

PANGBOURNE

Independent, co-educational day and boarding school, ages 11-18



Mill Hill  
EDUCATION GROUP



# PANGBOURNE COLLEGE CHARITABLE MERGER WITH MILL HILL EDUCATION GROUP

## INFORMATION BOOKLET

ACADEMIC RIGOUR | EXPLORATION | COMMUNITY | LEADERSHIP

# BRAVELY AND FAITHFULLY INTO THE FUTURE

Pangbourne College is joining one of the largest charitable groups of schools in the country, placing Pangbourne at the heart of educational excellence in the South East.

Pangbourne College has a long and proud history, and it has played a central role in shaping the lives of young people for nearly 110 years. Our strategic intent has long been to position Pangbourne amongst the leading independent schools in the country, securing its future for centuries to come.

As such, we are delighted to announce that Pangbourne is joining Mill Hill Education Group in a charitable merger.

This booklet will explain why this decision has been made by the Pangbourne Governors, and the benefits this merger will bring to our pupils and staff. It will explain how this decision places Pangbourne in an even stronger position to thrive in the future, to continue to be a beacon in the independent school landscape and to stay true to its founding principles.



**Oliver Knight**  
Head  
Pangbourne College



**Patrick Roberts**  
Chair of Governors  
Pangbourne College



**Antony Spencer**  
CEO  
Mill Hill Education Group



## WHAT IS HAPPENING?

The independent sector is changing rapidly and many schools are now recognising the strength that comes from being one of many, rather than remaining in splendid isolation.

As the sector changes, we want to be on the front foot, and make strategic decisions from a position of strength. The College occupies a strong position in the wider market, and as such the Governors were able to run an extensive process to find the best merger partner. The Governors undertook a long and detailed evaluation which was supported by insights from the 2025 research with parents, alumni, staff and students and helped shape the Governors' understanding of the College's future needs. Following this, the Governors concluded that Mill Hill Education Group was the best fit for Pangbourne.

Mill Hill Education Group's ambition is to create a hub, with Pangbourne playing a central role in our region, to drive forward educational excellence and partner with like-minded prep and senior schools. Joining Mill Hill Education Group will enable Pangbourne to build on each of the Four Pillars of Academic Rigour, Exploration, Community and Leadership so central to our success.

Both Pangbourne College and Mill Hill Education Group are long-established educational charities that exist solely to serve pupils and their families. There is a genuine synergy between the two organisations; together, they are even better placed to meet their shared objectives. This is not a commercial sale or profit-driven transaction. It is a values-led charitable merger designed to enhance education, opportunity and stability for the long term across the Group.



# HOW WILL THIS MERGER BENEFIT OUR STUDENTS?

## Academic Rigour

Being part of a group of schools will bring a number of positive benefits to the academic life of the College.

- Great teachers secure great outcomes. By being part of a group, teachers at Pangbourne will benefit from the ability to collaborate, attend world-class training and share expertise with other schools; thus enhancing their career progression. This will directly benefit our students who will progress faster with expert instruction.
- Students will benefit from access to Oxbridge programmes, support for Medical and Dentistry applications, American University scholarships, Degree Apprenticeships and a wider careers programme. This means that students will have access to a broad and diverse range of opportunities and inputs that would be hard to provide in a stand-alone school.
- The Head and Senior Leadership Team will continue to lead on the choice of curriculum and decisions around the recruitment of staff and students. The deliberately broad intake we curate at the College will remain unchanged.

## Exploration

Joining Mill Hill Education Group will ensure that Pangbourne's adventure programme is enhanced.

- Pangbourne's distinctive adventure and character development programmes are unique within the Group. We will be able to play a leading role in developing programmes and supporting other schools, within and outside the Group. This will both enhance the offer for Pangbourne students and open up the campus to more feeder schools, thus expanding the pipeline of students wanting to experience a Pangbourne education.
- Pangbourne's adventure infrastructure will be able to be fully utilised, helping to accelerate non-fee income which in turn will be fed back into the resources at the College. The aim is for this to enable Pangbourne to become the centre of excellence for outdoor education and character development in the South East.
- Our sports offer and sport development will be enhanced through having access to additional expertise across a wide range of sports. It will also allow for more opportunities for competition and collaboration within the Group.

