation@hgs.herts.sch.uk).

If you would like to discuss this matter in person, we will be available in school for a 'drop-in' session on Thursday 21 November, between 6.00 pm and 7.00 pm. We would like to be able to answer any questions that you may have and to be able to do this please would you email the questions to us by 4.00pm on 20<sup>th</sup> November. If you wish to attend, please would you confirm your attendance by emailing [admin@hgs.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@hgs.herts.sch.uk).

Following completion of the consultation process and a due diligence exercise, the Governing Body will meet next term to consider all responses and make a final decision on whether or not to proceed with the formation of the MAT.

This letter is also published on the school website: [www.hgs.herts.sch.uk](http://www.hgs.herts.sch.uk) and we will also update the FAQs as additional questions are received.

Yours sincerely,



Chris Hall  
Chair of Governors



Frances Manning  
Headteacher