

27thth November 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

RE: Proposal for Ryedale Learning Trust to merge with Areté Learning Trust

I want to let you know that the Trust Board is progressing a proposal with regard to a merger which will involve Ryedale Learning Trust merging with Areté Learning Trust. We take very seriously our responsibility to provide the best possible education for the young people in our schools and therefore have considered all options to strengthen and develop the Trust. As you know, we employed a recruitment consultant with a view to finding a strong CEO. Over the summer months and during this term, we have also explored the possibility of joining with another trust, which has involved considerable research and consideration. Strategically, this is partly in the context of national policy to build larger, more viable and sustainable trusts. We believe we now have an opportunity not only to protect our future but also to increase our school improvement capacity, enable greater collaboration and partnership working, maximise resources and support the delivery of high quality and inclusive educational provision.

Ryedale Learning Trust comprises Ryedale School, Norton College and three primary schools - Kirbymoorside, Helmsley and Sinnington. Following extensive discussion, it has become clear that there is considerable synergy between the two trusts, not least in terms of values, vision, the communities we serve and our sense of purpose. As a result of that, we have carried out very detailed Due Diligence and this has included our Board interviewing the CEO, Mark McCandless. Following this exercise, a decision has been made to suspend the recruitment process, as we are confident that, in Mark, we would have a strong, principled, strategic leader, passionate about education and with a proven track record of school improvement, were plans for a merger to be progressed.

The Board of Ryedale Learning Trust has also undertaken Due Diligence and is of the view that a merger with Areté Learning Trust would be beneficial to all parties. We are currently in discussions with the Department for Education about the merger process, on the basis that Ryedale Learning Trust would join Areté Learning Trust - the larger Trust still to be named Areté Learning Trust. Pending DfE approval, over the coming weeks, both parties will be consulting more broadly, including parents and other stakeholders. We'll send more information about how you can respond in due course.

Kind regards,



Mrs C. M. Brooker
Chair: Areté Learning Trust Board of Trustees

*"Being the best we can be by uniting schools,
communities and families, to secure success
for all young people"*

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