



Bridge & Patricxbourne CEP School
Conyngham Lane, Bridge, Canterbury, CT4 5JX

T: 01227 830276

E: office@bridge.kent.sch.uk

W: www.bridge.kent.sch.uk

Monday 1st December 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

Over the past couple of years, the Governing Body has been carefully exploring the future direction of our school. As many parents will know, the level of support that schools receive from the local authority has gradually reduced, and the specialist services we do access are becoming increasingly expensive. This has led governors to look closely at how we can best secure long-term stability and ensure the right support for our children, families and staff.

After taking time to review the options, the governors have chosen to explore joining an academy trust, specifically Aquila. This is not a decision that has been rushed. Governors looked at a range of trusts and considered what would be the best fit for Bridge School. They were very clear about three key priorities:

- that we keep the high level of autonomy that allows us to maintain our school's unique character;
- that we can choose to work with other schools when it benefits our children;
- and that some of the increasing administrative and compliance pressures can be taken off school leaders, allowing them to focus more on teaching and learning.

Aquila meets these criteria well. They offer strong professional support while still valuing the individuality of each school. Joining them would give Bridge access to expert advice, shared training opportunities and a wider network of colleagues, while still keeping decisions about the day-to-day running of the school firmly with us.


The Governing Body and Leadership of Bridge and Patricxbourne Church of England Primary School are therefore consulting with you about joining Aquila, the Diocese of Canterbury Academies Trust which is a multi-academy trust (MAT) with a strong Christian foundation.



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"I am the vine, you are the branches. If you abide in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit." John 15:5



Our school is in a position of strength. We are proud of our pupils' achievements, the quality of our teaching and the distinctive Christian ethos that underpins all that we do. It is from this position of confidence that we are now exploring how best to secure and build upon our success for the years ahead.

Why are we considering this step?

Becoming an academy within a like-minded Christian trust would allow us to:

- Preserve and strengthen our Christian character. By joining a trust that shares our faith-based vision and values, we can continue to nurture our pupils' spiritual and moral development alongside our school's academic excellence.
- Collaborate with other high-performing schools. The trust offers a community of schools that work together to share expertise, professional development and best practice which enriches opportunities for staff and pupils alike.
- Secure long-term stability and sustainability. The educational landscape continues to evolve and becoming part of a strong, well-established trust offers a stable framework for governance, financial planning and strategic development.

We already do some work with Aquila and joining the MAT will bring further opportunities for innovation. Financial savings will enable us to tailor staffing and resources more closely to the needs of our pupils and our community.

What will not change

It is important to stress that our school's name, ethos, Christian values and dedication to our pupils and families will remain at the heart of everything we do. Our staff will continue to be employed and to work in Bridge & Patricxbourne CEP. Our commitment to serving our local community will not diminish. Pupils will continue to enjoy the same caring environment, high standards and rich learning experiences that you have come to expect.

Next steps

This consultation is an opportunity for you to understand the proposal in full and to share your views. We will be holding an information meeting for parents on Friday 12th December at 9am in the school hall where representatives from the school and the trust will be available to explain the process and answer questions. You are also welcome to send written comments to consultation@bridge.kent.sch.uk by Monday 12th January.

We approach this consultation with optimism, believing that partnership within a Christian multi-academy trust offers a positive and forward-looking path for our school



community. Thank you for your ongoing support and for all that you do to work with us in helping every child to flourish.

How can I give my views?

The formal consultation period opens today and will remain open until Monday 12th January 2026. You can comment and ask questions using the forms link attached to this letter or by emailing consultation@bridge.kent.sch.uk

Forms link: <https://forms.office.com/e/uG9wayaiUv>

A page has been established on the school website dedicated to the consultation process: <https://bridge.kent.sch.uk/parents/proposal-to-join-aquila-schools-trust>

We will include answers to [frequently asked questions](#) on the page and update this weekly.

Following the consultation period, the Governing Body will consider all the feedback and views it has received during the consultation and will then make the final decision on whether to legally complete the process. We will write to parents to inform you of our decision.

We look forward to receiving your responses to this consultation process and, as always, please do not hesitate to contact us if you would like to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Hellman
Chair of Governors

James Tibbles
Headteacher

We want to ensure your needs are met. If you would like this document in any other format or language, please contact us: office@bridge.kent.sch.uk