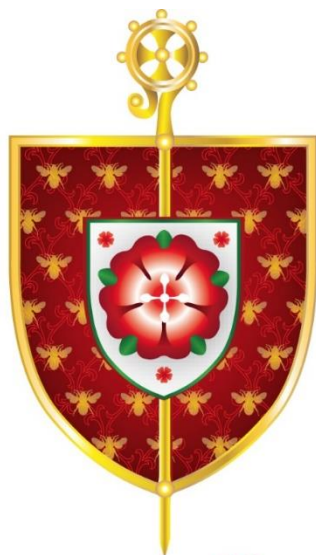


Diocesan Department for Education



DIOCESE OF SALFORD

Application guidance, key dates and contacts for schools planning to join a Catholic Academy Trust

Stay with us, Lord, on our journey

Revised - January 2022

Diocese of Salford guidance – Joining a Catholic Academy Trust (CAT)

The information contained in the following pages updates some of the general guidance published May 2017 in the document ‘**Diocese of Salford MAT advice for Headteachers and Governing Bodies**’. This summary document outlines the necessary steps to be taken by a school planning to join a Catholic Academy Trust (CAT)

The basic process is outlined as follows:

- The Governing Body decides to join a CAT (as a Voluntary converter) or the Governing Body is required, through a Directive academy order, to convert and join a CAT (as a sponsored converter)
- The first step is to identify which of the three Diocesan CATs your school has been assigned to join (See CAT footprint table below)
- Inform the Diocese of your interest/intention by submitting **Stage 1 Conditional Consent** via email to Angela Williams (angela.williams@dioceseofsalford.org.uk)
- Formally engage with the CAT and Diocesan officers who will support you through every phase of both the process of conversion and in joining the CAT as outlined in the flow chart below
- Develop a broad idea of the timescale of the process ensuring that you feel comfortable with such timescales and are able to keep all parties well informed
- Following your own due diligence and that of the CAT, formally advise the Diocesan Trustees of your intentions to proceed to conversion by submitting the **Stage 2 Conditional Consent form** to Angela Williams (angela.williams@dioceseofsalford.org.uk)
- The Trustees will consider your application and either **approve without further condition** or **approve with further conditions**. Approval with further conditions is not a NO, it is a NOT JUST YET - and would typically relate to risks raised during the due diligence process which need to be resolved prior to the conversion process progressing any further.
- Once approval is given the school should submit the **DfE ‘Application to convert to an Academy’** form and send to the DfE/RSC contact below
- Your application is considered by an RSC Advisory Board and if approved the Secretary of State for Education will write to you confirming approval to become an academy and join the CAT named on your application form
- A series of project planning meetings then begin with DfE, school, diocese, CAT and LA regularly meeting to plan the conversion (see Indicative Academy Conversion Timescale below)

Key information and contacts:

In March 2019 the Diocesan Trustees approved the creation of three Catholic Academy Trusts across the diocese;

Emmaus CAT	Romero CAT	St Teresa of Calcutta CAT
Covering schools in the following Local Authority areas; Manchester, Stockport, Oldham, Trafford and Tameside	Covering schools in the following Local Authority areas; Blackburn with Darwen, Calderdale and Lancashire	Covering schools in the following Local Authority areas; Bolton, Wigan, Bury, Rochdale and Salford
The Senior Catholic Executive Leader (CSEL)/CEO for this CAT is; Daniel Copley Daniel.copley@emmauscmat.com	The Senior Catholic Executive Leader (CSEL)/CEO for this CAT is; Des Callaghan Dcallaghan@romerocat.com	The Senior Catholic Executive Leader (CSEL)/CEO for this CAT is; Chris Foley cfoley@stoc.cat

Diocese of Salford Department for Education	Department for Education (DfE)/Regional Schools Commissioner's for Lancashire and West Yorkshire Office (RSC for L&WY)
Colin Mason – Academies Lead officer Colin.mason@dioceseofsalford.org.uk 07745659821	Deborah Dempsey – RSC Relationship Manager Deborah.dempsey@education.gov.uk 07384520975

Flow chart outlining the process of joining a Diocese of Salford Catholic Academy Trust



