

DIOCESE OF **Hexham & Newcastle**
— DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION —



Frequently asked questions about academies

January 2020

Introduction

The intention is that this Frequently Asked Questions document provides a response to some of the questions that have been raised regarding the Diocesan Academy Policy. Any time of change can be a worrying time. It is hoped that the responses will provide reassurances. The answers are generic to all schools in the Diocese rather than answers to questions that are specific to individual schools or Trusts.

This document should be read in conjunction with

- Diocesan Academy Policy December 2019
- Articles of Association for the Academies in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
- Model Scheme of Delegation for Academies in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle
- CES Diocesan Protocols issued January 2020

Diocesan Academy Policy

What is the purpose of the Diocesan Academy Policy?

The main purpose is for all parties to collectively protect, secure and develop Catholic education in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle so that every school is within a mutually supportive structure and each and every child receives the very best educational opportunities possible.

The development of the four Catholic Education Trusts (Trusts) builds on the concept of families of schools and will enable clear working relationships to be established between Catholic schools in order to assist with school improvement, leadership, succession, recruitment, formation, governance and co-operation thereby strengthening our Catholic mission.

How will the Catholicity of the Catholic Education Trusts be ensured?

This is one of our most important issues. We are not just merely creating 'structures', we are building 'communities'. It is important for us to work on the mission of the new Trusts from the very beginning. We are also committed to ensuring that the Trusts retain Local Governing Committees (LGCs) that will be responsible for maintaining the Catholic ethos, engaging with their local parish community and overseeing standards and Catholic Life within the academy.

Academy status

What is an academy?

Academies are publicly-funded schools which operate outside of local authority control. They receive their funding directly from central government through the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) rather than through a local authority. However, the General Annual Grant (GAG) is determined by the local authority. The government describes academies as independent, state-funded schools. In law academies have more freedom than other state schools over their finances, admissions, the curriculum, length of terms and school days and teachers' pay and conditions.

What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

A Multi-Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee and is responsible for running the academy. It has three layers of governance:

- members (who are best viewed as guardians of the constitution)
- directors sometimes referred to as 'trustees' (who are legally responsible for the running of the Trust)
- local governors (who are responsible for monitoring standards in the individual schools in the Trust)

How is a Catholic Education Trust different from a Multi- Academy Trust?

In the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle, our Multi- Academy Trusts are called Catholic Education Trusts. In law they are the same as Multi Academy Trusts.

The members of our Diocesan Catholic Education Trusts are

- Diocesan Bishop
- Vicar General
- Episcopal Vicar for Education
- Director of Education
- Diocesan Financial Secretary

The members have close oversight ensuring that each Trust is operating according to the Articles of Association. They are the guardians of the constitution. They determine the governance structure of the Trust. They provide oversight and challenge of the Trust directors to ensure that the charitable object of the Trust is being fulfilled and a Catholic education is being provided. Trusts in our Diocese do not have the same freedoms as secular trusts. An example of this is the requirement by the Members that the Trusts are required to follow national and local agreements for the payment of teaching staff and non-teaching staff.

What are the advantages to a VA school converting to academy status and joining the larger Catholic Education Trusts?

The Trust model allows us to preserve, protect and develop our schools. Our Trusts can better support the long term goals of developing our future leaders of Catholic education in the Diocese. Improvements in school standards can be secured across the board by developing and resourcing a strategic vision for leadership development. By pooling expertise and knowledge on standards, robust arrangements for school to school support and school improvement can be developed.

Greater control over the curriculum allows flexibility in terms of the balance and mix of subjects. A curriculum tailored to the needs of a Catholic school could be more fully developed. Stronger collaboration between schools in Trusts is beneficial.

We are a good school and work well in partnership already so why shouldn't we stay as we are?

Partnership working is strong in our Diocese and it is expected to continue. Working in a more formal relationship within a larger Trust will ensure that all schools are supported and are mutually dependent. Working within and between Trusts will open up more creative possibilities for sharing good practice. This further strengthens the Catholic family. The Leadership Group will work to establish working groups within the Trust.

My school receives good support from the local authority so why should my school need to join a Trust?

