

Newsletter - October 2017

Welcome to the first newsletter in relation to the new 11-19 English Medium School in Haverfordwest.

As many of you know, a decision was made at Full Council on 20 July 2017 to discontinue Sir Thomas Picton and Tasker Milward VC Schools on 31 August 2018.

Consequently, a new 11-19 English Medium Voluntary Controlled School in Haverfordwest will be established with effect from 1 September 2018, initially using the sites of the current schools.

The temporary governing body for the new school has now been established and has conducted two meetings. The Local Authority appointed the governors, as required by Welsh Government Regulations. All members are currently governors on the governing bodies of Sir Thomas Picton School or Tasker Milward VC School. Mr Paul Lucas (Tasker Milward VC School) and Mr Richard Griffiths (Sir Thomas Picton School) have been elected Chair and Vice-chair respectively.

Statement from the Chair of Governors

"The new temporary governing body is looking forward to the challenge and creation of a new secondary school in Haverfordwest and is putting plans in place at an early stage in order to move forward in September 2018.

"We are aware of parental and carer concerns and are addressing these and doing our utmost to ensure a smooth transition to the new school wherever possible.

"The Acting Head Teachers and staff of the two existing schools are already working closely together to ensure best practice as far as subject provision and teaching standards are concerned.

"On behalf of the Temporary Governing Body, I wish to thank parents/carers for their support and interest in this amazing opportunity to help create a first class seat of learning for the pupils of Haverfordwest and the surrounding area." **Paul Lucas**

The next meeting is due to be held on Thursday 9 November 2017.

Appointment of Head

An appointments panel has been formed for the appointment of the new headteacher; an advert was put in place with a closing date of 6 October. The panel has begun the process of shortlisting and interviews will take place in November; the Temporary Governing Body will then meet to ratify the appointment of the Head.

Once an appointment is made, many arrangements for the organisation of the school will be a decision for the headteacher and the Temporary Governing Body with the Local Authority working closely with both to make sure that changes are implemented as smoothly as possible.

School Logo

During the autumn term, pupils of the current schools will be eligible to take part in the design of the new school logo; a staff governor representative on the Temporary Governing Body is currently in the process of creating guidelines to the pupils. The Chair of the Temporary Governing Body has kindly offered a prize of £100 to the winning design!

Frequently Asked Questions

1) How is a split site going to work?

This will be a decision for the Head and Governing Body, but it is likely that some year groups will be in one building and some in the other building. The important point is that it will be one school community.

2) Will one site operate on a lower and the other on an upper school?

An upper and lower school model is a possibility, but it would be a decision for the Head and Governing Body on where to place the year groups.

3) Are staff going to travel between sites or will each school retain their own staff?

The new school will be the employer of the staff. Once a decision is made on the organisation and staffing structure of the school, there will be a consultation with staff on how this would impact on organisation. It is likely there will be some travelling as staff may be required to teach different year groups in different locations.

4) How large are classes going to be?

We do not anticipate average class sizes being much larger than they currently are, but some pupils from Tasker Milward may experience larger classes and some from STP smaller classes due to the difference in pupil numbers currently in the different schools.

5) Are all subjects currently being taught likely to continue after the merge?

A broad and balanced curriculum is a requirement of all schools, and with the merger there is the possibility that there could be an expansion of subjects as there will be economies of scale in other areas.

6) How will school transport be operated?

The transport policy of the Local Authority will be applied and there is no intention for pupils to need to travel between sites.

7) Which school should I apply for during the admissions period?

Either choose Sir Thomas Picton School or Tasker Milward VC School on the online system whilst applying and we will automatically consider your application as being for the new school.

8) On which site will the school be permanently placed?

A bid for funding has been submitted to Welsh Government and we should know by mid November as to whether this has been approved. Discussions are ongoing in relation to site options. Once we have confirmation of the funding then we will inform both schools in order to be able to communicate this to parents, staff and pupils. It is anticipated that a final decision on the site will be made at Full Council on 12 December 2017.

9) Will new uniform have to be purchased by September 2018 or will it be phased in?

The temporary governing body is currently discussing the uniform for the new school and this includes a consultation process with School Councils, parents/carers and other

stakeholders; new pupils entering the school in September 2018 will need to wear the new uniform, whilst existing pupils of Sir Thomas Picton and Tasker Milward VC Schools will be encouraged to transfer from their current uniform as soon as possible, but no later than September 2020. The new uniform will be of a different colour; all parties will be notified of the changes in good time prior to September 2018.

Any question arising from this newsletter should be sent to:

Huw Jones

Planning School Places & Admissions

County Hall

Haverfordwest

SA61 1TP

01437 764551

huw.jones@pembrokeshire.gov.uk