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Powerful schools' partnership is strengthened



Hillside and Verwood First schools join Wimborne Academy Trust's family of first and middle schools. Both Hillside and Verwood feed into Emmanuel CE Middle School and pupils from all three schools are pictured with Trust CEO Liz West, Verwood headteacher Adam Parsons, Emmanuel executive headteacher Ron Jenkinson and Hillside headteacher Jeremy Harrison.

Two Verwood schools have joined Wimborne Academy Trust (WAT), making it one of the biggest multi-academy trusts in Dorset.

In what has been described as a 'powerful partnership of schools' the additions of Verwood and Hillside first schools has seen the Trust grow to 11 schools.

It also means three of Verwood's four first and middle schools, including Verwood Nursery, are now WAT members after Emmanuel CE Middle School joined the Trust last year.

CEO of Wimborne Academy Trust, Liz West, said: "We are absolutely delighted to welcome Verwood and Hillside first schools to our Trust.

"The vision and ethos of both schools fit very much with ours – we're based in the local community, serving the local community.

“Having two excellent schools join us really strengthens our team and we have in place a powerful partnership of schools all working together to provide the best possible education for our children.”

With the addition of Verwood and Hillside, WAT now has more than 3,300 pupils and 508 staff.

In addition to the three Verwood schools, the Trust is also home to Allenbourn Middle and St Michael’s CE Middle schools in Wimborne, Lockyer’s Middle School in Corfe Mullen, Merley First School, St John’s CE, Colehill, and Hayeswood first schools in Wimborne and Witchampton CE First School.

Hillside First School headteacher, Jeremy Harrison, said: “We’ve just celebrated our 50th anniversary and with such a milestone it’s not just about looking back but also looking forward.

“To ensure Hillside is here for another 50 years we wanted to join a bigger multi-academy trust and WAT, being local and successful, was the perfect fit.

“We look forward to accessing the excellent pool of talent that Wimborne Academy Trust offers.”

Adam Parsons, headteacher at Verwood First, added: “We have been really impressed with the excellent work WAT has done at our close neighbours Emmanuel CE Middle School and now we’re excited to be part of that same team.

“Almost all of our pupils and Hillside’s pupils go on to Emmanuel and our already close ties with the middle school will be further strengthened.

“This is not only about providing the best possible education for our present children but also the future children of Verwood.”

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Note to editors: For more information please contact Rachel Read, account director at Deep South Media, on 01202 534487.