

Federation of
Fountains CE VC Primary
and
Grewelthorpe CE VC Primary
Academy Conversion Consultation Briefing

Welcome and Introductions

- Rachel Bain, Chair of Governors
- Pam Acheson, Head Teacher
- Richard Noake, Diocesan Director of Education, Diocese of Leeds and CEO of the Leeds Diocesan Learning Trust

From the perspective of the Governing Board

Rachel Bain

Why are we here?

- The Governing Board of the school has been discussing options for academy conversion for several years, considering a range of options.
- As a Church School in the Diocese of Leeds we are guided and advised by the Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) about academy conversion options for Church Schools.
- In September 2021 the DBE published revised Academy Strategy guidance encouraging all schools to consider their academy future given the expectation from government that all schools should be moving to join a family of schools in a Multi-Academy Trust (MATs)
- Church Schools can only join Church MATs
- Following a presentation by the Director of Education to 14 Church Schools in the Ripon area in November 2021 highlighting the opportunity to join the new Diocesan MAT the Governing Board has resolved to apply to the DfE for an Academy Order

Where are we now?

- The Governing Board has now made an application to DfE for an Academy Order
- Following a period of due diligence and co-working between schools and the Trust the DfE has approved the partnership and issued our school with an Academy Order
- Now we must hold consultation meetings with our families, parents and carers, our staff and our community to give you all an opportunity to find out more about the reason for our decision
- This is your opportunity to find out more about our decisions, the Leeds Diocesan Learning Trust, what becoming an academy will mean for your children and ask us any questions you may have at this stage

Why have we taken this decision?

- We are at the right point in our school improvement journey where it is timely to unite with likeminded schools to achieve the very best for our pupils and communities.
- We will only join a MAT rooted in Christian values and we desire to work with other similar schools including those in our locality.
- The educational landscape is changing and we must think strategically about our future.
- Becoming part of LDLT will provide opportunities for sustainable growth, collaborative working and longer-term sustainability, whilst also enabling the school to maintain its own distinctive character.
- Being part of a trust will ensure we are able to focus on what really matters in school: teaching, learning and safeguarding children; whilst also having the security of knowing that statutory responsibilities, business functions and budgetary oversight are being managed at a strategic level.

From the perspective of the quality of provision

Pam Acheson

Benefits to our school

- We recognise that LDLT will be more than the sum of its parts. Therefore, to be part of the trust at the beginning will allow the school to be equally valued and contribute to the development and direction of the Trust as grow together.
- We believe that joining the LDLT will enable us to work closely together with other schools, taking part in real and meaningful collaborations between teachers, pupils and local communities.
- There is a degree of isolation that we are currently experiencing as a maintained school and especially as we have seen the role of the Local Authority diminish over time. We would be leaving the diminishing authority to join a growing and strengthening trust.
- Through joining the trust, we hope all in our community will benefit from being part of and contributing to: Stronger Leadership, Strategic Management, Shared Staffing expertise

What will we gain?

- **Specialist Resources:** Combining resources and seeking out funding so specialist knowledge can be shared in many different areas, for example academically and in relation to, extra-curricular and operational functions.
- **Professional Development:** building networks across multiple schools, sharing costs and upskilling as many staff as possible in timely and focused ways.
- **Economies of Scale:** We recognise that being in a trust does not necessarily provide more funding, however, greater value can be driven into how finance is spent and the impact of how it is prioritised to strengthen pupil outcomes.
- **Shared Accountability:** The school will benefit from oversight at trust level. This shared responsibility will bring expertise from the wider trust to keep a sharp focus and provide support to ensure the school is effective.

And all underpinned by a strong Christian foundation

- Becoming part of LDLT provides the opportunity to all members of the Trust to unite, with moral purpose, in a set of shared Christian Values rooted in a distinctly Christian vision for education.
- The diocesan vision and aims for the Trust are consistent with those of the school and its community and therefore our values align. This underlying foundation of LDLT has stronger Christian underpinnings than other Trusts.

What will we bring?

