



## **Frequently asked questions**

### **What is a free school?**

Free schools are state or maintained schools that receive their funding entirely from central government. As such they are automatically academies and sit outside local authority control but adhere to the School Admissions Code. Free schools are non-selective and free to all attending students. They are set up by interested local groups that feel their area would benefit from a free school and can demonstrate local demand for one.

### **Why are parents being encouraged to express an interest now?**

In order to secure funding, Hillingdon Education Trust has to demonstrate sufficient parental interest in the school to the Department for Education (DfE). Parents can express their interest in the school by completing the survey, indicating that Hillingdon High School may be a preference. This will help ensure that local parents have Hillingdon High School as one of their future choices.

### **How does the funding work?**

If successful, Hillingdon High School will receive a package of funding direct from the DfE to set up and establish the school. From the date of opening, the school will receive a per pupil funding settlement from the local authority in line with all maintained secondary schools.

### **What happens if there is a change in government/education policy?**

On opening, all free schools receive the same legal status as academies. Hillingdon High School would join a group of hundreds of existing academies, a policy supported across the political spectrum. All schools in England are required to become academies by 2022 under proposals set out by the government in the 2016 White Paper.

### **How can parents get involved with the school in the future?**

Hillingdon Education Trust seeks to engage positively with parents. Parents will be invited into school regularly and will meet formally with their child's mentor twice a year. A parental focus group will operate throughout the pre-opening stages and this will continue to offer a regular voice for parents after opening. In addition, parents will be represented on the school's governing body.

### **How can parents become more involved now?**

Hillingdon High School is committed to serving the community. Hillingdon Education Trust aims to start recruiting parent governors in the pre-opening phase. Once the school is running, parental involvement through the governors and the parent association will be a vital part of school life.

### **How can parents stay in touch as the project develops?**

Over the next two years, Hillingdon Education Trust will continue to involve prospective parents in every aspect of the project, providing regular updates via Facebook, Twitter and the school's website. Formal and informal information evenings will be organised to ensure the parents receive regular information.

### **What will you be looking for in your staff?**

Hillingdon Education Trust will be recruiting outstanding professionals, who share the school's vision and passion for education and are committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure students fulfil their potential. Hillingdon High School will recruit qualified teachers on the basis of their academic qualifications, quality of classroom practice, commitment to learning (that of students and their own) and a shared vision.

### **My child has special needs? How will you cater for them?**

Hillingdon High School will follow the Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice to ensure that students are appropriately supported. Hillingdon Education Trust will have access to experienced, specialist support teachers, for example to support students who are dyslexic.

### **Will there be after schools clubs for those with working parents/carers?**

Hillingdon High School will provide extended care for students, from the pre-school breakfast club to the comprehensive range of after-school activities, including a supervised homework club and enrichment and extension.