

## Proposal to Make a Significant Change to our Schools

This document is intended for distribution to everyone with an interest in **Greys Education Centre** or **St John's Special School**. The information presented is intended to describe the proposed Multi Academy Trust and has been prepared in support of the formal consultation process.

Important information for discussion about proposed changes to our school.

## Specialist Education and Training Trust

Our proposal is to form the Specialist Education and Training Trust (SEaTT) to promote our shared vision of excellence in provision of specialist education. This will; improve outcomes for our young people and their families; continue to drive an improvement in standards. The Trust will be responsible for the strategic direction and governance of both St John's Special School & College (SJS) and Greys Education Centre (GEC) in the form of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT).

A MAT - Multi Academy Trust is where two or more schools come together under a shared governance and leadership structure.

Better outcomes for young people and their families.

Operational management of the SEaTT will be undertaken by an Executive Principal supported by the existing school leadership and administrative teams. It is anticipated that the existing Headteacher of Greys Educational Centre (GEC) will transfer to post of Executive Principal. The current Principal of St. John's School (SJS) will be retained by the Trust in an advisory capacity. The Trust board will be drawn from the existing governing bodies of both SJS & GEC.

The Executive Principal will lead both St John's and Greys supported by the board of trustees.

Maintaining the unique identity and character of our schools is of fundamental importance to the Trust. There will be no change to the existing school pupil populations or curriculum provision arising from implementation of the Trust

The separate identities of both Greys and St John's will remain unchanged.

## Our Schools

**Greys Education Centre** is an alternative provision academy with sites in Kempston, Bromham and on Riverbank Ward in Bedford Hospital. Greys also supports pupils with medical needs in the community.

Please see the attached school information sheet or [www.greys.beds.sch.uk](http://www.greys.beds.sch.uk) for further information.

**St. John's Special School & College** is a special academy based in Kempston providing specialist education for children and young people from age two through to 19.

See attached school information sheet or [www.st-johns-school.co.uk](http://www.st-johns-school.co.uk) for further information.



## What are the aims & values of our Trust?

- Improve Learning, Life opportunities and Outcomes for all our pupils and young people.
- Robust & sustainable leadership for our schools.
- Improved opportunities for staff development.
- Build on successful staff training programme, offering enhanced opportunities for all staff within the Trust; a centre of excellence for Specialist staff training.
- Together we are Stronger.

## How will our schools be managed?

Our schools have established records of strong management and are run with high standards of financial probity; as such the Trust will operate on a "school led" basis with significant delegation of powers to the Local Governing Boards (LGB) of each school.

Operational management of our schools will be the responsibility of the respective school leadership teams, supported by the Local Governing Bodies (LGB). The Trust Board, working with the executive principal, will set the strategic direction for our schools and retain overall responsibility for standards. The structure is shown in figure 1.

The Trust Board is appointed by and accountable to the Members. Members are required to hold at least one meeting per year to review the operation of the Trust; for Greys this has included an open meeting to celebrate the work of the school during the year and it is hoped that we can retain this model for the Trust as a whole.

The Aims & Values of our SEaTT Trust are to:

