



An Daras
Multi Academy Trust



Statement for Stakeholders of St Catherine's C of E School Conversion to Multi-Academy Trust Status

"Creating a Community of Lifelong Learners"

What is being proposed?

The Governing Bodies of **St Catherine's C of E Primary** are considering a proposal to convert to Academy status in January 2016 and join **An Daras (St Stephens and Windmill Academies) Multi Academy Trust (MAT)**. It is proposed that Werrington and North Petherwin will be joining at the same time to make a group of 5 local primary schools.

Any decision on whether or not to convert to Academy status will be taken by our Governing Body based on what is considered best for our school, our students, our staff and for St Catherine's in the wider Christian community. As part of the decision making process, the Governing Body is committed to undertaking full consultation with our stakeholders and will take their views into account before any final decision is taken. The purpose of this statement is, therefore, to introduce the proposals to you, signpost you to where you can find additional information and inform you how you can take part in the consultation.

What is an Academy?

An academy is a state-funded school which operates independently within the requirements of national codes of practice for state schools. However, unlike a state school it receives its funding directly from central government rather than through a local authority. Under new legislation introduced by the present government, schools are encouraged to convert to Academies. The current DfE preferred MAT model is for 5 or 6 local schools to join together to create strong and sustainable educational provision within their local context. The two Launceston town schools currently in An Daras MAT are rated good and outstanding. Schools within a group forming a collaborative structure to support one another are now also eligible to convert to Academy status. An Daras MAT is currently our School Improvement Partner.

What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

The model involves a family of schools forming a 'Multi Academy Trust' (MAT) under a Shared Company. The essential principles of the model are that no schools in the town are left behind, it involves no external business sponsorship and there will be no change to the distinctive and individual nature of any of the schools. **Therefore the Christian distinctiveness of St Catherine's will remain.**

Why convert?

Schools have always operated within a changing educational landscape and the introduction by the government of the Academies programme means that for the schools to do nothing is not a viable option. It is the Government's vision that the majority of schools in England will over time convert to Academy status and will cease to be 'maintained' by their Local Authority.

Why join ADMAT?

It has been beneficial to our school to work closely with our town school partners. The Head Teacher of St Catherine's currently is a member of the Board of Directors of ADMAT.

St Catherine's was part of the original Launceston Trust Schools Group and had intended to convert alongside Windmill and St Stephens. Some legal reasons linked to the trust deed of church schools prevented us initially moving forward. However, these have been resolved and we received support from our Diocesan Board to move forward provided that the MAT uphold the Object of the Academy Trust of St Catherine's, namely to ensure that the academy is conducted in accordance with the principles, practices and tenets of the Church of England both generally and in particular in relation

to arranging for religious education and daily acts of worship, and in having regard to any advice and following any directives issued by the Diocesan Board of Education.

Outlined below are the **ADMAT Vision and Aims**

Vision Statement

To be the primary gateway for life-long learning ensuring every child in the Multi Academy Trust is equipped for present and future success.

Core Aim

We are committed to improving the life chances of children by delivering high quality academic, social, economic and experiential learning to raise aspirations and contribute effectively to positive personal development.

We will achieve this by;

- Accelerating and sustaining children's progress towards higher achievement.
- Ensuring achievement gaps for disadvantaged children are addressed.
- Ensuring children are equipped for the next phase of learning.
- Creating an enjoyable and creative curriculum that meets the learning needs of children.
- Providing for children a safe, stimulating, caring but challenging learning environment.
- Encouraging children's active participation in outdoor and sporting learning opportunities.
- Working positively with stakeholders and partners to provide an integrated educational experience for children and families.

ADMAT Governance

The model proposed see **APPENDIX 1** will ensure that each school will maintain its own distinctiveness. This will be the responsibility of the Local Governing Advisory Body (LGAB) Local Governing Advisory Bodies lead local improvement, prioritise school initiatives and monitor impact.

- **LGAB creates individual school Vision and Aims, agrees policy and sets targets**
- LGAB participates in all committees and ADMAT directors board
- **LGAB safeguards the individuality and ethos of each school**
- LGAB has a major role in ensuring teaching and learning is of high quality
- LGAB preserves effective parental involvement and parent voice
- LGAB ensures a local user driven model of effective governance is maintained
- LGAB participates in local school staff recruitment and wider MAT recruitment
- LGAB contributes to local budget setting through the annual improvement plan process
- LGAB contributes to wider MAT strategic development through the MAT committee system (the LGAB has its own Terms of Reference)
- LGAB responsibilities are clearly devolved through the ADMAT Cyclical Governance Plan. They meet twice a term.
- LGAB are essential to the ongoing success of individual schools as well as the MAT as a whole
- LGAB committee has the Head of School/Head teacher as an integrated member who reports directly to the LGAB
- LGAB has the opportunity to participate in annual Performance Management of HoS/Head Teacher

What will change?

Conversion to Academy Status for Trust schools is not too difficult. The Governing Body of St Catherine's School already manage the school finances and have responsibility for employment and admissions. Under the proposed model Governance of our schools would remain largely unchanged as the majority of governors on the Local Governing Bodies at St Catherine's would be appointed as currently and there would be staff and parent governors as now. The employer will be An Daras through our own local Governing Body.

The only difference would be the establishment of an overarching **Multi Academy Trust Board of Directors** consisting of representatives from each School Local Governing Body and members of the local community.

