

Thursday 7th May 2026

Dear Parents, Carers, Staff and Members,

In June 2025, we shared with you that Hatfield Community Free School Trust (HCFST) would begin a careful and considered exploration of future trust options, including whether joining a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) could best support the long-term success of our school. We provided a further update in January 2026, outlining the progress made to that point.

As with many schools nationally, we are operating within an increasingly complex educational landscape. It is therefore right that we take the time to consider whether continued collaboration through a trust structure could best support long-term resilience, capacity and school improvement, while remaining true to our values and priorities. We are now writing to let you know that this work has moved into its next stage.

Over recent months, the Trust Board and Senior Leadership Team have completed a detailed review of a number of trusts, considering factors such as educational ethos and values, school improvement capacity, leadership and governance models, staff development, financial sustainability, and geographical alignment. Throughout this process, the interests of our pupils, staff and wider community have remained central to all discussions.

Following this work, the Trust Board and Senior Leadership Team have agreed to identify [Ambition Education Trust](#) (AET) as our preferred trust with whom to undertake further, more detailed engagement.

At this stage, no final decision has been made. We have now entered a period of mutual due diligence – a careful and thorough process where both HCFST and AET examine how well we align and whether joining AET would be the right step for our school. This will include detailed discussions around education, staffing, governance, finance, and culture.

Ambition Education Trust is a locally established, cross-phase trust with schools in Hertfordshire, primarily across St Albans, Welwyn Garden City and Hemel Hempstead. We believe there is strong initial alignment in values, ambition and approach. However, this next phase is deliberately investigative and confirmatory, and it is an important part of ensuring that any future decision is well-informed and responsible.

It is important to reassure you that:

- there is no change currently to the day-to-day experience of pupils, staff or families
- no legal or formal commitments have been made
- any future proposal would be subject to further communication, engagement and the appropriate statutory processes, including approval by the Department for Education

We remain fully committed to being open and transparent with our school community. As this work progresses, we will continue to provide updates and ensure that staff and families are kept informed. We will also continue to update the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) (FAQs) page on the school website, where you can submit questions for consideration.

Thank you for your continued support and for engaging so thoughtfully with this important work. We believe it is right to take time, ask careful questions, and ensure that any decision we make is in the very best interests of our pupils, staff and community, both now and for the future.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Maxine Kinghorn
Chair of Trustees



Mrs Victoria Hobson
Principal