



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Why has the School decided to make these changes?

Moira House has recently been operating under difficult financial circumstances as a result of market pressures in the independent sector; the rising costs of running schools; increased market competition here and abroad; and the resulting increased difficulty for small and medium sized schools. This has inhibited the School's ability to adequately maintain, or improve, facilities which, in the very long term, could threaten the School's future.

To secure the future of the School the Governing Body approached Roedean because of its proven experience and long-standing commitment to high quality education of girls, as well as its knowledge of working in a similar market place. Roedean has similar values to Moira House. The approach was designed:

- to secure the most positive future for the girls of today and future generations and provide the School with a means to flourish; and
- to ensure longer term stability and growth for the School, rather than facing annual challenges.

By joining the Roedean Group of Schools, Moira House will have long-term security to enable the Governors to plan for the School's future and support the School in achieving its goals, whilst preserving its ethos and ensuring it thrives for generations to come.

Moira House will continue to have its own identity, Governing Body and remain at its current location. With Roedean's support, the Governing Body believe this structure will allow the best of both schools to be reflected in Moira House's future.

What are the benefits of the change?

Roedean and Moira House share a similar school ethos. By Joining the Roedean Group of Schools, Moira House will benefit from enhanced leadership and governance support; financial stability and investment.

Roedean's strategic oversight will drive longer term strategic development through the implementation of a Strategic Plan, which will be developed by the Governing Body. Consequently, Moira House will be strengthening its position as a school of choice for girls in the area and for boarders further afield.

Significant capital investment, year on year, will improve the learning and teaching environment as well as communal spaces and boarding facilities designed to ensure the School can flourish on its site in Eastbourne.

Moira House will retain responsibility for the running of the School through its own Governing Body, but there are a number of financial benefits that will arise and arising from economies of scale by joining the Roedean Group.

Is the decision due to the School being in financial difficulty?

Moira House has recently been operating at below capacity within a competitive market; generating future pupil growth is an essential part of the strategy for the School's successful long term future.



How is the investment in the School being funded?

The School has carried out detailed financial planning as part of the due diligence process and the financial implications have been carefully scrutinised alongside the educational case. Our obligation as responsible school leaders is to use the School's resources in the ways that have the most positive impact on educational outcomes for pupils. The strength of Roedean's position means that the School will be able to secure enhanced financial backing, which will enable the realisation of the strategic plans for the School, which focus on growth to secure a sustainable future.

Why was this news not shared sooner and why were parents not consulted?

The Governors of Moirahouse and the Council of Roedean, as the trustees of the charities, have taken this decision together following a lengthy period of assessment, analysis and due diligence, which has involved the support and advice from professional advisors. Moirahouse joining the Roedean Group of Schools had to be right for both parties. Now the period of due diligence is complete we are delighted to be able to share the news.

As you will appreciate, due to the sensitive nature of such discussions, it was not possible to share the news prior to the completion of this process. As we move forward, we will seek to involve parents and the wider community in the School's future plans.

What guarantees are there that this a permanent and reliable solution for the School?

Roedean is a long-standing, highly regarded and successful School, both nationally and internationally. Moirahouse has 142 years of operating a successful girls' school. This uniting of two long-standing and well-regarded institutions gives greater stability, opportunity and visibility which will help ensure long-term viability.

Investment in key staffing positions, infrastructure and estates will ensure Moirahouse will have the strongest opportunity to thrive under Roedean's strategic direction. The Strategic Plan will be designed to ensure that Moirahouse is financially stable and secure in its own right on its campus in Eastbourne.

Who will lead the School?

The Acting Principal, Elodie Vallantine, has done an excellent job in recent months in leading the School and we recognise the importance of her role in continuing to provide stability through this period of transition. She will take on the role of Head of School within the new leadership structure, working with an Executive Head.

Moirahouse Governors and Roedean's Council are committed to ensuring that the School has the strongest possible leadership and over the coming weeks we will evaluate what the School needs in the long term, considering the essence of the School and its future requirements.

The Headmaster of Roedean, Oliver Blond, will take on the role of Executive Head of the Roedean Group of Schools and will provide leadership support and oversee the strategic direction of the School's development as defined by Moirahouse's Trustees and Roedean's Council.

Moirahouse will continue to operate as the existing charity, keeping its current charity and company registration number, and maintain its own Board of Governors with Roedean oversight.