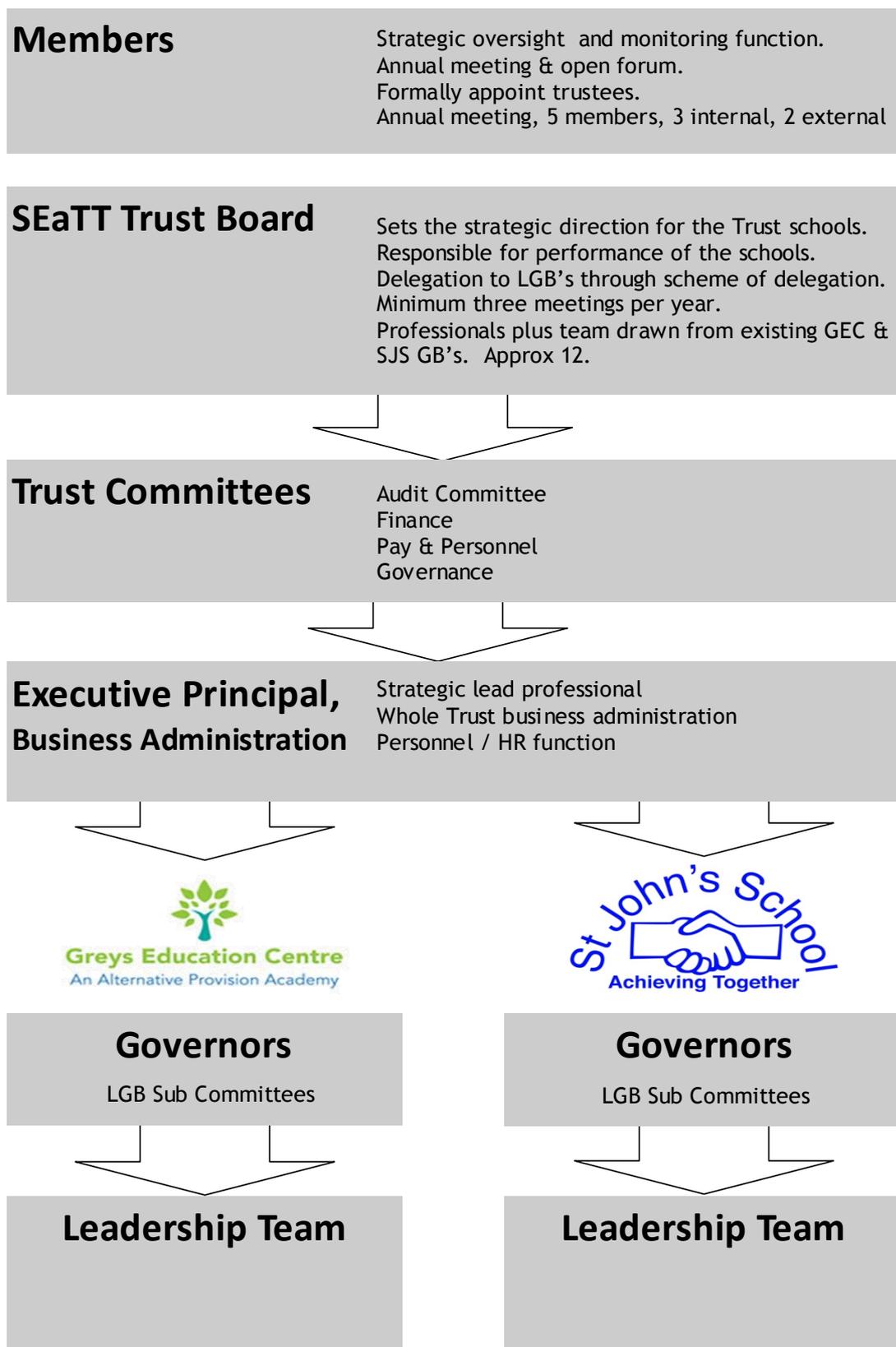
- Do the best we can for all our pupils in learning and life skills.
- Have excellent senior staff and management.
- Provide good career growth and training for staff.
- Work together to help both schools grow and prosper.

Each School will have its own separate governors board.

Each school will have separate managers for day to day duties and the Trust Board will manage standards and future plans for both schools.

Every year the Trust will hold a meeting where the Members can question the Trust Board.

Figure 1. **Governance & Management Structure,**  
 what each part of the SEaTT will do or be responsible for



## Will other academies join the Trust?

Once established the Trust would welcome the approach of other local providers with shared values and strategic fit; the Trust will agree appropriate governance and management structures as required.

**Other local Specialist schools could join the Trust in the future.**

With our "school led" model and local focus for Specialist provision the number of schools within our Trust is likely to remain below five and the Trust will ensure that any expansion is achieved without compromising standards in any way. Part of the strategic role of the Trust will include actively working with Bedford Borough to identify and meet local need for Specialist Provision.

## Will staff be moved around?

No.

Staff will continue to be contracted to work and be based in one school as now. Most contracts for new staff will be to work for a particular school. However, the Trust is committed to retaining and developing its staff which will include the opportunity to work at other schools as part of career progression; any new or existing roles within the Trust schools will be advertised internally to give the Trust staff the opportunity to apply. Any movement will be with the agreement of staff and no one will be forced to move.

