



LEWESTON
SHERBORNE

CELEBRATING 135 YEARS
WITH A NEW STRATEGIC ALLIANCE



Leweston: 135 years of Commitment, Compassion and Community

135 years ago, a small group of pioneering women arrived in Sherborne, Dorset. Members of the Religious of Christian Instruction, a Belgian order of Catholic sisters, they came with little English, few resources, and a bold mission: to bring education to children who might otherwise be denied it.

In the face of local resistance they opened their school. St Joseph's welcomed local boys and girls from low-income families, while St Antony's offered boarding to girls at a time when formal education for women was far from guaranteed. Their work was tireless, their vision unwavering, and from their courage, Leweston was born.

Since 1891, Leweston School has educated generations of children and welcomed families from across the UK and around the world. From its historic roots, it has grown into a forward-thinking, inclusive community that blends tradition with innovation, placing the individual at the heart of its educational philosophy. Developing not only academic excellence but also character, compassion, and curiosity. Today, we are home to over 550 pupils aged 3 months to 18 years, offering a holistic, highly personalised education that develops every child's talents, interests, and aspirations. We teach our pupils not only to excel, but to lead with kindness, to value community, and to live lives of purpose.

With a clear strategic vision, a passionate staff team, and a strong community, we continue to write our story, one student at a time. We honour the legacy of those remarkable founding sisters and invest in a future where every child has the opportunity to shine.



Introducing Concept Education and the Catholic Schools' Trust

Concept Education

'Head, Hand and Heart'



Concept Education is a schools group led by a team of highly respected former headteachers and leading figures from the world of education, all of whom are looking to safeguard independent schooling for the next generation.

Led by founder and CEO, Hugh Dickinson, the Directors and Advisory Board form an impressive body of leading educators. Leweston has existing links to the group. Former Headmaster, Adrian Aylward, was involved in its foundation and former Leweston Deputy Head, now Headmistress of Badminton School, Jessica Miles, sits on the Advisory Board.

Directors of Concept Education



Hugh Dickinson
Founder &
CEO



Martin Stephen
Chairman
Former
High Master
St Paul's



Steven Fern
Finance Director
FD 200 Degrees
Coffee



James Hall
Director
Founder
Hall Lahaise



Jenny Stephen
Director of
Education
Former Director
of Schools &
Colleges,
Alpha Plus



Aly Kachra
Director
CEO Country
Court Care



Will Orr-Ewing
Director-Education
Founder
Keystone Tutors



Harry Dickinson
Director-Strategy
Managing Partner
Harrington Cooper

Advisory Board of Concept Education



Fran Nelson-
Smith
Italian School
London



Grace Moody-
Stuart
Director
Good Schools
Guide



Jessica Miles
Head
Badminton
School



Areti Bizior
Head
Luckley House
School



Andrew Lewer
Former Member
of Parliament
Northampton
South



Robert Fletcher
CEO
R Fletcher and
Partners



Jonathan Hall
Head of
Acquisitions

Concept acquired their first school, The Marist, Ascot in May 2022 but Leweston will be the first school to join the new formed Catholic Schools' Trust, which puts the school at the forefront of a group expected to grow to between 5 and 10 schools over the next seven years.

Offering a truly innovative model the Catholic Schools' Trust, a charity which will grow out of the Leweston School Trust, will own the real estate and ensure the continued ethos of the school, whilst Concept Education will provide strategic business support. Amongst those backing Concept Education are investors who have a track record of supporting top UK schools and universities including Eton, Winchester, Loretto, Wycombe Abbey, St Paul's and Oxford University.

Education for its own sake - all our efforts will be focused on producing in our pupils that holy grail of teaching: a love of learning.



Why is Concept the right partner?

Leweston's governors have long been considering the best way to safeguard the future of the school by looking for a suitable partner to help the school move forward with confidence. The governors approached several interested parties and selected Concept Education because they believe the group is best aligned with Leweston both in terms of its belief in holistic education and future plans.

High Aspirations - we aim to be the best we possibly can in everything we do.

The team behind Concept understands that the success of a school depends on the trust of its parents, their children and their teachers. They feel excited and privileged to be asked to carry on the outstanding work undertaken at Leweston and in gaining that trust, using it to strengthen even further the evolution of the school as a unique, caring and high-achieving environment – one which combines the best of traditional education with a modern approach and makes our children's lives even more fulfilling.



