



**Live Laugh Learn**

**St. Cleopas**

Church of England Primary School

Beresford Road

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Tel: 0151 727 1725

Mrs L Gannon

**Headteacher**

Dear Parents and Carers,

As Chair of Governors I wanted to write to you to explain a change to our school. It is important for me to point out from the start that it will not make any difference to what your children, or you as parents or carers, currently experience on a daily basis.

Those of you who have had a long association with St Cleopas CofE Primary School may be aware that the school received a Good Ofsted judgment in 2019. This is due to our exceptional staff, our talented and hardworking pupils, and the commitment and support from our parents, carers, and the wider community.

You may be aware that in recent years, the government has signaled their intention that all school should be part of strong multi-academy trusts. More recently, the Government's Schools White Paper stated that all schools should either be an academy or on their way to conversion by 2030. Although this bill has been withdrawn, it is widely understood that the intention remains the same - even if there is a change in government.

We want to decide our own future and feel it's important to approach the academisation agenda proactively. As a Church of England School, it is essential that St Cleopas joins a Trust who share our Christian Values and Vision. The governing body has taken considerable time to consider which Multi-Academy Trust aligns with our values and vision and continues to support and enhance St Cleopas' target of excellence in all aspects of your children's education. I am therefore pleased to advise you that St Cleopas CofE Primary School have applied to join the All Saints Multi-Academy Trust. That means that the school will receive its funding and support services in a different way to what has previously been the case and it becomes part of a small group of other schools in a Multi-Academy Trust. To find out more about All Saints Multi-Academy Trust please visit: [www.allsaintsmat.org](http://www.allsaintsmat.org)

I repeat that that there will be no changes to what you currently experience at school. Your children will still have exactly the same classroom and support staff that they currently have. The curriculum will remain the same. The school day and uniform will remain the same. The Christian values of the school and the warm welcome that you and your children experience every day will remain the same. The change simply allows the school to continue to develop and to have access to all of the available opportunities to get even better.

Everybody on the governing body is incredibly proud of St Cleopas Primary School and we are also very grateful for the support that staff receive from parents and carers on a daily basis. Thank you very much for the essential role that you play in making your school so strong.

If you do have any questions about anything in this letter then please contact the school office via email within the 14 days consultation time and I will respond to you.

I hope that you and your families have a wonderful half term break.

Yours sincerely

Mrs. Mills  
Chair of Governors

Mrs. Gannon  
Headteacher

## Frequently asked questions

### What is a Multi Academy Trust?

**Academies** are publicly funded schools, independent of the local authority, held accountable through a legally binding funding agreement with the Department for Education (DfE). Staff are employed by the academy trust.

**Multi-academy trusts (MATs)** are groups of academies that have come together to form a charitable company, with a single group of 'members' (who have an overview of the governance arrangements) and a single board of trustees. All Saints is a MAT. Even as part of a MAT:

- individual schools remain as separate entities, with separate names and DfE numbers
- individual schools still receive separate Ofsted judgements and performance tables are still based on individual schools

MATs are set up as charitable companies and are accountable directly to the Secretary of State through the Regional Director.

As charitable companies, MATs have articles of association and a scheme of delegation, legal documents that set out the governance composition and procedures for the Trust.

The people on the main governing board of a MAT are known as Trustees. These roles come with specific legal responsibilities, which include:

- ensuring the organisation remains solvent and spends money in accordance with its charitable objectives
- ensuring the schools in the MAT provide a good standard of education
- managing any conflicts of interest

MATs are also required to have a group of members who sit above the board of trustees. The members have a hands-off, but significant, role. They monitor the performance of the trust and hold the trustees to account. They appoint Trustees and the Headteacher. They will intervene if the Trustees are not performing by making changes at board level.

### **Responsibilities**

MATs are required to produce a 'scheme of delegation', which outlines what decisions are taken by whom and at what level of the organisation. MATs must also comply with the Academies Financial Handbook that acts as the financial framework for academy trusts and sets out the financial governance requirements that all trusts must adhere to.

### Why would we want to join a MAT?

There are a number of reasons why a school may want to join/form a MAT:

- Common teaching and learning practices across schools
- Additional opportunities for our pupils across schools and in the community
- A common professional development programme (CPD) that adds real value to the education of the young people
- Efficiencies in administrative functions and joint procurement; this will help in these more financially challenging times to advantage our pupils
- Enhanced governance
- Enhanced reputation for excellence due to collaboration with other schools in the Trust
- Recruitment, retention and growth of excellent staff
- Improved overall academic standards

### **Will we lose our school name or individuality?**

There will be no change to the school name or uniform when the school joins the Trust. Our Christian Distinctiveness will remain the same and essential to St Cleopas.

### **Will the school still be a church school?**

The school will remain a Church of England School within the Diocese of Liverpool. All Saints has an excellent working relationship with the Diocese of Liverpool and were identified by the Diocese of Liverpool as being one of the seven Trusts in which St Cleopas could consider. We are committed to enhancing and developing the school's Christian Distinctiveness to ensure another glowing SIAMS report at the next inspection.

### **How will joining the Trust improve standards for our children?**

This will enable us to utilise the expertise of staff from schools across the Trust to accelerate progress for our children. Likewise, other schools will utilise the expertise at St Cleopas to support their pupils' progress. There will be wider opportunities and additional experiences open to our children. The talents of the schools together will grow and benefit all pupils – we are stronger and better together.

### **Will we lose our teachers and teaching assistants?**

The current team at St Cleopas will all remain employees of the school. However, if they choose to apply for different roles across the Trust they would do so in the same way they would for a school outside the Trust. One of the benefits of being within a Trust can be the flexibility of support if required. Being part of a MAT will provide professional development opportunities for staff. Our staff will often attend joint training, skills will be shared and good practice will be spread between the schools.

### **Do we have to re-apply for a school place?**

As when the school changed from an LA school to an academy all pupils will automatically remain on the school register.

### **My child has special educational needs. What happens to their funding?**

All funding will continue to be allocated in the same way as now and will be provided by Liverpool LA.

### **How does the transfer work?**

St Cleopas submits an application to the Regional Director. If they agree to the proposal, the legal teams sort out the paperwork to transfer St Cleopas into the Trust. It is planned that the application will go to the board on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023 for a transfer on 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024.