

Boudica Schools Trust and the Yare Education Trust

Stakeholder Consultation

Dear Stakeholder

Over a period of several months, the Boards of Trustees of Boudica Schools Trust (BST) and the Yare Education Trust (YET) have been exploring options for working together. The catalyst for this was our shared desire to do everything within our power to improve the educational experience and outcomes for our pupils.

There were a number of reasons why it made sense for BST and YET to work with each other, including:

- Our vision and values were already very similar;
- Our senior staff were already doing some joint work;
- All of our schools are located in Norwich and North East Norfolk; and
- More recently, we have been sharing a Chief Executive Officer.

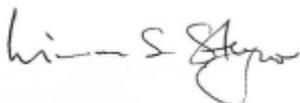
One of the options that the Trustees have been considering is bringing the two Trusts together formally to create a single, new Trust. We believe there would be significant benefits for pupils and staff in creating a single, new Trust including:

- Schools will be even better connected and will be able to access resources from within the Trust more easily with children benefiting from the possibilities this allows;
- Greater depth of educational offer with more subject specialists;
- Wider and even greater support in providing the best learning environment for the collective Trusts schools;
- Expanded professional networks for staff;
- Improved career opportunities and professional development for staff; and
- Greater flexibility with our resources to meet future challenges.

The Boards of Trustees are now undertaking a detailed review of all of the key information required to make a fully informed decision and as part of that, we would be interested to hear your views on this proposal. To give you some additional context, we have attached a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), which we hope will be useful. Please send your comments to consultation@bschoolstrust.co.uk

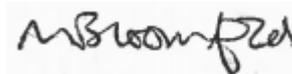
The consultation will run for four weeks from 12/7/2021 to 9/8/2021. However, as we need to take time to fully consider all of the information we gather during the detailed review, we do not envisage being able to make a final decision on whether or not to proceed with forming a single new Trust before September 2021.

Dr Linda Steynor



Chair of Trustees – Yare Education Trust

Neil Bloomfield



Chair of Trustees – Boudica Schools Trust

Boudica Schools Trust (BST) & Yare Education Trust (YET)

Consultation FAQs

Why would we want to create a single new Trust?

As a larger single Trust, the scale and flexibility of our combined resources would enable us to:

- Offer even better educational experiences and outcomes for our pupils;
- Ensure we recruit and retain the highest quality of staff by offering more and better training and career opportunities for staff; and
- Use resources more flexibly and effectively.

Across the Academy sector nationally and locally, Trusts are growing and expanding. Such collaborations may impact on our future and we believe we must explore all options moving forward. A voluntary, proactive decision to take ownership of our growth and future strategic direction now, offers both BST and YET a strong degree of protection locally from other academy chains

Why aren't we just going ahead with it then?

Although we have already established that there are very strong educational reasons for creating a single new Trust, it's important that we take time to fully understand the strengths and challenges of each Trust. We may discover through this process that some of our ways of working are incompatible.

Would creating the new Trust cost money?

There would be some unavoidable costs e.g. the legal costs. However, all costs would be kept to a minimum and where we can, we would seek grant funding to cover those costs. We would make savings in the longer term and would see any one-off costs associated with creating the new Trust as being a worthwhile investment to unlock future benefits and savings.

Who has a say in the decision?

The decision about whether or not the Trusts should come together to create a single new Trust, rests with the two Boards of Trustees.

However, as part of the process of gathering information to inform that decision, our stakeholder consultation will enable parents, community members and other interested parties to make comments on the proposals.

Ultimately, the final decision on whether the proposal goes ahead rests with the Regional Schools Commissioner for East of England and North East London and the Headteacher Board for that area, who would consider the strength of the full business case proposal including the benefits to the education of the children and young people in our schools.

What would be the name of the new Trust?

We think it is too early to look at decisions like that, given that we haven't committed to creating a new Trust yet. If we do decide to go ahead, it is possible that the new Trust would have a new name, but other considerations would be taken into account by the new Board.

When would we know the outcome?

There is not a definitive date by which we would know the outcome. However, it is expected that all information gathering and analysis will be completed across the summer, so we would hope that the Boards of both Trusts would be in a position to decide on whether or not to progress by September 2021. If they do decide to go forward with the proposal, then a submission could go to the Regional Schools Commissioner and Headteacher Board for approval as early as October 2021. If approval is received we would look to complete the process of creating the new Trust for 1st January 2022.

Would there be any changes to the way schools work?

There are no plans to change the way any of our schools work. All are unique and it is essential that we maintain their individuality, respect where they are on the school improvement continuum and provide the bespoke support they need.

Would there be changes to uniforms, badges and logos?

There are no plans to change uniforms. Any decisions about the branding of the new Trust would be taken by the new Trustee Board. However, we would look for that to happen over time.

Would there be job losses affecting Trust staff?

We do not envisage any job losses as a result of the merger. A key benefit of the merger is the additional capacity it would bring, so reducing capacity through job losses would be counter-productive.

There would of course only be one CEO post rather than two but as we are temporarily sharing a CEO, this would not mean anyone losing their job. However, it does mean we would be able to reduce the costs of having two CEOs.

What changes will there be?

There are no specific changes proposed in schools. In fact, our goal would be to ensure that pupils and staff experience the creation of the new Trust as seamless. However, going forward we would expect our schools to experience the benefits of stronger education and business functions.

There would be changes to the governance and leadership of the Trust and in some central functions:

- Each Trust currently has Members and Trustees and the new Trust would look to appoint its Members and Trustees from the two existing groups;
- In the same way, the Executive Team would be made up of current post-holders from each Trust; and

- The central support services offer to schools would be improved and based on the best elements of existing practice across both Trusts.

What will happen if we decide not to create a single new Trust?

BST and YET have already seen the significant benefits of working together and as such, we would continue to look at other avenues for working closely together, although we would not then be able to achieve the full benefits that would come with the creation of a new Trust.