## Community

Community is the very essence of College life. Joining Mill Hill Education Group safeguards this for the future.

- The uniqueness and beauty of a Pangbourne education will remain unchanged. Our distinctive uniform, our much loved ceremonial traditions and Parade infrastructure will all continue to ensure we preserve the essence of Pangbourne we all hold dear for future generations of Pangbournians.
- Being part of a group of schools will enable us to continue to know each individual whilst providing enhanced opportunities for our students to engage with a larger student population, better preparing them for life in the modern world.
- Joining Mill Hill Education Group will enable us to secure efficiencies across multiple areas, enabling the College to continue to offer strong value for money and keep fees as competitive as possible.

## Leadership

A Pangbourne education is synonymous with leadership.

- Our unique model of student leadership will remain unchanged. The merger will enable Pangbournians to work with students from other schools, sharing ideas and building networks.
- Joining a larger group of schools will enable Pangbourne's voice to be amplified, providing a larger platform from which to shout about all of the amazing things our young people do and attract more families to the College. This supports our vision to be thought-leaders in the sector and to help shape the model of independent education more widely.
- The scale of Mill Hill Education Group will enable us to retain the very best staff in the country, providing career opportunities and enhanced professional development.

## LOCAL COLLABORATION

Mill Hill Education Group operates a highly devolved model of decision-making, recognising that school leaders are strategically best placed to make decisions for their own communities.

There is a focus upon schools working collaboratively and consequently, Mill Hill Education Group is developing local networks of schools for mutual support. With Heathfield School in Ascot already in the group and St Gabriel's in Newbury joining at the same time as Pangbourne, there will be a strong regional cluster. These networks will facilitate staff training, networking events and provide opportunities for some shared pupil activities. There will also be opportunities to collaborate with other schools within the group who are located further afield.



“ This is an exciting and significant moment in the history of Pangbourne College. We are proud of the school we are today, the strength of our community and the exceptional opportunities we provide for our pupils. Joining Mill Hill Education Group is not about changing who we are; it is about building on our strengths and creating even more opportunities for our pupils and staff. What attracted us to Mill Hill Education Group was its deep understanding that every school is unique. Pangbourne will remain proudly Pangbourne – with the same values, traditions, adventurous spirit, leadership culture and close-knit community that make this such a special place. This charitable merger allows us to preserve everything that is distinctive about the College while benefiting from the expertise, collaboration and opportunities that come from being part of a wider educational family. We will continue to place our pupils at the heart of every decision we make, while ensuring that each individual is known, valued and supported to fulfil their potential.”



**Oliver Knight**  
Head  
Pangbourne College



**Patrick Roberts**  
Chair of Governors  
Pangbourne College

“ The Governors approached this decision from a position of confidence and ambition for the future. Pangbourne is a successful and highly regarded school and we were fortunate to have the time and opportunity to undertake a detailed process to identify the right long-term partner. Throughout that process, our focus remained firmly on finding an organisation that shared our values, respected our heritage and could help us realise our ambitions for the future. Pangbourne was seeking a like-minded partner and we are delighted to have found that charitable partner in Mill Hill Education Group.”

“ Pangbourne College has a distinctive educational philosophy, an outstanding reputation and a strong sense of purpose. Its commitment to developing young people through Academic Rigour, Exploration, Community and Leadership aligns closely with our own educational values. We are delighted to welcome Pangbourne into the Mill Hill Education Group family. Our role is not to change what makes Pangbourne special, but to support and strengthen it. By working together, we can create even greater opportunities for pupils and staff while ensuring the College continues to flourish as a leading independent school.”



**Antony Spencer**  
CEO  
Mill Hill Education Group

# ABOUT MILL HILL EDUCATION GROUP

A charitable collection of independent schools. Its aims of instilling values and inspiring minds has been a key focus since the founding of Mill Hill School in 1807.

