



BTC Trust | Parkway | Bridgwater | Somerset | TA6 4QY

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www.bridgwatercollegetrust.org.uk

03 February 2026

Subject: Proposed Merger between Quantock Education Trust (QET) and Bridgwater Taunton College Trust (BTCT)

Dear Parents/Careers,

Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust (BTCT) has always been committed to delivering high quality education that strengthens our communities, raises aspirations and provides excellent opportunities for every child. As we continue to navigate a rapidly evolving educational landscape, we believe it is essential to consider strategic partnerships that will enhance the long term stability, resilience and impact of our Trust.

With this in mind, we are writing to let you know you that the Boards of Quantock Education Trust (QET) and Bridgwater Taunton College Trust (BTCT) have agreed to enter a period of joint exploration into the potential for a merger between our two Trusts. By working together, we believe we can build a stronger, more resilient Trust that is better able to support our schools, further develop our staff, and deliver on our collective ambition to provide an excellent education for every pupil.

This work is still at an early exploratory stage. No final decisions have been made by the Department for Education. However, both Boards believe there is significant potential in aligning our vision, values and strengths to improve educational opportunities for all pupils and the communities we serve across Somerset.

As part of the merger process, we are working closely with the Department for Education (DfE) and the Diocese who are very supportive of the project, as well as with wider stakeholders. We have been advised that the proposed Advisory Board date is currently scheduled for 23rd February. This is a regional panel that provides expert advice to the Regional Director, who ultimately decides whether merger proposals should proceed. Ahead of this, we will be entering a formal four-week engagement period, running from 03rd February to 10th March. This process will provide an opportunity for staff, parents and other stakeholders to ask questions and share feedback.

As part of wider planning, the DfE has also confirmed that it is actively considering how best to secure a strong and sustainable future for West Somerset College, which will not be part of the proposed merger. One of the options under consideration includes the proposed rebrokering of the College to Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership.

Bridgwater College Academy
Brymore Academy
Hamp Academy
Maiden Beech Academy
Otterhampton Primary School
Stanchester Academy
West Somerset College
Brookside Academy

Parkway, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 4QY
Cannington, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 2NB
Rhode Lane, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 6JB
Lyme Road, Crewkerne, Somerset TA18 8 HG
School Lane, Combwich, Bridgwater, Somerset TA5 2QS
Montacute Road, Stoke-Sub-Hamdon, Somerset TA14 6UG
Bircham Road, Minehead, Somerset TA24 6AY
Brooks Road, Street, BA16 0PR

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Why are we exploring a merger?

Our initial discussions and evaluations have highlighted strong alignment in our educational values, and a shared commitment to place-based improvement. Both Trusts are rooted in Somerset, and we believe that closer collaboration would allow us to:

- Create a stronger, more coherent and ambitious education provision that improves life chances, opportunities and long-term outcomes for children and young people across Somerset
- Strengthen support for teaching and learning across all schools
- Strengthen our collective state boarding provision
- Develop high-quality, coherent educational pathways from early years through to post-16
- Share expertise and best practice across a wider network of schools
- Make the most of our combined resources
- Enhance leadership development, curriculum coherence and career opportunities for staff
- Build a more resilient, agile and sustainable trust structure for the future

Our schools

Our schools serve communities across Bridgwater, Crewkerne, Minehead, Street, Bruton and surrounding areas. A merger would bring together 15 schools across the two Trusts, including primary, secondary and all-through settings, supporting approximately 7,500 pupils and over 1,000 staff. A full list of schools is shown in the table below:

Trust	Primary	Secondary
Quantock Education Trust	• Spaxton CofE Primary School • Stogursey Church of England Primary School • Merriott Primary School • Ashlands Church of England Primary School • St Bartholomew's Church of England Primary School • Haselbury Plucknett Church of England Primary School	• Haygrove School • Sexey's School
Trust	Primary	Secondary
Bridgwater and Taunton College Trust	• Brookside Community Primary School • Maiden Beech Academy • Hamp Academy • Otterhampton Primary School	• Stanchester Academy • Brymore Academy

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|--|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bridgwater College Academy (All-through) |
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Our aim is to create a Somerset-based trust that reflects our shared values and builds on the strengths of both QET and BTCT. This would support the development of a high-quality, local education pathway that provides continuity and opportunity for children from early years through to degree-level study. We believe that this cradle to career progression model will support stronger transitions, raise aspirations and help more young people realise their full potential.

We are equally focused on supporting the staff who make this vision a reality. We want to retain and develop excellent teachers and leaders, invest in high-quality professional development, and create an organisational culture that is collaborative, evidence-informed and focused on lasting impact.

A significant amount of work is already underway, including detailed due diligence by both Trusts across areas such as finance, leadership, governance, risk and school improvement. We are working closely with the Department for Education and the Diocese to ensure that plans are developed carefully and responsibly. We are also keen to hear any early questions or feedback from our school communities as we move through this phase.

How can I get involved or ask questions?

We know that parents, carers and staff may have questions at this early stage, and we want to make sure everyone feels informed and supported throughout this process.

To help with this, we have prepared a Frequently Asked Questions document, which answers some of the key questions you might have. This will be kept up to date as things develop. You can access this document via [Important Information - Bridgwater & Taunton College Trust](#). We welcome early feedback, questions or comments from all members of our school communities. If you'd like to get in touch, you can do so by completing this short form [STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT FORM – Fill in form](#).

We will also be holding a series of staff and parent briefings over the coming weeks, if required. We understand that proposals like this can prompt questions and uncertainty. Please be assured that both Trusts are approaching this work with care, transparency, and a strong focus on what is best for our pupils, staff and wider communities. We are committed to keeping you informed and involved at every stage.

With best wishes,

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Chair of QET Board

Andy Berry
Chair of BTCT Board

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