



7th May 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

PROPOSAL FOR THE SHARED LEARNING TRUST TO MERGE WITH ADVANTAGE SCHOOLS

I am pleased to share with you some important news regarding the future of our school community. The Shared Learning Trust (TSLT) and Advantage Schools (AS), acknowledging strong alignment between the two organisations, propose to merge to create a larger and stronger Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) of ten schools across Luton, Bedford and Central Bedfordshire. This application to merge has been approved by the Department for Education's Regional Director, marking the start of an exciting journey for all. The proposed merger date is 1st September 2024.

Should the merger conclude as anticipated, your child's school will become part of the newly merged MAT under the name **Advantage Schools**. Rest assured, despite the change in trust name, the priority remains the same: to ensure the best possible learning opportunities for your child(ren). Transitioning smoothly into this new MAT will be a priority for the teams. We are committed to maintaining continuity and excellence throughout the process.

The Shared Learning Trust's board of trustees, having undertaken significant levels of due diligence, wholeheartedly welcomes the merger with Advantage Schools. The benefits of the merger will include additional staff development opportunities, as well as greater capacity for school improvement along with combined innovative ideas. Our collective goal is to provide every pupil in the MAT with a high-quality educational experience. Together, we will equip our pupils with the knowledge and skills needed to be well-informed and well-rounded members of society.

The CEO of the new trust will be Stuart Lock, CEO of the current AS; I will also remain in the merged organisation as deputy CEO. Stuart has my full support; he has the passion, expertise and skill to take the new, merged MAT forward.

I am proud of the culture that has been fostered at TSLT. From the many months of discussions and meetings between the two organisations, I am confident that the values of inclusivity and diversity are shared and that these values will be retained and further developed.

In terms of practicalities; the name of your child's school will not change at or after the point of merger, nor will the school uniform be altered. Staff will remain in their respective schools unless they have expressed a desire to work across more than one academy. The operational impact on pupils and families will therefore be minimal.

A list of frequently asked questions will be uploaded to our website and updated throughout this process.

Thank you for your interest and support as we work through the transition process with AS.

Yours sincerely,

Cathy Barr
CEO, The Shared Learning Trust.