



St Joseph's Catholic
Primary School

Proposed Academy Conversion of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Consultation Report for the Governing Body

July 2025

Document Control Sheet

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- APPENDIX C – QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS FROM THE CONSULTATION MEETINGS

1. Introduction

In September 2017, the Diocese of Westminster published its strategy for Catholic Academy Trusts <http://rcdow.org.uk/education/academies-/>

The aim of the Diocese's CAT Strategy is to protect, secure and develop the Church's mission in education.

The Governors and Headteacher of St Joseph's Catholic Primary school have been considering the benefits of converting to an Academy for some time and have thoroughly researched the implications and benefits of converting for the School, including commencing collaborative working with partner schools in the Deanery to form a Catholic Academy Trust in the Diocese of Westminster.

A first step to taking this further was to complete the Diocese's Due Diligence process. The Diocese Project Board subsequently confirmed that the school had met the requirements and issued the Diocese's Letter of Consent to convert allowing the school to submit their application to convert and form the St Carlo CAT in December 2024.

In parallel to this, the Governors and Headteacher of the School passed a resolution to submit a conversion application to the Regional Directors (RD) Headteachers Advisory Board (HTB) to apply to become an Academy and form the St Carlo CAT in December 2024.

9 of the 10 Catholic Schools in the Ealing Deanery worked together to submit conversion applications to the Regional Director prior to the DfE's deadline on 20th December to qualify for the conversion grant of £25,000.

The school subsequently received its Academy Order from the Regional Director in February 2025.

The purpose of governance is to provide confident, strategic leadership and to create robust accountability, oversight, and assurance for educational and financial performance. The Governors of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School firmly believe that they know what is best for the school and wished to invite comments from stakeholders on this proposal.

This School therefore sets out results of the consultation exercise commissioned by the Governors to listen to the views of stakeholders.

A meeting of the Governing Body in Autumn 2025 will consider the findings of this report.

2. Scope and timing of Stakeholder Consultation

The Governors devised and implemented a consultation exercise which sought the views of parents, staff, and the wider community on whether the school should become an Academy and form the St Carlo CAT.

The consultation period opened on 2 June and ended on 11 July 2025.

3. Methodology

The Governors of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School developed a consultation plan and FAQs leaflet, which identified all the school's stakeholders to be contacted at the start of the exercise and provided them with background information about the Diocese CAT Strategy to inform the debate.

The Headteacher wrote to all parents and staff on 2 June to start the consultation exercise, invite them to attend consultation meetings and direct them to accessing the consultation leaflet on the School's website.

Staff and parents were invited to attend consultation meetings to find out more about the proposed conversion to an Academy and the formation of the St Carlo CAT.

Emails were also sent to both officer and elected representatives of the London Borough of Ealing, as well as the local MP, neighbouring Secondary, Primary and Nursery Schools and other partners.

The consultation materials also contained a response form which stakeholders were invited to complete and submit by the end of the consultation period.

The Consultation Leaflet produced by Governors is attached as **Appendix A** to this report.

4. Consultation Meeting Chronology

The letters to parents and staff invited them to submit questions, and to attend the appropriate consultation meetings scheduled below:

- Staff – 18 June at 4pm; and
- Parents – 18 June at 7pm.

The meetings were attended by the Headteacher, CEO Designate of St Carlo CAT, Co-Chairs of Governors and the Academy Implementation Officer.

The staff meeting was attended by 26 members of staff and the Parents meeting was attended by 4 parents.

The Headteacher and Co-Chairs of Governors gave a presentation covering issues such as the Diocese's vision for the CAT programme and the advantages of forming the St Carlo CAT, why this is being considered now, the conversion process and next steps, as well as explaining the vision, values, and approach of the CAT.

The full presentation is enclosed as **Appendix B** to this report.

Attendees were then given an opportunity to ask any questions they might have.

The questions asked and answers provided at the above meetings is included as **Appendix C** to this report.

5. Completed Questionnaires

1 completed questionnaire was returned and the stakeholder agreed with the proposal.

6. Findings from the Consultation Questionnaires

Q2) Respondents were asked to consider the proposal that St Joseph's Catholic Primary School should convert to an Academy and form the St Carlo CAT

The respondent, who indicated that they 'agreed' with the proposal, offered the following comments:

- If this means we will, inadvertently, receive more funding and have more control of spending them that sounds like a good idea. I would be interested to hear of the tangible benefits or proposed changes of being in a CAT with the other schools – financial, shared resources, closer working together, etc. I would also like to hear about the cons and not just the pros of becoming an academy.

Q3) Respondents were given the opportunity to make any other comments about the proposed conversion.

The respondent offered the following comments:

- I have concerns about the future viability of Catholic schools and Catholic teaching remaining truly Catholic for future generations, due to the lack of practicing Catholics and the need to increase the intake of non-Catholics. How do you think becoming an academy will future proof?

7. Reflections on the Consultation

The staff and parents' response to the consultation was positive and no significant concerns were identified which had not been anticipated by Governors and the Diocese.

The only respondent agreed with the proposal.

The lack of opposition to the proposal indicates that the St Joseph's Catholic Primary School community has been well informed on the proposed changes and benefits of forming the St Carlo CAT.

8. Summary

This report summarises the findings of the genuine, open, and honest consultation exercise undertaken by Governors to ascertain the views of parents, staff, and other stakeholders on the conversion of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School to an Academy and to form the St Carlo CAT.

This report evidences the comprehensive approach taken to raise awareness of the consultation exercise in the community, to provide background information on the issues and to host staff and parents' meetings to allow stakeholders to find out about the Diocese's Strategy and ask questions.

Although the only respondent was in favour of the proposal, the number of returned response forms was a little disappointing. The school and Trust should continue to communicate with staff and parents about this to ensure that the community remains updated and engaged.

However, the range of questions asked at the parents and staff meetings (and listed in **Appendix C**) was wide ranging, reassuring and positive. The questions and answers illustrate the willingness of attendees to engage with the Headteacher and Governors on this matter.

The school should continue to communicate with staff and parents about this to ensure that the community remains updated and engaged.

9. Acknowledgements

The Governors and Headteacher of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School would like to express their gratitude and appreciation for the staff and parents who took part in the consultation by listening to the presentations, asking clarification questions and who took the time to contribute their views.

10. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Governors of St Joseph's Catholic Primary School:

- (i) Approve the contents of this report.

- (ii) Recognise that they have fulfilled their duty to undertake a Statutory Section 10 stakeholder consultation exercise on the proposed conversion.
- (iii) Publish this report on the school's website as a record of the consultation and feedback to the participants and wider stakeholders.
- (iv) Continue to share updates and engage with staff and parents on this matter; and
- (v) Proceed to the next stage of the conversion process having not identified any barriers to the schools' conversion and proposal to form the St Carlo CAT.