25th September 2026

Dear parents, carers, staff and parish community,

Academisation Development Consultation about the Vision

On 11 July 2024, Archbishop Bernard Longley outlined a new plan for our Catholic schools. The goal is to move from collaboration to shared responsibility by bringing all Catholic schools into a smaller number of stronger, flourishing Catholic Multi Academy Trusts (CMATs). After consulting widely, the Diocesan Trustees have approved the formation of a new CMAT, merging some existing academies and voluntary aided schools.

What is being proposed?
The first step towards forming the CMAT is the merger of Emmaus Catholic MAC, Lumen Christi Catholic MAC, and Our Lady and All Saints Catholic MAC, along with the addition of four Voluntary Aided schools. This consultation process relates only to this stage of the CMAT formation. From 1 September 2027, Emmaus Catholic MAC, Lumen Christi Catholic MAC, Our Lady and All Saints Catholic MAC and the four VA schools will form a new CMAT which will be called, St. Michael the Archangel CMAT.

The three MACs and four VA schools are as follows:

	Number of Schools	Secondary	Primary	Pupils Jan 2026 Census
Emmaus Catholic MAC	14	1	13	3787
Lumen Christi Catholic MAC	9	1	8	3126
Our Lady and All Saints Catholic MAC	14	2	12	5544
VA Schools				
St Alban's, Kings Heath	4	0	4	207
St Dunstan's, Kings Heath				262
St Jude's, Birmingham				187
St Mary's, Harborne				418
Totals	41	4	37	13,531

Through the Diocesan mission to form Christ-centred pilgrims of hope with kind hearts, questioning minds, a thirst for knowledge and a hunger for justice, St. Michael the Archangel CMAT will serve its children and communities through the creation of structures that will reduce the workload for staff and schools, ensure the delivery of the highest quality Catholic education and provide the economies of scale needed in these challenging times.

Why merge schools into a larger Trust?
By combining schools into a bigger Trust, staff workload can be reduced, resources can be shared, and schools can focus on delivering high quality Catholic education. This setup can also create cost savings, which will benefit all schools involved.

How will a larger Trust benefit the schools?
Large, well-managed Trusts have several advantages for the students, staff, parishes and communities:

- Catholic mission and values: The Trust will maintain and develop a strong focus on our Catholic mission and values including outstanding chaplaincy across all schools.

- More resources: Larger Trusts can access more funding and manage it more effectively. This can mean new buildings, better teaching resources, and more support for students and staff.

- Support for school communities: Strong Trusts can quickly provide extra staff or resources to schools that need them.

- Career development for staff: Teachers and staff will have more opportunities for growth without leaving the classroom.

How will a larger Trust benefit children in our schools?
This development will strengthen the education we provide, ensuring that every child receives an excellent Catholic education that nurtures academic achievement, personal development, and faith formation, enabling them to flourish as confident and successful learners.

Who will lead St. Michael the Archangel?
The CEO of the Trust will be Suzanne Horan. Suzanne is currently CEO of both Emmaus Catholic MAC and Lumen Christi Catholic MAC. Suzanne will be challenged and supported by a highly skilled Board of Directors.

How have the schools been allocated to the new CMAT?
Diocesan Education Service officers, working with Diocesan Trustees and the Department for Education, have considered a range of factors including Local Authority, parishes, number and phase of schools and pupils, finances and current academy and voluntary aided status. Primary/first feeder schools will continue to be allocated to the same Trusts as their Catholic secondary/middle school.

How will we be able to influence decisions in such a large Trust? Will we lose our identity?
No. Schools will remain deeply connected to their communities, and the Trust will ensure that each school's individuality is respected and celebrated. Local governing bodies will continue to play a key role in making sure the school's needs and voices are heard.

Will our school feel lost in the larger organisation?
To the contrary, successful Trusts are rooted in the communities that they serve. CMAT leaders will be required to engage with school communities.

What will be the role of the local governing body?
As stated above, successful Trusts and schools are rooted in their communities. In the larger CMAT, the role of the local governing body becomes even more important as a means to ensuring the local community are represented and listened to. Local governing bodies are the eyes and ears of the Board in ensuring the school and CMAT are meeting the requirements of a strong and flourishing CMAT.

Will there be more money for my school?
Money for school buildings is paid directly to larger Trusts and that opens many doors for the CMAT to work with their schools to grasp the opportunities of managing their estates.

In addition, the significant economies of scale will result in a more effective use of funds across the Academy Trust leading to additional resources for schools and pupils where required. This support can be provided in different ways: SEND, pupil premium, education performance, estates management, administration support, parish and community engagement, and will vary depending on need.

What is the timescale for the new vision?
Diocesan Trustees, Trust leaders and the DfE will work together for the merger and academisation of the Voluntary Aided schools to be complete by September 2027.

Next steps
As part of the process, we are now consulting the parents, parishes, and wider community of our schools for the period 25th September 2026 to 13th November 2026. If you would like to make a comment about the proposal, we invite you to submit these through this link to the Comments Form, by 12:00 pm on 13th November 2026.

As we look forward, we pray for the success of the St Michael the Archangel CMAT so that we can all work together in order for diocesan schools, their pupils and communities to flourish.

Yours sincerely,

Suzanne Horan
CEO

Katherine Marston
Chair of Board of Directors