



Elstow School



BEDFORD
FREE SCHOOL

SERVING BEDFORD & KEMPSTON

7th October 2016

Dear Parents & Carers,

Elstow School & Bedford Free School to form a multi-academy trust

Following extensive consideration, we are pleased to announce that our Governing Bodies have agreed to enter into discussions together, with a view to forming a "multi-academy trust".

Two schools – one charitable trust

This means that both schools would come under the care of one academy trust – a charitable organisation that would oversee both schools and be responsible for the quality of their provision. As part of this process, Elstow School would convert to academy status, with the trust taking on responsibility for its staff, buildings and site from the Local Authority.

Why we have chosen to work together

Both schools have thought long and hard before agreeing to this exciting next step.

We have chosen to work with one another as we share the same beliefs and values, and are passionate about the power of schools to transform lives. Whilst confident in our practice, we are reflective and humble, recognising that we must always do better for our children. We also believe that key to achieving this is looking after our staff, students, and their families too.

In coming together, we want to build upon the complementary strengths of the two organisations: Elstow School's long track-record of care and success with younger children, and Bedford Free School's growing expertise as a centre of academic excellence at the secondary phase.

One charitable trust – two distinct schools

Elstow and BFS are already great schools, and will be free to run themselves as they see fit. We are clear that both schools would retain their own distinct identities, and both would have their own Governing Body too.

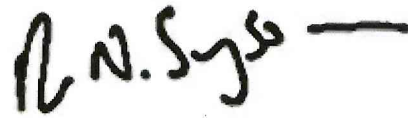
By taking an "evolution, not revolution" approach, things will not change immediately when we officially come together. The intention is that over time we learn from one another, and through working together improve the quality of education for our students.

We would welcome your views

We recognise that people may have particular questions about this decision. We are also keen to incorporate the views of our families and other interested parties, and so we will organise meetings in the next few weeks where people can meet with Governors and senior staff in person.



Robert Harding
Chair of Governors
Elstow School



Nigel Syson
Chair of Governors
Bedford Free School



Jenny Jackson
Headteacher
Elstow School



Mark Lehair
Principal
Bedford Free School