There are ten Local Authority areas in the Diocese. Working relationships between schools and Local Authorities have changed as funding levels have reduced, leading to variations in the level of support and in the way in which they are able to provide support to schools. The trust model provides us with the opportunity to safeguard the future of all our Catholic schools across the ten local authority areas. It would not be appropriate to have a different Diocesan policy for schools depending on local circumstances as all schools are part of the wider Diocesan family.

Is full academisation a requirement for all Catholic Voluntary-Aided Schools in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle? Can a school choose not to convert?

All remaining Voluntary Aided schools in the Diocese of Hexham and Newcastle are expected to convert to academy status by July 2022. This follows a decision taken by the Diocesan Board of Directors and a letter issued by the Bishop to all schools on 17 December 2019.

Will academy status provide a better safeguard for the Catholic identity of our schools?

Under the Diocesan model the Catholic identity will be better safeguarded. This is seen as one of the main advantages. The Diocesan documentation is written to safeguard the Catholic identity of our schools.

What are the particular advantages of the Trust model?

The model will lead to schools feeling mutually supported and able to focus even more closely on providing a first-class all-round Catholic education for all our children and young people. There are advantages in terms of the ability to employ specialist staff to work across all the schools, agreeing a common shared ethos, policies and practice and economies of scale in terms of brokering services. The Trusts will also provide greater opportunities for staff recruitment and retention, succession planning and opportunities for coaching and mentoring and continued professional development.

Will schools lose their identity?

No. Each school will become an academy in its own right and will be part of the Trust. The Scheme of Delegation protects the uniqueness of each school. The Local Governing Committee is tasked with ensuring that the Catholic ethos is strong and the unique identity of the school is maintained.

When schools convert, which Trust will they join?

The details of this are in the Diocesan Academy Policy December 2019.

The names of the Trusts are under review. What will the new Catholic Education Trusts be called?

In order to establish a new sense of identity for each of our Trusts, they will be renamed. The Trusts will remain as the same Trust company but each name will change.

What is the approach of other Dioceses to the establishment of Trusts?

Many other Dioceses are developing structures to further preserve, protect and develop Catholic education. Examples in the north eastern hub are Nottingham Diocese where all schools are within four Trusts and Middlesbrough Diocese where all schools are within three Trusts. All schools in Leeds Diocese are also all moving to academy status within large Trusts.

What will the direct impact be on families of a VA school converting to academy status and joining a Trust?

The move will not have a negative impact on families. Each school will still be led and managed by the headteacher and governors. It is anticipated that the Trust structure will provide greater opportunities for curricular and extra-curricular activities and transition.

The process

Does the order of joining the Trust determine the influence that schools have on the Trust?

All academies are equal partners in the Trust. No one school is more important than another.

What does it cost the school to convert to academy status? Is money ring fenced for the school or pooled? What happens to money that is left over?

The Department for Education pays £25,000 towards conversion costs. In most cases this covers the cost. The Trust will retain any surplus and will be required to pay any shortfall.

What is the timeline for conversion?

This will be discussed at the regional meetings in conjunction with the DDfE. There will be a number of factors that will be taken into consideration when deciding on the order of conversions. It is important that this is planned strategically.

When will the conversion process start for the VA schools?

The regional meetings will begin in February 2020.

Are any meetings being planned to brief governors directly?

Each Trust will plan to meet with the governing body of each VA school as part of the conversion process.

Governors do not know what life within a trust is like and what the academy conversion process is like? How will this be addressed?

The Trust will work with the governing bodies on the conversion process from start to finish. This document and the Diocesan academy documentation will help to answer questions regarding academisation. There will be a contact person in each Trust who will liaise with the governing body.

Schools are finding it difficult to embrace a process that is leading to a loss of local autonomy.

This is why we are very clear that we want to establish within the Trust every opportunity to hear the voice of each school. We are aware of some of the concerns that some schools have. However the decision has been taken to secure the longer term future for all our Catholic schools.

Are Local Authorities aware of the plans?

The Diocesan Academy Policy has been shared with all ten Local Authorities. Discussions have taken place in our regular meetings and we will continue to have regular dialogue with them.

Leadership in the Catholic Education Trusts

Will the role of the Headteacher be diminished?

The Headteacher role will not be diminished. Each school needs a Headteacher. Headteachers continue to be the main professional lead with the same level of responsibility and accountability.

Why is the term CEO used?

