



# **Stakeholder meeting St Alban and St Stephen Catholic Primary School**

## **Interim Report for the Governing Body**

15th May 2025

## 1. Introduction

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On 15th May 2025 governors held meetings as part of a stakeholder consultation on the proposal that St Alban and St Stephen Catholic Primary School joins All Saints Catholic Academy Trust as an academy.

The meeting with staff was held in person at 3.30pm on 14<sup>th</sup> May with an introduction from the Chair of Governors and a presentation, with Stephen Wheatley (SW) the CEO of All Saints Catholic Academy Trust (ASCAT) and Justin Wilson representing the Diocesan support for the transfer. The second meeting for parents and other stakeholders following on at 6.30pm on 14th May.

To aid governors in their consideration of feedback from stakeholders the questions and answers arising at the meetings are captured below.

### Parents' meeting at 6.00pm on 15<sup>th</sup> May

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The meeting was attended by 3 parents in person including a parent governor, the Chair of governors (PL), the Head of School (TH) and the Executive Head teacher SLM).

The Chair of Governors and Head of School welcomed everyone and delivered a presentation around the proposal and detailing the background to the proposal and possible transfer, background on the diocesan strategy and the context of the school becoming an academy in the CAT.

The following questions were asked.

Question
There was a question on where the trust board sits in relation to the local governing body
Answer
The answer referred to the slide in the presentation listing members as the "shareholders" of the organisation, the trust board as the board of directors supporting the executive team and the local governing body responsible for the individuality of the schools.
Question
How many secondary schools are there in the trust?
Answer
Two at present.
Question
The governing body is presently the employer of staff how will that change?
Answer
The trust board becomes the employer. We have a TUPE process to undertake with staff to reassure them that their terms and conditions will not change and any benefits such as salary sacrifice schemes will still be honoured.
SLM said that having converted her school last September ASCAT has lived up to its ethos of support and supporting relationships across the trust. SLM added that they had a business manager brought in by the trust when our previous person left with short notice. The feedback we had was that it was a very positive experience always with someone on the other end of a phone to help and the support was managed very effectively. The positive experience outweighed everything else, there were some minor issues with land but engaging with ASCAT made the school feel a part of the group.

PL added that the back-office support is also key, there would be no cutting back on staff but the valuable role office staff in the school play in supporting pupils and families could be enhanced with some of the administration and paperwork being managed centrally, releasing office staff to focus more on that support role.

**Question**

Where does funding come from?

**Answer**

Funding currently comes via the LA, and some academy trusts do pool the grant but the money will come straight to the schools, and the trust will be reimbursed under and SLA for the services it provides.

**Question**

So, the LA won't get a cut of funding, but ASCAT will? How does that compare with now?

**Answer**

The school is presently paying for traded services in addition to the funding the LA takes from its schools. We have a finance team that is covered by an SLA and central contracts for the management information system and legal services. Those are covered out of the central charge the CAT takes. There is an annual review of services with schools, a consultation that informs any changes to service levels but critically it's about serving the needs of schools.

PL added that so far, the governors have estimated the school will not be losing out based on next year's budget, but they can't do a penny-by-penny comparison without being a full member of the trust.

A recent new catering contract has saved schools and parents money. Up to 30-40p per meal per pupil per day. We worked with heads and schools to do that.

We can also add value to the money schools have. The trust performs a treasury function investing funds that are sitting in bank accounts at the end of a month and redistributing the interest to make schools' money go further. This provides freedom to make choices for children with a large organisation behind you. Big trusts must allow freedom and creativity, and we can't control that centrally.

**Question**

What is the relationship with secondary schools?

**Answer**

Families presently send children to different secondary schools, Loretto or Nicholas Breakspear, that will not change. Sometimes there is a direct link with feeder primary schools for example in the trust JFK in Hemel Hempstead has links with some schools in the trust but there will still be admissions to Nicholas Breakspear from here, that will not change.