

4th October 2021

Our Ref: SDG/VP/lt Parent

Dear Parents and Guardians

Possible Merger of TrustEd Schools' Partnership and Central Shropshire Academies Trust

We are writing to inform you that the Trustees of TrustEd Schools' Partnership, are exploring the possible merger between ourselves and another Multi Academy Trust, the Central Shropshire Academies Trust (CSAT). CSAT operates three very strong schools: Belvedere School, Mary Webb School and Meole Brace School. Belvedere is a medium sized secondary school in Shrewsbury, with an Outstanding Ofsted rating. Mary Webb is a small secondary school with a Good Ofsted rating and it is situated in Pontesbury, close to Church Stretton. Meole Brace is a larger secondary School in Shrewsbury with a Good Ofsted rating. This means that the possible amalgamation would lead to a family of four primary schools and five secondaries, all within south and east Shropshire, including church and non-faith schools.

There are a number of reasons why this merger is being considered. First and foremost, we believe that the potential merger would present us with an opportunity to further improve the quality of education for learners in both Trusts. This is the most important reason to consider such a change, and we feel a merger would provide many opportunities to benefit the children in our schools. We see many and varied benefits for our learners through this amalgamation, including joint sports and arts ventures and joint enrichment and residential opportunities. We are confident that the vision and values of both Trusts are compatible and complementary; most importantly, both Trusts are committed to putting the interests of pupils first. By combining our two central MAT teams to build a single, larger team, our capacity for supporting school improvement would be greatly increased. There would also be a larger family of schools, so there would be greater opportunities for staff development, for school-to-school support, and for sharing of good practice. This would lead to further improvements in teaching and learning, along with more opportunities for extra-curricular collaboration involving students from a larger MAT community.

In addition to the direct education benefits for the children in our schools, the potential development would form a Trust of sufficient size that it would receive considerable capital funding without having to submit bids, enabling us to improve the learning and working environments for our young learners and staff across all schools.

It is very important to stress that both of our Trusts are in good financial health and there is no need, nor indeed any plan, to make cost savings from the potential merger. The intention would be to build a stronger Trust, not to reduce costs. As a result, no staffing reductions are proposed or expected as a result of this possible development. Rather, we would hope for our staff to benefit significantly from the greater opportunities for collaboration and CPD that a new larger Trust would offer.

If this development goes ahead, a new Trust Board will be formed with Trustees joining from both TrustEd and CSAT. Our commitment to local governance would be maintained and we would continue to work with strong Local Governing Bodies in all of our schools.

At this stage the two Trusts are exploring the merger. This will involve a comprehensive Due Diligence process where each Trust will consider a range of information on the other Trust and its schools. A decision to proceed will only be taken if it is the best interests of the students and schools in our Trust.

Parents and guardians are invited to be part of the consultation through writing their response. You can send this to us at consultation@trusted-schools.com. Our period of consultation will close on Friday 5th November 2021. We very much look forward to receiving your view, questions, or comments if you would like to contribute.

Yours faithfully



Sarah Godden
CEO



Vince Pizzoni
Chair of Trustees