This is what is becoming universally accepted as the terminology that is understood within the leadership structure of multi academy trusts. The DfE expects there to be a single professional lead in each multi academy trust.

What is the leadership structure in the new trusts?

In the first instance there will be a CEO and a COO. The CEO is responsible for education and the COO is responsible for operation. There will also be a senior finance officer for each Trust. Each Trust will develop their leadership structure according to need and in response to growth.

Will there be a Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher in each school?

There is an expectation that all schools will have a Headteacher. In some cases, as currently, this will be an executive role where the Headteacher leads more than one school. There is an expectation that all schools will have a deputy Headteacher. According to the expectation of Bishops' Conference, these are reserved posts for practising Catholics.

Will there be times when heads of school are appointed rather than headteachers?

It is possible but it would be as an interim measure. An example of this could be creating a head of school temporarily in order to support career development.

Will the Local Governing Committee have a role in the appointment of headteachers and senior roles within the academy?

The appointment of a headteacher is delegated to the Trust with representation from the Local Governing Committee. The Diocesan Department for Education is also represented by a Diocesan recruitment adviser at each recruitment process.

How would the Leadership Group know that their views were being taken to the board of directors?

The CEO chairs the Leadership Group of which all headteachers are members. The CEO is required to represent the views of the Leadership Group to the Trust board (see Leadership Group Committee Terms of Reference).

How does the Leadership Group work?

There are regular Leadership Group meetings. The focus and format of meetings will be agreed by the group. The biannual meetings with the chairs of governors have a specific focus in the autumn term and in the summer term (see Leadership Group Committee Terms of Reference).

How is the cluster working and cluster identity maintained?

The current cluster working that exists in the Diocese is a significant strength. It will be further developed and built upon. The cluster identity is important and there will also be many opportunities to work with other colleagues between clusters and across the Trust(s).

Will the secondary agenda dominate?

This cannot happen. Each academy is as equal as the other. There is no one academy that is more important than another. Within each Trust there will be 5 secondary schools and between 29 and 43 primary schools, depending on the Trust. Each school will have its own staff and its own delegated budget (see Scheme of Delegation).

Governance

What about governance, does that change?

Each school will have local governors (Local Governing Committee) who will be responsible for Catholic Life, standards, holding the leadership team to account and being at the heart of the relationship between the school and its local parish community. A single Trust Board of Directors will set the strategy for the Trust and oversee the performance and standards in all the academies within the Trust. Supporting them will be the Executive Team of the Trust led by the CEO.

Are all Trust directors Catholic?

Catholic directors will always be in the majority of two and are appointed by the Bishop. Non-Catholic directors may be appointed but the appointment is approved in each case by the Bishop. (see Articles of Association)

How many Directors will there be?

There needs to be a minimum of three directors (see Articles of Association). However in practice there will be more than this and the board will be made up of directors with a range of skills and experience. No one school is represented by a director.

What powers will the Local Governing Committee (LGC) have?

The local governors will have their responsibilities set out in a Scheme of Delegation but their prime responsibilities will be to monitor standards and pupil attainment, hold the leadership team to account and to ensure that the Catholic Life of the school is maintained and developed. These are major responsibilities. We recognise the vital role that governors play in our schools. The new structures will enable governors to devote themselves entirely to their monitoring role at local school level rather than having to be concerned with complying with a number of statutory requirements. The LGC is a committee of the trust board. The LGC will carry out many of the functions they presently do. For instance the LGC will, working with the Trust, ensure that standards in the school and pupil attainment are as good as they can be and that the school is delivering against its development plan. The governors will be responsible for ensuring that performance management arrangements are robust in the school. The responsibilities are set out in the Scheme of Delegation.

Will there be one common Scheme of Delegation or can there be local variances?

There is one common Scheme of Delegation that all Trusts are expected to adopt. This can be reviewed annually and any proposed changes will have to be approved by the Diocesan Department for Education. Within each region, there will be training for governors on the Scheme of Delegation and on the roles and responsibilities entailed within it.

Communication with parents from our schools is very good. Will that continue and will the role of parent governors remain the same?

Yes relationships with parents are of paramount importance. The role of local parent governors will not change.

In a large trust will small primary schools be disenfranchised?

