



**St Joseph's Catholic Primary School**  
**Consultation Information for Parents, Parishioners**  
**& Members of the Local Community**  
**November 2023**

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Archdiocese of Birmingham – Statement of Intent

“The Trustees of the Archbishop have requested that all schools under the Diocesan Trust Deed work towards becoming ‘academy ready’. This means that the Archdiocese sees the long-term future of its schools as forming and being part of a Multi Academy company with other Catholic schools in their local area.” *Birmingham Diocesan Education Service (BDES)* [www.bdes.org.uk](http://www.bdes.org.uk). The Archdiocese of Birmingham has determined which MACs the VA schools will join and Emmaus is the nominated MAC for this school.

### 1.2 What is being proposed?

The Governing Body of St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School is proposing to convert to academy status in 2024 by joining Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company (MAC).

Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company was formed in October 2014, at which time it was called St Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Company. On 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021, it became a larger MAC of 10 schools, following a merger with an existing Multi Academy Company of four Sandwell primary schools.

Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company currently consists of the following schools:

#### **School**

Hagley Catholic High School  
Our Lady & St Hubert’s Catholic Primary School  
Our Lady of Fatima Catholic Primary School  
St Ambrose Catholic Primary School  
St Francis Xavier Catholic Primary School  
St Gregory’s Catholic Primary School  
St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School  
St Mary’s Catholic Primary School  
St Philip’s Catholic Primary School  
St Wulstan’s Catholic Primary School

#### **Local Authority**

Worcestershire  
Sandwell  
Birmingham  
Worcestershire  
Sandwell  
Sandwell  
Dudley  
Dudley  
Sandwell  
Worcestershire



HAGLEY CATHOLIC  
HIGH SCHOOL  
SEMPER FIDELIS



OUR LADY OF FATIMA  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL



OUR LADY  
AND ST HUBERT'S  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL



ST FRANCIS XAVIER  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL



ST AMBROSE  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL



ST GREGORY'S  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL



ST JOSEPH'S  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL



ST MARY'S  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL



ST PHILIP'S  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL



ST WULSTAN'S  
CATHOLIC PRIMARY  
SCHOOL

The following four Worcestershire Catholic primary schools are aiming to join Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company in 2024:

Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Primary School, Worcester  
St George's Catholic Primary School, Worcester  
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Droitwich  
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Warndon

This decision is based on our commitment to preserving and protecting Catholic education and continuing to achieve the best for our schools, pupils, staff and Catholic communities. The proposal has had the approval of the Archbishop of Birmingham. As part of the process of applying to become part of a Multi Academy Company, St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Governing Body has committed to full consultation with all stakeholders in order to take their views into account regarding the changes ahead. The purpose of this document is, therefore, to introduce the proposals to you, signpost you to where you can find additional information and inform you how you can take part in the consultation.

### **1.3 What is a Multi Academy Company?**

A Multi Academy Company is a structure where the charitable company and Board of Directors oversee the running of two or more schools. The company is limited by guarantee, not by shares, and as such, is not profit making and does not pay dividends to shareholders. Being a company, the MAC must be registered with Companies House and must operate within the legal framework for a limited company, including filing company accounts annually.

The Multi Academy Company receives its funding directly from central government rather than through a local authority and is accountable to the Department for Education and the Secretary of State for providing high quality education.

The Board of Directors takes on a similar role to that which the local authority fulfils for maintained schools – overseeing the strategic direction of the schools. The Multi Academy Company structure is the only structure under which schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham can convert to become academies, it is not possible to convert as a single school. The essential principles of the model are that no schools are left behind, it involves no external business sponsorship and there will be no change to the distinctive nature of any of the schools who join Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company.

## **2. Changing Educational Landscape**

### **2.1 Academy Strategy – National and Diocesan Perspective**

Schools have always operated within a changing educational landscape and successful schools adapt and develop accordingly. It has been the vision of successive governments to encourage and to support schools in England to cease being 'maintained' by their local authority and to move to academy status. Converting schools to academies is central to the Department for Education's approach to improving the quality of education.

To ensure Catholic education is protected within our communities for the long term, the Archdiocese of Birmingham's Academy Strategy is to develop a number of Catholic Multi Academy Companies of which there are currently 16, supporting 150 schools. The Diocesan Academy Strategy is for all schools to be in, or have a plan to join, a Multi Academy Company.

