



**University of Brighton**

**Academies Trust**

**HASTINGS**  
**ACADEMIES TRUST**

To: All parents and carers of pupils/students in academies in the  
Hastings Academies Trust  
and  
University of Brighton Academies Trust

16 May 2017

Dear parent/carers

### **Trust structures**

As your child attends an academy in the Hastings Academies Trust (HAT) or the University of Brighton Academies Trust (UoBAT), I am writing to inform you about an important development for the trusts.

The Boards of Directors of the trusts have agreed in principle to proceed with a proposal to merge the two trusts, with effect from September 2017. The merged trust would be called the 'University of Brighton Academies Trust'.

### **Why is a merger of the trusts proposed?**

When HAT was established in 2010, the University of Brighton was its lead sponsor, with East Sussex County Council (ESCC) and BT as co-sponsors. UoBAT was subsequently established as a separate trust in 2015, with the University of Brighton as its sole sponsor.

Since its establishment there have been significant changes to the HAT sponsorship arrangements. Over the past year we have mutually agreed for ESCC and BT to withdraw as co-sponsors. We appreciate the contribution they have made to the trust - from its inception as two secondary academies to our current family of nine infant, primary and secondary academies – and value our continued positive working relationships with them.

Now that the University of Brighton is the sole sponsor of both trusts there is no need for there to be two separate organisations. It is our aim that the proposed merger will be a true blending of the trusts: capitalising on their strengths and reflecting the university's commitment to supporting the merged trust through the next stage of its development.

### **What would the merger mean for my child?**

The proposed merger relates to the overall legal structure of the trusts. Should the merger proceed, the academies comprising the trusts would operate in the same way as at present, with pupils/students taught by the same staff.

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There is already considerable joint working across the two trusts, including shared central management structures, support and operational services; joint policies; and a joint school improvement strategy. The proposed merger would enable us to further develop these collaborative practices, increasing our ability to support and challenge academies to deliver the highest quality of teaching and learning.

We have established an area on our website which provides further information about the proposals: [www.brighton.ac.uk/trust-merger](http://www.brighton.ac.uk/trust-merger). This includes a range of 'Frequently Asked Questions'. Please email [enquiries@brightonacademiestrust.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@brightonacademiestrust.org.uk) if you would like us to answer a question not covered there.

### **How would the merger benefit the trusts?**

We expect to see many benefits from merging the two trusts, such as:

- the ability to maximise school improvement capacity
- financial benefits including increased purchasing power and a single central management budget
- more efficient governance
- a joint communications strategy.

### **What will happen next?**

The Boards of Directors of the two trusts are undertaking a period of consultation on the proposal. The consultation process officially started on 15 May 2017.

The enclosed leaflet includes more information and details of a questionnaire for you to complete. We shall also be holding consultation meetings for parents, carers and community representatives, at various locations, during the week commencing 5 June 2017.

At the end of the consultation period, all of the responses will be collated into a report that the Boards of Directors will consider when making the final decision to proceed with the merger in July 2017.

In the meantime, if you have any queries, please email [enquiries@brightonacademiestrust.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@brightonacademiestrust.org.uk) in the first instance.

Yours faithfully



Dr John Smith  
**Interim Chief Executive**  
Hastings Academies Trust  
University of Brighton Academies Trust