

Do everything in love



1 Corinthians 16:14

Learning to Love, Loving to Learn

St Mary's School

**St. Mary's Church of England
Primary School**

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16th September 2022

Head Teacher Rachel Tainsh B.A.
(Hons) P.G.C.E

Dear Parents and Carers,

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED ACADEMY CONVERSION

Following many months of research, the Governors at St Mary's Church of England Primary School have taken a decision to consider applying for academy status and join Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT). In considering applying for academy status, school leaders and governors have met with representatives from the Chester Diocesan Board of Education, from Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT) and have talked to other schools who are already part of CDAT and to other local schools. CDAT is the multi-academy trust that was originally established by The Diocesan Board of Education for schools in the Diocese who wish to take advantage of the academy model. We strongly believe this would benefit our pupils and staff enormously.

RATIONALE

In the publication of the recent School White Paper, the Government vision is for all schools to join multi academy trusts by 2030. In anticipation of this, the Governors have spent some time looking more closely into whether an academy model would be in the best interests of the children, teachers and staff at St Mary's Church of England Primary School. The Governors are keen that St Mary's Church of England Primary School have full control of when and how they go forward with academy status, without pressure from Government departments. As one of a number of schools currently considering academy status, our Governors consider that joining Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT) now will be a positive step for the school.

THE PROPOSAL

The Governing Body at St Mary's Church of England Primary School believes that the best plan for the school is to become an academy and join Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT).

As a Church school, we embrace any opportunity to strengthen our links with the Diocese of Chester, which we would do as an academy within the Trust. The Diocese already work closely with St Mary's Church of England Primary School and have



provided high-quality support in areas such as governance, school improvement etc. Becoming an academy would give us increased access to this support from a partner that we know and with whom we share a common Christian ethos. CDAT have received significant interest from other schools across the Diocese who would like to join the Trust; demand has been high especially from those schools that are judged to be Good or Outstanding. Strengthening our partnerships with these schools would have clear benefits for St Mary's Church of England Primary School and the additional support available through a Trust model would be an advantage of becoming an academy.

The proposal is that St Mary's Church of England Primary School converts to academy status and joins Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT) on 1st July 2023.

QUESTIONS AND FEEDBACK

Governors are now entering the consultation phase. We know that the debate around academies has been predominant in recent times, and we would like to make sure that the entire school community has had an opportunity to ask questions about what academy status means for St Mary's Church of England Primary School. The consultation period will run from **16th September 2022 to 20th October 2022**.

We are therefore holding a meeting whereby we would welcome the opportunity to talk to you about academy status. The meeting will be held at the school as follows:

On Tuesday 4th October 2022

- Parent/Carer meeting 5.00pm - 6.00pm

We have included a feedback form (Appendix A) with this letter - we would be grateful if you could submit to us by **4.00pm on 20th October 2022** with any questions, comments, or concerns you may have by email at consultation@st-marys.halton.sch.uk. You can also leave any paper feedback forms in the box at the school office and forms received will be kept completely anonymous.

We also enclose, with this letter, an outline of the CDAT Vision (information also available at www.cdat.co.uk) and a copy of some Frequently Asked Questions which you may find of interest. Information about the consultation and the feedback form can be found at <https://st-marys.academyconsultation.co.uk/>. Any future information, feedback or responses can also be found on this website. The website will go live on 16th September 2022. We will be consulting on academy status with staff in school on 4th October 2022.

In order for us to gather as broad and deep a range of opinions as possible, we strongly urge you to participate by attending the organised information session. If you are unable to attend this session, but would like further information or would like to respond to our consultation, you can contact the school in the following ways:

- Telephone: 01928 565995
- Email: consultation@st-marys.halton.sch.uk
- Suggestions box: Leave paper feedback in the office at main entrance



Finally, we would like to thank you for your continued support of St Mary's Church of England Primary School. We believe that we have a truly wonderful school here and we are committed to ensuring we provide the very best for our family.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Rachel Tainsh
Headteacher



Mrs Theresa Worrall
Chair of Governors