How will Leweston benefit from being part of Concept Education and the Catholic Schools' Trust?

Whilst there will be little difference in the day-to-day running of the school Concept Education brings to Leweston a depth of experience from educational professionals who have spent a lifetime at some of the country's top independent schools. It also brings security and investment for the future.

Concept Education are passionate about helping Leweston to maintain its excellent reputation and to thrive in a competitive market. They are committed to investing in Leweston's infrastructure and creating greater opportunities for professional development of staff. As the group grows there will be the opportunity to learn from other leading schools and benefit from group services but each school will retain their individual characteristics and ethos. Indeed, the aim of this new partnership is to preserve Leweston's proud history, excellence in education and outstanding pastoral care. The school will continue to offer breadth of choice to local families, as well as those from further away, who share our values.

Initially, Concept Education want to get to know the school well and to ensure it runs smoothly. In the longer term, they will work with the leadership team to develop plans for the school's future. Central to Concept's vision is preserving the individual identity of its schools and providing an education which is accessible and affordable to as many people as possible.



Who will lead Leweston?

The current Headmaster, Mr Paget-Tomlinson, and his Senior Leadership team will continue to lead the school unchanged. To ensure continuity some of the governing body will join a new board of governors appointed by Concept Education. This new body will be made up of highly successful former headteachers of independent schools, as well as others who are leaders in their respective fields, bringing a wealth of expertise and knowledge to the role.

The new governing body will be chaired by Martin Stephen the former High Master of St Paul's School in London, High Master of The Manchester Grammar School and Headmaster of The Perse School, Cambridge.

Service and Leadership -
we believe in leadership is
a compassionate and in
the service of others.

Dr Stephen is a former Chairman of HMC (The Headmasters' and Headmistresses' Conference) and has been described as 'the most influential Head in the independent sector' by the *Times Educational Supplement* and *Daily Telegraph*.

After St Paul's, Dr Stephen was the Director of Education for GEMS (UK) and Chairman of the Clarendon Academies Group, and Founder and President of the National Mathematics and Science College. He is a Founding Governor of the London Academy of Excellence.



Will this bring fresh ideas and improvements?

Whilst Concept Education want to preserve Leweston's identity and ethos there will be investment in infrastructure, people and provision. The school's current five year strategic plan comes to an end in 2025 and the senior leadership will be working with Concept Education to develop a new vision for the next five years. This will be shared with parents on completion.

Amongst the plans to be considered are investment in academic, boarding and sports facilities and the Sixth Form, as well as improving staff development. The strong focus on pastoral care remains central to delivering an outstanding all-round education and the expertise and resources Concept Education bring will help to further improve our provision.

Innovation - our schools will continually challenge themselves to improve whether educationally, pastorally or operationally.



Will this ensure Leweston's future?

Unlike other schools in the area Leweston has not seen a significant drop in pupil numbers and enquiry levels are strong both in the immediate and long term. Whilst Concept Education is not a charity its motivation, first and foremost, is delivering excellent all-round schooling. Concept Education believes that the potential loss of Catholic independent schools in the UK would have a devastating impact on the formation of the leaders of tomorrow and is working to preserve the history, and potential, of these outstanding educators. The group will be looking to put a long term strategy in place which invests in Leweston and allows it to realise its potential.

Accessibility - we make the commitment that our schools will be as accessible as possible because our education is a force for good.

We expect Leweston's competitive position within the local educational landscape to continue to improve because of our partnership with Concept Education and we will not be looking to change the model of the school. Concept Education are committed to providing an excellent independent education at affordable cost and they want the school to thrive in the local community.



Will this make the school 'more Catholic'?

Leweston has always welcomed families of all faiths and none and this will not change. The school's ethos is already based in Catholic social teaching and the importance of community, courtesy, respect and affection, as well as continued service to others is central to what we believe in. Concept Education's CEO/Founder, Hugh Dickinson, and other members of the team are Catholic. Hugh was educated at Catholic schools and is a former governor at Downside School but the leadership of the group represent a variety of faiths and inclusivity remains at the heart of what we do.

Spirituality - as a Catholic Schools Group we believe in Christian values and in developing a firm moral compass in the pupils in our schools.





LEWESTON
SHERBORNE

Leweston School
Sherborne
Dorset DT9 6EN

+44 1963 210691
admin@leweston.dorset.sch.uk
www.leweston.co.uk

