



## St. Philomena's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Miss V Maher

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

The school are consulting on a proposal to join St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust. We have put together some of the most commonly asked questions.

#### **What is a Multi-Academy Trust?**

A Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) is a group of academy schools overseen by a charitable trust, and governed by a board of Directors. Rather than being financed by the Local Authority, a MAT is directly funded by, and accountable to, the Department for Education. While the schools that make up the Trust are still firmly part of their community, the Trust is there to support the schools and help them work together for the benefit of all children.

#### **Why are schools grouped in a MAT?**

Grouping schools within a MAT affects the quality of education we can provide for your child in a beneficial way. Improved learning outcomes are behind everything we do. The MAT provides collaboration opportunities for pupils and staff and an effective Executive Team to provide challenge and support.

#### **Why not stay as we are?**

We have to be mindful of both national and local issues that affect the education of our pupils. As schools transition from maintained to academy status then the provision available to maintained schools proportionally diminishes. We are a single school and whilst we do “punch above our weight”, we have always recognised that real strength comes in numbers, and being part of a strong MAT provides that security for the future direction of the school.

#### **What about the school's name, uniform, identity, ethos, etc?**

Everything about our school will stay the same in this respect. We were just becoming part of a larger organisation. On a day-to-day basis there will be no noticeable change for our pupils.

#### **Will the staff be transferred to other schools in the MAT?**

No.

Our staff will continue to work at this school. Roles will become available in the Trust which our staff will have the opportunity to consider but that's a personal choice for them – the Trust will not transfer staff to another school without their agreement. The staff current terms and conditions of employment will be honoured and mirrored in the new arrangement.

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**Will new staff be unqualified?**

All teaching staff of the Trust are required to be qualified.

**What changes can we expect to see at the school?**

There will be cosmetic changes to signage and headed paper as our legal status needs to be reflected accordingly.

**Will there be any changes to SEN funding?**

This comes directly to the school as normal.

**Is an academy like a business?**

No. A business makes profit for its shareholders. An academy is a charitable trust which cannot make profit.

**Does becoming an academy change the relationship with local schools and the community?**

No. The funding agreement states that the school must ensure that it remains at the heart of the local community.

**How does governance work?**

The same governors would continue in post and form the Local Governing Committee of the school. There is a document called the Scheme of Delegation which explains what responsibilities the Local Governing Committee and the Trust Board have. A copy of this document can be located on the Trust website ([www.OscarRomero.co.uk](http://www.OscarRomero.co.uk))

**Who will “own” the school building and land?**

It will be assigned to the Trust on a 125-year lease.

**Will the Trust engage with the Trade Unions?**

Yes. The Trust recognises the role of trade unions and sees positive engagement as critical to the transition process and ongoing success of the MAT. They will play an important role in the consultation process on TUPE for staff.

**Will the school remain non-selective?**

Yes.

**Where can I find out more about St Oscar Romero Catholic Academy Trust?**

Please visit their website [www.OscarRomero.co.uk](http://www.OscarRomero.co.uk) which has a wealth of information.

**Please refer to the consultation letter for details of how to submit additional questions during the consultation period.**