

20 March 2020

Dear staff, governors, parents, carers and students,

The trustees of the Morris Education Trust have been in dialogue with those of the Cambridgeshire Educational Trust, about a proposal to merge our Trusts. We are writing to you now to share our reasons for proposing this, describe the process, and invite you to contribute.

What is being proposed?

CET (which includes Chesterton Community College and Downham Market Academy) and MET (which includes Impington Village College and Witchford Village College) are both small multi-academy trusts in North Cambridge, with a strong track record of excellence. We are proposing that we merge CET and MET to form an enlarged multi-academy trust. The Chief Executive of the merged trust will be Lucy Scott, currently CEO of CET, Ryan Kelsall, principal of IVC, will be deputy CEO.

Why is the proposal attractive? Why now?

The discussions between the trustees are the result of collaboration and a deepening relationship between Chesterton Community College and Impington Village College that began in 2017. The reason for thinking about it now is that Rob Campbell, after thirteen years as principal of IVC and then CEO of MET, is fully relocating to Cumbria this summer.

As the discussions between the trustees progressed it became apparent to all of us that the combination of our schools and resources would create an organisation that could significantly enhance the quality of education provided for all students in our trusts. For example, we could offer a broader curriculum and enhanced student support services; and we would cover a geographically coherent area to the north of Cambridge.

What is the process that will be followed?

Before any merger can go ahead we will follow a series of steps to ensure that the decision is carefully considered and that the views of stakeholders have been taken into account:

- The trustees of both CET and MET must carry out due diligence.
- The Regional Headteacher Board, chaired by the Regional Schools Commissioner, must agree.
- We will carry out a consultation with stakeholders, including staff, governors, parents and students, during April.

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- We hope to make a final decision in time for any new arrangements to be in place for the upcoming academic year, which starts in September 2020.

The great strength of our schools is the skill and professionalism of our staff and governors, and the commitment and engagement of our students and their parents. To be really successful, a merger needs the informed support of all these stakeholders.

The trustees are conscious that this is a stressful and uncertain time for families and staff alike and did consider delaying the merger process. However, the advantages of being able to start the new academic year with the merger complete, and the benefits that this will provide to students' education, outweigh the challenges.

In normal times we would have held a series of face-to-face meetings to allow all stakeholders to ask questions and provide feedback, but this is not possible under the present circumstances. Instead we have set up a website (www.cet.tmet.org.uk) with a comments section where you can ask questions and provide feedback. Those questions and the trustees' responses will be visible to everyone accessing the website.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Rigby". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'M' and 'R'.

Martin Rigby

Chair of Morris Education Trust