



**Consultation Report on Isle of Wight Education Federation
merging schools with HISP MAT.
June/July 2022**

The Governing Board for The Isle of Wight Education Federation consulted on merging its schools (Carisbrooke College and Medina College inc The Island VI Form) with a Hampshire based academy trust, HISP MAT (Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Southampton and Portsmouth). This was following an approach by HISP to IWEF.

HISP MAT currently have three schools in their MAT. Thornden School (Secondary), Portswood Primary and Tanners Brook Primary. Highcliffe Secondary School and Test Valley Secondary School are also currently consulting on joining HISP MAT.

Background:

During the past year, Governors decided to explore ways to further secure the education offer that children have available to them through the Isle of Wight Education Federation schools.

Before deciding to consult on this proposal the Governing Board initially created a list of criteria and completed a SWOT analysis of various possible future options (Joining HISP, joining another MAT, forming their own MAT, exploring the LAs plans for forming a MAT and continuing as currently, and address in the future if required).

In addition to this the Governing Board and in some cases, some senior leaders met with the CEO of HISP MAT on several occasions, met with the Deputy CEO of HISP, met with the Vice Chair of Governors at Thornden Secondary school to discuss their experience of the transition to the MAT, met with a Headteacher of one of the Primary Schools that joined the MAT, met with a representative of the LA and had several meetings dedicated to discussions relating to this.

HISP MAT was identified as providing the perfect balance of having a highly regarded region wide school improvement network, providing high quality staff development opportunities through their learning hubs, whilst supporting and encouraging the schools in their learning community to maintain their own curriculum and identity.

At a Full Governing Board meeting held on Tuesday, 7 June, the Governing Board voted in favour of initiating the consultation with key stakeholders.

An academy order would confirm whether the Department for Education (DfE) was, in principle, supportive of this option. This would be subject to due diligence being undertaken on both sides. Due diligence is a comprehensive and robust process to ensure both parties are fully prepared for joining together and working as one organisation.

This report follows the period when the Governing Body sought the views of: students, parents and carers, staff and their union representatives, local schools, the local community and other interested parties.

The consultation ran between 9.00am on Tuesday, 14 June and 3.30pm on Friday, 15 July.

Consultation activity timeline:

| | |
|---------|---|
| 13 June | Full Staff meeting held and presentation shared. Initial Staff FAQs document shared to address some immediate potential questions. |
| 14 June | 9am - Consultation opened. |
| 14 June | Initial letter sent to parents with link to this website page . This was to all year groups on roll plus the incoming year 6 students on CC and MC sites. Open door policy to staff for whole of consultation process. |
| 14 June | Consultation notice to Island Heads. |
| 14 June | Staff consultation open door at Medina College.. |
| 17 June | Reminder in newsletter to parents with links to website and offer of individual email address to a specific member of staff. |
| 17 June | Reminder in Staff Update with links to consultation feedback form and separate staff questions form. FAQs updated. |
| 22 June | Assemblies delivered to students Medina College and Carisbrooke College with students given opportunities to ask questions/make comments or write them on a card and put in feedback box. |
| 22 June | Staff consultation open door at Carisbrooke College. |
| 22 June | Meeting with Unions. |
| 23 June | Staff consultation open door at The Island VI Form. |
| 24 June | Reminder in newsletter to parents with links to website and offer of individual email address to a specific member of staff. |
| 24 June | Reminder in Staff Update with links to consultation feedback form and separate staff questions form. FAQs updated. |
| 27 June | Full staff meeting with representative from HISP. |
| 1 July | Reminder in newsletter to parents inc reminder regarding consultation meetings. |
| 1 July | Reminder in Staff Update with links to consultation feedback form and separate staff questions form.FAQs updated. |
| 4 July | CC Parent consultation meeting - with presentation prepared. |
| 5 July | MC Parent consultation meeting - with presentation prepared. |
| 8 July | Reminder in newsletter to parents with link to website . |
| 8 July | Reminder in Staff Update with links to consultation feedback form and separate staff questions form.FAQs updated. |
| 11 July | Meeting with Unions. |
| 13 July | Letter to parents from Governors re proposal, with a reminder about consultation deadline.This was to all year groups on roll plus the incoming year 6 students on CC and MC sites. Also shared with staff. |
| 14 June | 3.30pm - Consultation closed. |

Consultation feedback methods:

As can be seen above, there were opportunities for all stakeholders to engage with the consultation process and contribute with their views, whether that be in person in a public forum or individually, or in writing to a Google Form or by private email.

Representations made for each school:

| School | Number | Percentage |
|------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Carisbrooke College | 15 | 32.6% |
| Medina College (inc VI Form) | 16 | 34.8% |
| Both | 15 | 32.6% |
| Total | 46 | 100% |

Stakeholder category representation made from:

| | Carisbrooke | Medina (inc VI Form) | Both |
|-----------------|-------------|----------------------|------|
| Students | 1 | 3 | |
| Parents/carers | 6 | 6 | |
| Staff | 8 | 7 | 11 |
| Local schools | | | 1 |
| Local community | | | 2 |
| Other | | | 1 |

Feedback:

There were a variety of written response types. Some were openly supportive, some were openly opposing and some were comments/questions.

| Response | Number |
|----------|--------|
| Positive | 16 |
| Negative | 5 |

Summary of comments:

