

THIS E-MAIL IS INTENDED FOR THE WHOLE GOVERNING BODY

Dear Governors

I am writing to you as a result of receiving the 6 February 2019 letter from the Head Teacher and Chair of Governors concerning the proposal to re-form the White Hills Park Trust (WHPT).

I fully appreciate that reaching a decision on whether or not to seek to join the WHPT is not an easy one and I know you will not make that decision lightly. However, I would ask you to reconsider the order in which you are going through that decision making process.

My specific concern is that the 13 February 2019 vote may result in a registration of interest form being submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) before any meaningful, two-way dialogue has been had with parents, one of the key groups of stakeholders.

As a parent, the main questions I have around the issue are 'why?' and 'why not?'.

Having looked at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/convert-to-an-academy-information-for-schools/1-before-you-apply>, I was struck by the sentence "Once we have received your registration of interest, we will get in touch with you and give you the name of your Department for Education (DfE) project lead. Your project lead will work with you throughout the conversion process and answer any questions you may have."

To me, this very much gives the impression that conversion is a 'done deal' if a registration of interest is submitted and that any statutory consultation would be meaningless, but I am open to being persuaded otherwise. As a parent and taxpayer, I would want to be confident that the governing body understands (i) the implications of submitting that registration of interest, (ii) what DfE/other time and taxpayer/other money might be spent as a result, (iii) whether the registration of interest can be withdrawn and (iv) consequences of withdrawal.

I do not know what flexibility there is to change the questions in Tuesday's vote, but I would ask you to consider embarking on a dialogue with parents before deciding whether or not to submit a registration of interest.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

Kind regards

