



**OUR LADY AND ALL SAINTS CATHOLIC MULTI-ACADEMY COMPANY  
PUBLIC CONSULTATION SUMMARY, NOVEMBER 2019**

**Outcome of Public Consultation**

The Governing Body of each of the following schools published their intention to convert to academy status as part of the Our Lady and All Saints Catholic Multi-Academy Company:

- Guardian Angels
- Our Lady of Compassion
- Our Lady of the Wayside
- Our Lady's
- St Edward's
- St Andrew's
- St Anne's
- St Anthony's
- St Augustine's
- St George and St Teresa
- St John the Baptist
- St Peter's
- St Wilfrid's

Each school consulted with the following stakeholders:

- Parents
- Staff
- Students
- Parishes
- Other Schools
- Local Authority

Stakeholders were directed to a Consultation Information for Parents and Parishioners leaflet posted on each school website as well as invited to attend a Consultation Meeting at each school. Furthermore, all stakeholders were invited to respond to [academies@bdes.org.uk](mailto:academies@bdes.org.uk) throughout the whole consultation period.

The consultation period took place between Monday 16th September 2019 and Monday 14th October 2019.

This is a summary of the questions asked during the public consultation period from all thirteen schools. Questions submitted by email have been answered individually. All questions and comments received during the consultation period will be fed back to the Governing bodies of all thirteen schools.

## **1. Rationale**

### **Why are we proposing to become Academies?**

**The Trustees of the Archdiocese of Birmingham have requested that all schools under the Diocesan Trust Deed work towards becoming 'academy ready.' This means that the Archdiocese sees the long-term future of its schools as forming and being part of a multi academy company with other Catholic schools in their local area.**

On the 1st September 2019 there were 114 schools' within the Archdiocese of Birmingham operating within 18 Multi-Academy Companies (MACs). In addition, John Henry Newman operates as an academy from pre-MAC model arrangements.

The existing MACs differ in size, but the desired model consists of a common strategic and structural framework of secondary schools aligned to primary feeder schools. This reflects the aim to structurally consolidate the relationship between partner schools as well as providing a secure and effective mechanism for promoting outstanding Catholic education across the 3-19 age range.

Each governing body expressed an interest in developing a MAC with this group of schools which are geographically located together. Headteachers and Chairs of Governors have been working as a group for over eighteen months to develop further the relationships between schools, in advance of the further work required to form this MAC. After our proposed conversion on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2020, other schools may join that are not currently part of this process.

The proposed name of the new MAC will be Our Lady and All Saints Catholic Multi-Academy Company.

## **2. Catholic Education in our Schools**

### **Will the teaching of the Catholic faith (Catechism) be diluted over a period of time?**

The MAC will be set up to continue the mission of the Church in making Christ known today. The pupils in our schools will continue to receive a Catholic education. Across the MAC, there will be greater opportunities for the development of Catholic Life through joint RE teacher training, Lay Chaplaincy, collective worship and charitable outreach, all of which occur in other Diocesan MACs.

### **Are there statistics that show that schools in academies outperform schools not in academies?**

Government reports currently available do not show clear improvements across all Academies in England, however, conversion to a MAC is greater than just performance data. This is about ensuring the future of Catholic schools by working together and strengthening Catholic education provision within our local communities. The Birmingham Diocese is beginning to see data which show positive outcomes in pupil results. We are also beginning to see more Catholic pupils staying in Catholic education through closer educational relationships between primary and secondary schools; a greater retention of Catholic staff and leaders within Catholic education and greater support for Catholic Life and the mission of the Church.

### **Will the school still receive OFSTED inspections?**

Schools in the MAC are still subject to the standard OFSTED inspections. Schools will also continue to be inspected under Canon Law through a Diocesan Section 48 inspection. The results of inspections will continue to be made public to keep our communities informed of the standards of education provision in our schools.

### **Will school exams be the same?**

The MAC will follow the National curriculum and SATs, GCSEs and A Levels will continue.

