



Thursday, 12 February 2026

Letter re: Next chapter for Haylands Primary School

Dear Parents and Carers,

Over the past few months, the Governing Body and Leadership Team at Haylands Primary School have been reflecting carefully on the long-term future of our school. This has been prompted by an ever changing educational landscape both locally and nationally, as well as the Isle of Wight LA's proposed reorganisation of education last year.

Haylands is a proud community school, and we are deeply committed to making sure that the school continues to serve our community for generations to come. To do that, we want to continue to move forward with ambition, building on our many strengths and ensuring that Haylands continues to thrive at the heart of our community.

As part of this thinking, the Governing Body has begun exploring the possibility of joining an academy trust as we enter this next phase of the school's development. This is an important decision and one we are determined to get right, so that Haylands continues to flourish and grow. This feels particularly important given the changes taking place across education on the Isle of Wight, as well as forthcoming national developments from the Department for Education, including expected changes to SEND and inclusion.

Alongside this, we are keen to secure the strongest possible school improvement support for Haylands and to access high-quality collaborative networks that allow us to work alongside like-minded schools.

As a governing body, we are clear that any future partnership must align closely with our vision and values, enhance what is already great about Haylands, and provide a strong and proven school improvement offer. When considering potential partner organisations, it was important to us that any academy trust we explored as a possible partner, had an exceptional track record in Key Stage 2 outcomes and a local presence on the Isle of Wight.

Following an initial period of exploration and discussion with a number of organisations, the Governing Board has identified Lift Schools as our preferred partner for further consideration. Lift Schools is a national trust of 58 schools but operates through a strong regional model that places great emphasis on each school's identity and role within its local community. If we moved forward in partnership with Lift Schools, Haylands would sit within the trust's South West region, working closely with ten other schools, including five mainstream primary schools, one of which was recently voted TES Primary School of the Year.

Lift's nearest school is our partner secondary, Lift Ryde, which is one of the highest-performing secondary schools on the Isle of Wight and continues to go from strength to strength. We have been impressed by Lift Ryde's experience as part of the trust and by the level of educational and operational support they receive, despite being the only Lift school currently on the island.

As part of our exploratory process, we have visited four Lift primary schools in different parts of the country and have been encouraged by the positive feedback from leaders in these schools, as well as the journey of transformation that their schools have been on. Importantly, all Lift schools we visited retain their own unique heritage and identity. This is a key factor for us, and we are excited by the potential opportunities that a partnership with Lift Schools could offer as we continue our journey of improvement, collaboration and innovation.

Lift Schools has a particularly strong track record in primary education and is consistently one of the highest-performing primary trusts nationally. In 2025, 79% of pupils across Lift primary schools achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and maths at the end of Key Stage 2, with 13% achieving the higher standard. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are also among the strongest nationally, with 71% achieving the expected standard and 8% achieving the higher standard.

It is important to emphasise that no decision has yet been made about joining Lift Schools. We have moved from an initial exploratory phase to a more formal period of engagement. This will allow both the Governing Board and Lift Schools to undertake detailed due diligence to ensure that there is a strong mutual fit.

While there is still much work to do before any decisions are taken, this represents an important and exciting milestone as we look to the future of Haylands. We remain committed to keeping you fully informed as this process develops and will continue to share updates as appropriate.

Thank you, as always, for your continued commitment to our school.

Kind regards,

Bob Bullivant
Chair of Governors
Haylands Primary School

Katrina Shaer
Headteacher
Hayland Primary School