

Wigmore High School and Wigmore Primary School

Statutory Proposal to change school category from Community School to a Foundation School supported by a Trust

This Proposal is given in accordance with section 19(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that the Governing Body of Wigmore High School and Wigmore Primary School ("the Governing Body") intends to make a prescribed alteration to each of Wigmore High School and Wigmore Primary School both of Ford Street, Wigmore, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 9UW ("the School").

The proposed alteration ("the Proposal") is to change category from a Community School to a Foundation School and to acquire a Foundation supported by a Trust. The Foundation to be acquired by the Foundation Governing Body shall be Wigmore Ascent Education Trust.

Introductory Information

a) School Details

The name of the schools affected by this proposal are Wigmore High School and Wigmore Primary School.

The address of the School is Ford Street, Wigmore, Leominster, Herefordshire, HR6 9UW.

The School is currently a federated Community School made up of Wigmore High School and Wigmore Primary School.

b) Dates

The planned implementation date for the Proposals is 1 July 2009 or as soon after that date as possible in order to allow for the local authority to issue the relevant instrument of government for the School.

c) Objections or Comments

Copies of the Proposal may be obtained from the School reception or upon request and following receipt of stamped self-addressed envelope from Alison MacArthur at the School. These proposals can also be found on www.wigmore.hereford.sch.uk website under the link 'About Wigmore' 'Trust'. Within four weeks from the date of publication of this Proposal, any person may make representations on the Proposal by sending them to by email to trust@wigmore.hereford.sch.uk or by post to the Chair of Governors at the address given above. Representations must be submitted by 8th June 2009.

d) Consultation

Consultation on the Proposal was carried out between 2 March 2009 and 20 April 2009.

- See Appendix 1 for a full report on feedback, including minutes of consultation meetings and the views of those consulted.
- See Appendix 2, for a List of Consultees.

The Governing Body considered the responses from the consultation at a meeting on 7th May 2009 at the School and decided to proceed to the publication of this Statutory Proposal. It was noted that responses had been sent to all requests for further information. Copies of the minutes of the Governing Body's meeting of the 7th May, are available from Alison MacArthur at the School on receipt of a stamped self-addressed envelope. Copies are also available to download from www.wigmore.hereford.sch.uk website by following the link '[About Wigmore](#)', 'Trust'. You may also view a copy of the original consultation documents on the School website.

The Governing Body has followed and complied with all aspects of applicable statutory guidance and all applicable statutory requirements in relation to consultation over the Proposal and has consulted at all stages as and when appropriate.

e) Alteration Description

The prescribed alteration comprises both a change of category to Foundation status and the acquisition of a Trust.

Changing Category to Foundation

a) Rationale for the proposal

The School is considering becoming a Trust School. The change of category from Community School to Foundation School is a pre-requisite for a school acquiring a foundation under the provisions of the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Were the proposal to be implemented, the Governing Body would continue to have day to day control of the School's land and assets and would continue to be responsible for the performance of the School. The School would operate as it does at present. As a self governing Foundation School the School would benefit from increased financial and management autonomy, building on the strengths of local management and the expertise of the Governing Body. The School would continue to play a full part in taking hard to place students.

The Governing Body would become the employer of the staff, although existing pay and condition arrangements would be unchanged as the School would remain in the maintained sector and be subject to national pay and condition agreements.

b) Admission Authority

The Governing Body will be responsible for the School's admissions criteria. Wigmore School will work in collaboration with the Local Authority in ensuring strict adherence to the national Code of Practice for Admissions within the local context. The school will exercise the right of a Foundation School, within the remit of the Code of Practice, to establish its own admission preferences for students. Pupils will be offered a place on the basis of the following ranked criteria:

1. Statemented children whose statement names the school
2. Looked after children
3. Siblings of pupils already attending the school
4. For admission to Wigmore High School, children who are pupils of Wigmore Primary School
5. Children who live in the catchment of Wigmore Primary and Wigmore High Schools
6. Children who are attending one of the feeder Primary Schools (Kingsland, Leintwardine, Orleton, Shobdon)
7. Any other children

Distance from school, by the shortest available walking route by road or made up footpath, will operate as the tie break should either of our schools be over-subscribed from any of its designated priorities.