### **Is there going to be a clash of interests? Staff development & children's progress?**

Staff development is crucial to ensure we maintain high standards of education across our schools. Investment in staff training will continue to be a priority for the MAC. All employees, teaching and support staff, are being consulted throughout this process and we will work closely to address any concerns that are raised and show the potential benefits of working within a larger family of catholic schools. Our concern that each child is given every opportunity to reach their potential remains foremost in our minds. We do not believe there is a clash of interests.

### **Worried about losing the personal/nurturing/family feel of our school?**

The MAC will ensure the unique character and strength of each school is maintained. Schools will continue to serve their individual communities where the Catholic ethos places our children firmly at the heart of everything we do. Parish Priests will continue to be involved in school life with their continued role on each school's LGB.

### **Will the children be informed?**

There will be little obvious affect to the pupils, so the children will be informed in an appropriate manner as talking about conversion to academy status will not mean much to the pupils and may make them worried.

## **3. Governance**

### **It is less than the year until the new MAC opens in September 2020. What systems are in place to ensure that the conversion process is successful:**

The Secretary of State for Education is the person who approves conversion to the MAC. The process to obtain approval is very rigorous. Working Parties, supported by the Diocese, are in place to develop plans which will be subject to detailed scrutiny from the Department for Education (DfE) Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), and Regional Schools' Commissioner (RSC). Our MAC has appointed an experienced Project Manager who has recent, relevant MAC conversion experience. She will provide us with valuable guidance on our journey to becoming an Academy Company.

### **Who appoints the Catholic Senior Executive Leader (CSEL) and Chief Finance Officer (CFO)?**

The Diocese will be involved in the appointment of both these positions along with the Shadow Board of Directors. Governors and Headteachers from across schools in the MAC will be involved in this process.

### **Is there a Shadow Board already in place?**

Applications for the role of Shadow Board Director will be reviewed and appointments will be made on the skills and experience people are able to bring to this role. The role of a Director is entirely voluntary. Operating to current best practice and guidance from the Charities Commission, DfE and the Catholic

Education Service, employees will not be appointed to a Director role. For further information, detailed role descriptions are available on the Diocesan website.

### **How will parents' views be represented and heard by Directors?**

When the MAC is formed communication between governing bodies and directors will be a priority to ensure information flows in both directions. Headteachers will work closely with the CSEL which will ensure schools are represented at Board level. Systems established in other MACs include Board Director and Chairs of Governor meetings; MAC wide committees on key areas such as Standards and Performance, Catholic Life, Finance; Clerks reporting between Governors and the Board; a link Board Director appointed to each school. The MAC will explore the most suitable way to ensure our school communities have a voice in the future of the MAC.

### **Do Board of Directors make decisions that impact on school day-to-day life?**

Directors are responsible for the strategic development of the MAC. Headteachers will continue to manage schools on a daily basis. A Scheme of Delegation,

[http://www.bdes.org.uk/uploads/7/2/8/5/72851667/version\\_4\\_scheme\\_of\\_delegation\\_clean\\_01.05.19.pdf](http://www.bdes.org.uk/uploads/7/2/8/5/72851667/version_4_scheme_of_delegation_clean_01.05.19.pdf)

outlines the Operational and Governance roles and responsibilities within the MAC and each school.

### **Who will be responsible for appointments of staff in a school?**

The Board are responsible for the recruitment of Senior Leadership positions across the MAC, including Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher, Assistant Headteacher, Head of Religious Education and Lay Chaplain. Directors will work with the LGB and School leaders to ensure the right appointments are made for the communities each school serves.

### **Would you employ staff who are not qualified like some schools?**

Our staff are the most important asset in the education of our children. It continues to be our intention to recruit the best teachers and there is no intention to change our employment criteria.

## **4. Funding**

### **Where does the funding come from?**

Currently funding is received from the Local Authorities. As an Academy the same funding, outlined in the National Funding Formula (NFF) is received directly from Government through the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA). The MAC will have full control of the funds and will ensure that we can achieve greater value through the purchasing power of the combined group of schools. All savings are retained within the MAC for continued investment on educating our children.