## **2.2 Academy Strategy in the Context of Catholic Education**

In considering the formation of a Multi Academy Company, it is helpful to reflect on the context and the distinctiveness of Catholic education. Catholic schools' primary purpose is to support families in the education of their children. Schools must strive to enable each child to attain personal excellence in their studies and through the formation of their human values and understanding of God's purpose in their life. Crossing the threshold of a Catholic school should be like entering into the nurturing comfort of a loving Christian family, where all experience welcome, feel valued and are challenged to grow.

What makes a Catholic school distinctive is that it aims to bring Gospel virtues into every aspect of education, engaging young people with finding value and purpose in their life through an awareness of the beauty, truth and goodness of the Holy Trinity. For many pupils and their families, school life is their gateway to an encounter with Christ.

As an instrument of the Catholic Church, Catholic schools are by their nature collaborative and should always seek to work in partnership with other schools in a spirit of solidarity and never in competition. The spirit of solidarity underpins how the Catholic Dioceses of England have creatively worked together with the State to provide education for over seventy years. The Church's proven history in education reaches back much further, most notable to the 1850's and predates State provision in England. Because of importance the Catholic Church placed on education, they decided that the education of the poor was to be their first priority, often building schools before churches. 1944 marked the passing of the Education Act 1944 where most Catholic schools became 'voluntary aided' schools. This meant they remained part of the state system whilst retaining their distinctively Catholic ethos through various legal protections which continue to apply to Catholic schools to this day.

## **3. Academy Strategy – Collaborative Model**

### **3.1 Increased Collaboration**

Joining a Multi Academy Company would allow St Joseph's Catholic Primary School to establish a transparent working relationships with a family of Catholic schools in our geographical area, moving beyond any existing informal working into a relationship of collaboration and support, serving the common good in a spirit of solidarity.

The benefits of this increased collaboration can include:

- Schools leaders can share ideas, expertise and plan to tackle initiatives and challenges together;
- Shared accountability can foster closer cooperation leading to better pupil support and achievement;
- Those responsible for local governance can cooperate to share skills, think strategically and support each other;
- Sharing resources offers schools different ways to use expertise, foster staff development, plan for the future and tackle recruitment challenges;
- Extend the range and broaden the diversity of planned curriculum and extracurricular opportunities:
- Groups of schools can source and fund specialist provision;
- Shared professional development is facilitated (coaching and mentoring can develop expertise within and across the different phases of education);

- Retention of staff with greater opportunities for professional development and career progression;
- Regional provision can be put in place for educational welfare, family support, special educational needs and support for our most vulnerable pupils;
- Shared expertise and skills in growing the Catholic life of the schools and their communities.

### **3.2 Shared Vision**

For St Joseph’s Catholic Primary School, moving into a Multi Academy Company will involve change and adapting to a new educational culture, common purpose with a shared, mission, vision and values.

#### **Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company Mission, Vision and Values**

##### **Motto**

Our journey with Christ.

##### **Mission**

A family of schools, united in Christ and working as one, to provide the very best Catholic education, faith formation and personal growth, rooted in Gospel values.

##### **Vision**

Excellent Catholic Education for all in the heart of our communities: nourishing faith, nurturing talent, fostering aspiration.

##### **Values**

Believe	Christ and the teaching of the Catholic Church are at the centre of all we do. We believe there is no limit to what, with Christ, we can attain.
Achieve	We encourage our staff and young people to: be curious about the world, embrace new ideas, meet challenges and aspire to reach the highest standards.
Sustain	As responsible stewards of our people, resources and environment, we promote sustainability to preserve Catholic education and protect our communities.
Share	We work collaboratively, with integrity and respect, to share expertise, training opportunities and best practice for the benefit of all.
Serve	We recognize the Christian call to serve within our schools and wider communities. By caring for others and putting their needs first, we acknowledge the gifts God has given us and recognise Christ in those we meet.

## **4. Frequently Asked Questions**

### **4.1 Will our school name change?**

No, our school’s name will remain the same but you will see on letter headed paper or on the school website, our school name followed by, ‘part of Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company.’

#### **4.2 Will our school logo change?**

The school logo will not change but will be adapted to include the Emmaus logo mark.

The Emmaus logo mark comprises three main elements, one of which is the spiral device - the journey to Emmaus is represented with a distinctive spiralling path in the shape of a lower case 'e' that suggests movement and progression. The three sections represent the three travellers spoken about in scripture, one of whom is Christ.

