



St Clement's Catholic Primary School

DIOCESE OF ARUNDEL & BRIGHTON

Fennells Mead, Ewell, Epsom, KT17 1TX • Telephone: 020 8393 8789

Head of School: Mrs I Chappell

www.stclements.surrey.sch.uk



Wednesday 20th November 2024

Dear Parents,

Consultation to convert to academy status

You may be aware that the Government is encouraging all schools to consider converting to academy status. In addition, it is now the view of the Catholic Bishops of England & Wales that achieving academy status would be beneficial to the future of Catholic Education. After careful consideration and preliminary discussion with the Diocese, the School's Governing Body has decided that they wish to explore conversion to academy status as part of the Xavier Catholic Education Trust. We are writing to consult with staff, parents and local community partners to determine whether the School should proceed with conversion and we would like to invite your views on the matter.

What is an academy?

Academies are publicly funded state schools that are independent of the Local Authority and receive funding directly from the central government. The School would still be a Catholic School under the authority of the Bishop of Arundel & Brighton and its religious designation would not change. In the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton, Bishop Richard has determined that there will be two Multi-Academy Trusts: The Xavier Catholic Education Trust (serving Catholic schools in Surrey) and The Bosco Catholic Education Trust (serving Catholic schools in Sussex). Both Trusts are now well established. The Xavier Catholic Education Trust currently consists of 19 out of 28 Catholic schools in Surrey.

Why is this being considered?

As a successful Voluntary Aided School, gaining academy status would ensure that St Clement's maintains the legal freedoms to protect its distinctive Catholic identity within a family of strong Catholic schools locally, including St Andrew's who are also considering conversion at this time.

What are the advantages of conversion?

The Government is clear that the greater freedoms enjoyed by academies are designed to allow schools to develop and to build on individual strengths in response to the needs of the community. We feel that the additional freedoms and flexibilities would enable the Governors to better secure the long term future of our School.

In addition to this, we believe that the formal partnership with Xavier Catholic Education Trust will have a number of benefits for St Clement's. This includes a more targeted approach to the long term future of Catholic education in Surrey, strengthening our Catholic identity, pooling of resources and skills which will improve teaching and management practice within the schools as well as a greater control of our finances and better management of these for the benefit of children attending the schools.

What are the disadvantages of conversion?

Greater freedoms do bring additional responsibilities, including statutory duties as an academy trust company, but the School is confident it can manage these, with the support of the wider Trust.



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Will any changes to the School be made as a result of conversion?

We do not intend to make any changes on conversion. Our motivation to join the Xavier Catholic Education Trust is about securing the long-term freedoms and support that will continue to ensure the School offers an excellent Catholic education.

Please be assured that the Catholic character, ethos and values of the School would remain unchanged should academy conversion take place.

How to take part in the consultation process

At this stage we are not committing the School to conversion to academy status. We are consulting with everyone associated with our School before Governors meet again to make a final decision.

Please find enclosed with this letter the FAQ pack which provides further information about the academisation process and frequently asked questions regarding academisation.

We look forward to seeing you at the meeting on **Wednesday 27th November at 6.30pm** in the school hall where there will be a presentation by the Xavier CEO James Kibble and further opportunities to ask questions regarding the academisation process.

We would ask that you let us have your views by emailing Mrs Irma Chappell (Head of School) by Wednesday 18th December 2024: office@stclements.surrey.sch.uk

The Governors will meet after this date to consider how to proceed.

Kind regards

Joe Cook
Chair of Governors

Irma Chappell
Head of School