



Response of the Board of Trustees of the Ninestiles Academy Trust to the public consultation conducted during February and March on proposals for the Sixth Form College Solihull to convert into an academy and join the Ninestiles Academy Trust.

The Ninestiles Academy Trust and the Board of the Sixth Form College jointly commissioned Clarke Associates to conduct an extensive public consultation exercise as part of the proposals to merge the organisations. A summary of this process and the outcomes it generated are attached as a separate report. The report shows that the legal requirements for public consultation under the legislation managing this process have been met. The final element to complete this is the publication of a formal response to the consultation from the Board of the Ninestiles Academy Trust and the Corporate Board of the Sixth Form College which has to be shared with the Secretary of State. This paper proposes the formal response which the Board of Trustees may wish to adopt.

1. The Board notes that a full consultation exercise was actively promoted using a range of approaches and media, and that all interested parties had many opportunities to respond. Interested parties included the staff, parents and students of both organisations. Additionally a comprehensive number of “prescribed persons” representing groups with local and national interest were given the opportunity to attend drop in sessions and share their views. Only a small proportion of these people chose to respond suggesting that there were no strong negative opinions about the proposals and that stakeholders felt well informed by information posted in the media and on websites.
2. Of those stakeholders who did complete the formal questionnaire, a significant majority expressed support for the proposals. The proposal to dissolve the Sixth Form College Corporation attracted the least positive responses but the majority of respondents were in favour.
3. There were no negative responses from the staff or parents representing schools within the Ninestiles Academy Trust. The conclusion drawn from this is that staff and parents felt well informed about, and comfortable with, the proposals, both from briefings prior to the formal consultation and during the process of the consultation.
4. A small number of minor concerns relating to timetables, branding and dress code etc raised by staff from the Sixth Form College have been addressed directly by the leadership of the college..
5. Overall the consultation has not raised issues which would require the Board of Trustees to reconsider the proposal. The Trust notes the importance of the Corporate Board of the Sixth Form College continuing to be proactive in their communications with stakeholders to ensure that the legal changes around dissolution are understood and that the inevitable concerns from staff, parents and students related to these are addressed.
6. To address any ongoing communication needs resulting from the proposals a joint communication strategy will be deployed by the Ninestiles Academy Trust and the Corporate Board following their meetings scheduled for 02 May 2017.