It is recognised that the current Board of Governors have worked exceptionally hard to ensure the school and pupils achieved their best in very challenging circumstances, and the new Board will include representatives from both Moira House and Roedean meaning that a number of existing Trustees will be retiring. The retiring Trustees have made an enormous contribution to the School and given a substantial amount of time, and the School would like to thank them all for their service.

The new Board will continue to be responsible for the governance and supervision of the School, its committees and the management of the relationship with Roedean. They will ensure the effective oversight of all aspects of the leadership, management and operation of the School and deliver its statutory duties to a high standard.

It is important that the Board has a proper mix of skills experience, and below is the list of Governors and it is anticipated that this will be added to over the coming months.

Will Moira House School's aims, ethos and values change?

Our aim is to strengthen Moira House's reputation as a provider of high quality education for girls in the area, building on the School's much-loved ethos and values and ensuring the School continues to thrive for generations to come. There will be ways in which both schools, through sharing ideas and approaches, adapt and develop.

Roedean's aim is to provide a high quality, academically focused, holistic education for girls from the Sussex area, and beyond, on the Eastbourne site.

How will you safeguard the School's traditions?

Traditions are important and we will respect the history of the School. However, as the School grows and develops, new traditions will also evolve to mark this next chapter in its history.

Will the School be reliant on support from Roedean?

It is a key part of the strategic vision for the School, that a strong leadership team is established to take Moira House forward. Strategic oversight will be provided by the Roedean Group Executive Head, Oliver Blond, in accordance with the constitution of the new local Governing Body. The synergies and efficiencies of being part of a group are an important part of the creation of the Roedean Group of Schools.

What will Moira House's position be in the local market?

From its very foundation, Moira House was a progressive School with a bold vision. For over 142 years the School has provided a caring and high achieving environment, where every girl is known, cherished and challenged. Roedean shares these values and indeed a similar founding ethos, and together we will be seeking to make Moira House a school of choice for even more parents in the Eastbourne area. We will seek to ensure that the school continues to be a place where every pupil is treated as an individual and inspired to aim high and exceed expectations.



Is the School merging with Roedean School?

No, the School is joining the Roedean Group of Schools and will continue to have its own local Governing body with Roedean oversight; however, across the Group we will seek to identify opportunities to work together to optimise the benefits for pupils and staff alike.

Roedean's Council supports the move and is very positive about the mutual benefits to be gained from being part of the same schools' family. Roedean wishes to build upon the excellent provision at Moira House, which was recognised as such in the recent inspection, and to support its growth as a school of choice in Eastbourne.

Will the curriculum change?

We acknowledge the high quality of the provision across a range of areas, as recognised in the 2017 inspection, and will take time to evaluate the current curriculum to ensure it provides pupils with the best opportunities to develop a love of learning and subject knowledge that will prepare them for the next stage of their education, whatever their age.

In the short-term, the wider Senior Leadership Team will review, with Roedean's Senior Team, ways in which those girls studying for GCSE/iGCSE or A-Levels can be supported and are able to benefit from collaboration and group work with fellow pupils.

Will these changes affect the School's academic standards?

Academic rigour is an important feature of the vision for the School and in line with the founding principles of educating the 'whole girl', we will support every girl to ensure they are able to achieve the very best results of which they are capable.

Will these changes affect the School's pastoral standards?

Pastoral care has always been a great strength of the School and was recognised as such in the most recent inspection report. We will continue to nurture and challenge in the same way. Maintaining the happy, caring, family feel is very important to us.

Will new facilities be developed at Moira House School?

One of the benefits of joining the Roedean Group of School will be access to expertise to help expand the long-term plan for investment. Priorities for investment will focus on the learning and teaching spaces as well as boarding houses.

How many pupils will there be in the School in the future?

A central aim of the School's Strategic Plan will be to grow to capacity (based on current facilities, capacity is in the region of 400 pupils). It is important that the School remains small enough to nurture and support each and every individual, but it is critical that it is large enough to provide optimum numbers in each year group and the much-needed investment in infrastructure, resources and staff.

Will class sizes change?

Growth and investment aims to ensure that every year group has an appropriate number of pupils to facilitate optimum learning and teaching.



Will this have an impact on fees?

Fees, bursary and scholarship arrangements will continue as previously published for 2017/18 academic year.

