



Proposal for Neroche Primary School to join Uffculme Academy Trust

The Governors of Neroche Primary School are consulting on a proposal to join Uffculme Academy Trust, a Multi Academy Trust in Devon and Somerset which currently includes four schools.

These are:

Holyrood Academy;

Axe Valley Academy;

Uffculme Primary School;

Uffculme Secondary School.

When would this change take place?

The proposed change would take place on **January 1st, 2021.**

Why is this change being proposed?

The change is being proposed because we believe that joining Uffculme Academy Trust will bring significant benefits to the children and staff at Neroche Primary School.

Most of the schools in Uffculme Academy Trust are at least good and outstanding. They have a wealth of experience of working with both primary and secondary schools and are starting to grow their primary network and capacity. We believe that the Trust shares the same values as Neroche Primary school and that it is particularly beneficial to us to be in the same Trust as Holyrood Academy.

Why Uffculme Academy Trust?

We believe that Uffculme Academy Trust provides an excellent opportunity to ensure that Neroche Primary School continues to thrive and improve for a number of reasons:

- Uffculme is a small locally based Trust which is committed to working in and for its communities;
- Holyrood Academy, where most of our children transfer, is already a member of Uffculme Academy Trust and the partnership will enable children at Neroche to have priority if Holyrood is oversubscribed
- There are opportunities for sharing resources, facilities and roles between Neroche Primary and Holyrood Academy;

- There are opportunities for collaboration and networking between Neroche and Uffculme Primary which is a Good school with a similar village context;
- The Trust has a designated teaching school which gives us access to a wide range of training and development opportunities as well as training our own teachers;
- Like Neroche and Holyrood Academy, Uffculme works in a mixed rural and urban catchment area;
- Uffculme School is widely regarded as one of the best schools, not just in the region, but nationally and is regularly the top performing Comprehensive school in both Somerset and Devon. It has been rated Outstanding by Ofsted for many years;
- Uffculme has a culture and ethos which matches our own with in particular an emphasis on strong relationships and inclusion as well as creating schools which are nurturing, successful and enjoyable;
- Uffculme Academy Trust is in a strong position financially
- Uffculme Primary School has made rapid improvement since joining Uffculme Academy Trust and transformed from a school with falling rolls and weak standards to a position where it is now thriving, is oversubscribed and regularly above national averages for performance;
- The Chief Executive of the Trust, Lorraine Heath is a National Leader of Education and has a national reputation for delivering school improvement. Lorraine was recently awarded an OBE in the 2018 New Year's Honours List in recognition of her services to education;
- Uffculme Academy Trust has a well-established Board of Trustees with a strong skill set and a range of expertise including financial, HR and educational;
- Uffculme has a reputation of being a good employer with a well-regarded wellbeing package for staff.

Profile of Uffculme Academy Trust

School	Age range	Current Ofsted Rating	Local Authority	Number of pupils	Total number of employees
Axe Valley Academy	11-16	RI Dec 2019	Devon	590	82
Holyrood Academy	11-18	Outstanding May 2013	Somerset	1245	149
Uffculme Primary	4-11	Good June 2018	Devon	222	36
Uffculme School	11-16	Outstanding Feb 2014	Devon	1046	165
Neroche Primary	2-11	<i>Outstanding March 2013</i>	<i>Somerset</i>	252	32

What will be different?

It is very unlikely that the children, parents and local community of Neroche Primary School will see any immediate changes as a result of this proposal. However as it is our intention that joining Uffculme will help us to better fulfil our aims to provide excellent education for our communities, future benefits could be:

- Improved recruitment and retention of teachers;
- Improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and training opportunities for staff;
- Supporting the continued high standards of attainment and progress;
- Financial savings through economies of scale;
- Greater opportunities for children to participate in enrichment activities;
- Strengthening the links with Holyrood academy including higher priority for our Year 6s transferring to Year 7 if Holyrood is oversubscribed;
- The opportunity for regular injections of capital funding to improve our buildings and facilities.

How can I find out more?

You are welcome to email any comments or questions about the proposal to our Clerk to Governors, Jane Burden via her email: jburden@educ.somerset.gov.uk

Please mark your email UAT consultation.

Unfortunately because of the current Covid-19 restrictions we are unable to hold a public meeting to discuss these proposals so if you have any comments or questions, it is important that you send in a response to the consultation.

The consultation will close at **noon on Friday October 16th** after which all comments will be considered by both the Governors of Neroche Primary School and Uffculme Academy Trust.

David Tucker, Chair of Governors, Neroche Primary School

Alison Collins, Headteacher, Neroche Primary School

Lorraine Heath, CEO, Uffculme Academy Trust