***Indicative* Academy Conversion Timeline**

Intended Conversion Date: 1st October 2022

Activity	School	Diocese	DfE
Governing body resolves to explore academy conversion and completes Stage 1 Consent form as an expression of interest and send to Diocese and CAT who will support school throughout the process	November 2021		
Soft/informal consultation begins	December 2021		
Consultation concludes	Early Feb 2022		
School submits application for Stage 2 consent to Diocese at least 2 weeks prior to next Trustees meeting	22 Feb 2022		
Trustees consider/approve application		8 March 2022	
School submits application to DfE. The DfE must receive the application at least 8 weeks prior to the Advisory Board agenda being published on Gov.uk.	23 March 2022		
DfE approve application Only at this point should school formally engage Browne Jacobson as legal advisors			26 May 2022
TUPE process starts	June 2022		
TUPE process completed	July 2022		
Register with exam boards – new school details	July 2022		
Deadline for Trust Board and Diocesan Trustees to approve documents	August/Sept 2022	8 th Aug 2022	
DfE progress checks and planning meetings, involving school, LA, Diocese and CAT will be held throughout the year			
Deadline for submitting draft Articles of Association, Memorandum of Understanding and Funding Agreement	3 Sept 2022		
Last meeting of school Governing Body, followed by the first meeting of the Local Governing body (3 weeks before conversion date)			
Deadline for submitting signed Funding Agreement and annexes to DfE	11 Sept 2022		
Deadline that the following are agreed, Commercial Transfer Agreement and Lease agreement	15 Sept 2022		
Latest date by which the EFA to have received school bank account details	22 Sept 2022		
ESFA pay the £25k conversion grant			30 Sept 2022
School converts	1 October 2022		

The information above is an indicative timeline. More precise date scheduling will be co-ordinated by the DfE project lead at the first joint planning meeting when typically the indicative conversion date will be agreed. It is possible to reduce the overall timescale to closer to 6 to 9 months if each key milestone is reached without holdups.

As can be seen, the final month prior to conversion is particularly busy. Schools should therefore consider carefully their intended conversion date particularly if there are any school holidays in the month prior to conversion.

Deadlines for conversion applications to be considered at Advisory Board meeting

***Please note that these dates are indicative as the RSC Advisory Board dates for 2022 are not yet confirmed**

All applications to convert **must** initially be considered and approved by Diocesan Trustees and only then can the application be formally made to the DfE. This application is considered by an Advisory Board who have monthly scheduled meetings. The agenda for these meetings is however published several weeks prior to the meeting so therefore **applications to convert must be with the DfE/RSC at least 8 weeks in advance of the meeting at which the application will be considered by the Advisory Board.**

We as a diocese have no flexibility with the DfE dates.

Stage 2 consent application submitted to diocese	Stage 2 Consent considered at Trustees Schools Committee	Deadline for voluntary converter application to DfE	Agenda published on Gov.uk	Advisory Board Meeting	Earliest conversion date
6 September	15 September	1 October	26 November	16 December	1 May
		11 November	6 January	27 January	1 June
3 November	9 November	10 December	4 February	24 February	1 July
		7 January	4 March	24 March	1 Sept/Oct
28 December	11 January	4 February	2 April	21 April	1 October
		4 March	30 April	19 May	1 November
22 February	8 March	6 April	28 May	16 June	1 December
		3 May	28 June	14 July	1 Jan/1 Feb
		No August Advisory Board meeting			
27 April	10 May	29 June	24 August	14 September	1 March
		11 August	29 September	20 October	1 April/1 May
22 June	5 July	1 September	27 October	17 November	1 June



APPLICATION FOR TRUSTEES' CONDITIONAL CONSENT - STAGE 1

PURPOSE

The purpose of these papers is to provide the Bishop and Trustees with certain guarantees, information and evidence which will enable them to evaluate properly a school's request to become an academy as well as the implications for other schools, both in the Diocese and within the local education community, and for the Diocese itself. This information will be taken into consideration in the decision to give conditional consent to the Governing Body to submit an application for conversion to academy status.

NOTIFICATION AND STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Governing Body of (Name of School)wishes to consider conversion to academy status and, following consultation with stakeholders and the exercise of due diligence, may formally apply to the Diocesan Trustees for conditional consent to seek conversion.

The date of proposed conversion is

The timeline for conversion is dependent on receiving Trustees' final unconditional consent prior to completing the DfE processes. This can take up to 6 months from the date of receiving an Academy Order from the DfE.

The Governing Body endorses the following statement of principles in submitting this notification and requesting diocesan support.

1. All Diocesan schools, whether academy or voluntary aided status, will continue to be members of the Diocesan family of schools and will not be left to work in isolation.
2. All Diocesan schools will continue to work for the Common Good and promote community cohesion.
3. The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and any member of staff appointed to deputise for the Headteacher, and the Head or Co-ordinator of Religious Education in a Diocesan Catholic school must be a practising Catholic as determined by the Bishops' Conference Memorandum of Appointment.
4. Religious Education must be taught:-
 - a) In line with the Curriculum Directory and any directive given by the Bishop with regard to specific programmes of study; and

b) In line with the Bishops' Conference which specifies 10% of curriculum time required in Key Stages 1-4 and 5% in Key Stage 5.

