

## **Merger Update**

November 2025

Dear Stakeholder/Colleague,

We're writing to let you know that the four-week consultation period for the proposed merger of Clarion Corvus Trust (CCT) and Inclusive Schools Trust (IST) has now finished.

Thank you so much to everyone who took the time to participate, including our Union colleagues. Your feedback is absolutely vital to ensuring that any decision made is fully informed and benefits the young people we serve.

The consultation process was designed to ensure accessibility and provide multiple opportunities for feedback:

- **Meetings:** We successfully held 15 consultation meetings (14 in-person and one online). Attendance was strong and led to some great discussions. The response was overwhelmingly positive.
- **Written Feedback:** It's important to note that, outside of the meetings, we received no emails with comments or concerns about the merger via the dedicated consultation email address.
- **Local Authority Response:** We were pleased to get a positive response from the local authority, who fully support the merger.

To keep things transparent, we've fully documented all the questions raised during the consultation events. These questions largely focused on key themes such as the practical impact on staff contracts, how we will preserve individual school identity and the enhanced opportunities for resource sharing across the new Trust. You can find a summary below, along with the original FAQ document we shared. We will also circulate the PowerPoint document we used for the meetings.

The Boards of Trustees at CCT and IST are now reviewing all the information gathered during the consultation and all the required background checks (due diligence).

We expect to make a final, informed decision about creating the new Trust soon. Assuming there is formal Department for Education support for the move, we are still aiming for the merger to be completed by April 2026.

We're focused on giving all our young people the best education possible, and we genuinely believe that forming a single, stronger Trust is the best way to achieve that vision.

Thank you once more for your valuable input.

Best wishes,

**Ms Christine Nichols (Chair of CCT) and Mr Jeff Prosser (Chair IST)**

## Consultation Frequently Asked Questions

### Why would we want to create a single new Trust?

As a larger single Trust, the scale and flexibility of our combined resources would enable us to:

- Offer even better educational experiences and outcomes for our pupils;
- Have access to increased direct funding for capital projects from the DfE
- Ensure we recruit and retain the highest quality of staff by offering more and better training
- and career opportunities for staff; and
- Use resources more flexibly and effectively.

Across the Academy sector nationally and locally, Trusts are growing and expanding. Such collaborations may impact on our future and we believe we must explore all options moving forward. A voluntary, proactive decision to take ownership of our growth and future strategic direction now, offers both CCT and IST a strong degree of protection autonomy and agency.

### Why aren't we just going ahead with it then?

Although we have already established that there are very strong educational reasons for creating a single new Trust, it's important that we take time to fully understand the strengths and challenges of each Trust. We may discover through this process that some of our ways of working are incompatible.

### Would creating the new Trust cost money?

There would be some unavoidable costs e.g. the legal costs. However, all costs would be kept to a minimum and. We would make savings in the longer term and would see any one-off costs associated with creating the new Trust as being a worthwhile investment to unlock future benefits and savings.

### Who has a say in the decision?

The decision about whether or not the Trusts should come together to create a single new Trust, rests with the two Boards of Trustees. However, as part of the process of gathering information to inform that decision, our stakeholder consultation will enable parents, staff, community members and other interested parties to make comments on the proposals.

Ultimately, the final decision on whether the proposal goes ahead rests with the Regional Director for East of England and the Advisory Board for that area.

### What would be the name of the new Trust?

It is possible that the new Trust would have a new name, but no final decision has been made. It is likely that any new name will recognise the contributions of both current Trusts.

### When would we know the outcome?

It is expected that all information gathering and analysis will be completed across the Autumn term. We would hope that the Boards of both Trusts would be in a position to decide on whether or not to progress by January 2026.

### Would there be any changes to the way schools work?

There are no plans to change the way any of our schools work. All are unique and it is essential that we maintain their individuality. Our schools reflect their communities and we think it's important they continue to do so.

### Would there be changes to uniforms, badges and logos?

There are no plans to change uniforms. Any decisions about the branding of the new Trust would be taken by the new Trustee Board. However, we would look for that to happen over time.

## **Would there be job losses affecting Trust staff?**

We do not envisage any job losses as a result of the merger. A key benefit of the merger is the additional capacity it would bring. Reducing capacity through job losses would be counterproductive. As the Trust embeds, there may be opportunities to look at staffing structures to increase efficiencies.