All schools share an educational philosophy around developing thoughtful and responsible pupils with a global outlook. School life combines academic rigour with a breadth of opportunities to develop young people able to flourish in an ever-changing world.

## Discover our Schools

### Mill Hill Schools



**Grimsdell, Mill Hill Pre-Prep**  
A day school for pupils aged 3 - 7.



**Belmont, Mill Hill Prep**  
A day school for pupils aged 7 - 13.



**Mill Hill School**  
A day and boarding school for pupils aged 13 - 18.



**Mill Hill International**  
A boarding and day school for pupils aged 13 - 18.



**Mill Hill International School Thailand**  
A day Pre-Prep & Prep school for pupils aged 3 - 10. Extending to senior over time. Opened September 2025.



**1729 Maths School at Mill Hill**  
UK's first specialist maths school for pupils aged 11-18. Opening September 2026.

### Cobham Hall



**Cobham Hall**  
A boarding and day school for pupils aged 11 - 18, located in Kent. Joined the Group in 2021.

### HERTFORD PREP



**Hertford Prep**  
A day school for pupils aged 3 - 11. Located in Hertford, Hertfordshire. Joined the Group in 2023.

### Heathfield School Ascot



**Heathfield School**  
A day and boarding school for pupils aged 11-18. Located in Ascot, Berkshire. Joined the Group in 2025.

### LYONSDOWN SCHOOL



**Lyonsdown School**  
A day school for girls, aged 3 - 11, located in New Barnet, London. Joined the Group in 2022.

### Kingshott



**Kingshott**  
A day school for pupils aged 3 - 16. Located on the outskirts of Hitchin, Hertfordshire. Joined the Group in 2024.

### Westbrook Hay



**Westbrook Hay**  
A day school for pupils aged 3 - 16. Located near Hemel, Hertfordshire. Joined the Group in 2025.

### KEBLE PREP



**Keble Prep**  
A day school for pupils aged 3 - 13, located in Winchmore Hill, London. Joined the Group in 2022.

### Abbot's Hill



**Abbot's Hill**  
A day school for pupils aged 3 - 16. Located near Hemel, Hertfordshire. Joined the Group in 2024.

### Framlingham COLLEGE



**Framlingham College**  
A day and boarding school for pupils aged 2 - 18. Located in the town of Framlingham. Joined the Group in 2026.

# HOW SCHOOLS WITHIN THE GROUP HAVE BENEFITED

Mill Hill Education Group currently consists of thirteen UK schools and one international school in Thailand.

It has grown from four UK schools in 2020, and now collectively educates about 4,200 pupils. The charity is likely to continue to grow in the coming years as it continues to merge with schools that share its educational ethos and charitable aims.

Within that overall ethos, the schools retain their individuality, and operate across a diverse range of settings, from pre-school nurseries to international boarding schools. This diversity makes Mill Hill Education Group as a whole a very stable charity. The accounts for the Mill Hill School Foundation charity are available via the Charities Commission [HERE](#).

One question may be: "Why is Mill Hill Education Group interested in Pangbourne?". The answer is rooted in the purpose of Mill Hill Education Group, about meeting our charitable aims to give a great education to the pupils in our care. We can do that better by working together. Collaboration is a powerful tool in education. There will be excellence in many parts of Pangbourne that we can share with other schools to help them, and vice versa. By being part of ensuring that Pangbourne continues to thrive, Mill Hill Education Group helps to achieve its own charitable objectives.



Here are a few examples from Mill Hill Education Group schools, where they benefited from being part of a wider group:

## 1729 Maths School

This will be the UK's first, dedicated, 11-18 Maths school, when it opens in September 2026. It will be based within Mill Hill School and Belmont, with generous financial assistance from a philanthropist, allowing needs-blind access based on ability. Mill Hill Education Group was chosen as the partner for this project due to the level of expertise it can offer collectively across teaching, facilities, marketing and boarding.

