

Frequently Asked Questions

Why are you making these changes?

We are making these changes as part of our ongoing review of our schools and the education market. We have listened carefully to parents' views, considered how the needs and expectations of families are evolving, and used this insight to help shape our plans. We are also investing in our schools and facilities to ensure we continue to provide an excellent educational experience for current and future generations of pupils.

Who carried out the research that led to these changes?

The research was carried out by Cairneagle, a strategy consultancy specialising in education with extensive experience in the sector.

Why are you making this change now?

We are making this change as part of our ongoing review of the market and our schools. We felt it was the right time to undertake this work given the changing education market and the importance of understanding what parents and families value most. We have listened carefully to feedback from parents and recognised the need to respond to changing expectations. This change will help ensure we continue to meet the needs of our families and remain well positioned for the future.

Is the trust in financial difficulties?

No. The Trust is financially strong and remains in a stable position. This change is not financially driven, but by our ongoing review of the market and our schools. The Trust is committed to proactively managing its resources in the best interests of all its beneficiaries, ensuring we can continue to invest.



Are the schools in financial difficulties?

No. The schools are part of The Trust, which remains financially strong and stable. Being part of the Harpur Trust provides long-term support and stability that many standalone independent schools do not have, helping to ensure a strong and sustainable future for our schools and pupils.

Who is funding these developments?

These developments are being funded through a combination of support from The Trust, the schools' own reserves, and contributions from supporters. This shared approach allows us to invest in our schools while maintaining The Trust's strong financial position. The review was funded by The Harpur Trust from its own reserves, as part of our commitment to supporting our schools and making informed decisions about their future.

Can I move my child from another Harpur Trust school?

Transfers between Harpur Trust schools may be considered through the normal admissions processes, subject to availability of places, suitability and timing. Parents would need to follow the terms set out in their parent contract with their current school, including providing the appropriate notice period. Any transfer would therefore be managed in line with the usual admissions and contractual arrangements. Please contact your child's school to discuss further.

Do these changes mean that my child's school fees are going to increase?

We work hard to keep fees as low as possible across all our schools. As a not-for-profit Trust, income generated by our schools is reinvested into school facilities and improvements for the benefit of our pupils and wider school communities.

These changes are not being made with the intention of increasing school fees. Fees are set separately through the usual annual budgeting process and reflect the cost of delivering education, not the cost of this review.

Will my child's bursary be impacted by this review?

No. We are passionate about our bursary programme and the opportunities it provides for children to access our schools. Supporting pupils through bursaries continues to be a key priority for The Harpur Trust, as it has for many years, and these developments will not change that. Bursaries will continue to play a valued role in ensuring that our schools remain accessible to talented children from a wide range of backgrounds.

Are any current trustees alumni of Trust schools?

The Board of Trustees is made up of individuals with a wide range of backgrounds and experience. Trustees are appointed for the outstanding range of skills, expertise and perspectives that they bring, and several individual trustees have connections to each of the Trust schools.



Who did you consult with?

As part of our review, The Harpur Trust carried out substantial market research involving hundreds of parents from both Trust and non-Trust schools, alongside wider strategic analysis. This research helped inform the decision-making process. A formal consultation was not undertaken because confidentiality was needed to avoid creating a prolonged period of uncertainty for pupils, parents and staff while the review was ongoing, and because of the complexity of the trade-offs required.

How was the decision made?

The decision followed an extensive strategic review led by the Harpur Trust, supported by research, market analysis, and feedback from hundreds of parents. A wide range of factors were considered, including demographic trends, future developments in the area, and the long-term sustainability of the Trust's schools.

After exploring a number of options, the review concluded that the changes announced were the best way to support the long-term success of the schools. The final decision was made by the Trust's Board of Trustees following detailed planning and assessment.

Were parents' views considered?

Yes. We carried out extensive research with hundreds of parents from both Trust and non-Trust schools as part of the review process.

This feedback formed an important part of the evidence considered alongside demographic trends, educational considerations, market analysis and long-term planning.

Why was the process kept confidential?

Maintaining confidentiality throughout the process was considered essential to avoid creating a prolonged period of uncertainty for pupils, parents and staff. Instead, we carried out research with hundreds of parents as part of a wider review of the long-term future of our schools. The findings from that research, alongside demographic, educational and strategic considerations, informed the final decision.