The Governing body is committed to offering value for money in providing high quality education and will review future fees and bursary and scholarship policies to ensure that Moira House's position as an affordable, high quality school is strengthened.

How will pupils be affected by this change?

Pupils will continue to be taught by the current staff at Moira House and in the classes and year groups with which they are familiar.

Over the coming years, we will be investing in the spaces in which pupils learn, live and play so that they are able to enjoy up to date and vibrant facilities.

We plan to increase the number of girls at Moira House so that pupils are able to benefit from the opportunities that a larger community affords, for example larger music ensembles, expanded subject choices for senior pupils.

We will include pupils in our plans for the future and look forward to welcoming them to the wider community of the Roedean Group.

What about boarders, what will the change mean for them?

Roedean has a strong history of excellent boarding provision and the two schools will seek to share best practice. Investment in facilities at Moira House will ensure boarders are able to benefit from improved surroundings.

How will staff be affected?

All staff positions are secure based on the current model. Staff will benefit from the investment in the School as well as the increased opportunities and extended training and development.

How will Roedean be affected by the change?

Roedean School will continue to work to its own strategic vision and school development plan, as part of the wider group of schools.

Roedean School looks forward to working with staff and pupils at Moira House and sharing in the increased opportunities and extended training and development. Together the Roedean Group of Schools will provide an academically strong provision across a wider geographical area for the benefit of a greater number of pupils in the region.

Will the uniform change?

It is acknowledged that the uniform for younger pupils has recently changed and is continuing to evolve and we will continue to talk to parents and girls about this to hear their views.

How can parents provide input?

Before planned changes are introduced, parents will be invited to provide input. Although parents will not be invited to the Governing Body, there will be structures to involve parents and ensure excellent communications throughout the school.



About Roedean Group of Schools

Roedean is one of the UK's most successful and famous independent schools. Enjoying an iconic location overlooking the English Channel, it sits within a national park and close to the thriving and cosmopolitan city of Brighton & Hove. Roedean has been providing a high quality and often ground-breaking education for girls for over 130 years.

In 2017, the Council of Roedean School formed the Roedean Group of Schools to explore ways to develop Roedean's educational model beyond the limits of Roedean School in order to enable more pupils to benefit from Roedean's educational vision and leadership.

Roedean's educational model is to offer a genuinely holistic academic education which enables pupils to enjoy their education, develop their own interests and discover their academic passions. A Roedean education is characterised by a commitment to academic excellence, high quality pastoral support and an exceptional range of opportunities beyond the curriculum, all within a friendly and supportive atmosphere.

In order to enable other schools and educational establishments to flourish and to support their pupils' development, the Roedean Group provides a flexible partnership model which provides strategic leadership and expertise, staff training and mentoring, and investment to schools that share a commitment to Roedean's educational vision.

Schools within the Roedean Group of Schools enjoy the benefits of being part of a larger and supportive family, while maintaining their own unique heritage, staffing and leadership structures. The Roedean Group of Schools seeks to enable its partner schools to develop, strengthen and diversify in accordance with a school development plan that meets the aims and objectives of the Group's overarching development plan.

Which Schools are part of this Group?

Roedean School, Moira House School, in Eastbourne and Deepdene School in Hove are the current schools in the group. Moira House is a full member of the Group and Deepdene is a partner school.

As a pupil, who can I talk to about the changes or any concerns I may have?

You can speak to your Personal tutor, Form Teacher, Head of Section, Housemistress or the Senior Leadership Team.

As a current parent, how can I find out more and to whom can I talk about the changes?

As always, the Head of School will be happy to answer any questions you may have. She can be reached on 01323 644144 or by email head@moirahouse.co.uk .

We are also hosting a special event for parents on Wednesday 6 September at 7:30pm in Swann Hall, to give you the opportunity to ask any questions straight away. For parents not able to attend, a follow up meeting will take place on Tuesday 12 September at 7:30pm.

As a prospective parent who can I talk to and when can I visit?

Mrs Elaine Allen, Registrar, is available to answer any questions on 01323 644144. Our staff will also be available on our Open Day on Saturday 30 September.



Moirahouse

Girls School

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As a member of staff who can I talk to about this?

Line managers and members of the Senior Leadership Team will be available to answer any questions.

As an old girl how can I find out more?

Mrs Sue Graham, Head of Communications and Alumnae, can answer any questions. Please call her on 01323 644144.