



*Learning together - enjoying success - aiming high –
celebrating difference – enriching community*

20th May 2025

Dear Parents/Carers and Staff,

Important – Request to Join Connect Academy Trust

We are delighted to inform you that following detailed consideration involving all members of the school's governing board, Haytor View Community Primary and Nursery has made a request to join Connect Academy Trust.

Having first established relationships with the leaders of Connect 18 months ago we all believe that this represents a positive and carefully considered step for the school. We feel that it represents an opportunity to build upon the values and ethos of Haytor View which have been central to our relationship with you, our community and staff team, for so long.

Who are Connect Academy Trust?

As a governing board we met Stuart Bellworthy, the Trust Leader of Connect in November 2023. He was introduced to us by Scott Hampton following links made through the Department for Education. What immediately struck us when meeting Stuart was his authentic recognition of the strengths of our school and the value we place in the connections we develop with the community that we serve. Stuart's positive recognition of how relationships with children and families sat at the heart of our provision led us to begin an informal relationship which has grown with time. Indeed, in early 2024 many of our staff team met Stuart when he joined us for a staff meeting so that he could develop an insight into how we work together to develop our school to support his awareness as a Trust Leader.

Our relationship with Connect grew further as we sought support from Sarah Ryder, Connect School Improvement Lead and Registered Ofsted Inspector, who has worked with school leaders and teachers from time to time in developing our provision. What's more, some members of the staff team have enjoyed valuable visits to some of the eight primary schools that sit within the Connect Trust as they have sought to develop skills within key curriculum areas.

You can find out more about Connect Academy Trust at www.connectacademytrust.co.uk.

Why now?

We have been carefully considering possible next steps in securing the best possible school provision for our community for a while. The developing landscape in education and the previous Government's intention that all schools needed be part of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) by 2030 encouraged us to look for Trusts whose values matched our own. It also led us, together with Mr Hampton, to explore different models of collaboration in an effort to secure the best future for Haytor

View. While the government no longer expects school to be trust members by 2030, it has remained our responsibility as governors to secure the best possible version of Haytor View as we move forward.

Why Connect Academy Trust?

We are reassured, as a result of our experiences with Connect Trust, that they understand and value what we feel is important about our school. You'll know that our staff team work hard to provide a high quality education for your children, and Connect recognise this too. You'll know how much we value our relationships with you, and Connect value this too. You know that we feel that our school, and the connections it brings to children and families is special – and Connect know this too.

Working together with other similar schools in a Trust offers many benefits for our pupils, the school and the wider community. Working within a Trust that recognises our values and our ethos is critical to us, and we feel that we have found that in Connect.

Connect are ambitious for excellence in learning and support, constantly seeking to improve the offer to young people and their families through collaboration, challenge and cooperation across the Trust. We feel that this is something that we want to be a part of.

What next?

As highlighted above, the Board of Governors of Haytor View are keen to make our relationship with Connect Academy Trust formal.

We know that you will have many questions to ask about the benefits of this collaboration and the process of joining Connect Trust. With this in mind, arrangements have been made for an 'open meeting' for all parents, carers and community members to take place in the **year 4 classroom at 3.30pm on Wednesday 21st May**. All are welcome and staff and governors will be available to answer your questions.

In line with legal requirements, we will be formally consulting on our proposal to join the Connect Trust **from Wednesday 21st May 2025 to Wednesday 18th June 2025**. The consultation will run for four weeks and will be open to everyone – parents, carers, pupils, staff, stakeholders and the wider community. The consultation will be an opportunity for you to share your thoughts about the plans we have shared above. You will shortly be receiving a separate letter about how you can share your thoughts in a way that will ensure that they are heard.

In closing this letter and moving into the consultation period we are keen to reassure you that our consideration of joining Connect Academy Trust is based upon preserving and building upon the foundations, the ethos and values that are Haytor View Community Primary School and Nursery. We believe that in partnership with Connect these will be secure and that outcomes for children and families further enhanced into the future.

Yours sincerely,

Robert Doets
Chair of Governing Board

Sarah Butler
Acting Headteacher