## **What changes will there be?**

There are no specific changes proposed in schools. In fact, our goal would be to ensure that pupils and staff experience the creation of the new Trust as seamless. However, going forward we would expect our schools to experience the benefits of stronger education and business functions. There would be changes to the governance and leadership of the Trust and in some central functions:

- Each Trust currently has Members and Trustees and the new Trust would look to appoint its Members and Trustees from the two existing groups;
- In the same way, the Executive Team would be made up of current post-holders from each Trust;
- The central support services offer to schools would be improved and based on the best elements of existing practice across both Trusts.

## **What will happen if we decide not to create a single new Trust?**

CCT and IST have already seen the significant benefits of working together and as such, we would continue to look at other avenues for working closely together, although we would not then be able to achieve the full benefits that would come with the creation of a new Trust.

## **Additional questions asked during the consultation process.**

### **Staff professional development – do you engage with other organisations e.g. VNET, NPQs, research-based projects?**

Yes, we work with a number of providers such as VNET and we access NPQs across all our schools.

### **In the consultation letter it says about looking at staffing structures to increase efficiencies, what does this actually mean?**

We don't anticipate there being any need for redundancies. As the new Trust settles, we will look to see how our Trust teams are working and see if there are any ways we can deploy staff to help them to work more effectively and efficiently.

### **Length of service – how will this work when we merge?**

Continuous service dates will be protected for all staff.

### **Is this merger going to benefit those pupils who need more support?**

Yes, we hope so. We think that by working more collaboratively across all our schools, we will find ways to find extra support where it is needed. Also, the additional capital funding released by the merger will allow schools to use their revenue budgets to focus fully on supporting what goes on in the classroom.

### **What is in place for staff well-being?**

Both Trusts value staff well-being. Although there will not be an overarching Trust policy, we will continue to encourage our schools and school leaders to consider and support staff well-being. Both Trusts subscribe to the Norfolk Support Line.

**The £750K capital funding, how will this be shared out?**

The additional capital funding will be shared out based on the number of pupils in each school. Some will be held back centrally so that it can be used to support schools that need additional funding for unexpected expenditure. It will also allow us to be more strategic in the way we maintain our schools.

**Do the Trust boards stay as they are?**

The new Trust Board will be made up of Trustees from both merging Trusts.

**What about opportunities for collaboration?**

We hope that increasing the number of schools in our Trust will allow for more collaboration. Both Trusts value collaboration and have seen the benefit to our schools. Examples include regular meetings for school leaders, secondments and network meetings (SEND, CPD, attendance etc).

**Does everyone have to sign a new contract?**

No, all contracts will be honoured as they are and protected in law.

**Would that be the same if an existing staff member changed position?**

If existing staff took on new roles, they would have to sign a new contract. That is no different to what happens at the moment. We plan to follow both the Green and Burgundy Books, so no terms and conditions would change. That applies to permanent and temporary staff.

**When do you expect to merge?**

We hope to merge in April. If this isn't possible, it is likely the merger will happen in September.

**Would you be lengthening the half term holiday**

There are no plans to do so. If we did look to do that, there would be a full consultation.

**Around the issue of Finance and leadership at the schools?**

The new Trust will have a number of different leadership models. These will depend on the needs and context of the schools.

**Is there any plan to have a restructure that would impact directly on the schools?**

No, please see the answer to the question above.

**Will there be an increase in the top slice (the money the Trust charge for services) to the schools?**

No, there is no plan to increase the top slice at the moment.

**You alluded to the need for money in classroom, I'd be concerned about cuts being made 'lower down' so what is the proposed structure from the top down?**

The merger will allow us to make savings on procurement and contracts. There will also be additional money coming into schools through the extra capital funding. We will use as much of the increase in funding in the classroom as possible. Both Trusts have 'lean' Trust teams and we aim to continue to operate in that way.

**With any large-scale change, there may be some disgruntled staff and people may leave. How will you mitigate against this?**

So far, the feedback from staff has been really positive. There will be greater opportunities for career development and more money for resources. If some staff do leave, staff movement is normal and a natural part of career development and we believe the larger Trust will be an attractive proposition for new staff.

**How will you maintain parity for all schools from Capital Funding, Pupil Premium funding and so on**

All schools will receive their full General Annual Grant (GAG) and will have the flexibility to use that as the school leaders see fit.

**How will the management structure change in the merged Trust?**

Jim Adams will be the CEO and will focus on finances, HR, premises and Trust growth. Selene Sawyer will be Deputy CEO and will focus on school improvement, people development, culture and SEND.

**How long had Clarion and Corvus been in a Trust before merging?**

Both Trusts had been in existence for about 3 years before they merged in 2022.

**Have you decided on a new Trust name?**

We have a good idea, but no decision as yet. We will share that as soon as a decision has been made by the combined Trustees.