If adopted, these arrangements will not be applied until the admissions for September 2010. This has been discussed and agreed in principle with Herefordshire Local Authority.

c) Statement that the School will have a Trust

On its change of category to Foundation School, it is proposed that the School would acquire a charitable Trust. The specific focus of the Trust would be to extend and develop the excellent support that the School offers its students.

Acquiring a Trust

- a) The name of the Trust will be Wigmore Ascent Education Trust.
- b) The School will have a foundation established otherwise than under SSFA 1998. The Trust does not act as foundation for any other school.

- c) The rationale for working with the Trust is to strengthen the School's relationship with its partners and to harness their energy and expertise to support the School's leadership and direction going forward.
- d) The membership of the Trust would include the following:
- The Board of Governors of Wigmore School
 - Kingspan Insulation Limited
 - Clive Richards
 - Edu-Tech Solutions Ltd
 - Ted St George
- e) Trustees would be appointed by the Trust's member organisations and checked by the Governing Body to ensure that they comply with relevant legislation.
- f) The Trust would appoint a minority (two) of the members of the Governing Body.
- g) The Trust's charitable objects would be as follows:-
- g.1 to advance the education of the pupils at any School or at any other school in respect of which the Charity acts or has acted as a foundation; it being acknowledged that in carrying out this object the Charity must (where applicable) have regard to its obligation to promote community cohesion under the Education Acts;
 - g.2 to advance and enhance the development and education of people of all ages and without distinction of race, nationality, gender, sexuality, disability or of political, religious or other opinions;
 - g.3 to provide or assist in providing facilities for recreation or other leisure-time occupations at all times of the year, including before and after school, weekends and holidays, in the interests of social welfare and in order to improve the conditions of life of the public at large;
 - g.4 to advance the health and welfare of people and their families and to assist in enabling access to education and recreational and leisure facilities
 - g.5 to advance the education and training of persons in the provision of care, educational and recreational facilities; and
 - g.6 to provide assistance to the charitable objects of any school which are not state funded..

- h) The Trust will meet the requirements as set out under section 23A of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 and the School Organisation (Requirements as to Foundations)(England) Regulations 2007.
- i) The local authority and the Governing Body will make a new instrument of government for the school to reflect its new status.
- j) The Governing Body believes that the Trust will raise standards at the School by developing new practice and strengthening its relationship with the School's external partners. Membership of the Trust will offer a stronger voice to the partners, who will lend expertise and energy and provide support for the School's leadership and direction.

The external partners share the School's aspirations, know the local community and support the School's continued improvement. The Governing Body hopes that formalising the School's relationship with them will improve the School's capacity to plan development over the long-term and provide continuity of direction when key members of staff and governors leave the School. Similarly, the School's external partners will be able to work together in a more cohesive and effective manner, using their pooled expertise to raise standards at the School.

Specifically the Governing Body expects the School to draw on partners' experience and resources in the following ways, which it believes will not only improve the performance of the School but will also contribute to the advancement of citizenship and local community development, and will increase community cohesion:

- The Board of Governors of Wigmore School will contribute:
 - Expertise in extended services provision across the Trust to include childcare, adult and family learning, culture, sport and play, parenting support, out of hours learning and holiday activities;
 - Leadership in cross-phase and inter school support for students' learning to deliver 100% attendance;
 - Expertise in supporting secondary schools in challenging circumstances;
 - Expertise in managing innovation and support for partnership working; and
 - Facilities for Extended Services.
- Kingspan Insulation Ltd, which already works with Wigmore School, is the largest employer in Herefordshire with substantial community links. It will contribute:
 - Through enhancing work placements and work experience within the School;