5. Religious Worship will be in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church.
6. The Governing Body will resolve to sign the Statement of Guarantee annexed to the Stage 2 document.
7. Personal Health and Social Education and in particular, Sex and Relationship Education must be taught in line with DfE guidance and in accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church.
8. Foundation Governors must be in the majority of at least two on the Governing Body of any diocesan Catholic Voluntary Academy. The Chair of Governors of a diocesan Catholic Voluntary Academy must be a Foundation Governor.
9. Diocesan schools will be lead, managed and governed according to the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church. They will express a preferential option for the poor and disadvantaged, particularly those with Special Needs and those in Public Care.
10. Governors and staff will ensure that priority is given to promoting good relationships with homes and parishes of the children.
11. All diocesan schools will be obliged to work collaboratively with diocesan and local families of schools.

The Governing Body understands it will be required to resolve to sign the Statement of Guarantee attached to this document if it submits a formal application for Trustees' conditional consent to make an application for conversion to academy status.

Signed

.....
Chair of Governors

.....
Headteacher

Date

Please return this Stage 1 application to Angela Williams at the Cathedral Centre.



APPLICATION FOR TRUSTEES' CONDITIONAL CONSENT - STAGE 2

The Governing Body of wishes to make a formal application to the Diocesan Trustees for conditional consent to seek conversion to academy status.

The Governing Body understands that:

- any consent granted is conditional only, and allows the full exploration of the school becoming a Catholic Voluntary Academy within a multi-academy trust without involving any final commitment on the part of either the Trustees or the School until the point of final sign-off by both the School and Trustees;
- conditional consent is not guaranteed to any School applying to receive it;
- final consent will be subject to satisfactory outcome of the various reviews required by the Trustees;
- both the Diocese and the School both have the right to postpone or stop the conversion process if at any time they consider that to be in the best interests of Catholic education.

In applying for conditional consent, the school submits the following information in support of its application and undertakes to carry out any other steps or due diligence exercises required by the Trustees:

1. MISSION AS A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Please describe how conversion to academy status would better enable the school to fulfil and develop further its mission as a Catholic school and serve the common good.

2. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

2.1 Current Ofsted category:

2.2 Date of inspection:

2.3 Date of last Section 48 inspection/CSI :

2.4 Governing Body's strategies for identifying underperformance and securing school improvement:

2.5

The Directors of CAT have adopted the Diocese of Salford Catholic Academy Trust Framework for Continuous Improvement. We confirm that we will use the vision, principles and procedures outlined in the Framework to identify underperformance and secure school improvement.

3 CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST STATUS

3.1 We have been allocated to Catholic Academy Trust.

3.2 Schools currently in the Trust are:

3.3 We confirm that we have consulted with the Directors of Catholic Academy Trust.

4. CONSULTATION

We confirm that consultation with the following stakeholders has taken/is taking place:

- parents/carers of pupils at the school
- for secondary, parents/carers of pupils in years 5 and 6 of any primary schools in the area
- for primary, parents/carers of pupils offered a place at the school for the next academic year
- staff working at the school and any staff due to be employed at the school from the next academic year
- for secondary, pupils at the school
- other local Catholic schools
- other local schools
- local clergy
- the Local Authority
- the CAT we are proposing to join

5. PARTNERSHIP

5.1 Our school currently undertakes the following work within the diocesan family of schools:

5.2 We are also involved in the following partnership work:

6. FINANCE

Please indicate that you have considered your financial position and completed financial due diligence

6.1 Three year forecast:

6.2 We have consulted the DfE site to determine what the likely level of our general annual grant (GAG) will be.

6.3 The CAT Central Team, along with the current capacity for business and financial management within the family of schools will provide the appropriate accounting system, payroll, banking services and legal support. Where appropriate, services will be commissioned from across the CAT, the Diocesan family of schools, local authorities or commercial external providers.

6.4 Insurances will be obtained from Diocesan recommended insurers or through RPA.

7. EMPLOYEES

The CAT will ensure that all contracts for employees are CES contracts. Current employees pay and conditions of service will continue unchanged. Local and national pay and conditions will be adhered to.

