

Monday 16th June

Dear Parents/Carers/Stakeholders,

**Consultation on a proposal for Great Academies Education Trust to join with
Dixons Academies Trust**

Context

We are currently assessing the best steps for us to take next on our journey to excellence across our schools.

We want to make sure we are always able to secure the best possible opportunities for our students, our communities and our team.

This is why we are currently exploring whether we want to join a larger trust which would bring greater opportunities for collaboration, professional development, financial sustainability and support for our schools, enabling us to build on our strengths and secure further improvements.

We know our trust has made progress, in terms of school improvement in recent years, so it is appreciated that you may be wondering why we are considering this as a next phase in our development. We believe wholly in deep and purposeful collaboration – working together we can get more of the right work done and accelerate the progress. After undertaking an extensive search over a period of 12 months, the trustees of Great Academies Education Trust (GAET) resolved on April 4th, 2025, to open due diligence processes with Dixons Academies Trust (DAT). Both boards of trustees recognise the mutual strengths of each trust and the alignment of our respective visions for our schools and communities.

We have worked with Dixons for some time in various ways, and we know that we have closely aligned missions and closely aligned values – which sets us up well for this exploration.

We have started a due diligence exercise to fully understand the benefits this could bring and how we could best work together.

What this means in practice, is spending some time together understanding more about each organisation. We're committed to making sure this process is run well and at a good pace, to make sure we have a clear plan. If a decision is made to join Dixons, there will be a period of consultation with you all, shortly after. There will also be communications and engagement with parents and other key members of our community.

Ultimately, this is about making the best decision for the students and the communities we serve. As a high performing trust, we know that Dixons has a lot to offer, and that we bring a lot to the table, too. This is a mutually beneficial relationship which will bring greater resilience to our trust and build on the improvements we have made. We believe this opportunity will have a profoundly positive impact on our students, our communities and for you all.

After due diligence and a decision has been reached, we would outline the key timescales and communicate more detail, so you are fully aware of what is happening. We will signpost avenues for feedback so you can ask any questions and share with our families and wider community.

We want to reassure you that, as always, we will continue to ensure our students, our communities and our teams are at the heart of our decision-making process.

Although this is not a statutory requirement, we recognise that this is good practice and wish to communicate with you as much as possible. We would now like to consult with parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders, on these proposals and this letter provides you with more information, whilst also inviting you to let us know your views.

Proposal

The proposal is for Great Academies Education Trust (GAET) to merge with Dixons Academies Trust to become a combined trust with a total of twenty-one schools. The schools currently in our Trust would become a Greater Manchester hub and work alongside the two schools in Wythenshawe and the three schools in Liverpool that are in Dixons Academies Trust.

We believe pupils and staff would benefit from the greater opportunities that formal partnership would bring, which include:

- extending learning opportunities and activities for pupils
- developing and enriching the curriculum through partnership working and shared resources
- further improving the quality of education in each school by enabling the sharing of excellent practice in teaching and learning
- enhancing the professional development of teaching and support staff
- building mutual support and accountability between the Head Teachers and between the Governors
- securing cost and resource efficiencies through joint commissioning of services

How can we find out more about each of the MATs involved in this proposal?

Great Academies Education Trust

GAET has 4 schools and 1 Teacher Training SCITT in the Greater Manchester area.

All schools work together to ensure that best practice is shared and there is a clear focus on school improvement. GAET has a commitment to working closely with its communities and places excellence at the centre of all it does.

Find out more about Great Academies Education Trust at www.greatacademies.co.uk

Dixons Academies Trust

DAT has 16 schools and 1 college serving the communities of Bradford, Leeds, Liverpool and Manchester.

There is a strong and inclusive partnership between all schools with a focus on supporting and inspiring pupils and their communities to maximise attainment, value diversity, develop character and build cultural capital.

Find out more about Dixons Academies Trust at www.dixonsat.com

How do I find out more, and how do I respond to the stakeholder consultation?

The stakeholder consultation will begin today, Monday 16th June, for a period of four school term weeks and will end at 3pm on Friday 11th July.

This letter together with the attached frequently asked questions document provides you with some background information.

Our Trust Board would very much like to hear your views on the proposal and would encourage you to respond to the consultation by completing the attached feedback form. Please email the completed form to consultation@gaet.co.uk or return the form to the school office by the deadline of 3pm Friday 11th July.

Yours sincerely,



Brendan Loughran
CEO



Paul Jones
Chair of GAET Trust Board