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Castle Newnham School announces intention to join BEST

The growth of BEST looks set to continue after Castle Newnham School announced its intention to join our trust.

Castle Newnham is a federation of two schools – one primary and one secondary – coming together as a single school community to provide all through education to 1,400 pupils in the centre of Bedford.

BEST Chief Executive Officer Dr Alan Lee said: “I am thrilled that Castle Newnham School are intending to join a trust and that we are their preferred choice.

“Should Castle Newnham join BEST, this would extend and enrich our learning community, affording many opportunities for collaboration.”

Federation Principal Ruth Wilkes said: “We feel there are huge advantages to be had for our pupils and staff in being able to collaborate more formally with other successful local schools already in BEST.

“We are committed, at the same time, to retaining all that is excellent and valued about Castle Newnham and it was felt that BEST offered both a close alignment of values and approach of allowing schools to retain a sense of uniqueness within their own communities.”

In order to join a multi-academy trust such as BEST, a school needs to gain approval from the Department for Education.

Castle Newnham has this week launched a consultation period with its community ahead of making its official application.

Alongside this, we will be carrying out our own due diligence for the BEST Board of Trustees to consider in support of the school’s application.

It is hoped these stages will be completed in time for a decision by the DfE’s Regional Director early in the new year.

If approved, a comprehensive legal process will follow and we hope to welcome Castle Newnham School formally to BEST in September 2024.

Dr Alan Lee
CEO & National Leader of Education.



BEST Schools: BEST Nurseries, Campton Academy, Etonbury Academy, Gothic Mede Academy, Gravenhurst Academy, Langford Academy, Lawnside Academy, Pix Brook Academy, Robert Bloomfield Academy, Samuel Whitbread Academy and St Christophers Academy.

Company Registration Number: 07546141 VAT Registration Number: 120 7845 28 BEST has exempt charitable status by virtue of being an academy trust.