

## Parent FAQs – Merger

The process to merge Eko Trust and The Compass Partnership of Schools in the coming months has begun. This document is designed to answer some of the most common questions you may have and to help reassure you about what this means for your child and their school. If you have any further questions, please feel free to get in contact with us.

- **What is a merger?**

It is when two or more trusts formally and voluntarily combine to become a single legal and operational entity.

- **Have other trusts done it before?**

Yes. While there have not been that many mergers to date, there are a number of examples and it is becoming more commonplace as trusts seek to strengthen their organisations, build resilience and deliver even higher standards of education for their pupils.

- **Is this a ‘takeover’?**

No. From a legal point of view, one trust must join another, and in this case Eko would be joining Compass – but in reality this would be a true merger of the two Trusts, a partnership of equals where we will be stronger together, can share ideas with new colleagues, develop our staff and be even better for our pupils.

- **Why are Compass and Eko proposing that they merge?**

The most important reason is because it will open up opportunities for the Compass and Eko schools to deliver an even better quality of education and care to our pupils.

The new organisation would mean staff teams will have even more chances to share and learn best practice with new as well as existing colleagues, and expand their networks and CPD journey. It will also provide additional career development opportunities. All of this will mean our teaching quality will continue to be exceptional and it will help retention and recruitment. The strongest indicator that pupils will do well, be happy and fulfil their potential is the quality of teaching – this is central to the proposal that the Trusts merge.

A merger would also mean the Trusts will become a stronger, even more resilient organisation, of 25 schools, safeguarding what has been built so successfully. It would mean the Trusts continue to be in control of their futures, and keep all the elements that make their schools so special, and enhance opportunities for our staff .

- **Why have Compass and Eko decided to join each other?**

A merger of two organisations can only work if they are aligned on values, vision and ethos - Eko and Compass are a perfect match in that respect. They put children and young people first,

provide an excellent education to pupils, and are committed to narrowing the gap for the most disadvantaged.

Both organisations should also be of similar size and strength, and Compass and Eko are both strong, successful and well-run organisations, with comparable numbers of schools – currently 15 and 10 schools respectively. This means they will be equal partners.

Both Compass and Eko have also always been Trusts that look ahead so that they – and the schools that are part of them – are in the best possible position to thrive not just today but tomorrow, next week and in the months and years ahead.

Finally, the Trusts also already know one another well, working together on school improvement, and sharing an HR service. Eko and Compass are a great match.

The proposal to merge gives the Trusts the best opportunity to be both successful and secure for many years to come, while retaining the same values that have always been so important to them, and to also learn from one another.

Overall, the plan to merge has huge positive potential – for pupils, their families, our school communities and staff.

- **What does this mean for my child's school?**

Day-to-day operations within all schools will remain unchanged. Headteachers, uniform, priorities and values will remain the same.

However, the new organisation will create even more opportunities for staff teams, the chance to share best practice with new colleagues, and expand their networks and CPD journey, all in support of enhancing the educational experience for every child.

This is a very positive development full of potential – for pupils, families, school communities and our staff. Above all, we are clear that it will lead to all schools delivering an even better quality of education and care to every child and young person.

- **Will this affect teaching and learning?**

Day-to-day operations within all schools will remain unchanged. However, the new organisation will create even more opportunities for staff teams, the chance to share best practice with new colleagues, and expand their networks and CPD journey, all in support of enhancing the educational experience for every child.

- **Will this change affect teachers or wider staff?**

No. There will be no changes to staffing structures or contracts due to the merger. Staff will remain in their roles, and your child will continue to be taught and supported by the same trusted adults they know.

- **How will this benefit my child?**

This is a very positive development full of potential for pupils. The new organisation will create even more opportunities for staff teams, the chance to share best practice with new colleagues, and expand their networks and CPD journey, all in support of enhancing the educational experience for your child.

While keeping all the elements that make the individual schools so special, the merger will add to that by allowing staff to share and learn new approaches with new colleagues. This merger will lead to the schools delivering an even better quality of education and care to every child and young person.

- **When would the merger happen if were approved?**

There is plenty of work to do ahead of a merger happening, including achieving the approval of the Department for Education, which we hope will happen before the end of this academic year.. There would then be a period of preparation and legal work. If all goes smoothly, the two Trusts could come together formally from April 2026. All school communities will be kept updated as this matter progresses.

The decision was made to move ahead with the proposal to merge so that the Trusts have the best opportunity to be both successful and secure for many years to come, while retaining the same values that have always been so important to them.

- **Who will lead the new Trust?**

The new organisation, due to be called The Compass Eko Partnership of Schools, would be led collaboratively by John Camp and Rebekah Iyambo.

- **I would love to ask a question about this proposal? Can I do that?**

Absolutely – all questions and comments are very welcome at any stage of this process and all will be answered. We want to hear from you and your views are very important to us. If you have questions that haven't been addressed in this document, you can send them to [communications@compass-eko.org.uk](mailto:communications@compass-eko.org.uk). This will help Headteachers ensure you get a timely and full response.