

Consultation Proposal on a page

Overview of the proposal

Hove Learning Federation, the single governing board that oversees the running of West Hove Infant School and Hove Junior School, is inviting the schools' stakeholders (including parents, teachers and members of the local community) to have their say in a proposal for the schools to join Aurora Academies Trust and to become academy schools. Currently both schools are maintained by the Local Authority.

Rationale for Academisation

The following key reasons have created an unstable situation for schools across Brighton and Hove. Joining Aurora Academies Trust would offer West Hove Infant School and Hove Junior School the best chance to overcome these challenges.

The challenges

- **The declining Pupil Admission Numbers (PAN)** - In the past few years, there has been a drop in student numbers across Brighton & Hove. This has led the Local Authority (who oversee the majority of schools in the city) to propose school closures and reduce the number of classes schools can admit.
- **Financial and strategic strain on schools** - Schools are directly funded according to number of pupils on their roll. Declining numbers and other demands on school budgets have meant that all schools (including West Hove Infant School and Hove Junior School) are facing significant financial pressures.
- **Support available from the Local Authority** – The governing board does not believe that the Local Authority can provide the necessary support required, both strategically or through the administrative services they offer, to meet our evolving needs and enable us to continue to offer an excellent quality of education.

The benefits of the schools joining the Aurora Academies Trust

Aurora Academies Trust is an established trust with seven other schools in the region. Its mission is *'to provide opportunity and create success for all our pupils'*. It has a strong record of impact with all its schools Ofsted grades being good or outstanding. By becoming part of a smaller trust, both WHIS and HJS would work in partnership with Aurora and grow together. We believe both schools would benefit from joining Aurora because:

- **Children come first** - Aurora schools focus on the children and communities they serve. Each Aurora school retains their own unique characteristics whilst serving their local communities.
- **Continued school improvement** – through sharing best practice and pedagogy and rigorous quality assurance.
- **Ambition - Aurora is a trust who are an excellent fit with our school vision** *'to provide high-quality education to all pupils, realised through strong, shared values, policies and exceptional, inclusive practice'* and our values of Love of learning, Equality & inclusion, Aiming high, Respect & kindness and Nurture & safety.

- **Inclusive** - providing strong support and increased access to help and expertise on the wider needs of pupils, including provision for SEND and disadvantaged pupils.
- **Enhanced education collaboration and curriculum provision** – Aurora believe in deep and purposeful collaboration. Access to a wider pool of subject expertise, working with teachers and experts from across all the schools in the trust, will further enhance the schools' excellence in teaching and curriculum enrichment.
- **Expert support** - Accessing Aurora's expertise of effective school operation, finance, facilities and HR.
- **Financial stability** - Overcoming budgetary challenges through effective financial management and purchasing flexibility.
- **Opportunities** - increased scope for professional development of staff and enhanced career progression.
- **Partnership – The opportunity to** share specialist staff and expertise in all areas of school organisation.

The consultation will run for 4 term-time weeks from 12th November to 10th December 2024 and we welcome your feedback. The full consultation document is included with this letter and contains information on how you can share your thoughts, including via an online survey or at one of our stakeholder meetings.

As a governing board, we seek to ensure that every decision that we make is in the best interests of our pupils and staff and to provide the best opportunities and educational outcomes possible. Our decision to propose this move is as a result of thorough scrutiny and exploration of all our options, as well as a period of collaboration with Aurora Academies Trust. We thank you for your ongoing support and welcome your participation in this consultation process.

We will continue to keep you updated with further developments and information over the coming weeks.

Any correspondence regarding the consultation can be sent to a.consultation@hovejun.brighton-hove.sch.uk from 12th November to 10th December 2024.