ADMAT Governance- Board of Directors (BoD)

BoD structure ensures ADMAT Articles of Association/funding agreements are met

BoD is recruited and approved by the ADMAT members
 BoD have with specific skills providing accountability and effective high quality strategic leadership across the MAT
 BoD structure ensures the LGAB are effective and rigorous by devolving key leadership responsibilities to the LGAB
 BoD is responsible for meeting the LGAB identified needs of each individual school
 BoD provides quality assurance of LGAB priorities
 BoD provides a central decision making body to ensure central ADMAT services meet the needs of individual school

We now have the opportunity to work together in a supportive Multi Academy Trust which builds on the collaborative structures previously established through the Launceston Primary Schools Trust. This will give extended opportunities to share good teaching and learning, join together to buy resources and develop a collaborative way of working for the benefit of all our children and families and create a pathway for the long term sustainability of all of our schools.

We have a vision for education in Launceston that goes beyond individual schools and changes our perception from 'my school', to 'our schools'. The challenge for us all is 'How can we share our gifts and talents to ensure all education for all of our children is 'outstanding.'

A number of other elements would remain unchanged. An Academy would still be bound by the statutory codes for Special Educational Needs and the Admissions criteria and catchment areas for each school would remain unchanged. There are no planned changes to the pay and conditions of staff, to the start and finish times or length of the school day and no change to the school's policy on pupil discipline or the school uniform.

Our schools will continue to offer a broad and balanced curriculum. However, an Academy is not bound by the prescriptions of the national curriculum and Governors are conscious that this freedom could offer an additional safeguard from an imposed wider national agenda or curriculum which may not accord with the local contextual learning requirements of pupils in the Launceston area. At St Catherine's we have a vision for Christian education that will remain a distinctive element of the school.

All our schools have excellent relationships with their Local Authority and work well in partnership with other local schools. That commitment to wider partnership working will remain and we will work with our Local Authorities across a wide range of providers in an atmosphere of mutual support.

Appendix 1 shows the operational structure for the Multi Academy Trust (MAT). Rather than having separate schools led by head teachers, there would be an Academy Board of Directors responsible for the strategic operations. These would be implemented and managed by an Academy Leadership Team of Executive Head, School Improvement Officer, Business Manager and possibly a Premises Manager. A school specific leader - Head of School - would sit on the Local Board of Governors to help direct school improvement in each individual setting and facilitate the retention of that setting.

How will the consultation work?

The consultation period will run from Friday 12th June 2015 to 9:00am on 11th July 2015. The Governing Body is consulting with all our combined stakeholders including:

- The Truro Diocesan Board of Education - have pledged support to this model.
- The Deanery, Parish Priests and the Christian Community
- School Governors
- Parents and known future parents
- Pupils
- Staff including Staff unions and associations
- The Cornwall Local Authority
- Elected representatives (local MPs, Councillors)
- The wider local community including voluntary groups associated with the Schools
- The feeder school for secondary education - Launceston College
- Other local primary schools

How can I make my views known?

You are invited to submit your comments and views using the following e-mail
head@st-catherines.cornwall.sch.uk

In addition, you are welcome to attend the Consultation events listed below. Any views expressed at the meetings will be captured and included in the final considerations of the Governing Body.

Stakeholder Consultation Meeting Timetable:

All at St Catherine's School on 30th June 2015

Administration staff, teaching and support staff - 2.45pm
Parents and other community stakeholders - 3.45pm

Before I give my views where can I find out more information?

Further information generally on Academies look on the government website.

<https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/academies>

Finally

We feel it is important to emphasise the distinctiveness of joining the An Daras Multi Academy Trust proposal.

It is underpinned by a commitment to work for the good of all schools within the MAT, to ensure that none are left in a vulnerable position and **our individual identity, characteristics and ethos are maintained and strengthened.**

Furthermore, our schools will maintain their commitment to working with others within and beyond our local area for the benefit of all concerned.

The freedoms, with the resources, that Academy status will bring would be major factors in enabling our schools to continue to provide the best possible education for our young people and to serve our wider local community.

ADMAT WILL NOT:

- Impose a single MAT wide learning pedagogy approach
- Change successful and unique curriculum provision at individual schools
- Impose a standard website or uniform across MAT schools
- Impose a model of decision making for individual LGAB
- Reduce staff training opportunities
- Ignore parent and pupil voice for individual schools
- Make important local decisions without full liaison with the LGAB of individual schools

The Benefits

Being in a MAT brings financial benefits to all member schools as there is less duplication, larger reserves to invest.

Academies continue to be better funded than maintained schools.

EFA grant funding is accessible through a points scoring system to allow for major capital projects and the MAT has experience of this process.

Major resource items e.g. IT and minibus provision can be ordered as multiples thereby reducing purchase costs.

Through appropriate succession planning and effective staffing structures reductions in staffing costs is achievable e.g. MAT school leadership costs for the five year span 2014-2019 will have been reduced by £100,000. This saving can be reinvested into direct learning provision for pupils. Staff CPD can be delivered more effectively and at reduced cost through ADMAT combined INSET. Wider high quality services (e.g. legal, HR, finance, insurance) can be accessed at a lower cost for individual schools through the use of MAT contracts.

The ADMAT Business Plan is currently projecting achievable long term building and resource improvements over the next 3 and 5 years.

Thank you for taking the time to read this consultation letter.

ADMAT Members

Individual school nominated member

ADMAT Board of Directors

Education Directors, Business Directors, Community Directors, Premises Directors, Local Governing Body Directors

ADMAT Operations Team

Executive Head Teacher, Academy Improvement Officer, Academy Safeguarding Officer, Academy Business Manager, School Leaders

ADMAT Committees

Improvement and Strategic Development, Resources and Staffing (including Audit), Local Governing Bodies

School 1

School 2

School 3

School 4

School 5

Local Governing Body

Local Governing Body

Local Governing Body

Local Governing Body

Local Governing Body

School Leaders

School Leaders

School Leaders

School Leaders

School Leaders

Pupils, Parents and Staff

Pupils, Parents and Staff

Pupils, Parents and Staff

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