We are very clear that we want the Trust structure to support each school without losing its individual identity. We also want to ensure that there is effective communication within the Trust between the CEO, Trust Board, the headteachers and the Local Governing Committee so that the voice of each group is heard. No school within the Trust should ever feel disenfranchised but should feel supported and empowered by being part of a wider Catholic community of schools.

What is the make up of a Local Governing Committee?

The membership is as follows:

- Foundation governors in the majority of 2
- Headteacher
- Up to one staff governor
- Up to one parent governor
- Up to one associate governor

(See Scheme of Delegation)

Can governors decide on school staffing?

The Local Governing Committee is responsible for the delegated budget and for the staffing of the school.

When the local governing body is disbanded on conversion, how is the new Local Governing Committee established?

When a school becomes an academy the governing body ceases to exist as the school's status changes to be an academy. In our Diocese a large majority of governors in our VA schools which have converted to academy status have been keen to continue as governors serving on the Local Governing Committee. Foundation governors will complete a nomination form and a skills audit. It is important that governors are appointed who have knowledge of the school.

Teaching and learning, curriculum and standards

What arrangements will there be to ensure accountability and to quality assure standards?

Ensuring accountability and assuring standards is vital. Academies are all still subject to Ofsted inspections and their results are published by the Department for Education. Additionally, as Catholic academies, all schools remain subject to the Diocesan Inspections carried out on behalf of the Bishop. The Trusts will have the responsibility to ensure that standards in each academy are monitored and evaluated effectively by the local governors. Where a problem is identified or reported to them, they will be required to ensure that appropriate support has been obtained. It is in the interests of all the academies in a Trust to ensure that each individual academy is successful. Every academy in the Trust will be expected to play a full part in supporting the improvement of standards across all academies in the Trust. The Diocesan Department for Education will continue to monitor standards in schools and will hold the Trust to account.

Will the curriculum be imposed on a school?

There may be some alignment to ensure that transitions are as smooth as possible. This will be discussed and agreed by the Leadership Group.

What will have to be common and what can remain different? e.g. curriculum/policies /assessment etc

Whilst there is an acknowledgement that all schools are unique and serve a local community, there is also a need to align some policies.

Will schools have full autonomy in relation to teaching and learning and for instance assessment systems?

The CEO will have a role to play in overseeing how schools are operating and whether what is being done within the schools is being successful. It is important on issues such as assessment for example, that there is consistency across the Trust and this will be an issue for the CEO to work in collaboration with the Leadership Group within the Trust.

Will becoming an academy change what is taught in school?

The requirement for the curriculum to be broad and balanced and to include the core subjects will be unchanged. There is also a requirement for all Trusts to make provision for the teaching of Religious Education and for a daily Act of Collective Worship. The Diocesan requirement for 10% of curriculum time to be devoted to Religious Education (at Key Stages 1 – 4) will not change. The Diocesan requirement for Relationships and Sex Education applies to all schools.

What will happen about admissions?

Admission arrangements will remain the same as they are now. The Local Governing Committee is responsible for determining the admission policy annually. Academies are subject to the same

Admissions Code as other state schools. They also remain part of the Local Authority coordinated admissions system. It is also a requirement that all Catholic academies continue to use the Diocesan admissions arrangements and adhere to the Diocesan guidelines on admissions.

Will parents of children at primary schools still have a choice of which secondary school to send their children?

Yes. There will be no change to admissions policies or impact on parental choice.

How will issues such as child protection and safeguarding work in the new Trusts?

The same expectations for schools around safeguarding would be in place in the new Trusts.

Will there be more meetings which take away headteachers from schools?

Headteachers are part of the Leadership Group and will meet regularly. However, the aim is that by having a central team and support structures, headteachers should have more time to concentrate on teaching and learning and the quality of education.

How are holiday dates decided?

Currently these are decided by the individual governing body of each school and are often in line with the Local Authority approved holidays. Moving forward, holidays will be determined by the Diocese for all schools within the four Trusts. This will enable consistency for parents as well as opening up opportunities for shared CPD and projects. The aim is that Diocesan holidays will be agreed from September 2021.

Services

Would it be possible to set out what the cost of the services delivered centrally by the Trust will be and what those services will look like?

Each of the four Trusts already has a core central team. Services are delivered in different ways depending on the Trust. Discussions and information is available directly from the Trust and will be shared via the Leadership Group.

