

Henleaze Junior School Formal Consultation

Should the school join Cathedral Schools Trust?

Key information

- **What are the dates for the consultation?**

The consultation will run from Wednesday 17th January to Wednesday 28th February.

- **How can you make your views known?**

There are a number of options available to you which are set out at the end of this document.

- **How does this consultation affect Henleaze Infant School?**

Henleaze Infant School is also consulting at the same time on joining Cathedral Schools Trust.

- **How can you find out more?**

You can come along to a Consultation meeting on Monday 29th January at 3:45pm at the Junior School or on Thursday 8th February at 9:00am at the Infant School.

What is the Governing Body's recommendation?

The Governing Body is recommending that Henleaze Junior School joins Cathedral Schools Trust. If a decision is taken to proceed, this would be effective from Monday 1st July 2024 or as soon as possible after that.

The Governing Body of Henleaze Infant School is recommending that the Infant School converts to an academy and joins Cathedral Schools Trust at the same time.

Current position

After extensive research and scrutiny of different options, the Governing Body has come to the conclusion that joining Cathedral Schools Trust would be the best way to secure the future of Henleaze Junior School and ensure it can continue to provide the best possible education for its pupils.

Governors have taken a decision in principle only at this point. A firm decision to proceed or not will only be taken following consideration of the views of all those associated with the school: the staff, parents/carers, pupils and wider stakeholders. This document provides further information about the Governing Body's recommendation in order to help you respond to the consultation should you wish.

How will the consultation impact on the Governing Body's decision?

The Governing Body will not take a final decision on this question until the consultation process has been completed. You can share your views and comments with us by email or in writing, or by coming to one of the consultation meetings. You can also request a meeting if you prefer with the Headteacher or the Chair of Governors. The governors will take account of all views expressed when making a decision on the best way ahead for our School.

What is Cathedral Schools Trust?

Cathedral Schools Trust (CST) is a multi-academy trust in the wider Bristol area. The trust currently comprises 9 schools - 6 primary schools and 3 secondary schools.

The CST 'family' of schools currently includes around 5000 children and 600 staff, and the Trust is set to grow with a number of additional schools in the Bristol area. CST's mission is to break barriers and achieve excellence and to ensure all children have a rich and balanced curriculum with a particular focus on music and the performing arts. The core values of the Trust are reflective (valuing the unique qualities of our schools and encouraging staff to be reflective), collaborative (sharing what we do well and providing high levels of challenge and support) and creative (valuing creativity and providing opportunities for staff and children to be ambitious and fulfil their creative potential).

As a mixed MAT, CST welcomes children of all faiths and of none.

You can find more information on CST, its schools and its values on the Trust's website at this address: <https://www.cathedralschoolstrust.org/about-us/vision-and-values/>.

Why join Cathedral Schools Trust?

The Governing Body considers that joining CST represents the best way forward for Henleaze Junior School for the following key reasons, all of which will impact positively on the School's ability to sustain excellent educational provision and achieve the best outcomes for pupils:

- There is a close fit between the values and ethos of Henleaze Junior School and CST.
- Access to some centralised services and expertise will mean more time for school staff to focus on curriculum development, pupil outcomes and school improvement.
- There will be increased opportunities for our pupils through enhanced professional development and networking opportunities for staff, and the sharing of best practice and resources.
- Joining CST will enable enhanced development of the strong collaboration between Henleaze Junior and Infant Schools
- CST is a group of like-minded primary and secondary schools without a 'corporate feel' and it is small enough for HJS to be treated as a valued and respected member.
- CST's plans for growth are focussed on the Bristol area. This is to ensure that the close interaction and collaboration that exists between its schools will continue.
- Headteachers at CST schools feel that their schools retain their unique identity, rooted in their local community.
- CST has a strong curriculum offer for its pupils and gives high priority to the professional development and career opportunities of its staff.

What could the risks be of joining CST?

The Henleaze Junior School community could lose its 'voice' in the running of the School:

Our Governing Body would become a Local Governing Body (LGB) with fewer responsibilities than it has at present, and these would be delegated by the Trustees of CST. Governors do not consider this a negative development as the LGB would continue to recruit parent governors and other governors from the local community, and the governors would be able to focus even more on the key areas of Teaching and Learning than they are able to at present. CST's Scheme of Governance makes it clear that the day-to-day running of the School remains in the hands of the Headteacher and the Governors.

CST's strategy and direction could change if/when its Senior Leadership changes:

CST makes it clear that its strategy and direction are not dependent on personalities or the individuals in the Central Team. It is the CST Trustees who decide on its strategy and future direction, not the Senior Leadership Team. It is the Trustees who have approved the current strategy of slow, deliberate growth of a group of like-minded schools.

