

‘A Multi-academy Trust that welcomes young people of all faiths and none and is committed to providing each of them with a high quality education and environment where Christian values and principles permeate all that is done.’

A Summary



Introduction from the Diocesan Director of Education/Chief Executive Officer

“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates - Deuteronomy 6 (ESV)

Teaching children is an essential human task that has always been at the heart of faith communities and especially of the Church of England.

Our family of schools in the Diocese of Liverpool has a long history of excellence combined with nurture, developing in young people the resilience and character needed for life.

Christian values are the foundation of British Values. Within the explicit Christian culture of our schools pupils flourish. Across the centuries, church schools have adapted themselves to the legislative framework given by Government. The current change to academy status for schools is as significant as the 1870 and 1944 Education Acts.

Across England the number of schools forming and joining multi-academy trusts (MATs) has grown significantly since the 2010 Education Act. The DfE expects that most schools which convert to academy status will join a MAT. The vast majority of dioceses around the country have already established multi-academy trusts. To continue without a diocesan MAT would risk the Church losing

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schools to non-church Trusts as they are faced with forced academy conversions.

Embracing the opportunities that this new framework provides the Diocese of Liverpool seeks not only to maintain our schools, 92% of whom are Good or Outstanding, but to extend, enrich and improve our family of schools. We believe that as a diocesan led Multi Academy Trust (MAT) we can, for the system as a whole, create stronger bonds of collaboration and cooperation, sharing good practice, addressing areas of weakness and offering increased opportunities for professional development.

After a period of consultation in 2016 and early 2017, it was clear that our schools wanted the Board of Education to take a strategic leadership role in

the academies programme. Further consultation looked both at the account in Genesis 18 of the visit to Abraham of three angels and also particularly at the icon of this event painted by Andrei Rublev to identify the core values of the Trust:

- Collaboration
- Valuing the local
- Valuing Difference
- Inclusion

We believe that we can create a Trust in which our schools will thrive under the leadership of headteachers, supported and challenged by local governing bodies and accountable to the board of trustees. We are confident that this can be achieved whilst at the same time ensuring that all of our family of schools benefit from high levels of collaboration.

Strong structures across three hubs will ensure a high level of accountability matched with only the challenge required to enable

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local leadership to flourish. Central services will ensure value for money and the ability to monitor from a distance. A strong school

improvement function will give the capacity to evaluate schools and intervene where needed.

Jesus said ‘Let the children come to me.’ (Mt 19)

We believe that we are fulfilling this command when we enable children of all faiths and none to flourish in our schools. The Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust has an important role to play in improving the attainment of pupils across the Diocesan region.



Father Richard Peers

*Liverpool Diocesan Director of Education and
Chief Executive Officer*

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Background

Recent legislation (particularly the 2010 Education Act) and various other external factors are leading to many more schools becoming academies. The Board of Education believes that it must engage with these developments in order to ensure Church schools flourish moving forward.

In light of this, and for the following three fundamental reasons, the Board approved the development of a Diocesan Multi-academy Trust:

1. To keep the family of Church of England schools together.

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2. To keep Jesus at the heart of those schools.

3. To protect and improve on the 92% of good and outstanding schools that we currently have.

The Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust (LDST) will grow over the next five years and there will be a place for any Church school wishing to join. The Board will not force any schools to join the Trust.

There is considerable support from Headteachers and Governors across the Diocese for this strategic approach and it is likely that between eleven and fourteen schools will be part of the first wave of schools joining the LDST in October. The expectation is that many more will join relatively quickly thereafter. There is now an acceptance from local authorities that schools will continue to convert to academy status and will do so by joining multi-academy trusts, such as the LDST. Each local authority is fully aware of the Diocesan strategic approach and the Trust will continue to work collaboratively with them. There will be a number of services currently provided by local authorities, or local authority trading companies, that the Trust will be responsible for as part of its support to member schools.

Governance and Structure

The Trust Board

There are five members of the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust Board.

Directors

The Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust will have a single Board of Directors responsible for the whole Trust. The board will include nine non-executive directors, and the Chief Executive Officer, and will be

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accountable to the Department for Education for all schools within the Trust. Seven directors have been appointed to date.

Parochial Church Council (PCC).

One of the key roles of PCCs is to protect the Christian foundation of Church schools. The PCCs in the Diocese of Liverpool achieve this by either nominating or appointing foundation governors for their school. This is a fundamental and crucial responsibility which has, historically, ensured and secured the Christian ethos and presence of Church of England Schools throughout the country. The Liverpool Diocesan School Trust will, for converted schools, become the

appointing body of foundation governors, as the Board of Education currently is in the vast majority of cases. The process will remain unchanged in that local, PCC nominated people will, wherever possible, be appointed as foundation governors. When a school joins the Liverpool Diocesan Schools Trust it will remain part of the Diocesan family of church schools. The links between PCC and school should remain unchanged with the church including the school in its prayers and having school matters as a regular PCC agenda item.