**Nearly all staff will continue working without change to their contracts.**

**Any changes will be agreed with staff individually.**

**More career growth opportunities will be available to Trust staff.**

However, some staff will move into whole Trust roles that may require them to move and travel between schools. Initially this will include the Executive Principal, Business Management and Human Resources. Other roles and/or functions may be moved to a whole Trust basis in time, but any changes will be fully discussed and agreed with staff individually.

## Will there be more training opportunities for staff?

Yes.

A key aim of the Trust is to enhance Training of Specialist staff, both in terms of capacity and quality. A number of our established Outstanding teachers are "home grown"; we want to build on this success for the future through offering more and varied training opportunities at all levels of development.

**Better staff training and more career opportunities is a key aim of the new Trust.**

## **Pay roll service & pay date?**

All staff will be employed by the Trust and this will be shown on all payslips, tax notices etc. That is the only difference staff should notice as the Trust will continue to contract with Bedford Borough for pay roll services; pay date, issue of payslips etc will remain as existing arrangements.

**The Trust will become the employer for all staff.**

**The way staff are paid will not change.**

## **How will pay rises be agreed?**

The Trust will continue to adopt national teaching and leadership pay scales and pay awards for teachers; subject to due process and agreement with staff.

For SJS non-teaching staff the St John's Single Status Negotiating Committee (SSNC) will continue to operate; with active union support and non-union representation. For GEC non-teaching staff current arrangements supporting Joint Negotiating Committee (JNC) outcomes will be maintained.

**The way pay rises are agreed will not change.**

## **Will unions be allowed?**

Yes, they will.

Preliminary discussions with union colleagues have been constructive and all represented unions have, or will be, contacted through the formal consultation process. The support offered by unions to their members is welcomed in ensuring that we follow due process and act in a fair manner towards all staff. Any and all feedback will be carefully considered.

**The Trust welcomes the support of our union colleagues.**

## **What work has been undertaken on the proposal so far?**

In November 2015 Governors of both GEC and SJS agreed to investigate the formation of a Trust to include the two academies. To assist in this process a working group was established. This group has met approximately five times and has taken professional advice from *EMW Solicitors* and *Streets Accountants*.

**Governors have agreed to investigate forming a Trust.**

Alongside the working group the school business managers for both GEC & SJS have met and worked through a process of mutual due diligence. This process is intended to identify specifics of service contracts etc and will form the basis of harmonising our respective school administration systems.

**The schools have looked in detail at all aspects of forming the Trust and shared information to assist in the process.**

All staff have been informed of the proposal and will be consulted with through the formal process. The existing

headteacher of GEC, as Executive Principal designate for the Trust, has attended a number of SJS senior leadership meetings and interviews in addition to SJS Full Governing Body meetings; during the summer term this will be extended to the class room, getting to know pupils and staff.

**Staff have been informed of the plans and will be included in the consultation process.**

## **What are the next steps?**

The key steps in the process of establishing the Trust are:

- Consultation with stakeholders (where we are now and of which this document forms part).
- Preparation of business case "for a significant change at an existing academy" and submission to the Education Funding Agency (EFA). This includes consultation outcome plus evidence to demonstrate financial viability of the Trust.
- Once the business case has been accepted a Master Funding Agreement will be drafted.
- Adoption by the existing Governing Bodies of both GEC & SJS of Master Funding Agreement and MAT articles.

Subject to the outcome of consultation, it is intended that the business case will be submitted during the summer term with the intention of implementing the Trust for September 2016.

The Governing Body of either academy can halt the process at any stage prior to adopting the Master Funding Agreement.

### **Next we will:**

- **Discuss our plans with everyone with an interest in our schools.**
- **Send our application to the Education Funding Agency.**
- **Agree all the legal details between the schools.**
- **Ask the Governors at both schools to agree with the plan.**

**Greys Education Centre**

Academy name	Greys Education Centre
Type	Alternative Provision Academy
Academy address	Manor Drive Kempston Bedford MK42 7AB
Est No. & UPIN	URN: 139320,
Website	<a href="http://www.greys.beds.sch.uk">www.greys.beds.sch.uk</a>



Greys Education Centre converted to an academy on 1 February 2013. We were subsequently inspected during November 2014 and Ofsted judged our school to be Good. As an Alternative Provision Academy we are commissioned by Bedford Borough to meet local need under a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with the Local Authority.

