



*The Best That We Can Be*  
**Devonshire Primary Academy**

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Headteacher: Mr Nick Toyne BEd (Hons)



Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

**Proposal for a Merger between Blackpool Multi Academy Trust (BMAT) and The View Trust (TVT)**

You are probably aware that there continue to be changes in the educational landscape, creating new challenges for schools. These include reductions in school budgets that will impact on the effective running of schools, recruitment and retention issues and a move towards school-led system leadership.

The Trustees of BMAT and TVT, along with the Headteachers and Chairs of Governors for the six educational establishments in these Trusts: Anchorsholme Academy, Devonshire Primary Academy; Park Community Academy; Revoe Learning Academy; Tor View School and Valley College are of course keen to ensure that the schools are in the strongest possible position to meet these challenges. Their priority is to ensure that we are best placed to provide an excellent education for our children and young people whilst protecting the schools' ethos and their position at the heart of their communities.

The Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) is encouraging the formation of larger Multi-Academy Trusts with 5+ schools, to continue to improve pupil outcomes and meet the challenges ahead. Headteachers and Governors across BMAT and TVT schools are in agreement that we need to develop a stronger culture of collaboration, which will result in the best outcomes for children and young people and will build on the current strengths within the individual schools. A larger MAT will deliver economies of scale to ensure the best use of funds and can develop shared efficiencies in the use of resources. It can also provide better opportunities for staff with more diverse roles and CPLD opportunities.

Our two Trusts are closely aligned in terms of shared vision and values and our dedication to collaborate to support all learners. The new MAT will seek to retain as great a degree of autonomy as possible so that Headteachers have primary responsibility for key areas such as school budgets, development and teaching of the curriculum, staff recruitment and admissions. Both Trusts are committed to creativity and the arts.

At the start of the year BMAT Trustees began looking for a CEO with the capacity to grow the MAT and to retain and develop teachers and leaders to meet the needs of schools both now and in the future. Central to the CEO appointment was a need to find a credible leader who would develop a school improvement strategy whilst keeping the needs of children and families at the heart of the work of the MAT.

TVT has been looking for a like-minded MAT that has the capacity to grow; The View Trust includes an Outstanding School, a Teaching School and a National Leader in Education with a heritage of school improvement.

In April 2019, Angela Holdsworth, CEO of the View Trust, was successfully appointed as Interim CEO of BMAT with a brief to consider a mutually beneficial merger of the two Trusts. Since this time, BMAT and TVT Trustees have commissioned a due diligence process to identify any risks that a merger may bring to either Trust. Due diligence is now drawing to a close and no serious risks have been identified; Trustees are therefore keen to pursue a potential merger from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019. In reality the merger will mean that TVT will be dissolved and all staff will TUPE across to BMAT. However, to signal to all

concerned that we are collectively forming a new Trust, we have decided to rebrand with a new name and a renewed energy for collaborative school improvement.

School leaders and governors from both Trusts have engaged in an exercise with the Interim CEO to rebrand the MAT and we have decided the name will be **The Sea View MAT**.

All the schools are committed to rigorous school improvement where Headteachers and other leaders work together to share best practice and learn from one another as well as from other external networks and partnerships. Headteachers and Governors believe that the organisation of, and proposed structures within, The Sea View Trust will ensure that school leaders can focus on leading teaching and learning within their schools. The capacity of the schools to train their future workforce is already established and there will be opportunities to attract and retain high quality staff by offering experience and career development across the MAT. Please be aware that The Sea View Trust remains committed to all staff and there will be no redundancies or reduction in current terms or conditions arising as a result of this merger.

Importantly, The Sea View Trust will continue to value the diversity and ethos of each school whilst providing supportive challenge. The new MAT will enable the degree of autonomy we currently enjoy and will not require us to make any changes to the schools' admissions criteria, identity, uniforms or staffing. This is an exciting opportunity for our school and a natural progression in cementing already established partnerships as we develop new links beyond our own Trusts.

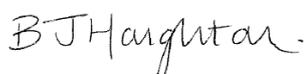
We firmly believe that the proposed merger will secure the future for the three primary schools, two specialist schools, specialist post 19 institution inclusive nursery and teaching school. The Sea View MAT will honour the inclusive, person-centred core values on which both Trusts were founded. It will realise our Trusts' shared vision of autonomous leaders with freedom to serve our local communities and high expectation to secure innovation and growth.

We have sought approval in principle from the Regional School Commissioner and the Education Funding Agency. We would also welcome any views, comments or questions you may have on the proposal. Please forward these to Annie Millard (annie.millard@park.blackpool.sch.uk), Company Secretary for BMAT by the consultation deadline, 12:15pm on Wednesday 17th July. Written responses will be provided for all questions asked and these will be available on the Trust websites from Friday 19th July.

Yours sincerely,



Mr N. Toyne  
Headteacher



Mrs B. Houghton  
Chair of Governors



Ms A. Holdsworth  
Interim CEO