What impact will conversion have on local authority services? What will be the impact on the capacity of the LAs if all Catholic schools become academies?

The Diocesan Department for Education has been meeting with the Local Authorities to keep them informed of the academy policy. Each Trust is required to purchase services that are of best value and best quality. Local Authorities have been encouraged by the Diocesan Department for Education to tailor services that could be used by Trusts where they are of quality and good value. A number of Local Authorities within the Diocese already sell services to the existing Trusts. Local Authorities still retain their statutory responsibilities.

Can advice be given on where schools should be buying their services from in this interim period as contracts come up for renewal or replacement? Are you advising schools to only enter into short term contracts during the interim period?

Yes, the advice issued to schools is that new long term contracts should not be entered into without consulting the Trust financial team.

Will headteachers be able to buy in provision that is not the same as that which the Trust has decided it will use?

Having collective buying power is an important way that the Trust can make savings by economies of scale. This money can then be used for the education of the children. Buying separately would limit this ability.

If a school is geographically isolated from other schools, will communication and a feeling of 'being involved' improve in a trust?

We very much hope so. The challenges of being a Catholic school with no local neighbouring Catholic schools is recognised. Each Trust will be challenged by DDfE to ensure that all the academies within it have a shared sense of mission and work together to support one another. Communication and contact between the schools will be vital to achieving this. How it is done within each Trust may vary and this will need to be developed by the Trusts through discussion and consultation of the Leadership Group.

What about school meals, grounds staff, and other support obtained the local authority?

If the Local Authority offers good quality services providing value for money the Trust may elect to 'buy in' these services. It could also choose to procure these services from other providers or to have

in-house provision. An advantage of being within a Trust is that schools can take on the same provider for certain services with potentially a reduction in cost for that service.

Will Local Authorities support schools that become academies?

The role of the LA is clearly laid out in legislation and they retain some statutory functions for all schools and academies e.g. for excluded pupils, for children with Education and Health Care Plans.

Finances and resources

What is the financial model for the Trust – will each school be responsible for submitting returns to Company House?

The Trust Board will be responsible for presenting the consolidated accounts for the Trust as a whole.

Will the new arrangement affect land ownership?

No. Any assets owned by the Diocesan Trustees will remain in their ownership. This is dealt with through a separate legal document called a 'Supplemental Agreement' which is entered into by the Secretary of State, the Diocesan Trustees and the Trust. The playing fields that are owned by the local authority are leased by the Trust.

How will capital funding be allocated in future? Will it be retained by individual schools or centrally administered by the Trust?

Each Trust is required to have an estates management plan that reflects in detail the state of the school buildings and the priorities for maintenance and development. The Trust will receive the Standard Capital Allocation centrally. This will be used across the Trust according to priority. The Trust will also hold each school's Devolved Formula Capital in a central fund to be used by each school. The estates management plan and the allocation of funds will be scrutinised by the Diocesan Department for Education.

With the pressures on school budgets, will there be redundancies?

We certainly hope that redundancies can be avoided. The Trust financial model suggests that centralising contracts and service delivery will yield considerable savings on school budgets.

What will be the contribution to pay for central services?

The aim is that the schools will pay no more than 5% of their revenue budget central services. This contribution is not an additional cost but will replace the costs that schools already incur by paying for services from existing providers. In some areas VA schools are currently paying significantly more than 5% for these services.

Will local governors still manage the budget for the local school?

The Local Governing Committee will be responsible for managing the delegated school budget. The Trust is responsible for the central service fund and for strategic planning across the whole Trust.

Who in the Trust will be making decisions about the use of school budgets in terms of school staffing structures?

The Local Governing Committee is responsible for staffing structures. As now, they will need to ensure that the structure is sustainable within the delegated budget. Any employment of staff extra to the existing staffing structure would need to be discussed with the CEO. One of our key principles

for all our Trusts is that they should be run and managed as efficiently as possible and central costs kept in check to ensure that the maximum amount of funds available can be used for the education of the children and on the key areas of school improvement and staff development.

Will resources be shared across the four trusts?

The sharing of resources and expertise across the Trusts will be encouraged. We will also have the same expectations of high standards in terms of leadership, management and outcomes from each of the Trusts and hold them to account against these standards.

What happens to a budget surplus on conversion?

