

## Frequently Asked Questions for Parents

### Cathedral School Trust and Trust in Learning Academies

#### **What will the benefits be?**

We know that choosing the right school and Trust for your child is an important decision and we want to reassure you that this merger is about creating more opportunities and delivering the best possible education for all our pupils.

#### ***For pupils:***

At the heart of this merger is your child's education and experience in school. By bringing together the strength of both Trusts we aim to:

- Offer the highest quality curriculum, combining the strongest elements from each Trust
- Enhance teaching and learning for pupils by ensuring our staff have access to the highest and relevant high-quality training and development.
- Offer widespread enrichment opportunities building on strengths, such as CST's music Trailblazers scheme and partnership with Bristol Beacon, and TiLA's speak-up challenge.
- Strengthen transitions between schools and key stages, so pupils will have a greater sense of belonging, with many children able to stay within the Trust from age 3 to 18.

#### ***For staff:***

We know that a well-supported and highly skilled teaching team is key to providing the best education for your child.

- Increased career and professional development opportunities for all staff through collaborative opportunities, enabling us to recruit and retain the very best staff.
- There will be greater opportunity to share practice and learn from a larger group of colleagues through professional learning communities and networks.

#### ***For families, communities and Bristol:***

Both TiLA and CST are committed to working locally, serving children and families in the Bristol area. Many of our schools are closely geographically located and there are good links between schools, the Local Authority and other trusts locally.

- A consistent experience from 3 – 18 years for your children, through staying within a Trust with a clear identity and strong relationships with your family

- A larger trust which fully represents communities of Bristol, and is able to adapt to contextual changes and opportunities
- An enhanced capacity for civic responsibility, and corresponding voice across Bristol

### **What would a merger mean for my child's school?**

While there may be some changes to governance and shared central services for the new Trust, what makes your child's school special will remain the same. Each school will retain its unique ethos, and commitment to delivering a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the needs of the young people and families it serves.

### **What would this mean for the current day-to-day experience of my child?**

Currently, there are no plans to change any aspect of the day to day running of any of our schools.

### **Will the name of the Trust change?**

Yes, we plan on changing the name of the trust. Although none of the school names will change, we would like to establish a new Trust identity. We have not yet made any decisions about what the new name would be. If you have any ideas for names, please do let us know in the feedback form below.

### **Will there be a change to SEND provision?**

SEND provision will continue as it is in each school, however there will be more opportunities for best practice to be shared to continuously improve provision for all our young people including those with additional needs.

### **Will the admission criteria change for my child's school under the merged Trust?**

No, the school's admissions policy will remain consistent with the national Admissions Code of Practice.

### **What changes will be made to Governance as a result of the merger?**

With the merger of the two Trusts, we will need to identify new Members and Trustees. The majority, if not all, will be drawn from our existing Boards where we are fortunate to have dedicated volunteers with a wide range of outstanding skills, experience and expertise.

The Board of Trustees provides strategic oversight while decision-making for certain functions will continue be delegated to the school Governing Boards for each school. This ensures that each school can continue to meet the unique needs of its community while benefiting from the strength and support of the wider Trust. We believe this balance

of local autonomy and collective collaboration is key to ensuring the best outcomes for our children and young people.

A key focus will be to maintain and strengthen effective leadership, both at the Trust level and within each individual school. By ensuring strong and supportive leadership across all levels, we can continue to provide the best possible education and opportunities for our children and young people.

### **What changes will be made to Leadership as a result of the merger?**

Leadership in individual schools will remain unchanged. Leadership at a Trust level will incorporate staff from both Trust teams, and we will be working with the Trust Board to carefully manage this transition.

### **Cathedral School Trust has some faith-based schools; how will this affect other schools?**

Our Trust will be home to a diverse range of schools, including those with faith-based traditions. We believe in celebrating this diversity and we are committed to maintaining the unique character of each school. Each school within the Trust is committed to our common and shared values, making us a unique collective.

### **How will parents, guardians and communities be kept informed during the merger process?**

We understand that during times of change, clear and open communication is essential. We'll be keeping you updated regularly through our usual channels, ensuring you have all the information you need.

### **What are the timescales for the merger?**

Subject to feedback and approval, by the Department for Education and agreement from both Trust Boards, the earliest any merger will take place is 1<sup>st</sup> January 2026.

### **How do I ask questions or provide feedback?**

We are seeking the feedback of parents, staff, governors, and other stakeholders on these proposals and would encourage you to submit any questions or comments by emailing our independent project managers, Edwin People at [engagement@edwinpeople.com](mailto:engagement@edwinpeople.com) by Friday 16th May 2025, or [click here](#) to complete the response form.