- Professional support and expertise in environmental and eco projects;
- Financial support through its own trust for community projects within the wider North Herefordshire community; and
- Eco projects to provide enhanced knowledge of environmental issues to promote development and stability, including tree planting and biodiversity investigations.
- Clive Richards will contribute:
 - Professional support and expertise in business management to provide innovative and enhanced education helping students to make more informed choices about their post-school life.
 - Guidance in developing students' maturity and ability as independent learners.
- Edu-Tech Solutions Ltd will contribute:
 - Expertise in ICT networking support for schools; and
 - Expertise in consultant advice to ensure the School is leading in ICT technology for education.
- Ted St George will contribute:
 - Guidance on strategic development of educational initiatives;
 - Expertise in government agenda to provide innovative opportunities; and
 - Expertise in school improvement and forward thinking.

More generally, the Governing Body expects membership of the Trust to enhance the educational experiences of the School's pupils in the following ways:

- Raising standards, particularly at Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 4;
- Securing resource use and best practice;
- Developing commercial acumen of pupils;
- Using the legal and financial expertise of the members to source additional funds;
- Developing ICT expertise for all pupils;
- Increasing pupils' awareness of the globalisation of citizenship, economy and population;
- Increasing cross-phase working, with a particular focus on teaching and learning;

- Increasing the sense of community in the rural area in which the School is based;
 - In times of falling pupil numbers to provide support and security through flexibility;
 - Providing opportunities to reflect on best practice; and
 - Providing the forum for debate about care for children, education for children and life-long learning experiences.
- k) Appendix 3 contains details of the School's test results and recent OFSTED report.
- l) The Trust will endeavour to promote community cohesion and the advancement of citizenship and community development and will contribute to and improve the diversity of school provision in the area.
- m) The Governing Body believe that if no action is taken, standards will continue to improve, but not at the rate at which they would like.

Explanatory Note

This background statement is supplementary to the formal statutory proposal. Its purpose is to address certain of the points raised during the consultation process to ensure that the full effect of the proposal is apparent to the general public.

a) Land and Assets

The Trust will hold the land and assets of the School on trust for the School for the duration of its relationship with the School. This means that the Trust will have the legal title to the land but must hold the land for the purposes or benefit of the School and subject to the provisions of its governing documents. If the Trust's role ends, publicly funded land will revert to the Governing Body or to the Council. The Governing Body will have day-to-day control over the School premises and will decide how its assets are used.

The Trust will be allowed to dispose of surplus land, but the Council will object to disposals that it feels are not in the long-term interests of the School, or would disadvantage the wider community. The proceeds of sale must be used for capital investment in educational assets in the maintained sector, and the Trust itself cannot profit. There would be no detrimental loss of resources by the School as a result of acquiring a Trust. There are special protections in relation to playing fields.

b) The Governing Body

The Governing Body of the School would be made up as follows:

- Two members would be appointed by the Trust;
- At least one third would be parent governors, elected on the basis of their expertise; from a body of ten there are 3 parent governors.
- At least two and no more than one third would be members of staff;
- At least one and no more than one fifth would be appointed by the Council;
- At least one tenth would be appointed from the local community;
- Additionally, up to two could be sponsor governors (persons who give substantial assistance - financially or in kind - or provide other services to the School) appointed by the Governing Body.

The division of responsibilities would be as follows:

Governing Body

Overall responsibility for the strategic development and operations of the

Trust

Achieving the Trust's charitable objects

School (as current). Examples are:

- Hiring and paying staff and other staff matters, including any disciplinary or grievance proceedings;
- Decisions around exclusions/appeals;
- Ensuring the national agreements on employment are met;
- Organising pension arrangements, human resources, occupational health and health and safety arrangements;
- Liaising with unions and the Council;
- Ensuring the requirements of the National Curriculum are met;
- Liaising with Ofsted, the DCSF and other regulatory bodies regarding School matters;
- Dealing with other matters that are the legal responsibility of the Governing Body.

Fulfilling the legal responsibilities of a charitable company such as:

- Meeting three times a year to discuss the advancement of pupils' education;
- Reporting as necessary to the Charity Commission;
- Approving the appointment of any new Trust members;
- Approving the appointment of Trust members to the Governing Body;
- Holding lands and assets on trust for the School

c) Staff

When the School acquires Trust status, existing staff will transfer to the new employer (from the Council to the Governing Body). Existing and new teaching staff would continue to work under the terms of the School Teachers' Pay and Conditions Document (STPCD).

