



HOLY TRINITY ACADEMY
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STATEMENT REGARDING SCHOOL EXPANSION MAY 2021

In response to information circulating in the public domain, regarding the expansion of Holy Trinity Academy (HTA,) The Governors and leaders of the school have created the following statement. The purpose of this statement is to explain the rationale behind the expansion and clarify some information regarding the perception of the school.

HTA were first approached by Telford & Wrekin Council (TWC) in December 2018 to consider expansion of the school. This expansion was driven by the increase in pupil admission numbers projected by TWC.

During the last two years HTA and TWC have worked closely in many meetings and through many design suggestions to establish the exact scope of the current expansion masterplan, which is agreeable to both parties.

Throughout this process, HTA have been consistent in setting out clear requirements to ensure that all risks associated with expanding the school are managed and do not create any barriers to the current Ofsted 'Good' Status or the overall aim of aspiring to 'Outstanding.'

In 2020 the Governors accepted the masterplan shown on the TWC website, based upon 2 conditions.

- 1) The 2 community football pitches were given over to school use and fenced off to ensure these comply with all safeguarding measures existing for the rest of the school site. HTA agreed to take over the management of this area and include them in future lettings provision for community use.
- 2) Assurances that the school travel plan would be reviewed and refreshed, to incorporate present and future situations. HTA hoped that this would allow improvement in the current day to day issues as well as accommodating the future situation if the expansion is approved.

All school buildings are designed using Government Planning Guidelines, commonly referred to Building Bulletin 103 (BB103.) These guidelines produce a spreadsheet which details the size of all school facilities required to deliver the curriculum. For a school of 1200 students, the proposed design provides a good solution for almost all criteria of internal space required, however even with the 2 community pitches included in these calculations, the external space is only 85% of the recommended size. HTA have accepted this situation and if the proposal is accepted, are prepared to ensure this does not impede school progress.

HTA acknowledge that they have always had shared access, to use the two community pitches. In the first two years of operation several attempts were made to conduct lessons, but the ground was found to be regularly contaminated with litter and dog mess. There were also incidents relating to unwanted interaction between students, members of the public and their pets. Safeguarding requirements for schools mean that HTA have concluded that use of these pitches is unworkable, in the current configuration as a shared facility.

HTA was jointly founded by the R.C. Diocese of Shrewsbury and the C. of E. Diocese of Lichfield as a 'Faith School.' Admissions policy for the school is for 60% of places set aside for Foundation (or faith) students and 40% for Open admissions. This appears to mean that the school is populated with many students who may not live in the Priorslee locality.

In practice, every year since the school opened, the number of faith applications has been between 25 to 35% of the total intake. In every year of admissions, the remaining places have reverted to open spaces which means that the whole school student population has been drawn from 65 to 75% open applications, unrelated to faith. The result is that today within school there a strong representation of the Priorslee community with over 63% of students with a TF2 postcode. The Admissions policy was also adjusted recently, to further strengthen the 'local representation' of the local community within the student admissions. Current admissions for September 2021 show 68% of students with a TF2 postcode.

Recent news highlights that there are plans approved for over 1000 new homes in the area. The new plans include plans for building new primary school provision. There appears to be no detail in any of the new plans, related to secondary school provision or provision of football pitches.

As detailed above, it is inevitable that any expansion of the school must include an expansion of the available site area. Using the BB103 spread sheet, the existing school area is also below the recommended size. Any expansion of the school buildings will further reduce this available school area. Opportunities for expansion are limited by the site being bounded by the Teece Drive, Wesley brook, Priorslee Balancing Lake, and housing on 3 sides of the site. If the school is unable to expand the site area, it is unlikely that this (or any future) expansion can proceed.

HTA recognise that any expansion of the school is a risk which will have to carefully managed within school, to ensure we are able to sustain the high quality teaching, learning and development we offer. We accept these risks and feel confident our plans can aim the school towards Ofsted 'Outstanding' status if this expansion is approved.

We also recognise that the inclusion of the exclusive use of the two football pitches would be difficult for the community to accept, however, if the school is to expand and introduce 300 more students, we hope this statement clarifies why both HTA and TWC feel this presents the only feasible option.

The Governors and Leaders of Holy Trinity Academy