As is reflected in the mission statement, Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company is a family of schools and, therefore, the spiral device will be added to each school's individual logo, with the school logo as the centre, in order to keep their own identity. Please see the Emmaus school logos in section 1.2.

#### **4.3 Will our school uniform change?**

The school uniform will not change as Emmaus Catholic MAC encourages its schools to maintain their own identity and uniform is a part of that identity. However, where St Joseph's Catholic Primary School's logo may currently be incorporated into an item of our uniform, the relevant Emmaus school logo, would replace the school's current one.

Please note, however, that as sustainability is one of Emmaus Catholic MAC's values, our parents and carers would not be expected to update our children's uniform immediately, and would only expect uniform to be updated with the Emmaus logo when our children have outgrown existing uniform.

#### **4.4 Will our admission arrangements change?**

No, becoming part of Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company does not change our current admission arrangements.

#### **4.5 Will our existing staff be required to work in a different school within Emmaus Catholic MAC?**

Emmaus Catholic MAC works very hard to be an employer of choice and no existing member of staff will be directed to swap schools to work in another MAC school. There are times, where in the spirit of solidarity, an Emmaus colleague may volunteer, if requested, to help out colleagues in another MAC school, but this would be via a mutually agreed arrangement and approved by the relevant school Principal.

Emmaus is committed to the talent management of its staff and has outlined that one of the benefits of being part of a family of schools is the increased opportunities this can offer in promoting professional and career development within a Catholic educational setting. This will help to secure Catholic education within our local setting.

#### **4.6 What will be the governance structure?**

We will continue to have our own Local Governing Body which will consist of Foundation governors (governors appointed by the Archbishop), parent governors and staff governors.

In addition, there will be an Emmaus Catholic Multi Academy Company Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is the MAC employer, working on a voluntary basis and consisting of a variety of people with a range of relevant skills, for example:

- knowledge of education
- knowledge of finance and accounting systems
- knowledge of legal and employment issues
- knowledge of property and land issues
- knowledge of IT
- commercial and management experience

The Archdiocese of Birmingham will ensure that our Foundation Directors are always in the majority, by a minimum of two. They will look to appoint people who bring a balance of skills, to ensure our Board of Directors are able to fulfil their statutory duties. Directors may be co-opted to meet specific skills gaps.

The Board of Directors is the employer whose main responsibilities are:

- Setting the strategic vision and direction for the Multi Academy Company and its schools.
- Monitoring the MAC's work in terms of Catholic ethos.
- Developing and enhancing the quality of education provision.
- Challenging and monitoring the performance of the MAC.
- Ensuring the MAC applies with relevant legislation.
- Managing the MAC's finances and property.
- Appointing senior school leaders – Catholic Senior Executive Leader, (Executive) Principal, Head of School, Vice Principal, and RE Subject Leads.
- Ensuring effective partnerships between the Board of Directors and Governing Bodies.

#### **4.7 Will all our policies and practices have to be the same for every school within Emmaus Catholic MAC?**

Emmaus Catholic MAC produce a number of MAC-wide policies to ensure fairness and consistency across its schools but also to reduce the workload of school staff. Therefore, these policies will apply to our school. Other policies will be contextual to individual schools within the Multi Academy Company.

#### **4.8 Will our School get more money?**

The Secretary of State for Education has made it clear that financially no school should be better, or worse off, because of becoming an academy. Our current School Funding Grant comes via our Local Authority. Our Local Authority retains some of our funding (often referred to as top slicing) to pay for central services e.g. the School Admission Team. In a Multi Academy Company, school funding is paid directly to the Multi Academy Company- there is no involvement of a local authority and a local authority has no say on how the money is allocated or spent. Emmaus Catholic MAC distributes the school funding to its schools, and like our Local Authority, will also apply a Central Services Charge in respect of MAC central services. Whilst no additional government funding can be obtained for being part of a MAC, the economies of scale of working together as part of a bigger family of schools means we will be able to get better value for our money.

#### **4.9 Will our School continue to collaborate with schools who are not part of our MAC?**

Yes, we have close partnerships with other schools within our local area, partnerships which have been developed and nurtured over many years. Being part of a Multi Academy Company does not affect our relationships with these schools and we will continue to work closely with them to share and develop best practice.