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Positive | 16 formally support. (examples of supportive comments below) |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See benefit in joining early if have to meet the Gov white paper. • ‘Really exciting opportunity for the students and Federation. Looking forward to the next few years and the new possibilities.’ • ‘Looking forward to the new pathways this could open. I don’t think this decision would have been considered unless it was beneficial for the future progression of IWEF.’ • ‘Fully support the proposal as being a partner within HISP will support greater levels of achievement and success for all students |

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| | <p>into the future.'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It offers an opportunity for the school to improve further and give my child the opportunity to achieve their full potential. To form links with schools off the Island will be of benefit in ● 'The process has been clear and transparent so far. It would certainly appear that the option to join the HISP MAT is in the best interests of the staff and students at our three sites. This move will give us access to the support.' ● 'Excellent idea and shows real forward thinking on the part of the Governors and SLT. Well done you! Yes there will be concerns raised but I trust the team to look after our schools.' ● 'Good move and enables the federation to continue to improve.' ● 'It future proofs the school.' ● 'It enables staff access to wider training and opportunities that as a school on the Island is difficult to get access to.' ● 'I don't like it but trust that our leadership has made the best decision for us as a federation'. ● 'I love my school but I love it because of who teaches me and not who owns the school because I have never seen them in the school. Whatever, choice is made I trust my teachers especially Mr Parr-Burman who has seen me today to answer a question I had. Don't see my MP asking me how I am or taking the time to get to know me.' |
| Negative | 5 formally oppose. (summaries of concerns below) |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● General concern over academies as a generic entity. ● Concern over TUPE/restructure/re-apply for jobs. ● Concern over losing current staff benefits - travel discounts. ● Can the training offered by joining not be accessed anyway? ● Academies break promises - will only last as long as current Executive Headteacher is running the Federation. ● Change of Government between now and 2030 might change education direction and academies drive be removed. ● No TURA (Trade Union Recognition Agreement) in place. ● Loss of democratic accountability. ● Hampshire do not understand limitations of living on an Island and may not allocate services appropriately. ● Concern biggest IW VI Form would sit outside LA. ● No automatic improvement just because an academy in the short or long term. ● Previous academy experience poor and concern same will apply here. ● Academies are more profit and money driven than LA schools. ● More experienced teachers will get pushed out and replaced with less experienced cheaper ones. ● CC has unique feel, this may not be retained. ● Change of Government between now and 2030 might change education direction and academies drive be removed. Politically driven to privatise everything currently. ● Finances of academies not transparent. ● Removes accountability to local community by joining a MAT ● Knock on effect to Island LA as a whole by losing the schools. ● Staff terms and conditions not guaranteed. |

| Questions/ comments | Summaries of questions/comments to be considered below. |
|------------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Five staff comments relating to inaccurate union representation. ● Two staff question over impact to Einstein Centre - funding allocation of students, running of. ● Will wages increase in line with Hampshire schools. ● Question if hard federation remains in place. ● How will HISP attract teachers to the Island? ● What happens in schools judged RI? ● Feedback related to MC operational item. ● Two questions of impact on SEN students. 1 - CC SEN good and don't want it to change. ● Question of specialist provisions not usually in academy schools. ● Want behaviour policies to reflect neurodivergent students. ● Does the academy have experience of taking schools from RI to Good? ● Lots of questions around Governance. ● Impact of new training taking teachers out of classrooms. ● Misunderstanding about schools merging on one site. ● Announcement during exam season means attention is diverted. ● Transparency of process if unions not invited before announcement. ● Form is only way to represent thoughts. ● Progress is being made now - why do we want help now? ● Do HISP have necessary experience? ● Concern of wider impact to the Island. ● Government may change and therefore path may change. ● Not enough benefits given. ● Concern timing means no chance of overturning. ● Concern negatives of academies not been presented. ● Would have preferred to have options to choose from. ● Concern of timing for resignation date and staff getting other jobs. ● Concern not sharing SWOT analysis fully. ● Feels like was all done behind closed doors - not transparent. ● Is there capacity and structure in HISP to expand at the rate it is? ● Who determines school budgets? ● Concern for wider knock on effect to LA of losing two more secondary schools. SWOT analysis of that impact? Community should have bigger say. |

Updates to points raised during consultation:

As part of the consultation, many points/questions/concerns were raised. Where possible and appropriate answers and feedback was sought.

A staff FAQs document was updated regularly with feedback to questions raised. Many of these related to terms and conditions and operational matters. Feedback to these has been shared with staff throughout the consultation period.

Several questions were raised around Governance. These were answered in the letter from the Chairs of Governors sent on 13 July 2022. A copy of this letter and therefore answers to these questions can be found [here](#).

Below are a few of the areas which were key aspects that have had updates. These are responses to factual questions, not conjectural comments.

| Question/concern | Feedback/update |
|---|--|
| No TURA (Trade Union Recognition Agreement) in place. | HISP MAT have agreed that one would be put in place. Model agreements are being looked at. |
| Is the draft Scheme of Delegation now finalised? | Alterations have been made to the initial draft in light of concerns and questions raised by IWEF Governors. |
| Are the Local Authority in support of this? | The LA have a neutral view of IWEF joining HISP MAT. |

Summary:

Looking at all of the questions/feedback provided by all stakeholders it is clear that there is support for the potential merging of IWEF with HISP MAT. There have however been some very valid and important questions raised and we appreciate that if the decision is taken to proceed that these areas must be picked up under the next stage of Due Diligence.