

# Central Bedfordshire Press Release

*For Immediate Release*

PR 8812

01 October 2020

## **School trust approved for new Houghton Regis secondary**

The Regional Schools Commissioner has approved Advantage Schools as the trust that will run the new secondary school to be built on the Kingsland campus in Houghton Regis.

After a strong round of applications, the Multi-Academy Trust were Central Bedfordshire Council's preferred choice of provider for when the new school opens in September 2022, for 900 pupils aged 11-16 and 220 sixth-form students aged 16-18.

Advantage Schools currently operates two free schools in Bedfordshire – Bedford Free School, a secondary school which opened in Bedford in September 2012, and Elstow School, a primary school in Elstow, which was a founding member of Advantage Schools when it joined with Bedford Free School in April 2017.

Cllr Sue Clark, Central Bedfordshire Council Executive Member for Families, Education and Children, said: "We are delighted that the Regional Schools Commissioner approved our recommendation for Advantage Schools to run the new secondary school in Houghton Regis.

"This is an exciting time as we continue working to deliver an excellent new and modern school for the children of Houghton Regis, and we look forward to working with Advantage Schools to help young people in the area get the most out of their education."

Stuart Lock, CEO of Advantage Schools, said: "We are delighted to have been chosen to run this new school in Houghton Regis. During the process, we heard many families tell us they were eager for an excellent new local school, and that is what we are determined to deliver.

“Our outstanding-rated secondary free school in Bedford provides a model for high expectations of conduct and achievement for all pupils. That is what the our Executive Team and the Advantage Schools Trustees are determined to deliver. We can’t wait to get started.”

The Council is currently conducting a planning consultation for the new secondary school, having submitted a planning application last week, while Advantage Schools will consult residents about the school’s governance before it opens in 2022.

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**For further information please contact: James Cunliffe, Communications Officer on 0300 300 5301**

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