## Keble Prep

This was a traditional, all-boys prep school from Reception to Year 8 at the time of merger. Within Mill Hill Education Group, it introduced a Nursery and became co-educational, being supported by Group experts in Early Years education and curriculum adaptation for co-education. Pupil numbers grew by 50% within three years.

## Westbrook Hay

Only joined Mill Hill Education Group at the beginning of September 2025. It already had plans to expand its age range from a traditional prep school to include the GCSE years. It therefore needed additional facilities for specialist provision. Mill Hill Education Group experts took on the design and project management of this, resulting in the provision of new facilities on time, to a higher specification, and with a procurement saving of over £1.5 Million.



## HEAR FROM GROUP HEADS

“ I really appreciate being able to work with fellow Heads and colleagues. The Group schools are all unique, but we can learn from each other. I'm proud to be leading a successful school within the Group, and welcome the chance to work with new schools joining the Group.”



**Rittu Hall**  
Head  
Lyonsdown School



**Perran Gill**  
Head  
Keble Prep

“ We joined the Group four years ago, and the merger has been an unqualified success. Our pupil roll has increased by around 50% in that time, and we are now full. The school is happy, buoyant and thriving.”



**Sharon Schanschieff**  
Head  
Abbot's Hill

“ I was appointed as Head just before the merger, and as a new Head I've found the support to me and my colleagues has been invaluable. The school has really benefited from the stability from being in a larger group, and we are looking to the future with renewed optimism.”



# GOVERNANCE AND THE WIDER PANGBOURNIAN COMMUNITY

Pangbourne College is owned and run by a charity called Pangbourne College Limited (charity number 309096).

Mill Hill Education Group is similarly constituted as a charity, called The Mill Hill School Foundation. The two charities have very compatible aims, and this enables them to merge to create a larger charity that is even better able to meet those shared aims. This is a nil-cost transaction, and therefore very different from a corporate transaction where one business acquires another for a payment, usually involving additional debt.

Under a charitable merger, the assets and liabilities are gifted to the other charity that shares its charitable objectives, and then the existing charity is dissolved. The existing Governors (Trustees) therefore have no ongoing legal role with the combined charity. Mill Hill Education Group is overseen by unpaid Governors just like Pangbourne is, and Mill Hill Education Group Governors will take on the responsibility for overseeing Pangbourne. Alongside this, to provide as much continuity as possible, a group of existing Pangbourne Governors will meet with the CEO of Mill Hill Education Group after the charitable merger, in an Advisory Board capacity, to provide input and offer their experience, so this isn't lost in the merger. Whilst Mill Hill Education Group will govern the school, it is with an understanding that school Heads are best placed to make most decisions.

As such, it is important to note that fees will continue to be set as appropriate for the local community, according to local conditions. Bursaries and scholarships will continue to be honoured and offered. Staff will be offered new contracts with the Mill Hill Education Group on the same terms and conditions.

Pangbourne is rooted in the local community it draws its name from and will remain so, continuing the strong relationships that exist across the wider family of Pangbourne and the Pangbournian Community. Every leaver will continue to automatically become an Old Pangbournian and to engage with the College and one another, benefitting from the College's thriving alumni engagement programme as they do today. Pangbourne's philanthropic initiatives are a source of great pride and all philanthropic gifts will be ring-fenced to support Pangbourne College and its projects.

# NEXT STEPS

## When will the merger take effect?

A merger between two charitable school organisations is a well-established legal process, and many such partnerships have taken place across the sector in recent years.

The formal merger agreement between Pangbourne College and Mill Hill Education Group has now been signed and exchanged. Pangbourne will officially be part of the Mill Hill Education Group from the start of the new academic year in September 2026.

Pangbourne College's bank account details remain unchanged and will continue as normal until the merger formally takes effect. Families should therefore continue to pay fees in the usual way. As with any organisation, we encourage vigilance against potential fraud and advise parents to treat with caution any unexpected communication requesting changes to payment details. Pangbourne College will always communicate any genuine changes clearly and directly.





# PANGBOURNE

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