



All Saints Catholic Academy Trust

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CEO: Mr. Stephen Wheatley

St Bernadettes Catholic Primary School Academisation Consultation
2 Walsingham Way, London Colney, St Albans, AL2 1NL
Wednesday 18th October 2023

Staff Consultation 3:35pm		Action
1.	Welcome provider by Co-Headteachers	
2.	Presentation delivered by Co-Headteachers.	
3.	<p>The Co-Headteachers invited questions from Attendees.</p> <p>Staff Question: How will relationship with LA change? The HIP service is something the Trust buys into, to support the schools through external validation. If a school would like additional support, it would be up to the school to buy in but over time the school will see there are other options within the Trust to share best practice.</p> <p>Staff Question: Will the school have to change MIS system? The CEO advised that he would note that the school would rather remain with the current provider.</p> <p>Staff Question: Does the school name change? Technically there is a legal change but the signage, uniform and school name within the community will not change.</p> <p>Staff Question: Is there a deadline for schools to academise? There is not a hard deadline. The Diocese has asked all schools to be engaged with the academy trust that has been identified for them by 2025. The CEO advised that the Trust operates under a Hub model for Watford, Dacorum and St Albans as the Trust is keen to protect localised collaboration.</p> <p>Staff Question: Is there a limit as to how many schools There is a strategy for all schools in the Diocese. ASCAT is working towards 19 schools.</p>	
Meeting Ended 4:00pm		
Parent Consultation 5:30pm		
		Action
1.	Welcome provider by Co-Headteachers	
2.	Presentation delivered by Co-Headteachers	
3.	<p>The Co-Headteachers invited questions from Attendees.</p> <p>Parent Question: How does the school intend to keep its own identity when the Trust will have its own vision that the school will be expected to implemented? The HTs advised that part of their background research to inform the decision to academise was to ensure that the ethos of the Trust aligned with the schools. It would be expected that the day to day ethos across schools vary as this will be driven my localised influencing factors and the make up of the school community but there will be one shared vision for the Trust. Part of this is to protect and celebrate the distinct Catholic ethos of each of the</p>	

schools. The commonalities in the vision will be the aspects all parents wants to see in a Catholic school.

Parent Question: What is the difference to the school if the funding comes direct from central government instead of via the local authority?

Hertfordshire will have its own funding allocation where it will keep a certain amount back to cover the central function. As a Trust the funding will come from central government and then the schools will make a small percentage contribution for central services. The difference is that you cannot control or share your views with the local authority about how your funds are used for the central services but in the Trust this is encouraged and the schools actively contribute to discussion about how these funds are used.

Secondly, access to Capital funding will change in that where VA schools would have previously applied to the Diocese, Academies are allocated a put of funding directly from the ESFA for the Trust to allocate to the schools. The benefit to this is that there is a smaller pool of schools and the Trust has a better understanding of the needs of those schools. Lastly, as an Academy the school will be able to claim back the VAT on capital works.

Parent Question: Does the CEO decide how the funds are allocated?

There is a Capital Allocation Strategy and Policy which includes a scoring process and is informed by independent conditions surveys that rank conditions needs by risk and urgency.

Parent Question: Does that change as the Trust grows?

The funding will increase as it is partly allocated by pupil numbers.

Parent Question: How will the conversion impact on the chain of command?

There is a scheme of delegation which outlines the responsibilities of each tier of leadership. Overall the vast majority of responsibilities that your HT's have now will be retained. The CEO is there to provide additional support and to be a champion for the school and the Headteachers.

Parent Question: Can staff be forced to work across the schools?

There is no portability clause for staff. There are often opportunities for staff to work across the schools and for secondments into leadership positions but this is only for staff who are interested.

Parent Question: Will the secondary school links be impacted?

There will be no difference to the current arranges for secondary transition or applications. Parents will retain the choice as to where their child attends schools.

Parent Question: Will parents have priority if they want to send their child to a Trust school?

All the schools will have their own admission criteria. The school is keen to maintain its relationships with the local secondaries.

Parent Question: Will the schools be given the opportunity to use the facilities in the other Trust schools?

The Schools in the Trust are very good at sharing resources and part of the discussions at the Trust Development Day this week will focus on how Secondary colleagues can support the primaries through the sharing of resources.

Parent Question: Would that be throughout the year groups?

At every stage of learners education there will be a range of opportunities.

Parent Question: Will staff pension schemes be maintained?

Yes the Trust upholds the teachers pay and conditions and abides by the Green and Burgandy Books. Later in the process the school will go through TUPE where the local authority and the unions will be involved. There will be no changes to contracts.

Parent Question: What about policies?

There are some Trust policies which deal with aspects relating to operational risk. School level policies around the curriculum and teaching and learning will continue to be the responsibility of Governors and the Headteacher.

Parent Question: Will the process for parent complaints be impacted?

This will be very similar to the process now. The main difference is if the parent submits a complaint about the Governing Board this will be escalated to the Trust.

Parent Question: Will the Headteacher still be required to be Catholic?

It is a Diocesan requirement for the top two leadership positions, typically the Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher, to be Catholic. If a new HT is appointed the Diocese would be an advisor in this process.

Parent Question: Will the school name change?

No although there is a legal technicality where the school will be registered as a Catholic Academy but will continue to be known as the same name.