



St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Multi Academy Trust



Monday 19th November 2018

Dear Parent/Carer

Proposal for St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Multi Academy Trust (SToCCMAT) to join Carmel Education Trust

On behalf of the Trust Board, I am writing to all parents, carers, staff, unions and other stakeholders to consult on a proposal for St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Multi Academy Trust (SToCCMAT) to join Carmel Education Trust.

The vision for establishing St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Multi Academy Trust in 2016 was to strengthen partnerships whilst investing in the future of Catholic education, particularly in our community of Billingham. This vision continues, however since establishing the Trust there have been a number of changes that will impact upon us moving forward if we fail to plan ahead. These include:

- A national initiative to strengthen governance and leadership arrangements by the Catholic Education Service and the Department for Education including the requirement to appoint a Chief Executive Officer for all Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) and a requirement to restructure historic governance arrangements to ensure their effectiveness.
- The vision of the Diocese to move in time to develop larger MATs across the Diocese which will have significantly better capacity for supporting our families of Catholic schools both financially and educationally.

SToCCMAT is a small MAT, and by virtue of this would find it extremely difficult to implement and sustain the changes required in leadership and governance. Therefore, following dialogue with the Diocese, the Department for Education, Carmel Education Trust and the Trust Board, it is proposed that we consult upon a proposal for SToCCMAT to join Carmel Education Trust. The key benefits being:

- The further strengthening of partnerships with other Catholic schools in our area of the diocese, combining governance, leadership and where appropriate, teaching expertise in order to provide the very best Catholic education possible to children in our community.
- To improve our ability to manage increasingly tight school budgets, centralising purchasing where possible and sharing services across a wider community of schools.

About Carmel Education Trust

Carmel Education Trust was established on 1 March 2013 by Carmel College, a Catholic Academy, judged to be Outstanding by Ofsted. In recent years Carmel has been ranked amongst the top state schools nationally in terms of GCSE and A level results. Carmel Education Trust is highly regarded by the Diocese and the Department for Education.

The Carmel Education Trust Board of Directors is ultimately responsible for the schools within the partnership and accountable to the Bishop, providing visionary strategic leadership, a focus on continuous improvement, high quality governance and a strong Catholic ethos with a caring and supportive culture.

By 1st January 2019, the Trust will include the following schools:

- Carmel College, Darlington
- St Michael's Catholic Academy, Billingham
- Our Lady & St Bede Catholic Academy, Stockton
- St Bede's Catholic Academy, Stockton
- St Gregory's Catholic Academy, Stockton
- Our Lady of the Most Holy Rosary Catholic Primary School, Billingham

- St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Norton
- Holy Family RC Primary School, Darlington
- St Augustine's RC Primary School, Darlington
- St Bede's Catholic Primary School, Darlington

In addition, Carmel College's Teaching School status and its strong links with the National College for Teaching and Leadership means that professional development of staff is central to the work of the Trust.

Vision, Values and Ethos

Carmel Education Trust's aim is to build upon the existing strengths of the partnership formed by SToCCMAT and to offer "outstanding" education provision so that every child succeeds and reaches their potential.

What are the main benefits for schools within the Carmel Education Trust?

- Access to top quality staff, including an "outstanding" Trust leadership team who are sharply focussed on securing excellence.
- Moderation of standards across the partnership of schools to ensure the highest quality provision
- Greater control over finances and the money due to schools.
- Educational benefits for students as a result of additional freedoms available to academies in terms of the curriculum we offer, and how we prioritise resources.
- The opportunity to work in close and formalised partnership with other schools, and share expertise and services that will benefit all of our students and staff.
- Sharing resources and expertise, allows us to target funding towards improving front line teaching and learning.
- Joining up provision to remove barriers to learning.
- Develop our own solutions collaboratively.
- Building on Catholic ethos and protecting Catholic education.

Consultation Process

The consultation period for this proposal commences today, Monday 19th November 2018 and will remain open for 4 weeks, closing at 5pm on Friday 14th December 2018.

During this consultation period, we would like to invite parents and carers to attend a meeting at **St Joseph's RC Primary School at 4pm on Tuesday 4th December 2018** which will be attended by representatives from both Trusts and the Diocese.

Alternatively, you can respond to this proposal by completing the consultation response form at the end of this letter and returning this to the school office.

We will also be holding meetings during this time specifically for staff and their professional associations as well as seeking the views of our neighbouring schools and other stakeholders.

Your views are very important to us and we will fully consider all points raised before a final application is made to the Department for Education.

Yours sincerely,



Mr Patrick Keane

Chair of the St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Multi Academy Trust Board

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Consultation Feedback Form

Please let us know your views on the proposal for St Thomas of Canterbury Catholic Multi Academy Trust to join Carmel Education Trust.

Name.....

Contact details.....

Which school does your response relate to:

- St John the Evangelist RC Primary School
- St Joseph's RC Primary School
- St Paul's RC Primary School

Are you a:

- Parent/Carer
- Member of staff
- Other please state.....

Your written response should be handed in at the school office and marked "Private and Confidential" by no later than **5pm on Friday 14th December 2018.**

Thank you for taking the time to respond to the consultation.