CST's Trustees could decide on a change of strategy and direction:

A change of strategy by the CST Trustees could potentially lead to a mismatch of values and ethos with Henleaze Junior School. However, joining a local MAT of reasonable size means that HJS's views on these important matters should be more actively taken into account.

What about the 'Do Nothing' option?

The Governing Body has decided that it is not sustainable for the school to stay as a stand-alone Junior School in the education landscape as it exists now and as it is forecast to develop over the coming years. The governors have explored the various options available and consider that joining CST is the best route for the school to take in order to provide the best educational outcomes for our children into the future.

How do I respond to this consultation?

To share your thoughts and views on this, you have the following options:

- Send an email to our Chair of Governors at cog@henleazejuniorschool.co.uk with the heading "CST Consultation".
- Deliver any hand-written comments to the school office marked "CST Consultation – for the attention of governors".
- Attend our consultation meeting on Monday 29th January 3:30pm at the Junior School.
- Attend our consultation meeting on Thursday 8th February at 9:00am at the Infant School.
- Request a meeting with the Headteacher, Jonathan Parr, or Chair of Governors, Hazel Phillips, via the school office.

Deadline for responses:

Please share your views with us before the Consultation closing date of 28th February 2024.

Joining Cathedral Schools Trust: FAQs for parents and carers

Background information	
<p>Why don't Henleaze Infant School and Henleaze Junior School become 1 school?</p>	<p>Each individual school receives a £120,000 lump sum as part of their funding grant. If we became one school, we would lose 1 lump sum which is a considerable proportion of the overall budget.</p> <p>The savings from business efficiencies between 2 schools would not be significant.</p>
Cathedral Schools Trust Structure and Policies	
<p>What other schools are members of CST?</p>	<p>CST Primary Schools: St Werburgh's, Headley Park, Stoke Park, Victoria Park, Hotwells Primary and Cathedral Primary.</p> <p>CST Secondary Schools: Trinity Academy, Bristol Cathedral Choir School and St Katherine's School</p>
<p>Are all CST schools faith schools?</p>	<p>CST is a mixed MAT which means that, within its group of secondary and primary schools, there are faith schools and non-faith schools. Bristol Cathedral Choir School and Bristol Cathedral Primary School are the only 2 schools that are Church of England 'Voluntary-Controlled' schools (i.e. Church of England faith schools) and required to have a 25% church representation on their local governing bodies (LGBs). None of the other schools are faith schools and there is no requirement for their LGBs to have church or religious representation.</p>
<p>What is the CST approach to Inclusivity and Diversity?</p>	<p>CST is committed to developing and implementing equality within its group of schools and has an Equalities Lead who works across all schools to further develop their Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) strategy. The role has been established to take forward key areas including DEI within the curriculum as well as recruitment and retention of staff. CST is striving to develop a more representative and diverse workforce but acknowledges that it has some way to go to achieve that aspiration and this remains a challenging issue right across the educational sector.</p>
<p>Would HJS become a feeder school for any of the CST secondary schools?</p>	<p>There are no plans for this.</p> <p>Currently the feeder schools within CST are on the same site as the secondary schools eg: Bristol Cathedral Choir School and Cathedral Primary School, and Stoke Park Primary School and the new Trinity Academy.</p>
<p>Who would manage admissions?</p>	<p>CST would become the Admissions Authority and their Admissions lead would support Henleaze Junior School with any queries, e.g. around out of year group applications or appeals.</p>

	The transition from Henleaze Infant School to Henleaze Junior School would remain as it is.
What changes would be apparent to parents and children? Would the transition be noticed?	<p>There would be no changes to the School's name or its uniform etc, and the current Henleaze Junior School curriculum and behaviour policy would remain in place.</p> <p>Over time, as our staff collaborate with staff from the other CST schools, we should see the Teaching & Learning, Leadership and the business efficiency of our school further develop.</p> <p>This is likely to include some curriculum changes as we engage in the curriculum networks sessions with other schools within the Trust. However our work with CST to date has given us confidence that their core curriculum philosophy is aligned with ours and some key areas already match e.g. the phonics and maths progression we follow.</p> <p>We expect to be able to devote more time to teaching and learning as one of the core aims of CST is to reduce the management burden on leadership teams and staff to enable them to devote more of their time and energy on their main role. <i>'How can we make children's learning better?'</i> is a consistent focus of CST.</p> <p>Trust wide events help to bring the schools together as a family. Examples are the annual Trust Sports day for primary schools and the annual Trust Music Concert for all pupils that will be held this year in the Bristol Beacon.</p>
Teaching and Learning: The school curriculum	
Are MATs (incl CST) exempt from following the National Curriculum?	Academies do have some freedoms around the National Curriculum; however, all CST schools currently follow the National Curriculum and, currently, each school develops its own curriculum plans.
Do schools in CST have a common curriculum?	<p>Through collaboration between the current 6 Primary Schools, the schools have moved to adopt the pedagogical approach and curriculum progression for most subjects set out in CUSP, a published curriculum document.</p> <p>CST does not dictate that schools take on CUSP and recommend those that do, do so in a gradual, planned way. They do recognise that if schools do not follow CUSP, they will limit the opportunity for collaboration and school improvement with other schools within CST.</p> <p>The principles behind the CUSP curriculum are aligned with those we follow.</p> <p>CST follows Unlocking Letters and Sounds for phonics and White Rose Maths for maths.</p>

