

Merger - Frequently Asked Questions

The proposed merger of Ebor and Nexus MAT is a fantastic opportunity for us to further strengthen our partnerships as a group of like-minded schools.

We've developed a set of frequently asked questions which we hope will answer any queries or concerns you may have. If you have a question that isn't answered in this document, please get in touch via our Microsoft Form <https://forms.office.com/e/N2dUDgi6HQ>

General questions

What is a Multi Academy Trust?

A Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) is an academy trust that operates more than one academy – both Ebor Academy Trust and Nexus Multi Academy Trusts are examples of these. Our proposal is to combine the two MATs into one larger MAT.

Which schools will be included in the proposed merger?

All schools/settings that are already part of the Ebor and Nexus trusts, and those that are currently in the process of converting will be included in the merger. A full list of all schools can be found below.

Ebor Multi Academy Trust:

Alderman Cogan CofE Primary Academy
All Saints C of E Junior Academy
All Saints C of E Nursery and Infant Academy
Braeburn Primary Academy
Brotherton and Byram Primary Academy
Camblesforth Primary Academy
Easington CofE Primary Academy
Filey Infant and Nursery C of E Primary Academy

Nexus Multi Academy Trust

Abbey School
Bader Academy
Becton School
Bents Green School
Beech Academy
Coppice School
Craggs Community School
Discovery Academy

Learning together, to be the best we can be.

Nexus Multi Academy Trust. A Private Ltd Company. Registered in England & Wales.
Company Number: 10075893.

Registered Office: Maltby Hilltop School, Larch Road, Maltby, Rotherham, England, S66 8AZ.

A charitable company.

Ebor Multi Academy Trust:

Haxby Road Primary Academy
 Hob Moor Community Primary Academy
 Hob Moor Oaks Primary Academy
 Lakeside Primary Academy
 Luttons Primary Academy
 Marfleet Primary Academy
 Osbaldwick Primary Academy
 Park Grove Primary Academy
 Patrington CofE Primary Academy
 Riston CofE Primary Academy
 Robert Wilkinson Primary Academy
 Sherburn C of E Primary Academy
 Siggleshorne CofE Primary Academy

 Sproatley CofE Primary Academy
 Staynor Hall Primary Academy
 Tadcaster Primary Academy
 Tockwith CofE Primary Academy

Nexus Multi Academy Trust

Endeavour Academy
 Fountaindale School
 Hallamshire Academy
 Heatherwood School
 Hilltop School
 Kelford School
 Kenwood Academy
 Lotus Academy
 North Ridge Community School
 Notts Hospital Home Education Learning
 Centre (in the process of converting)

 Pennine View School
 Seven Hills School (in the process of
 converting)
 The Willows School

Why are we considering merging to form a new Multi Academy Trust?

The Department for Education (DfE) encourages multi academy trusts (MATs) to merge and grow in size because larger trusts can have a greater impact and are better able to address school needs, across different areas.

Larger trusts can use resources more effectively to address the needs of the communities they serve. This includes developing teaching and learning support systems, an enhanced, enriching and engaging curriculum, staff development and progression opportunities, finance and human resources, and improved procurement opportunities.

Both Ebor and Nexus MAT have first-hand experience of the improved educational experience our learners have when we collaborate closely with other schools and trusts.

Both Trusts have specific specialisms which we believe will enhance the other, offering a mutually beneficial merger, improving opportunities and resource for both children and adults alike.

The scale at which we would operate as a larger, merged trust would make us more sustainable,

and will enable us to make more effective use of our shared resources.

What are the advantages of merging?

In exploring merger over the last few months, Trust leaders have defined the following reasons to progress to consultation now:

- **A shared ethos** – both Trusts have a strong set of values which are deeply held and complementary. The continuation of our work aligned to our values is vital to both Trusts: the focus on servant leadership and agency for our schools, and respect and support for the communities we serve
- **Maximising value of every pound** – the finances of the two Trusts together would give the opportunity for much greater economies of scale when it comes to things like procuring goods and services, and our shared resources
- **Long-term sustainability** – demand for primary school places is falling as a result of broader demographic changes in England. With funding for mainstream primary schools being largely pupil-based, this demographic shift is creating financial pressures for schools and smaller academy trusts. At the same time, the demand for SEND provision is rising. A merger would not only create longer-term resilience and sustainability for the trusts, but also will create the opportunity for offering more inclusive, ethical provision in localities that don't currently have enough SEND provision.
- **Playing to our strengths** – If the merger goes ahead, the new Trust would have a unique position as a result of its joint specialisms of mainstream primary and special. This would enable us to not only drive improvements in the provision of education for our learners, but also to highlight early years and SEND as two areas of national priority in education
- **Sphere of influence** – The merged trust would be one of the largest in the country. Together, we would have the size and strength to influence policy at a governmental level – improving outcomes not only for learners in our schools and settings, but across primary and special education nationally
- **Capacity creation** – By drawing on the resources of both Trusts, we'll be in a position to create short, medium and long-term capacity and capability, enhancing our ability to improve outcomes across our region – both within the Trust and our schools, and within our wider communities.

How long is this process likely to take?

The entire process from start to finish typically takes around 12 months. So, for our situation it is likely that Ebor Academy Trust and Nexus Multi Academy Trust would be able to merge from September 2026.

What would the new Trust be called?

If the merger goes ahead, our two Trusts will combine to create a new organisation. We believe it's right that this new organisation should have a new name, that reflects the strong profile and legacy of the two Trusts.

We will also create a new Trust vision and strategy that reflects our shared core values and ambitions for the future.

Who makes the final decision on the proposal?

The Board of Trustees/Directors of both Ebor Multi Academy Trust and Nexus Multi Academy Trust, will make the decision on whether the merger should proceed, based on the outcomes of consultation with all stakeholders. The proposal will then be referred to the Department for Education, which will consider the application and take the final decision.

Future changes, if the merger goes ahead

Will the Trust grow?

The DfE suggests that for Trusts to be sustainable, they should be of a size of 10 schools/7500 students or more. At this size, MATs can achieve true economies of scale. The newly formed MAT being proposed would consist of 47 schools and approximately 8500 students.

More schools may wish to join the trust in the future. There is a clear understanding between all the leaders that the growth strategy needs to be carefully planned. We'd also expect that any school/setting that wants to join us should share our vision, values and governance structure, as well as being willing to fully contribute to and learn from our other schools/settings.

Will the schools' names and/or uniforms change?

No, all schools will retain their current names and no changes will be made to school uniform as a result of the proposed merger.

What difference will pupils and families see/feel?

As with the academy conversion process, pupils and families should see and feel no material difference as a result of merger. We also anticipate that the impact for our employees will be minimal. Schools will continue to be led by the same leadership teams in the same way. Over time, it is anticipated this merger prevents risks arising for our schools, which means pupils and families continue to get the best possible experience at the point of accessing their education.

Finance and governance

Will there be any change to the finances of the individual schools?

No. The current financial arrangements between schools and the Trusts would remain in place post-merger. The only difference is that the new Trust would be the single authority responsible for all our schools' finances.

Who would the Trust be accountable to?

As is the case already for both Ebor and Nexus, the Trust would be directly accountable to the DfE and our accounts will be audited by external auditors. The DfE's Regional Directors will continue to oversee our activities, and we will continue to be subject to Ofsted inspections. Each school/setting would still have their own separate Ofsted inspections and gradings.

Who runs a Trust?

As is the case for both Ebor and Nexus Trusts now, the new Trust would be overseen by the CEO and supported by the central team on behalf of the Board of Trustees/Directors.

Our existing headteachers and senior leadership teams will continue to lead and manage their schools as they are currently doing. The Headteachers will work in collaboration with line managers and with each other and drive their establishments forward.

We would create a new fully representative Trust Board which would include an equal number of people from both Ebor and Nexus, as well as drawing on the skills of some of the existing governors and trustees.

Will there be changes to local governance if the Trusts merge?

No. Local governance arrangements will remain as they are and will not be affected by the proposed merger.

A lot of news reports I've seen are about failing schools being forced to be taken over as academies. What does this have to do with us?

A school that is failing can be taken over by an academy trust sponsor and turned into an academy with the aim of the sponsor driving improvement in the school. That doesn't apply to this proposed merger.

We want to make this move because we are two groups of high performing schools with strong leadership, and we want to continue to build on this.

The strength of the schools involved and the leadership capacity will enable the new Trust to support wider school improvement in our region without putting provision and standards at risk in our current schools.