



St Thomas More Catholic Primary School

I have come so that they may have life and have it to the full - John 10:10

Lewis Road | Cheltenham | Gloucestershire | GL51 0HZ

Head Teacher: Mrs N Tippen

Tel: 01242 513339 | Email: admin@st-thomasmore.gloucs.sch.uk

www.st-thomasmore.gloucs.sch.uk

9th January 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

School and community consultation regarding the formation of a Catholic Multi Academy Trust (MAT) and the conversion of St Thomas More Catholic Primary School into the Trust

You may recall from the Governing Board letter sent to our school community in the summer, that the Roman Catholic Primary schools within the Little Way Partnership were exploring the possibility of forming a multi-academy trust together.

During the Autumn Term we have continued to work together to further develop our thinking, including agreeing our vision for the Trust and our overall approach to ensuring we maintain both our Catholic identity and the high educational standards we enjoy across our schools - supporting each other to be the very best we can be. We also now have a clearer shared understanding of the current financial position for each of the schools, from which we can now start to work together to understand the implications of academy conversion and the opportunities and challenges that this might bring. As we continue to undertake this work into the Spring Term, we wanted to reach out to our community to ensure that your views help to shape the Governing Board's response to the opportunity that this presents for us.

One of the first steps required by the Department of Education is that we consult with our community ahead of seeking consent from the Diocese and then the Department for Education to move forward with the proposal. Clearly there is a lot of work for each Governing Board and the shadow Board of Directors (when appointed in the New Year), to do before these schools make any final decision regarding conversion to academy status. If we are able to secure the necessary provisional approvals from the Diocese and the Department for Education later in the Spring Term, this would release some funding for the maintained schools within the partnership to undertake some of the due diligence and legal work which will form part of the conversion process. It would also mean that we could consider joining the multi-academy trust at the beginning of the new academic year (September 2023).

We therefore would like to invite you to respond to the questions on the attached questionnaire. Additional hard copies of the questionnaire can be made available upon request at the school office. Similarly, if you would like this information in another language, large print, braille or audiotape, then please contact the School Office. The Governing Board will consider all the responses received before determining whether to go ahead and seek the necessary consents from the Diocese and Department for Education to move to the second stage of forming and joining the Trust. The very final decision regarding this move will take place only once all of the legal and due diligence processes have been completed.

In order to provide you with more information, we have attached a FAQ sheet and we will set up a link on the school website specifically for updates on the formation of the Little Way Catholic Educational Trust.



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We will also invite all members of our school, church and wider community to a presentation later this month.

Please can all completed questionnaires be returned to the School Office no later than noon on Monday 6th February 2023.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs C Hipkiss
Chair of Governors

Mrs N Tippen
Head Teacher