

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

<p>Why is a merger being considered and why now?</p>	<p>Over the past few months, stakeholders from both WDT and OMAT have been positively engaging in confidential discussions with counterparts regarding a potential Trust merger.</p> <p>Both of our Trusts have been approached in previous years by other Trusts to discuss a potential merger, and on each occasion, it has been determined that the opportunity has not been right.</p> <p>However, it has become increasingly clear to us both, and our respective Trust Boards, that this opportunity is overwhelmingly positive for our organisations.</p> <p>There are several convincing reasons which explain why we are considering a merger.</p> <p>First and foremost, from a teaching and learning perspective, the pooling of knowledge and resources provides access to a wider range of expertise and skills. A merger would provide extra capacity and widen the scope of potential with an increased pool of staff to carry out school improvement work.</p> <p>Meanwhile, the Department for Education encourages MATs to explore merging. Larger MATs are better equipped to withstand economic pressures, ensure long-term sustainability and continue to improve standards across the board.</p> <p>Both WDT and OMAT consider one another to be trusted partners with a strong, local footprint, committed to a set of values that are fully aligned.</p> <p>Together, we have already undertaken work together in partnership to drive school improvements, and our co-operation continues to grow from strength to strength.</p>
<p>Who makes the final decision on the proposal?</p>	<p>Any decision to proceed with the merger will be subject to consultation, due diligence, the approval of both Trust Boards, followed by approval from the DfE Regional Director.</p>



What does the due diligence process involve?	<p>Both Trusts independently carry out due diligence on each other. As part of this thorough process, a number of areas are explored. These include, but are not limited to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Legal, compliance & contracts2. Financial stability and compliance3. HR & organisational4. Premises, estates and property5. Quality of education, standards & safeguarding6. Reputation of the Trust and its schools
What is the proposed timescale?	<p>We anticipate that all due diligence and paperwork will be completed in the Autumn Term this year.</p> <p>Any decision will be informed by the completion of the due diligence process which is currently underway and a review of the feedback received from the consultation.</p> <p>Should a decision then be unanimously agreed by both Trust Boards to merge, approval will then be required from the DfE Regional Director.</p> <p>However, these processes can take some time and be subject to delays so we will keep stakeholders informed of any changes to these proposed timescales.</p>
What will this mean for staff?	<p>We believe that the merging of both Trusts will bring benefits for our staff.</p> <p>Through increased collaboration, staff will have access to enhanced best practice sharing, resources and training.</p> <p>If either of our respective Trust Boards suspected that this merger would not benefit our entire school communities, including staff, we would not be proceeding with the proposal.</p> <p>The merger presents no changes to existing staffing. However, as is the case with any merger, there is always a 'transferring' Trust and a 'receiving' Trust; in accordance with legal frameworks.</p> <p>Wade Deacon Trust is the 'receiving' Trust, and Omega Multi-Academy Trust is the 'transferring' Trust.</p> <p>This means that all staff employed by Omega Multi-Academy Trust will be moved over and employed by the newly formed Wade Deacon Omega Trust, subject to completion.</p>



	<p>Omega Multi-Academy Trust staff will be protected to transfer on the same employment terms and conditions, including pensions. This is legally covered by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations; commonly known as TUPE.</p> <p>Prior to a merger there would be a full staff consultation regarding TUPE for Omega Multi-Academy Trust staff, which is set out in the regulations. Further information on this will be shared at the appropriate time. We are committed to ensuring that this contractual change happens smoothly with no disruption.</p>
Why are we proposing one trust transfers to another, rather than creating a brand-new trust?	<p>We are proposing that one trust transfers to the other, rather than creating a brand-new trust, because this approach is simpler, quicker, and ensures better use of public funds:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. A trust, in legal terms, is registered as a company at Companies House. To create a new Trust would involve creating a new legal entity.2. Creating a new trust would require two separate legal transfer processes, which would significantly increase costs and complexity. By transferring one trust into another, only a single legal process is required. This makes the process less complicated, avoids duplication in legal fees, and ensures funding is retained for education, to the benefit of our schools and students.
Why is Omega Multi Academy Trust transferring into Wade Deacon Trust? What not the other way around?	<p>There are a number of factors that help us to decide which is the 'receiving trust' and which is the 'transferring trust':</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The number of employees / schools in each Trust is a key consideration; the trust with the larger number of employees / schools is simply more expensive to transfer. Therefore, it is more economical to transfer the trust with the smaller number of employees / schools into the trust with the larger number of employees / schools.2. Some technical factors also influence this decision, for example, the complexity of contractual arrangements that exist within the two trusts. 'PFI' (Private Finance Initiative) arrangements related to school estates and/or Facilities Management, can make transfers more complicated. It is less complicated, and therefore less costly, to transfer the trust with the fewest complicated contractual liabilities, into the trust with the least complex arrangements, leading to a quicker completion and lower legal fees.
Will staff have to reapply for their jobs?	<p>There are no plans for this. Should any organisational decisions need to be made later down the line, those members of staff affected would be consulted with directly, in line with employment procedures.</p>

Will staff be moved across locations?	There is no plan to change the location of staff members' places of work. However, for those who are interested in exploring new prospects, there may be opportunities to work across more settings and be part of a wider collaboration.
How will this support staff's professional development?	Following the merger, there will be increased opportunities for collaboration and professional development for all staff with the Trust, including through best practice and resource sharing.
What does this mean for our children and young people?	<p>The merger will not disrupt provision in any of our schools.</p> <p>There will be no changes to senior leadership and parent and/or carer relationships with their child's school will continue as normal. The staff, including senior staff, will continue to teach as they currently do.</p> <p>There will be improvements to the way we support teaching, for example, in the capacity to provide additional staffing resource, information technology and funding. There will also be enhanced opportunities for developing the condition of our buildings to provide first-class facilities for everyone.</p>
Will the school names change?	No however the new trust name, subject to approval will be Wade Deacon Omega Trust (WDOT)
Will there be any changes to the admissions criteria?	There will be no changes to determined admissions for September 2027 entry.
Will the curriculum change?	Alignment will take place over a sustained period of time.
Would the term and holiday dates change?	<p>There are no planned changes to term dates that have been published. Any changes will be communicated to parents and carers at the earliest opportunity.</p> <p>Both Trusts will continue to work with all schools to ensure dates best serve children and young people and staff within their community.</p>
Would there be a change in school uniform?	There will be no changes to school uniforms.



WADE DEACON
TRUST



omega
MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

How would governance arrangements work?	<p>Currently each Trust has its own Board of Trustees. Subject to the completion of a merger, this will change and there will be one Trust Board representing the newly merged Trust.</p> <p>The newly formed Trust Board would be made up of skilled and experienced individuals and would comprise of existing Trustees from both Trusts.</p> <p>As is currently the case, each school will continue to retain its own local governing body (LGCs), with responsibilities delegated from the Trust Board.</p>