We have much to offer to the Trust as it begins its work and this will benefit everyone:

- A proactive staff group who actively engage in professional development and are keen to benefit from wider networks and development opportunities.
- Strong and experienced governing body.
- An excellent reputation in the community.
- A track record of professional generosity and positive contribution to school improvement across the existing federation and more widely.
- Strong use and development of system leadership, including using technology as a leadership tool and to support teaching and learning.
- Stable staffing.

From the perspective of the Diocese of Leeds

Canon Richard Noake



The Diocesan Board of Education View

- Providing guidance and advice at a time of educational change
- DBE Academy Strategy 2021 – please be prepared for a future where all schools could be academies: Church Schools must be in Church MATs so explore options
- Government’s Education White Paper March 2022 (?)
- DBE proactively working for 9 years on a developing strategy and provision of Church MATs across the diocese
- Leeds Diocesan Learning Trust – 11th Church MAT, supported by DBE and DfE through project start up grants
- DDE is the CEO



The Academy Programme and LDLT

- An Academy is a publicly funded school independent of the LA
- The programme was developed by Labour in the mid 2000s and became the programme of choice of the coalition government in 2010
- Academy freedoms include:
 - Freedom from LA control
 - Greater control of budget
 - Ability to set own pay and conditions for staff
 - Freedom from following the National Curriculum
 - Ability to change the length of the school terms, days etc
- When two or more academies join together they create a Multi Academy Trust – a charitable company regulated by company law

Leeds Diocesan Learning Trust – a Church MAT for Church and Non-Church Schools

- Created by the Diocese of Leeds to provide more capacity for its schools to have a strong MAT home
- In time it will operate across a number of geographies in the Diocese
- Its first cohort of schools will be in Ripon and the surrounding area
- 7 Church Primary Schools have been granted Academy Orders – it is likely there will be a few more from the area over the next few months
- The MAT will also be able to support vulnerable schools who have been directed to convert by the DfE because of Inadequate Ofsted judgements – the moral imperative to support where possible

Strong Governance – Three Layers

Members (Diocese sits in the majority)

- Equivalent to shareholders of a company.
- Ultimate control – appoint the Trustee / Directors - can amend Memorandums and *Articles of Association*.

Trust Board (Majority appointed by the Members)

- Trustees are equivalent to company directors.
- Similar responsibilities to governing board of a maintained school but oversee the work of the whole trust.

Local Academy Council

- Trustees delegate majority of the responsibilities for running schools to this local board/committee/council and are often used as a key link to local communities. This is outlined in the *Scheme of Delegation*.

Leeds Diocesan Learning Trust

Members

- Rt Revd Nicholas Baines, Bishop of Leeds; Bishop Helen-Ann Hartley, Bishop of Ripon, DBE Chair; Jonathan Wood Diocese of Leeds CEO; Baroness Canon Margaret Eaton; Matthew Ambler, Solicitor and Leeds Board Member

Trust Board

- Peter Foskett, Chair, Solicitor
- Angela Cox OBE, Vice Chair, former Director of Education
- Richard Graham, Head of Planning, Yorkshire Dales National Park
- Liane Atkin, solicitor, Durham/Newcastle Diocese Assistant Director of Education, & Durham and Newcastle Diocese Trust COO
- Geoff Park, Diocese of Leeds CFO
- Mark Evans, former Senior HMI and National Lead for RE

Local Academy Council

- The current governors and maintaining Foundation and Vicar appointments

LDLT Vision

Loving, living and learning together

Drawn by a vision of transformational learning and the flourishing of all, we will love God, the world and each other. Celebrating our unique schools and communities, we will grow together to build a present and a future to be proud of.

Our vision is rooted in the example of the life of Jesus. In each Gospel encounter and story, we are challenged to love one another and ourselves (Matthew 22:37-39) and reminded that all things are possible (Matthew 19:26).

