

15/11/2021

Amalgamation Priory and Garth Schools

Dear Parents and Carers,

I write to you following the announcement of our school's new name within the C.I.T Newsletter and to answer some questions raised by parents and carers regarding this decision and the amalgamation process.

Exciting times ahead for two Spalding Schools

Following the recently completed new wing at The Garth School which involved five new classrooms with external play spaces, two new hygiene suites and a playground extension, building works have now commenced at The Priory School. The project, due for completion in autumn 2022 (funded by Lincolnshire County Council and new government grants), includes the demolition of unsuitable and outdated buildings and remodelling within the existing school, creating a new nine-classroom block with enhanced therapeutic spaces and specialist teaching provision, enhancements to the external play areas and improved parking and mini-bus access.

As part of this process, the Priory School and Garth School will formally amalgamate becoming one school across two sites. These are exciting times for both schools where together they will work to become an 'all need' and 'all age' provider.

The schools have consulted with pupils, parents, carers, staff and friends of both the Priory and Garth schools regarding a new school name. Engagement within this process has been very positive with plenty of ideas and suggestions. There was a clear majority amongst stakeholders within final stages of the consultation and the Interim Executive Headteacher, Matthew Bloodworth-Flatt is very pleased to announce the name of the new school:

"From September 2022 the newly amalgamated school will be known as Tulip Academy Spalding. As the school will be based across two sites, each campus will have its own name and identity. The Garth School will be known as Springview Campus and the Priory School known as Waterside Campus.

I feel the new names really encompass many aspects of the local area and elements which are historic and pertinent to the town of Spalding.

I also very much like the description provided from the stakeholder who suggested the name Tulip Academy. They said: 'A tulip grows at its own pace, in its own time,

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but all are beautiful.' This description really resonates with the pupil led philosophy and approach we have within both schools. We appreciate that each and every one of our learners is an individual and we work to ensure we support each child in a way most suited to them allowing them to achieve their true potential."

Although the schools will be moving away from using the names Priory and Garth, there are plans to recognise and appreciate both school's history and what they represent.

We look forward to continuing to work closely with pupils, parents, carers, staff and friends of the schools over the coming month as they continue to develop the vision for the new school.

Questions asked by parents and carers regarding the amalgamation

Do the two schools need to change name?

Ultimately the two schools would need to adopt a new name even if that was just a variation to the current name. The Spalding Special Schools (Priory and Garth) are now academies and our name would need to reflect this. I appreciate for many the names Priory and Garth are symbolic to the schools and hold great sentimental value. As part of our extended discussion amongst leadership we felt it best to consult with all stakeholders and to put you at the forefront of this decision. The name *Tulip Academy Spalding* was the majority favourite. I feel that this new name comes at the perfect time acknowledging our new relationship and journey of supporting children and young adults with special educational needs in Spalding and the surrounding area.

Will my child move schools as of September 2022?

As of September 2022, we expect the two campuses to run in a similar manner as they currently are and therefore the day to day experiences your child receives shouldn't feel too different. Our Springview Campus (currently Garth School) will continue to cater for pupils ages 2 – 19 with the severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties. Our Waterside Campus (currently Priory School) will continue to cater for secondary aged pupils with moderate and/or severe learning difficulties. Acknowledging that both sites cater for pupils with severe learning difficulties there may be some planned transition between the two sites to ensure your child is receiving the education most suited for them. If this is the case a member of leadership will contact you to discuss any proposed plans. Parent / carer voice is an important component in these decisions. As the two sites relationship continues to grow stronger, there will be times when your child may access a particular lesson or activity on the opposite campus. Each campus will have its own specialised resources and these will be shared and available for all pupils. Ultimately our vision is to have stronger and better facilities for all pupils attending *Tulip Academy Spalding*.

Will there be a new school uniform?

As part of our rebrand there will be a new name and school logo. This will impact the designs we use on our branded clothing as of September 2022. Where possible we plan to keep colour pallet the same. This will mean families purchasing uniform can buy either school branded clothing or items from a local supermarket or supplier. At the time of conversation to *Tulip Academy Spalding* there will be no immediate need to purchase new school uniform items if the items you currently have fit your child and are still in good condition. Although both schools have a uniform policy we apply an element of flexibility appreciating pupils special educational needs and family circumstances as required. We will continue to work in this way as of next academic year.

The virtual form for parent and carer reflections remains live and can be accessed at the following link -

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=loM95ITEAki5q9duGED0A3KlsnYe_RBpUzAC16K52pUMUVINFZPS1q2MFVJM0IVNFdLWTE0VkpYRi4u

Thank you to all parents and carers for your input and contributions within this process so far. I hope you and your child enjoy designing a new logo for our school.

Yours sincerely



Matthew Bloodworth-Flatt
Executive Headteacher