



c/o Dereham Sixth Form College
Crown Road
Dereham
Norfolk
NR20 4AG
T: 01362 696884

2 October 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

We are writing to advise you of an exciting new development for our Trust and schools.

As a Trust, and a family of schools, we are committed to providing your children with the best possible education. One way to do that is to work with other schools and academy trusts to share best practice, to further raise standards and secure operational economies of scale.

As many of you will know Unity Education Trust has, for the past year, been working very closely with the Engage Trust. The Engage Trust runs the Short Stay School for Norfolk, which comprises two schools over 10 different bases located across the county from Great Yarmouth in the east to Kings Lynn in the west, and Pinetree alternative provision School in Thetford.

The collaboration between our two Trusts was initially based on the part-time secondment of UET's Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Glyn Hambling, to be Interim CEO for Engage but has been extended to encompass the secondment of Mr. Andy Mason as Director of School Improvement, the co-location of the central offices of the two Trusts, joint procurement of some services and staff CPD.

In July the Boards of both Trusts voted to join together to form a single Multi-Academy Trust under the UET umbrella. An application to this effect was submitted to the Department for Education and, within the last few days, we have been advised that the application has been approved.

Work will now begin to complete the necessary legal and other steps which will result in Engage staff and premises being transferred to UET and the closure of Engage as a company and trust. Our two Trusts hope to complete this process by early in the New Year.

We wish to reassure you that the merger will not alter the way our schools work day-to-day nor will students and parents notice any significant differences. ET schools will continue, as now, with their own identities and there will be no changes to admissions arrangements, uniforms, premises etc. Each of our schools will remain focused on delivering excellent teaching and learning for Norfolk and Suffolk learners and will remain the point of contact for parents and carers. What, we believe, students, staff and parents will notice over time are additional opportunities being made available and the positive benefits these will have for all.

The merger will allow us to consolidate the benefits of our collaboration to date and to extend those benefits:

- educationally (e.g. larger pool of teachers for dissemination of best practice; joint CPD; learning from working with pupils with different needs; curriculum development; cross-Trust quality assurance, challenge and support)
- financially (e.g. economies of scale and greater procurement bargaining power; internal efficiencies; further support to drive school improvement)

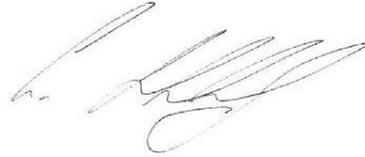
- capacity (combining the two Trusts will enhance the skills and experience sets of Members and the Trust Board and facilitate strengthening governance at all levels).

We will keep you informed as the merger process proceeds but, in the meantime, we welcome any comments you wish us to consider or questions you would like answered. Please address these to trust@engage.norfolk.sch.uk by 18 October 2019

Yours sincerely



Dennis Freeman
Chair of Trustees
The Engage Trust



Glyn Hambling
Interim Chief Executive Officer
The Engage Trust