On conversion, schools will keep their surplus

How will the Diocese prevent schools who have not yet converted and who hold a surplus balance (reserves) from spending those reserves prior to conversion to prevent the Trusts from having access to the funds?

Any reserves (surplus) held by the school will be retained on transfer. All funding available to schools should be spent responsibly. Each Trust will have a reserves policy that will be reviewed annually. The ESFA expects schools within trusts to pool money for projects. These would be discussed by the Leadership Group.

Will budgets be delegated?

Each school will receive its delegated budget. All monies will be held in one account by the Trust with the General Annual Grant (GAG) delegated to each school.

Will a school be able to convert with a deficit budget?

This would not prevent conversion. However there will need to be a plan for the school to pay back the deficit to the Trust or the ESFA as the case may be.

What happens to school fund or any money fundraised e.g. PTA on conversion? Can a school raise its own school fund and keep the money?

Due to financial regulations, academies are not able to hold a school fund account. On conversion any school fund would be transferred into the school's budget and maintained by the school together with any budget surplus. Academies can only have one bank account. Once an academy, if money is raised through fundraising, this money can be put into a PTA account.

If a school earns money by being a teaching school or by the head doing external work for the Diocese, OFSTED or a LA, is this kept by the school?

This is something that will be discussed by the Leadership Group and decided at Trust level according to the reserves policy. Current examples are that the school will keep a proportion and a proportion is pooled in the Trust for shared projects.

Will a school needing support have to pay more money to the Trust or will it be included in the central services?

This is included in the central services contribution. Each Trust will develop a support protocol with the Leadership Group.

Do all services have to be bought from the Trust or are some optional?

All SLAs need to be bought from the Trust. Anything additional will be paid for by the school

Will there be better SEND provision? What about support in a crisis e.g. short-term interim teaching assistant support?

The Trusts are aware of the demands placed on schools in terms of high need placements. Each Trust will work with the Leadership Group to address this issue to ensure that these needs are addressed.

Impact on staff

What happens to terms and conditions for teachers?

Standard Teachers Pay and Conditions (STPCD) will be adhered to for as long as they are in existence. Terms and conditions of employment are protected by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ('TUPE'). This means that, on the day staff transfer employers, such as from a Voluntary-Aided school to a Trust or from one Trust to another, all staff will transfer with their terms and conditions as they were before. Terms and conditions are a contract between an employer and employee and so can only be changed by agreement. TUPE requires that if a school envisages offering new terms and conditions they must consult with employees and their representatives.

What happens to terms and conditions for support staff?

On transfer terms and conditions of employment are protected by the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 ('TUPE'). This means that, on the day staff transfer employers, such as from a Voluntary-Aided school to a Trust or from one trust to another, all staff will transfer with their terms and conditions as they were before. Terms and conditions are a contract between an employer and employee and so can only be changed by agreement. TUPE requires that if a school envisages offering new terms and conditions they must consult with employees and their representatives. The aim is that eventually there will be a Diocesan-wide pay scale for support staff. As support staff currently have had job evaluation and pay set according to Local Authorities, this would be a significant piece of work over a period of time. However, it is something that other Dioceses have done and it has been welcomed by staff.

Is there an expectation that staff will have to travel around the new trust?

There would be no expectation that staff would be required to work in different locations unless they would be happy to do so. There may, however, in the future be some specialist appointments that could be working across more than one school.

Where will the CEO and central teams be physically located?

We are looking at options and space available in our schools and other Diocesan buildings and will consider the possible options for each of our Trusts.

What about succession planning in the Trusts for future headteachers and CEOs?

This will be a big area for the Trust. The Trust should be well placed to develop a strong succession planning model within each trust. It is important that each Trust prioritises leadership development and succession planning.

What advice is there on vacancy filling in the interim period?

If vacancies arrive within the current staffing structure of the school then an appointment can be made to these posts. However, no new posts that are extra to the current school staffing structure should be created without a discussion with the CEO of their regional Trust.

What will staffing structures be like for the Trust?

The Trusts are currently working together, with the DfE to determine the staffing necessary to operate a central team.

What is the viability of small schools? Will they be closed down by the Trust?

The aim of the academy policy is to preserve, protect and develop Catholic education. The Diocesan Academy Policy aims to ensure that schools are supported by the Trust and savings through economies of scale can help this.