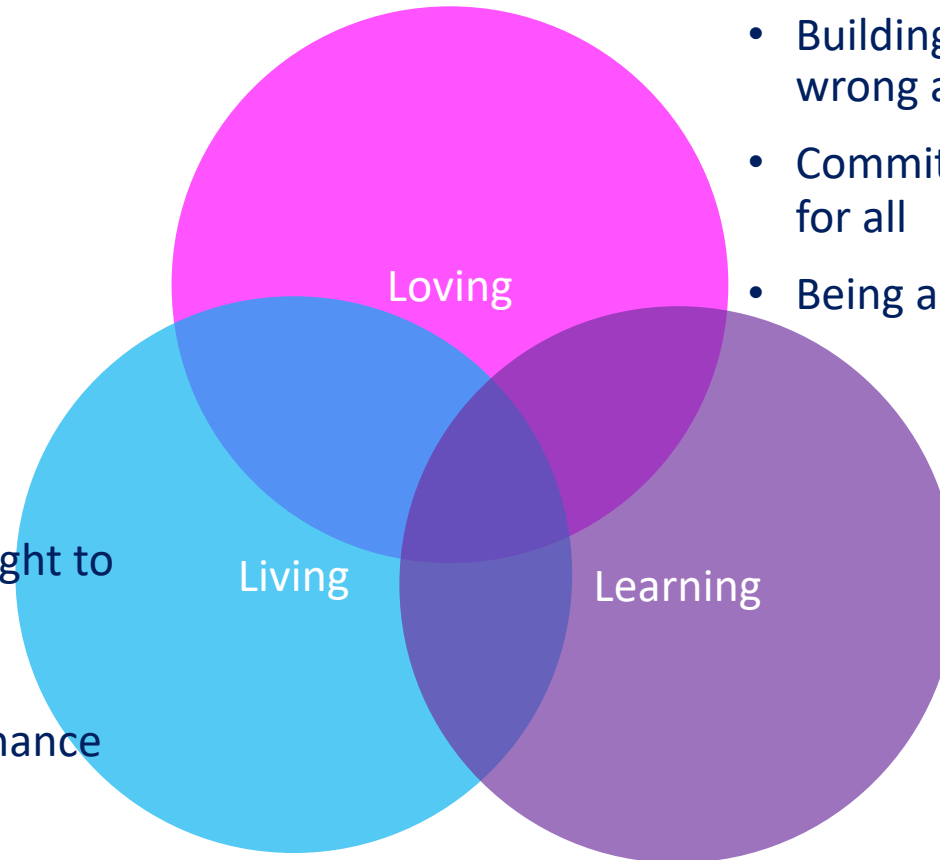
Jesus replied: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’

Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.”



A lived out vision

- Living out a vigilant culture of safeguarding, as everyone has a right to be safe
- Building strong relationships and partnerships that support and enhance our shared life
- Celebrating diversity and difference, supporting all to flourish
- Living and leading ethically



- Ensuring everyone knows they have ultimate worth and a part to play
- Building resilience for when things go wrong and then offering a way back
- Commitment to a culture of well-being for all
- Being a prophetic voice when needed

- Opening horizons of hope so that our aspirations are achievable
- Fostering confidence and delight in lifelong learning
- Building a breadth of experiences, knowledge and skills to succeed
- A commitment to removing barriers to learning, whatever they may be

Loving, living and learning together

Leeds Diocesan Learning Trust

Our core offer to each school will include :

- Finance – ESFA, payroll, finance systems, support to business managers, audit
- Compliance – policies, statutory expectations, Academy Handbook, ESFA Handbook
- HR
- Insurance
- Legal
- School effectiveness, development and improvement inc church school support
- CPD offer focused on supporting strong teaching and learning and growing leadership at all levels
- Head's Strategic Development Group
- Chair's Forum
- Business Manager Group
- Governor support and hub portal

Leeds Diocesan Learning Trust

What are we here for and what will we provide?

- An inclusive, strong, supportive trust that understands and is committed to schools across the diocese
- Dynamic governance: Members to Trustees to Local Academy Councils supported by a clear scheme of delegation
- Central team and resources that will support schools to flourish
- Collaborative approach to school improvement and curriculum development that promotes creativity, context and a professional understanding of alignment and quality assurance
- Schools supporting schools within the Trust and outside of the Trust, working with external partners like other MATs, Teaching Hubs, Diocese, LA, Ofsted, SIAMS and DfE – accessing latest research and good practice
- Strong quality assurance using internal and external validation and challenge partners
- To be an employer of choice
- To value every child and work to ensure all children are safeguarded and flourish so they can reach their potential
- First class education within the context of Christian belief and practice across all Church Schools



Your Comments and Questions