Would joining CST lead to an increased focus on Christianity in the Religious Education (RE) curriculum?	There is no imposed, standardised approach to the teaching of RE across CST. As it is a mixed MAT its member schools retain their faith or non-faith status and they are able to continue their RE curriculum in the way they did before they joined.
SEND is a huge challenge for all schools and currently support from the LA is limited. What would CST do differently?	Our school would continue to apply for EHCP (Education Health Care Plans) and top-up funding through the LA and there would still be access to support offered currently by Bristol. Through collaboration with the other CST schools we would gain access to another layer of SEND support; This would include an active SENDCo Network and informal observation. There is a real opportunity to share best practice through collaboration between staff and schools' SENDCos. CST recently procured speech and language therapy for all schools in the Trust.
What focus does CST have on PSHE, wellbeing and emotional education?	All CST schools put the education of the 'whole child' at the heart of what they do and this is clearly reflected in each school's vision and values. There is an active group of PSHE leads who work together to drive this agenda.
How do CST schools engage with 'green' and eco issues?	'Green' issues are very important to CST - it is active on this, with representatives from all schools meeting each term to collaborate and work together to deliver a sustainability strategy. The trust has a Sustainability Lead who is a member of staff at one of the Trust primary schools and has been recognised nationally for their contribution to work in this field. CST recognises that there is much more that could, and should, be done on this and would welcome Henleaze Junior School's involvement and contribution
Governance	
What would the implications be for the Governing Body and its role and responsibilities?	The Governing Body would become a Local Governing Body with powers and duties delegated to it by the CST Board of Trustees. Its overall role would not change, as it would be responsible for "monitoring the School's key performance indicators and acting as a critical friend to the Headteacher"; however, it would no longer be responsible for ensuring the strategic direction of the School, or for overseeing its financial performance. This would allow the governors to focus much more on the teaching and learning aspects. The Henleaze Junior School community would continue to have a voice through the parent governors and other governors recruited to the Local Governing Body.
Impact on staff	
What is the Henleaze Junior School Staff view on the	During a period of informal consultation, there has been positive reaction to the recommendation by governors to join CST from staff,

recommendation to join CST?	especially in relation to collaboration/networking possibilities and professional development. One question that has been asked is: could CST require staff members to work in other CST schools? The answer is No; this is not CST policy. However, there could be opportunities for secondments etc for staff who requested them.
What changes would there be to HJS staff roles? ie teaching staff, support staff and premises staff	All roles would remain unchanged and would be protected and transferred under TUPE – “Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)”. If a member of staff subsequently requested a change to their role, their ‘carried forward’ Henleaze Junior School contract would be replaced by a new contract under the prevailing CST contractual terms.
Is there a risk of staff being subject to additional pressure because of demands for or expectations of higher achievement?	CST regards its staff as its most important resource and it works hard to listen and respond to their needs. Active network groups across leaders, teachers and support staff and annual staff questionnaires provide opportunities to feedback and adapt approaches. All CST schools have trained mental health first aiders. The Trust has high aspirations for all members of its community but recognises that these aspirations will be achieved by working with people.
Financial Considerations	
What would the financial implications be of HJS joining CST? Would it mean that more funding would be available?	Our expectations are that our funding will remain unchanged. We may initially incur additional costs related to the transition, but that overall cost benefits and savings from joining the trust will cover the additional cost of the ‘top slice’.
What is the CST on its schools’ financial reserves? Would Henleaze Junior School retain ‘ownership’ of reserves if it joined?	The CST policy on financial reserves is that they belong to the schools that build them up. As CST is a single legal entity, it is not possible to say that legally those reserves belong to a specific school but that is in effect how CST operates. The Trust’s published accounts show how the reserves are allocated to each school (on CST website). In effect, the reserves are allocated to the schools that ‘earned’ them
Would HENSA (our parent teacher association) still exist and would funds go straight to the school?	There would still be an important role for HENSA in raising funds and organising the community events that are part of the school calendar. Money would go directly to the school to support the funding of pupil events, enrichment and curriculum resources as it does now.