Consultation Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Formation of St Michael the Archangel Catholic Multi Academy Trust (CMAT)

1. Why is the new CMAT being proposed?

To create a stronger, more sustainable family of Catholic schools that can share expertise, improve resilience and respond effectively to future challenges.

2. Will schools lose their identity?

No. Schools will retain their individual ethos, leadership and links with their local communities and parishes.

3. How will local communities have a voice?

Local Governing Bodies (LGBs) will continue to represent their school communities and act as the link between schools and the St Michael the Archangel Board of Directors.

4. Will decisions be made further away from schools?

Strategic decisions will be made at Trust level, but schools will continue to manage their day-to-day operations through their own leadership teams.

5. How will pupils' benefit?

The CMAT aims to improve access to specialist expertise, SEND support, school improvement resources, staff development and wider opportunities for pupils.

6. Will teachers be required to move between schools?

No. There are no plans for routine movement of staff between schools. Collaboration will focus on sharing expertise and best practice.

7. Will continuity of education be maintained?

Yes. Schools will remain staffed and led locally, with stability and continuity for pupils remaining a priority.

8. How will SEND provision be affected?

The CMAT will increase capacity to provide specialist support, share expertise and strengthen provision for pupils with additional needs.

9. Will school budgets be protected?

Funding will continue to be managed under academy trust regulations, with resources focused on supporting schools and improving outcomes for pupils.

10. What will happen to school reserves?

Reserves will be managed in accordance with the Academy Trust Handbook and used responsibly to support educational priorities.

11. What will the central "top-slice" be?

The final level of central contribution has not yet been determined and will be confirmed through future planning.

12. Will fundraising money remain with schools?

Yes. Funds raised for specific purposes will continue to be used for those intended purposes.

13. Will stronger schools subsidise weaker schools?

Resources will be allocated according to need, with support provided where required to ensure all schools can succeed.

14. Will there be more bureaucracy?

The intention is the opposite. Shared services and specialist support should reduce administrative burdens on school leaders.

15. How will staff benefit?

Staff will have access to enhanced professional development, wider career opportunities and stronger professional networks.

16. How will communication be managed?

St Michael the Archangel is committed to regular communication and clear routes for information to flow between schools, governors, parents and Trust leaders.

17. Is the merger already decided?

The proposal is rooted in the Archbishop's vision of creating a strong, sustainable and collaborative family of Catholic schools that can work together to deliver the very best outcomes for children and young people while preserving and strengthening their Catholic identity.

18. What will it cost to create the CMAT?

Detailed costs are still being finalised, but the expectation is that long-term efficiencies will outweigh initial implementation costs.

19. How will smaller schools' benefit?

Smaller schools will gain access to wider support, specialist expertise, collaborative opportunities and increased organisational resilience.

20. Will Principals retain autonomy?

Yes. Schools will continue to be led locally, with a clear Scheme of Delegation setting out responsibilities for school leaders, governors and the Trust.

21. When is the proposed implementation date?

The target implementation date is September 2027, subject to approval from the Department for Education.

24. How will success be measured?

Success will be measured by stronger outcomes for pupils, sustainable schools, effective support for staff, strong Catholic identity and continued engagement with local communities.