Local Governing Bodies (LGB).

Each academy will continue to be led by their local governing body (LGB) with delegated decision making powers set out in a trust Scheme of Delegation. The Governors will be appointed by the Board of Directors and will include PCC, staff and parent representatives. The LGB in each school will be responsible for the day-to-day operational matters. The Trust will preserve the local nature of its schools and their traditional place at the heart of each community. It will also preserve the structure such that the

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governance at both Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools will remain as close to the current position as possible.

The core business of each Local Governing Body will be:

- Christian Ethos/Character of School
- Ensuring that denominational education and worship as defined in the Trust Deed are inspected in accordance with the requirements of Section 48 of the Schools Inspection Act 2002
- Staff recruitment
- Reviewing and monitoring the School Improvement Plan
- Monitoring and reviewing Progress & Attainment
- Preparing and monitoring the budget ensuring money is spent well and achieving value for money
- Reviewing and monitoring the Curriculum
- Ensuring safeguarding and safety of pupils
- Health and safety
- Challenging and monitoring the performance of the academy
- Supporting the Headteacher and SLT and continuing to act as a critical friend and provide support and challenge.
- Admissions
- Performance management of the Headteacher

Staffing

The LDST Board of Directors will be the employers of all staff in member schools.

TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment)) regulations apply and the LDST will retain the nationally and locally agreed terms and conditions of service as a minimum standard for the employment of all members of staff, this includes the protection of pensions. The LDST will work closely with Unions during

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consultation and once schools join the Trust, to ensure staff are protected and supported throughout the process.

Academies & Employment

Q. If a member of teaching staff is TUPE'd from a community school to an Academy which does not follow STP&C arrangements and then moves from the Academy back into the maintained sector is their service considered continuous or not?

A. It will depend on whether the continuous service referred to is for the purposes of calculating redundancy payment or for the purposes of calculating a contractual payment, such as sick pay.

Redundancy Calculations

In relation to redundancy calculations, any service with an 'associated employer' can be counted as continuous service. Local Authorities, school governing bodies and academies are all associated employers. Therefore, a member of teaching staff could move (whether through TUPE or otherwise) from a voluntary aided, voluntary controlled, community or foundation school to an academy and back again, or indeed to another academy, without affecting their continuous service for redundancy purposes.

Contractual payments

For teaching staff, the situation is slightly different where the continuous service is used to calculate contractual payments such as sick pay. When a member of staff TUPE transfers from a maintained school to an academy, their continuity of service will transfer with them. However, if a teacher then decides to move from the academy back to a maintained school, or to another academy, their continuity of service for these purposes will be broken. However, it

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may be that the teacher can agree with their new employers that their continuity of service will be protected.

Support Staff

Their continuity of service for calculating sick pay would be maintained in these circumstances

Summary

The schools, like our Parishes, will be given as much autonomy as possible.

Schools will keep their own identity; there will be no name changes, no new branding, no corporate image or change of uniform. The intention is that children will be unaware of any change. There will be no excessive executive salaries and resources will be targeted where they are most needed in schools. There will be no change to admissions and schools will remain at the heart of their local community, serving their local community, and they will continue to be governed by people from the local community, including parents. The links between parish and school will be maintained and where possible enhanced. Church Schools are at the centre of the Church's mission to the nation. This recognises the importance of the role of the parish and church school, with the school, the worshipping community and incumbent in partnership at the heart of parish life. The Trust will also encourage existing local collaborations and new ones where appropriate. There will be no change to any staff members' terms and conditions, including pensions.

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The Board strongly supports the view that Headteachers should run schools and they should be supported, professionally and pastorally, in doing that. The Diocesan MAT will provide a structure that enables Heads to focus on teaching and learning in their own schools whilst

at the same time sharing excellence with each other in a collaborative and inter-dependent way.

The Trust will be there for schools to join if or when they're ready to – no school will be forced, or even expected, by the Diocese to join the Trust. There are already Church of England school led MATs that are supported by, and that remain very strong members of, the Diocesan family of Schools. The expectation is, working side by side, that both the LDST and the School led MATs can flourish over time for the benefit of all schools involved.

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Trust Prayer

We thank you, God of Love, for the gift of children,
bless the work of our Trust, that in all we do
young people may grow in wisdom and stature,
and so come
to know you,
to love you
and to serve you,
as Jesus did.

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We make our prayer in his name who is God

with you and the Holy Spirit, now and for ever.