



FAQs for proposal for the Leading Learning Trust (LLT) to join Newham Community Schools Trust (NCST)

Which trusts are proposing to merge?

Newham Community Schools Trust (NCST) and Leading Learning Trust (LLT) are proposing to merge, with LLT joining NCST. This will result in a local trust formed of the following schools:

- Selwyn Primary School (Newham)
- Portway Primary School (Newham)
- Sarah Bonnell School (Newham)
- Rokeby School (Newham)
- Eastlea Community School (Newham)
- Lister Community School (Newham)

How will the schools benefit from the merger?

The aim of the merger is to protect, secure and develop both organisations' visions for outstanding, local education.

Existing and prospective children in schools within the merged trust will benefit in a number of ways, including:

- Supporting effective transition for young people from KS2 to KS3
- Sharing effective practice and skills to strengthen the KS2 and KS3 curriculum
- Developing high quality SEND provision, including but not limited to collaboration in strengthening the Deaf Resource Provisions at both Lister and Selwyn. This SEND work could also include development of provision through joint purchasing of Speech and Language Therapists
- Enhancing opportunities for enrichment opportunities through sharing resources and facilities
- Enhancing existing work on the Newham Community Music Cluster

- Developing work with families, particular those in need of intervention, with continuity maintained as the child progresses through primary and secondary
- Developing opportunities to pursue sustainable, strategic growth, particularly in the primary phase.

How will the schools change after the merger?

Changes from the merger will largely be at the central trust level. When considering merger, both NCST and LLT Trust Boards have agreed a commitment to:

- Maintaining the distinct identity of each school in the Trust
- Outstanding support for all students, including those with SEND, and strong pastoral care
- Community focus and engagement
- Professional development for all staff
- A broad and challenging curriculum with wide range of enrichment opportunities
- Excellent academic outcomes in a supportive environment
- Keeping decision-making at school level unless there is a clear benefit to making decisions at Trust level
- High standards of professionalism in all areas
- Best possible use of resources

Each school will retain a Local Governing Body (LGB), with the Headteacher responsible for the day-to-day running of the school. The LGB will have powers delegated from the Trust Board under an agreed Scheme of Delegation.

Will each School retain its individual ethos?

Yes, the NCST and LLT Trust Boards are very clear that the individual ethos, character and good practices of each school will be retained and that all the schools operate as equals supporting each other.

Each school is seen as central to its own community with the skills of each school being used in a supportive way for all the others.

Will this change the status of any school?

All schools involved in the merger are already academies, and so will not change in status. Academies are publicly funded independent schools that are not managed by a local authority, but their funding and accountability lies directly with the Department for Education (DfE). Both Trusts are committed to maintaining a strong partnership with the Local Authority.

Will the merger change the admissions arrangements for any school?

There will be no changes to the admissions arrangements of any school as a result of this merger.

Will parents be required to purchase new uniform as a result of the merger?

The merger will not change the logos, names or uniforms of any school. As such, no new uniform will need to be purchased as a result of the merger.

Why is there a consultation?

There is no statutory duty for NCST or LLT to consult the wider community on this change. However, the Trust Board of each trust chose to ask for feedback, in order to ensure that merger plans work for the community. We are running a joint consultation between 25 January 2022 and 24 February 2022.

If the Trust Boards decide to proceed, there will be a separate TUPE consultation for staff.

What is the process for LLT to join NCST?

The conversion process includes the following key legal processes:

- Putting in place a Deed of Variation for the Master Funding Agreement (MFA) between NCST and the Secretary of State for Education, which varied the NCST MFA to include LLT schools
- Transferring the employment of the staff from LLT to NCST following a statutory process (TUPE)
- Agreeing a Commercial Transfer Agreement for the transfer of assets and contracts from LLT to NCST and
- Arranging a 125-year lease for the land and buildings with NCST.

While, as a matter of process, LLT is joining NCST, this is a function of the DfE's preferred legal processes and is designed to reduce disruption to the staff teams across both trusts. Both Trust Boards are committed to respecting the skills and expertise that each trust will bring to the new organisation; one that attaches equal importance to primary and secondary education and that values the strengths across both trusts as currently constituted

Both Trusts have agreed a process for Trustees of LLT to be invited to join the NCST Board as soon as the merger takes place, so that there will be a new Trust Board which draws on the skills and experience of both NCST and LLT's current Boards.

24 January, 2022