8. PROPERTY PLAN AND EQUIPMENT

8.1 On-going or planned capital projects:

8.2 Defects in property, plant or equipment:

9. ADMINISTRATIVE AND MANAGERIAL CAPACITY

The Central Team will provide the capacity to successfully manage the requirements of company and charity law. Where required, the solicitors Browne Jacobson will act on behalf of the school/CAT

10. REASONS FOR SEEKING CONVERSION

Academy status is the way forward for our school because we see the following benefits:

11. GUARANTEES

We ask that the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher sign the Statement of Guarantee below on behalf of the school Governing Body.

STATEMENT OF GUARANTEE

A. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

We confirm that the school will use the legal firm nominated by the Diocese for academy conversion - Browne Jacobson.

B. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

We agree to furnish the Diocese with pupil performance data upon request.

C. MULTI ACADEMY TRUST MODEL

The school will follow the CAT model provided by the Diocese and agree to use the model articles of association, funding and supplemental agreements (based on CESEW models) and model scheme of delegation.

D. WORKING WITH PARTNERS

We commit to continuing to work to support the aims and objectives of the Diocese.

We commit to working with other schools in the family of schools across the diocese.

We commit to working in partnership with the Diocesan Department for Education including making our contribution to the Diocesan School Contribution Scheme.

GOVERNING BODY RESOLUTION

We enclose a copy of minutes containing the Governing Body's resolution to convert to academy status and confirmation that the Governing Body has formally agreed to Statements A to E above.

Chair of Governors

Headteacher

Name

Name

Signature _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Date _____

Please return this Stage 2 application, Statement of Guarantee and any accompanying papers to Angela Williams at the Cathedral Centre.

The dates for consideration by Trustees or Advisory Board are indicative and may be subject to change.

Diocese of Salford Catholic Academy Trusts - Due Diligence Overview

1. Budget	
Information required	Agreed actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Finance support is currently resourced internally or bought in from: 2. Financial system used: 3. Resources Committee meet termly, last meeting xxx next meeting xxx. 4. 21-22 budget - attached 5. 3 year forecast - attached 6. Latest reconciliation – attached 7. <u>Insurance arrangements</u> currently provided by: Catholic Insurance Scheme: £ Employer and Public liability: £ Absence insurance - teaching staff: £ Absence insurance - support staff: £ 	

2. Previous financial audits	
Information required	Agreed actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recommendations 2. Fraud or theft 3. SFVS audit – attach 4. Process & procedure 5. Status of latest audit and date 	

3. Debts/creditors	
Information required	Agreed actions
SDSBP – please provide balance	
Other	

4. Fixed Asset	
Information required	Agreed actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Age of current IT 2. School owned Vehicle 3. Other assets 4. Fixed asset register 5. ICT plan 	

5. Other income	
Information required	Agreed actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Nursery 2. After school provision 3. Community 4. Other (including charitable/school fund) 5. Income reconciliation 	

6. Staffing

Information required	Agreed actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staffing list 2. Compromise agreements 3. Turnover 4. Skills audit 5. Governors 6. Supply 7. Absence 8. Pay disputes 9. Percuniary interests 10. Payroll 	

7. Pupil numbers

Information required	Agreed actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. PAN 2. Actual 3. Appeals 4. 5 year projections 	

8. Building issues

Information required	Agreed actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. State of the estate 2. Current and projected cost of maintenance/capital 3. PFI (Private Finance Initiative) 4. Are any of the premises leased, including mobile units 5. Asset Management Plan 	

9. Health and safety

Information required	Agreed actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health and Safety Audit/report 2. Fire Risk Audit/report 	

10. Legal

Information required	Agreed actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Claims for 2. Claims against 	

11. Contractual Any issues and copies of contracts

Information required	Agreed actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff 2. Land 3. Leases 	

12. Trade Union agreements/relationship

Information required	Agreed actions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Associated unions 2. Facilities time arrangement 	

13. Risk Register	
Information required	Agreed actions
1. Attach copy	

14.. Systems eg FMS/SIMS	
Information required	Agreed actions
1. Backup 2. GDPR 3. Trained staff/administrators	

15.. Governance	
Information required	Agreed actions
1. Resources Committee Minutes 2. FGB	

16. Safeguarding	
Information required	Agreed actions
1. Any known issues	

17. School Improvement Plan	
Information required	Agreed actions
1. Current Ofsted judgement: Date: Projected date for next inspection: 2. Attach report	

18. Local schools	
Information required	Agreed actions
1. No/PAN/Current intake/Ofsted	

19. Significant one-off costs	
Information required	Agreed actions
1. Incurred in last 12 months 2. Anticipated in next 12 months	

20. Bank	
Information required	Agreed actions
1. Bank accounts 2. Statements for last 12 months	

21. GDPR	
Information required	Agreed actions
1. Training and knowledge 2. GDPR policy 3. Breaches	