



Archdiocese of
Birmingham



St Anthony's Catholic Primary School



Warwickshire
County Council

Sydenham Drive
Leamington Spa
Warwickshire
CV31 1NJ

Mrs. Hannah Edwards BA(Ed) QTS (Hons)

Headteacher

Mrs. Clare Davies BA(Ed) QTS (Hons)

Deputy Headteacher

admin3544@welearn365.com

www.stanthonyscatholic.com

Telephone: (01926) 428800

24th February 2026

Dear Parents, Carers, and Parish community,

Academisation Development Consultation about the Vision

On 11th July 2024, Archbishop Bernard Longley outlined a new plan for our Catholic schools. The goal is to move from collaboration to shared responsibility by bringing all Catholic schools into a smaller number of stronger, flourishing Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts (CMATs). After consulting widely, the Diocesan Trustees have approved the formation of a new CMAT, merging some existing academies and voluntary aided schools.

In line with the diocesan plan, we are delighted to confirm that the name of the new CMAT will be St Raphael the Archangel Catholic Multi Academy Trust.

What is being proposed?

The merger of Holy Spirit MAC and Our Lady of the Magnificat MAC, along with the addition of five Voluntary Aided schools to form one Multi Academy Trust. The two MACs and five VA schools are as follows:

	Number of Schools	Secondary	Middle	Primary	First	Pupils 2025 Census
Our Lady of the Magnificat MAC	19	3	1	12	3	5136
Holy Spirit MAC	5	1	0	4		2245
VA Schools						
St Peter's, Leamington Spa	5	0	0	5	0	792
St Mary Immaculate						
Our Lady's, Princethorpe						
St Anthony's, Leamington Spa						
St Joseph's, Whitnash						
Totals	29	4	1	21	3	8173

The new CMAT will serve its children and communities through the creation of structures that will reduce the workload for staff and schools, ensure the delivery of the highest quality Catholic education and provide the economies of scale needed in these challenging times.

Please ask if you would like this letter in a larger font size.



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Why merge schools into a larger Trust?

By combining schools into a bigger Trust, staff workload can be reduced, resources can be shared, and schools can focus on delivering high-quality Catholic education. This setup can also create cost savings, which will benefit all schools involved.

How will a larger Trust benefit the schools?

Large, well-managed trusts have several advantages for the students, staff, parishes and communities:

Catholic mission and values: The Trust will maintain and develop a strong focus on our Catholic mission and values including outstanding chaplaincy across all schools.

More resources: Larger Trusts can access more funding and manage it more effectively. This can mean new buildings, better teaching resources, and more support for students and staff.

Support for school communities: Strong Trusts can quickly provide extra staff or resources to schools that need them.

Career development for staff: Teachers and staff will have more opportunities for growth without leaving the classroom.

Who will lead the new CMAT?

The CEO of the Trust will be Sinead Smith. Sinead is currently CEO of both Holy Spirit MAC and Our Lady of the Magnificat MAC. Sinead will be challenged and supported by a highly skilled Board of Directors.

How have the schools been allocated to the new CMAT?

Diocesan Education Service officers, working with Diocesan Trustees and the Department for Education, have considered a range of factors including Local Authority, parishes, number and phase of schools and pupils, finances and current academy and voluntary aided status. Primary/first feeder schools will continue to be allocated to the same Trusts as their Catholic secondary /middle school.

How will we be able to influence decisions in such a large Trust? Will we lose our identity?

No. Schools will remain deeply connected to their communities, and the Trust will ensure that each school's individuality is respected and celebrated. Local governing bodies will continue to play a key role in making sure the school's needs and voices are heard.

Will our school feel lost in the larger organisation?

To the contrary, successful Trusts are rooted in the communities that they serve. CMAT leaders will be required to engage with school communities.

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What will be the role of the local governing body?

As stated above, successful Trusts and schools are rooted in their communities. In the larger CMAT, the role of the local governing body becomes even more important as a means to ensuring the local community are represented and listened to. Local governing bodies are the eyes and ears of the Board in ensuring the school and CMAT are meeting the requirements of a strong and flourishing CMAT.

Will there be more money for my school?

Money for school buildings is paid directly to larger Trusts and that opens many doors for the CMAT to work with their schools to grasp the opportunities of managing their estates.

In addition, the significant economies of scale will result in a more effective use of funds across the Academy Trust leading to additional resources for schools and pupils where required. This support can be provided in different ways: SEND, pupil premium, education performance, estates management, administration support, parish and community engagement, and will vary depending on need.

What is the timescale for the new vision?

Diocesan Trustees, Trust leaders and the DfE will work together for the merger and academisation of the Voluntary Aided schools to be complete by September 2026.

Next steps

As part of the process, we are now consulting the parents, parishes, and community of our schools for the period 24 February 2026 to 24 March 2026. If you would like to make a comment about the proposal, we invite you to submit these through this link to the [Comments Form](#), by 12pm on 24 March 2026.

As we look forward, we pray for the success of the new CMAT so that we can all work together in order for diocesan schools, their pupils and communities to flourish.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Hannah Edwards
Headteacher

Mr Jamie Staddon
Chair of Governors

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