#### **4.10 Will there be a chief executive role within our MAC?**

Yes, there is currently a Catholic Senior Executive Leader (often shortened to CSEL) in post at Emmaus Catholic MAC.

Appointed by Emmaus Catholic MAC Board of Directors, in a paid role, the CSEL is required to provide visible strategic leadership across the MAC.

The CSEL is responsible for ensuring the schools within the MAC provide sustainable, high quality and inclusive education, financial and operational performance, while preserving and developing the MAC's Catholic character. This includes having overall direct responsibility for the school improvement, pupil development, progress and attainment within all schools across the MAC. In addition to the CSEL, there is currently a paid Chief Finance & Operations Officer (CFOO) in post, whose role is to ensure resources are properly accounted for.

#### **4.11 What will be the role of our Parish and our Parish Priest?**

Our School was built to serve the families of our Parish and to work in partnership with them to share in the central mission of the Church, which is to proclaim Jesus and His Gospel in the world today and, in so doing, hand on our faith to our children. This core purpose of Catholic education will not change and we will continue to strive to ensure we serve the needs of our Parish and we educate our children in a manner that is permeated by the Catholic faith. The role of the Parish Priest with regard to the Parish school has a long history, and is defined in Church law, local policy and custom. Our Parish Priest, along with our Headteacher and wider Governing Body, ensure our children are educated to the authentic purpose of a Catholic school. Their role is integrated into the strategic planning, and pastoral activity of our school. Joining a Multi Academy Company will not change, or lessen, their role within our School and the community we serve.

#### **4.12 Will our Headteacher still be responsible for the leadership and management of our School?**

Yes, our Headteacher will continue to be responsible for the leadership and management of our School. Reporting to the Catholic Senior Executive Leader, they will work in collaboration with and be supported by the Catholic Senior Executive Leader and will be accountable to the Local Governing Body and Emmaus Catholic MAC Board of Directors.

The titles of some leadership roles will change, for example, the Headteacher will be known as the Principal, the Deputy Headteacher as the Vice Principal and the Assistant Headteacher as the Assistant Principal.



## **5. Next Steps**

### **5.1 Consultation**

The consultation period will run for 4 weeks from Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November to Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2023. Within our community, we will be consulting with; parents, staff, parishioners, the LA, other local schools.

A consultation evening has been arranged for: **Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2023 at 3:30pm here in school.** If you wish to attend the consultation evening then you will be able to book a place via the following email address.

Alternatively, you can also share your views and suggestions or ask questions by emailing –

**[academy2023@st-josephs-pri.worcs.sch.uk](mailto:academy2023@st-josephs-pri.worcs.sch.uk)**

All consultation responses will be carefully considered. Following consultation, a consultation outcome report will be agreed by the Governing Body, published and made available to all stakeholders via the consultation area on the school website.

### **5.2 Timescales**

It is anticipated that we will join Emmaus Catholic MAC by 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

## **Appendix 1 - Birmingham Archdiocese's Academy Strategy**

- Only groups of Catholic schools can join together to form a Multi Academy Company (MAC). Each school retains their headteacher who will be responsible for delivering education within that school.
- No provision within the agreements negotiated by the Diocesan Education Service (DES) exists for schools to form single academies, or to form Multi Academy Companies with non-Catholic schools.
- The proposed academies do not involve any form of external sponsorship. The DES is opposed to this.
- Strategic control of the MAC rests with a board of volunteer directors, a sort of 'super' governing body. The majority of the directors would be appointed by the Diocese as Foundation Directors – in much the same way that the majority of governors on the governing body today are foundation governors, in place to represent the Church's interests.
- Each school would retain its own identity and would continue to have a Local Governing Body working closely with the headteacher and the school community. Governors are still responsible for school performance, admissions, budgetary oversight, staff recruitment up Senior Leadership positions and maintaining links with the local parish that the school serves.
- Staff currently employed by each school would transfer to being employed by the MAC. Current staff would have their terms and conditions protected under the TUPE legislation and continue to work in their school. New staff could be employed under different terms and conditions.
- The Multi Academy structure around education for pupils aged 3 – 19 is the preferred model and all schools in the Archdiocese of Birmingham have been asked to convert or planned to convert by September 2020.
- The DES will act as a facilitator for groups of schools, based on geographical areas, that wish to become a MAC.
- The aim is to secure, protect and continue to improve Catholic education as the Church has seen as its mission for over 150 years.