

# KING EDWARD VI COMMUNITY COLLEGE



*learning to flourish*

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14<sup>th</sup> January 2022



## Consultation on joining Education South West

### Introduction

The KEVICC Governing Board decided in December 2021 that the college's progress towards our strategic objectives would be enhanced if the College joins a larger trust of schools, Education South West (ESW).

As part of this decision, the Governing Board are launching a formal consultation. This will enable the board to explain why we think this move is the right one for our college at this time, to look in depth at the advantages that being part of a family of local schools will bring, and to listen to and discuss questions and feedback from all stakeholders. This consultation will inform a final decision by Governors on joining ESW.

#### **1. The National and Local Context**

Nationally, more than half of all students in the state sector now attend academy schools, and increasingly these schools are forming groups of schools to work together.

Locally, the vast majority of Devon secondary schools are members of school trusts or federations. In our local learning community area, 11 of the 12 primary schools are already in school trusts.

As schools have increasingly moved into trusts together, the role of the local authority in supporting schools has diminished. Going forward, schools will have to rely on each other for support and capacity to continually improve. You can read about school trusts and how they operate [here](#).

#### **2. Why do we think joining ESW is the right move for KEVICC?**

The central reason for seeking to join ESW is to accelerate and support the Governors' strategic vision for the College. Our vision is that we are...

*"A comprehensive college of lifelong learners. We are inclusive, kind and committed to the best for our students, supporting them to flourish."*

*Our key strategic priorities are:*

- 1. To be the **school of choice** for Totnes and its surrounding communities.*
- 2. To invest in **first-class facilities**.*
- 3. To provide **education that is excellent** and always improving.*

We believe becoming part of a trust of like-minded local schools will help us to better achieve this vision. The following section sets out how joining ESW will accomplish this.



### **3. Why are we seeking to join ESW?**

#### **i) Values and Ethos**

We are proud of our strong values and ethos, and governors are clear these will flourish as part of ESW. There is a clear alignment between our values and those of ESW, which will be the basis for a successful partnership.

ESW gives prominence to its values and ethos as a trust and makes this clear on their website [here](#). Schools within the Trust set their own ethos which is recommended and held by their own Local Governing Body. You can see how their different schools have their own distinct ethos [here](#).

#### **ii) Geography and Schools**

ESW is a local school trust that has a range of secondary and primary schools and one studio school. The trust already includes schools from Kingsteignton to Kingsbridge. We will be joining a family of schools educating students in the same area, from families facing similar challenges and with similar aspirations for their young people. We will be close enough together as schools to make collaboration meaningful, and we will be joining a trust with experience and expertise in secondary, primary, and 14-19 vocational education.

We already educate students who come to us from ESW schools in Dartmouth, Stoke Fleming, East Allington and Blackawton. Students come to us and leave us at times to Coombeshead, Dartmouth and Kingsbridge, as well as South Devon UTC. We are ideally situated in the centre of the ESW family of schools.

Education South West currently comprises Blackawton Primary, Christow Community Primary, Coombeshead Academy, Dartmouth Academy, East Allington Primary, Kingsbridge Community College, Kingswear Primary, Rydon Primary, South Devon UTC, Stoke Fleming Primary and Teign School. Full information is available on their website [here](#). The trust was formed from the merger in 2017 of Academies South West (based in Kingsbridge) and Templar Schools Trust (Teign and Coombeshead).

#### **iii) Recruitment and Retention of Staff**

Having staff who are secure, content and committed to achieving the best in their roles is the single most important driver of success for our students. We live in a fantastic part of the world. Our staff love living here. Because of this, colleagues who seek to progress their careers can be limited by availability of choice and opportunity. Equally, competition to secure new staff is fierce, and we want to be able to attract the best colleagues to work with our young people.

We want to make sure colleagues who wish to take on new challenges can do so without being lost from our local community of schools and the young people in them.