As the employer, the Governing Body would have the full range of employer responsibilities under employment law. It would usually delegate responsibility for day-to-day staffing matters to the head teacher.

Appendix 1

Feedback from the Public Consultation

Consultation documents were made available to all parents and stakeholders on or during the week commencing 6th March 2009. These gave full details of the Proposal, the names of the consultees and the arrangements for making a response. The documents can be viewed on the School's website by following the link: <http://www.wigmore.hereford.sch.uk/>.

The public consultation process ended on 20 April 2009.

A open meeting was held for parents and staff on 23rd March 2009.

Throughout the process the Governing Body has been committed to an open and transparent process abiding by the Cabinet Office Code of Practice on Consultation.

The feedback provided here covers all responses, and incorporates lists of "Issues to Consider" for the Governing Body and suggestions on how to give feedback to respondees.

Consultation Questionnaire

Questionnaire forms were available during the process. The public consultation period ended on 20 April 2009 by which time one response had been received, none by telephone and one on the form. There is therefore no statistical analysis of the responses .

The questionnaire asked for responses on five main issues plus asking for general comments and specific questions raised in relation to each one were as follows:

Q1 How do you feel about Wigmore School changing its status to become a Foundation School?

A 1 for 0 unsure, 0 against

Q2 How do you feel about Wigmore School acquiring a Trust?

A 1 for 0 against

Q3 How do you feel about Wigmore School working with the external partners suggested?

A 0 for 0 against

Issues to consider

If the Governing Body decide to publish statutory proposals it should:

- Consider working with Ludlow College as well because they offer progressive pathways Post 16 to Wigmore students and because they are the nearest Sixth Form College

Q4 How do you feel about the vision and aims of the Trust?

A Approve 0

General comments were:

- A close working partnership with Ludlow College included in the school's vision.

There were no aspects that were seen as contentious

Q5 Governance of the School: Trust to appoint a minority of Governors, one third of Governors to be elected parents?

A Approve 1; No View 0 Reject 0

General Comments

Only one comment was made as follows:-

- Ludlow College wishes to support and partner Wigmore Schools in their venture should we decide to go ahead
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Feedback to consultation responses

As there were no responses to the questionnaire that require a response it was unnecessary for the Governing Body to respond.

Consultation Meetings

An Open Meeting was held on 23rd March 2009

The following issues were raised at the joint meeting attended by 6 people; 2 staff and 4 parents:

Attendees wanted to understand what the benefits of acquiring Trust Status and possible risks. The Head Teacher and Governors explained how Trust Status would impact on and improve such things as admission arrangements.

The question of funding was raised and what negative impact, if any, this could have on the school. Parents and staff were assured that funding arrangements for the school remain unchanged. However, as a charitable trust further funding opportunities could be sought potentially improving the school's financial stability.

Innovative ways of providing alternative services were discussed including post 16 provision, EWOs and IGCSE and courses.

Attendees were overwhelming in favour of pursuing Trust Status.

Student Response

Student Council met on a number of occasions; the proposals were discussed in school assembly and in class.

Appendix 2

The following stakeholders were consulted:

- parents of the students currently on the role at the School;
- staff currently employed at the School, both teaching and non-teaching;
- all primary feeder schools currently sending children to Wigmore High School;
- Children and Young People's Directorate, Herefordshire (Local Education Authority);
- Local Councillor (Governor);
- Trade Unions of teaching and non-teaching staff;
- Surrounding Further Education Colleges:

- Ludlow College

- Local community groups including nursery and child care providers, local business:

- Kidzone, Wigmore Pre-School

Appendix 3

1. Test Results are available on the DCSF website: www.dcsf.gsi.gov.uk
2. OFSTED reports or other reports on quality are available on the Ofsted website: www.ofsted.org.uk