



Tel: 0114 274 5597

Email: enquiries@st-tc.co.uk

Web: www.st-tc.co.uk

17th January 2022

Head of School: Louise Clements

Dear Parents and Carers

Proposal to join St Clare Catholic Multi Academy Trust

We are excited to share good news of our work across the Diocese of Hallam, to create our new, Catholic multi academy trust. We are writing to you because all of our families, parents and carers are central to our shared vision.

We are stronger together. We are writing because we all want to continue to ensure the best possible Catholic education for all of your children now, and in the future. This consultation process both celebrates and underlines our shared vision and purpose, and helps us to take the next steps together.

We have lots to update you on since we last wrote, in April 2021, about the Multi Academy Trust programme in the Diocese of Hallam. After careful consideration and discussion, the Governing Body of St Thomas of Canterbury has been exploring the proposal for the School to join a Catholic multi academy trust (MAT) with other Catholic schools in the Diocese of Hallam.

The Governing Body of St Thomas of Canterbury is now undertaking consultation with parents and carers, staff, local parishioners and other local schools. We really welcome your views on this proposal.

Two new Catholic multi academy trusts have been established by the Diocese of Hallam called St Clare Catholic Multi Academy Trust and St Francis Catholic Multi Academy Trust with the view to St Thomas of Canterbury joining St Clare Catholic MAT together with other schools in our family group. Our proposed date for joining is 1st March 2022.

We are being supported on this journey by a team of Diocesan officers and by the newly appointed Interim CEO of St Clare Catholic MAT, Steve Davies, and the St Clare Board of Directors, Chaired by Kev Smith. The consent of Bishop Ralph and the Diocesan Trustees, which is a requirement before any Diocesan school can join a MAT approved by the Diocese, has been given.

Steve Davies, Interim CEO for St Clare is also working closely with Heidi Adcock, Interim CEO for St Francis Catholic MAT, which will be the other Catholic MAT opening at the same time in the Diocese of Hallam. Steve and Heidi made this comment:

“We are really looking forward to working with our schools on the next stage of this exciting journey. The challenges of the last two years have brought home just how much we rely on strong relationships between our schools and we are excited to build on those informal partnerships that already exist so that every school benefits from and contributes to the work of our wider Catholic family. Blessed with so much, working together we can also unlock new resources to make a difference to our teachers, staff and governance. In this way we will enhance the distinctive Catholic education provided by each school so that every child and young person can reach their full potential.”

A summary of all the benefits of this proposal and some helpful frequently asked questions are set out in an FAQ document which is available on the Diocese of Hallam website hallam-diocese.com. We will also make a hard copy available on request from the school office. We set out below some of the main points about this proposal.

What is a Catholic Multi Academy Trust?

A Catholic Multi Academy Trust is a company set up by the Bishop to preserve, develop and protect Catholic education in the Diocese through providing support and resources within a single legal entity with shared common purpose.

Why is this being considered?

We believe being an Academy as part of St Clare Catholic MAT will give us greater opportunities for working more closely with other local Catholic schools and the wider community of schools and will secure Catholic education for the long term.

What are the advantages?

The Government is clear that strong Multi Academy Trusts are an effective mechanism for ensuring the continued growth and sustainability of academies. We feel that the additional resources, expertise and economies of a MAT model would enable the Governors to better secure the long-term future of our School.

In addition, it will strengthen our Catholic identity, enabling the pooling of some resources. Vital new resources which will improve teaching and management practice within the schools.

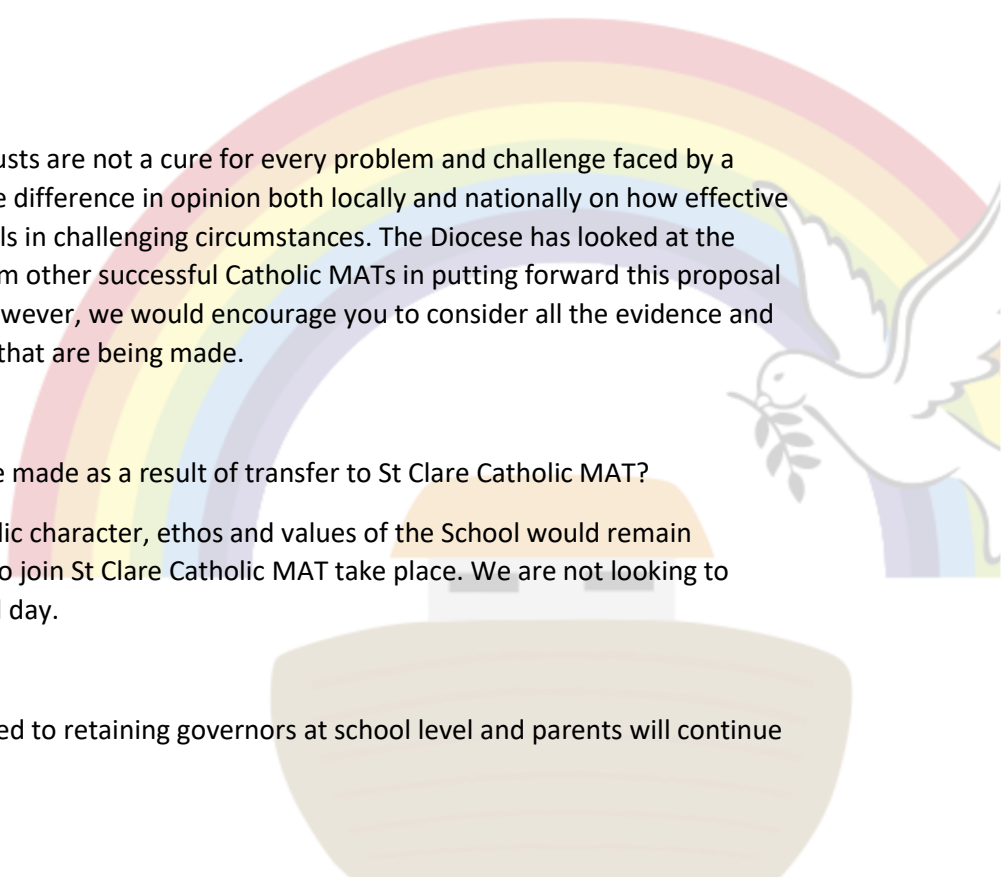
What are the disadvantages?

We know that Multi Academy Trusts are not a cure for every problem and challenge faced by a School and we are aware of some difference in opinion both locally and nationally on how effective MATs can be in supporting schools in challenging circumstances. The Diocese has looked at the evidence and lessons learned from other successful Catholic MATs in putting forward this proposal for two strong Catholic MATs. However, we would encourage you to consider all the evidence and check the accuracy of assertions that are being made.

Will any changes to the School be made as a result of transfer to St Clare Catholic MAT?

Please be assured that the Catholic character, ethos and values of the School would remain unchanged should the proposal to join St Clare Catholic MAT take place. We are not looking to change the uniform or the school day.

St Clare Catholic MAT is committed to retaining governors at school level and parents will continue to be represented at that level.



How to take part in the consultation process

We have set up a dedicated email address to gather views. Please email entering your school name and location in the subject box to: transfer@hallam-diocese.com

Whilst we do not anticipate responding to each and every communication, we will provide answers to questions by updating the FAQ document. Please be assured your views will be taken into consideration.

The consultation will close on Friday 11th February 2022. The Governing Body will meet after this date to consider responses and decide how those responses should inform and enable the School's future.

Yours sincerely,

Judith Wilde
Chair of Governors

Louise Clements
Headteacher

