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The Girls' Day School Trust is an institution dating back to 1872 and one of the UK's largest charities, with an income of £202m in 2009/10.

Since its early years, the charity, which owns 24 fee-paying schools and two academies, has used a logo depicting Minerva, the Roman goddess of wisdom. But this year it made a radical break from the past by ditching the goddess and adopting a new visual identity.

The decision followed a strategic review two years ago that revealed many people did not recognise Minerva or understand her relevance to the organisation. The review also set an aim for the trust, which is the country's largest education charity, to position itself as the leading authority on the education of girls, and said it needed a fresher, more professional look to achieve this.

"We were keen to have a look that reflects our dynamism and the strength of our network," says Amanda Riddle, its director of communications. Last summer, the trust gave the design agency Fonda a brief to achieve this.

The new logo had to sit below the logos of each school and academy, so it needed to complement rather than overpower them. The agency agreed Minerva's future was bleak. "People were wondering who she was," says Paul Fox, director of Fonda.



Roman overthrown *The new logo ditches the goddess of wisdom (right)*

The agency presented six concepts to a working group at the trust, consisting of Riddle, the chief executive Helen Fraser and two headteachers. The concepts were whittled down to two and the most popular bits of both were incorporated in the final design, which features the charity's initials in a white font on a deep, rich red, alongside the full name in grey.

"We wanted it to be robust and vibrant," says Fox, who believes having the initials in lower case gives them a friendlier feel.

The logo is flexible: schools can choose to use only the initials and can add the strapline "leading girls' education" if they want to provide a fuller explanation of what their parent charity does. "The new identity is a more

Girls' Day School Trust



accurate portrait of the organisation and is easier to implement consistently and effectively across a range of media," says Fox.

The rebrand cost £20,000. Riddle says she has been surprised how little fuss there has been about the loss of Minerva. "The only negative comment was from a classics teacher at one of our schools," she says. "Apart from that, everyone has been positive."

John Plummer

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