Being part of ESW will:

- Help us recruit new colleagues into schools, as potential colleagues can see future career opportunities mapped out for them.
- Give us a louder voice with training providers both locally and nationally.
- Enable better talent spotting and clearer career pathways that provide opportunities, for example through temporary experience, networking and secondment.
- Enable succession planning and emergency capacity in crucial areas to help with issues caused by national staff shortages.

ESW is big enough to enable promotion and retention opportunities that smaller trusts would not have, but locally based so colleagues can access career pathways without having to consider relocation.

ESW have key partnerships that enable them to recruit new colleagues and develop existing staff skills, for example through SWIFT (South West Institute for Teaching) and Teach First.

A trust the size of ESW has the advantage of being able to operate with economies of scale and be proactive to reduce the impact of staffing challenges by making sure every school has the best access to teachers and support staff to fill their needs.

#### **iv) School Improvement**

We want KEVICC to continually improve so that our students get the best education possible. We are proud to have been recognised by OFSTED as a good school - however we know there is always more to do, and that improvement takes a lot of hard work.

Our KEVICC staff are the key to the improvements we have already made and will make in the future. With the right support, improvement can happen more quickly, and can be better sustained into the future.

Schools improve through collaboration: when we give and receive support and share ideas. Colleagues get better through collaboration, and this in turn directly impacts our young people.

Being part of ESW will:

- Give opportunities to work closely with colleagues in partner schools facing the same challenges.
- Give the chance to, where appropriate, develop common collaborative approaches which release time to focus on excellent teaching and pastoral care.
- Give access to challenge and support from partners who have a shared commitment to our young people's success, and who educate local young people facing the same challenges.

ESW's school improvement model combines experience of inspection, recent leadership in local schools, and networks and communities of practitioners working together. ESW has excellent working knowledge of school improvement grounded in the experience of leadership of local schools, as well as inspection. School improvement is developed collaboratively and delivered by schools in the trust, to schools in the trust. Leaders at KEVICC have extensive experience of working with colleagues in ESW, and we share the same values and approaches to school improvement.

#### **v) Working Strategically**

All schools face common strategic issues that are most effectively addressed as a group, rather than in isolation. Our current foundation trust (the Dart Valley Learning Trust) was established in 2011 with the intention of other local schools joining. Unfortunately, this has not happened, and the opportunity to be part of a bigger group of like-minded schools has not been achieved.

All schools in our local area face similar challenges around funding, safeguarding and Special Educational Needs, to name but a few. We at KEVICC also face the significant strategic challenge of making considerable improvements to our school facilities.

Being part of ESW will:

- Give KEVICC more influence in strategic decision making at local and national level, including the struggle for increased funding to schools.
- Enable KEVICC to get the most from our site development plans. KEVICC will retain all capital receipts from its planned land disposal to spend on our facilities.

- Enable us to work with other local schools to tackle problems that affect young people across South Devon.

#### **vi) Value for Time and Money**

KEVICC currently operates as a standalone foundation trust school. Whilst this gives us freedom of choice, it means that we must provide and source services that multi-school trusts can do with greater efficiency.

The College, being a single purchaser, is less well placed to access economies of scale, and must procure specialist advice and support from a variety of sources, making accountability, and quality, less manageable.

Being part of ESW will:

- Ensure value for time and money by accessing economies of scale.
- Ensure the most efficient use of funding, so that money can be targeted directly to the quality of education for students.
- Provide high quality shared services that are responsive to KEVICC's needs.

#### **How to give your feedback and thoughts**

The views of students, staff, parents or carers and our community are important to us. You can give your response to this consultation by:

Emailing [consultation@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk](mailto:consultation@kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk)

or

Completing a consultation response form available on the college website at [www.kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk](http://www.kingedwardvi.devon.sch.uk)

We will be hosting consultation meetings for different groups in the coming weeks - please check the website for details.

The consultation closes on **Friday 18 February 2022 at 1700.**