



At Goughs, one of Wiltshire’s leading law firms, we place great value on establishing genuine working relationships with our clients.

We have worked closely with Hardenhuish School, Chippenham since 1997 and have recently advised the school on their conversion to Academy status.

The conversion began in February 2008 when an Ofsted report concluded that the school was “outstanding”. Due to its exceptional rating Hardenhuish then became eligible to convert to an Academy.



After consultation with the school we suggested the following steps should be taken to successfully manage the process of becoming an Academy:

- **Begin talks with the Department for Education (DfE), the Secretary of State, the Local Authority, the school’s governing body, all staff and relevant Trade Unions**
- **Create a new company for the school, a company limited by guarantee. In principle this type of company has the status of an exempt charity**
- **We arranged all the paperwork and negotiated with the DfE in relation to acquiring a funding agreement for the school**
- **We consulted with both Hardenhuish and the Local Authority advising on all aspects of employment, staff transfers and crucially, the asset transfer agreement**

Being an Academy, Hardenhuish School can now decide where it buys the services it needs. Wherever possible the school aims to source services locally. The appointment of local law firm Goughs clearly demonstrates their commitment to this goal.

“We have received excellent service from Goughs Solicitors, who have provided sage advice and the most prompt delivery of all the legal aspects of becoming an academy. They have totally justified our decision to stay local, despite being courted by many top London firms.”

Jan Hatherell, Headteacher of Hardenhuish School

For an informal discussion on the practical and legal implications of applying for Academy status, without obligation, please contact Gabby Corp or Kevin Basnett on 01249 812086 or email academies@goughs.co.uk

Achieving Academy Status

Points to consider:

- Begin early consultation with all groups involved in the running of your school.
- Create a company limited by guarantee
- Obtain the funding agreement. The legal basis for opening the Academy.
- Agree an asset and/or property transfer agreement with Local Authorities / landowners.
- Consider the impact Academy status will have on all aspects of staff employment.

About Goughs

- One of Wiltshire’s leading law firms
- Proven experience and extensive expertise
- Excellent local reputation
- Services tailored to meet individual needs
- Local firm making personal contact easier
- Six offices throughout Wiltshire