Surbiton Education Health Trust

Lime Tree Primary is a Foundation school (sometimes known as a Trust school).

In 2010 Kingston Council identified the need for a new school in the Surbiton area. Through joint working, NHS Kingston and the Local Authority (LA) successfully designed and developed the site of the old Surbiton Hospital, sharing costs and opportunities at a time of financial constraint. The proposals for the site, including the Health Centre and the lease of land to the LA for a school, received approval from NHS London, the strategic health authority in December 2010.

At that time, it was not possible for an LA to open a new school, due to government policy. Therefore, the LA in partnership with NHS Kingston, Your Healthcare and South West London Health Partnerships made a bid to be the providers of the new school. This collaborative partnership was called the Surbiton Education Health Trust. Providing the new school was a competitive process. There were initially two other providers who put in bids, although one later dropped out. There was a public meeting and both the providers, with live bids, were interviewed by the Schools’ Adjudicator. The Surbiton Education Health Trust was confirmed as successful in August 2011. The Trust then set about appointing a governing body, a Headteacher and preparing to open the new school.

As noted above, the school is built on land leased from NHS Kingston, for 125 years. The lease transferred from NHS Kingston to the Surbiton Education Health Trust in 2012.

The vision of the Trust is that – ‘Education is the key to a long, happy and healthy life. The more educated you are, the healthier you are, and the healthier you are, the easier it is for you to successfully access education.’ The Trust intends for Lime Tree Primary school to be at the heart of its local community, promoting sustainability, wellbeing, lifelong learning and an active life style supported by 21st century facilities and technology.

The first Headteacher was recruited and appointed from January 2012. The Deputy Head started in May 2012 and appointments were made for the other staff. The school building was completed in August 2012 and the school opened with 90 Reception aged children and 52 Nursery aged children in September 2012.

The regulations for Trusts, stipulate that the LA can only have 20% of representation on the Trust board and hence of any votes. The other partners make up 80%. Quite early on in the partnership the NHS was re-structured and NHS Kingston ceased to exist (2012). A few years into the partnership South West London Health Partnerships withdrew (2014). The remaining partners therefore approached a number of organisations with a similar vision. The YMCA joined in October 2014. Alongside these changes Achieving for Children was set up to provide children’s services for Kingston and Richmond councils (April 2014). These amendments to the Trust resulted in changes to the voting rights:
- 10% Royal Borough of Kingston (RBK)
- 10% Achieving for Children (AfC)
- 40% Your Healthcare
- 40% YMCA (London South West)

The Trust meets 2 or 3 times per year. The Associate Director for School Standards and Performance is the Chair. She represents both RBK and AfC. Your Healthcare provide legal advice to the Trust. The Trust invites the Headteacher of the school and from 2019, the Chair of Governors to meetings. These two representatives are observers. Further details of the Trust can be found at https://beta.companieshouse.gov.uk/company/08187058

The Trust is responsible for nominating 6 Trust governors. The governing body is made up of 11 governors, so these Trust governors hold the majority. Governors are responsible for the strategic oversight of the school. Other items that are typically discussed at Trust meetings include budget, accommodation, staffing and children’s outcomes.