We operate from three sites offering separate primary, secondary and hospital provisions. We offer education and support for pupils who have been permanently excluded from mainstream school or who have been out of school for reasons related to their behaviour. Short-term preventative packages can also be provided for pupils from local mainstream schools who are at risk of permanent exclusion. Pupils in Years 1 to 10 are normally dual registered with their mainstream school and placed with us for a limited time, whereas those in Year 11 are registered solely with us so that we can best support them through their end of school examinations.

For pupils who have mental health or physical illnesses that prevent them from attending mainstream school we also provide education at Bedford South Wing Hospital, home tuition or on-site tuition as needed.

Pupils may attend the hospital school for short, recurring or extended periods of time and numbers fluctuate on a daily basis. In the last academic year, the centre as a whole supported around 200 pupils in its bases, on outreach and at the hospital school.

Following consultation with local schools we have collaborated with Bedford Borough to implement the "HUB", an initiative to provide all schools within the LA access to timely expert behavioural and practical support for our most vulnerable pupils.

Approximately half of our pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium funding; this is well above the national average.

All the pupils at the primary and secondary sites have special educational needs because of their behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Pupils in the medical provision have special educational needs related to their mental health or physical difficulties.

A small number of pupils in Year 11 attend Bedford College of Further Education for one day a week. The centre also makes use of another alternative provider, YES - Sports Support.

## St John's Special School & College

Academy name	St John's Special School & College
Type	Academy Special
Academy address	Bedford Road Kempston Bedford MK42 8AA
Est No. & UPIN	URN: 137469, DfE No.: 8225951
Website	<a href="http://www.st-johns-school.co.uk">www.st-johns-school.co.uk</a>



As a Special Academy we are commissioned by Bedford Borough to meet local need, as part of the SEND Local Offer, under a Service Level Agreement between ourselves and the Local Authority. We are currently commissioned for 160 places whilst our funding agreement with the EFA stands at 140. Actual roll as of February 2016 is 166, with further consultations for placement on-going.

There are a number of factors behind the upward trend in our school roll. Local issues include housing development which has attracted more families to the area and nationally there are increasing numbers of children presenting with complex learning difficulties.

Our Specialist Nursery provision is currently oversubscribed and we are exploring creative approaches to increasing capacity. Accommodating this cohort of young people as they progress through school will present new challenges.

St John's is an Outstanding school. The key element in achieving this is the quality of our staff and we have a well established programme of Continual Professional Development (CPD). The fact that a number of our best teachers are "home grown" is testament to the success of this programme.

- St. John's is a day school for children and young people between the ages of 2 to 19 years
- Pupils present a range of complex needs which include
  - Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)
  - Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC)
  - Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)
  - Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI)
- St. John's became a Specialist School in Communication and Interaction in September 2009
- St John's acquired Academy status with effect from 1st September 2011
- The latest OfSTED inspection of the school in September 2014 judged St. John's to be an outstanding school

# RESPONSE FORM Specialist Education and Training Trust PROPOSAL

Please return before **25th May 2016**, the date our consultation period closes.

<b>Question 1</b> Do you agree with our proposal to form a Multi Academy Trust as presented in our consultation documents?				
Agree	Disagree	Suggestions/Comments:		
<b>Question 2</b> The proposed name for our Trust is the "Specialist Education and Training Trust". Do you feel this properly reflect our aims & values?				
Agree	Disagree	Suggestions/Comments:		
<b>Question 3</b> Do you agree with the stated aims & values of our proposed Trust?				
Agree	Disagree	Suggestions/Comments:		
<b>Question 4</b> Do you agree with proposed Governance and Management arrangements?				
Agree	Disagree	Suggestions/Comments:		
<b>Question 5</b> Do you agree with the suggestion that we maintain the character and identity of the schools within the Trust?				
Agree	Disagree	Suggestions/Comments:		
<b>Question 6</b> Do you have any other questions or suggestions about this proposal?				
Your Questions (please use additional sheet(s) if required)				
All questions will be collated and our responses published on completion of the consultation.				
<b>About You</b> Please indicate your main connection with our schools				
Parent	Staff	Local Authority	Community	Other (please specify)
...May we publish your comments? Yes / No (to be published anonymously)				