School Condition Improvement Funds received by a school before conversion, will be retained to carry out the works for which it was allocated.

Pupil Premium Funding will remain with the pupil and continue to be allocated to each school in full. Any school specific funding, e.g. Sports Premium, successful Lottery Grants will be invested in that school.

Parents and Carers are still able to raise funds specifically for their schools through their PTA.

### **What financial controls are in place in the MAC?**

After discussions with LGBs and Headteachers, budgets for each school will be set by the Board. Headteachers and LGBs are responsible for the management of their budget and the CSEL and CFO will work closely with each school to ensure finances are managed in line with expectations and the Scheme of Financial Delegation, which is reviewed annually in line with the updated Academies Financial Handbook.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/academies-financial-handbook>

The MAC is a Charitable Company and there is a requirement to have audited accounts published annually. There is also oversight from the ESFA and Diocese on behalf of the Trustees. There will be a Board Finance Committee and separate Audit Committee who will hold the Accounting Officer (CSEL) and CFO to account for the financial management of the MAC. The Accounting Officer (CSEL) is accountable ultimately to the Secretary of State for the control and management of what are Government funds.

### **Will an academy receive any extra money?**

Per Pupil funding remains the same. On occasion, the DfE introduce additional funding for MACs which is subject to a bidding process. MACs in the Diocese have been successful with grants of up to £165,000 being secured.

Additionally, our MAC will receive a School Condition Allocation of £115.15 per pupil which is used to maintain and improve the estate – school buildings, boilers, roofing, windows.

This money would be held by the Board of Directors and allocated based on need with each school having an asset management plan (AMP).

### **Do we receive anything free from the Local Authority at the moment that we would have to pay for as a MAC? Will the Local Authority mark up costs of services when we are a MAC?**

We pay for all services. Local Authorities do have different charges for Academies however we will be able to negotiate future services with other suppliers if there is better value and an improved service available.

### **Do we get funding to help the MAC process?**

There is a Government grant of £25,000 for each school to cover the costs of setting up the MAC. This pays for legal and property services, new finance, budgeting and payroll systems and any additional support required to create the MAC.

On-going, there will be a MAC Central Team taking on areas that were covered by the Local Authority. This team will support all the schools within the MAC and there will be a contribution, as schools currently do with the Local Authority, to fund this central provision.

## **5. Our Schools as Academies**

### **Will the school times and term dates change?**

There is no intention by the MAC to change the timing of the school day, such decision-making will continue to take place at school level.

Our schools are based within three Local Authorities, each of which can set their own school year. We will not try to add another layer of confusion to families by setting different term times. It will mean that schools may continue to be open on different days.

### **For Year 6 transfers, can we apply for other schools within the new MAC?**

Admissions criteria remain the same and you will still have to apply for secondary places via the Local Authority. Your current Catholic feeder secondary school will remain the same.

### **Will those primary schools who are a one form entry stay as a one form entry?**

No plans for any changes other than at St Augustine's which is already being considered locally. Should this move to two form entry it go ahead, it would be funded by the Local Authority through Basic Need funding and not by the MAC. The Local Governing Body at St George and St Teresa have also expressed an interest in becoming a two-form entry school.

**Is there a new curriculum to be introduced?**

Although we will have the option to devise our own curriculum if we feel it is necessary, we intend to continue to use the National Curriculum. Over time we may move away from it if we deem it necessary, but this will only be to enhance the curriculum to benefit our children.

**Will there be cross- academy policies?**

There may be a requirement to have MAC wide policies, e.g. H & S, safeguarding, child protection, however other policies would have to reflect the local community which the school serves.

**If the majority of parents through the consultation process felt becoming an academy and joining Our Lady and All Saints MAC was the wrong thing to do, what would happen?**

We have entered a period of consultation and have been listening to the views of parents and parishioners. Governors will consider all feedback before taking the next steps towards the creation of the MAC. If an LGB believes from representation by parents and carers that they wish to reflect further, then they can consider joining the MAC later.