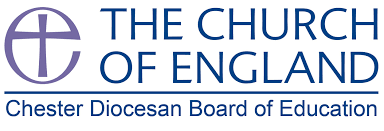


Chester Diocesan Learning Trust

Parent Consultation



CDLT (Chester Diocesan Learning Trust) is a proposed new Multi Academy Trust backed by Chester Diocese and Chester Diocese Board of Education. The following schools are set to form the trust at its inception in October 2025 (Subject to DfE approval):

Capenhurst CofE Primary School, (Cheshire)

Lostock Gralam CofE Primary School (Cheshire)

Hoylake Holy Trinity CofE Primary School, (Wirral)

Hoole Church of England Primary School, (Cheshire)

St Andrew's CofE Aided Primary School, (Wirral)

West Kirby St Bridget's CofE Primary School (Wirral)

Davenham CofE Primary School (Cheshire)

When forming a new MAT schools and the Governing Body have to consult with Staff and Parents and the community and the information gathered is shared with the DfE as part of the process. This document is the formal response to the process following a 4 week consultation period.

| Over what period did your consultation take place? | 4 weeks:  Monday 20th January to Monday 24th February 2025 |
| --- | --- |
| How did you disseminate your consultation materials? | * On the school website * Emails to Parents * Letters to Parents * Letters to wider community * Social Media |
| List the respondents and stakeholders you proactively engaged with in your consultation process: | * Parents * Community Groups * Local Councillors * Wider Community |
| What information was made available to consultees? | * Presentation in person to all stakeholders week commencing * Presentation shared with parents * Access to Trust Website * FAQ Document |

| School Represented | Parent/Community Question | CDLT Answer |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Unknown | The letter alludes to enhanced benefits, economies of scale and collaboration being the benefits of joining an academy, however, there is little detail on how exactly it is intended that the benefits will be realised and what specific benefits/improvements are you actually targeting by joining? When do you expect said benefits to be achieved by? | As the Trust is being formed central service negotiation is already taking place to get best value as companies know they gain benefit from being used in a number of schools rather than just one school. Many services offer preferable academy rates for this reason so as we sign up to further services this will be a benefit as the trust progresses. As SLAs come to an end the Trust can support the schools in negotiating central prices for all of their schools so the benefits will be gradual at the start. With regards to collaboration the benefits of this are already as schools are beginning to work together on vision and strategy with networks planned for SEND leaders, Deputy Heads and Business Managers. This will develop further into subject networks and other areas of focus. |
| Capenhurst | How much decision-making power will our school retain regarding curriculum, staffing, and budget allocation under the MAT? | The Head and the Governors would retain many of the powers that they retain today. There is no plan for a CDLT curriculum although the opportunities for collaboration may see schools adopting new initiatives - However no-one will be forced to take on anything new whilst they continue to perform well. The Headteacher will deliver a staffing plan to the budget set and this will be up to them to decide. The budget will be no different to the budget the school currently receives and the Governors alongside the head will plan and deliver this budget. The Trust will appoint a Chief Finance Officer who will oversee the budgets and spending across all of the schools. |
| Capenhurst | Who will oversee the MAT, and how will they ensure decisions are made in the best interests of each individual school? | A thorough and robust CEO appointment will be made when the time is right. The CEO pay will be benchmarked against National figures.  The CEO will be accountable to the Trust Board and members and will be subject to a rigorous Performance Management process. The Diocesan DDE and Deputy DDE will be involved in the recruitment process to ensure that whoever is appointed will reflect the vision and values shared by the founding and future schools. |
| Capenhurst | What specific support or benefits will the MAT provide to our school, particularly in terms of staff development and resources? | There is a list of services that will be offered by or procured centrally by the trust, including HR, payroll, Legal, finance, health and safety, etc the heads who are looking to form the trust are working together on what additional services/resources they want to have as part of the trust, this includes school improvement and CPD. |
| Capenhurst | How will collaboration between schools within the MAT be structured to ensure shared learning and best practices? | This is currently being explored by the schools forming the trust as to what would work best. |
| Capenhurst | How will the MAT allocate funding across its schools, and what measures are in place to ensure fair distribution of resources? | The schools will continue to receive the same funding that they currently do, but this will now come directly from the DfE, rather than via the LA. Currently the LA topslice this budget to provide some central services. Now each school will receive the full allocation from the DfE and the MAT will take a similar top slice to provide the MAT Central services. |
| Capenhurst | If one school in the MAT struggles financially or academically, how might this affect the funding or focus on other schools, including ours? | The purpose of a Trust is to be stronger together. School experiences can go through different highs and lows throughout a number of seasons and what we hope is that as a trust schools will be supported so that they are resilient |
| Capenhurst | How will the MAT be held accountable, and what opportunities will parents have to provide feedback or voice concerns about decisions? | The Schools are accountable to the Headteacher as now, and the Headteacher is accountable to the CEO and the MAT Board.  Parents will have their voice on the Board of Governors as now and any feedback or concerns will be shared with the Full Trust Board. |
| Capenhurst | Will the MAT have a specific strategy for ensuring transparency in its financial and operational decisions? | Just as a governing board has to now - the part one minutes of a meeting has to be available for scrutiny if people wish to see them. Academies have to have a rigorous external annual audit and this will be on the Trust website - the Trust’s financial policies and procedures will also be on the Trust website. |
| Capenhurst | What steps will the MAT take to ensure our school retains its unique identity and strong ties to the local community? | One of the reasons for developing the MAT is so that we can ensure that our schools unique identity and strong ties to the community and local church are retained. By working together with like minded schools we can enhance the uniqueness and links to the community. |
| Capenhurst | How will the MAT involve parents and the local community in shaping the future direction of the school? | As now, parents will have a voice through the Local Governing Body. |
| Capenhurst | Is this going to affect Breakfast and Afterschool that we provide?  As a preschool alone would not be financially viable.  We would close. | Schools within CDAT have Breakfast and Afterschool provision run by external providers as well as by the governors and we do not see that this would be affected by a move into a MAT. |
| St Andrews | Most of the schools are Voluntary Controlled, will this affect our Voluntary Aided status? | VA schools will become an academy within the MAT and will not retain the VA title but the school's attributes, such as admissions, religious education (RE), and collective worship, are managed and upheld and secured through a document called the Supplemental Funding Agreement.  Similarly, VC schools won’t retain the title Voluntary Controlled but the Supplemental Funding Agreement for your individual school and the Articles are designed to reflect the current status of the school so it would in essence remain a VC school. There would be no change to the criteria for admission to the school (the Trust becomes the admission authority and so will need a separate policy for each school but these will reflect what happened before eg VC school criteria set out under the LA) |
| St Andrews | Does the decision making stay the same? How does this affect the governors? | Each school will retain a Local Governing Body and many of their responsibilities will remain the same with an even stronger focus on safeguarding and standards within individual schools. Sitting above the LGB will be a Board of Directors made up of experts from various fields such as Education, Finance and HR. The Headteacher and the Governing Board are accountable to the Trust Board. There will be a two way flow of information and reporting between the Governing Board and the Trust Board. |
| St Andrews | The Trust is taking on the role of the LA. What legal powers, if any, exist for the trust to make changes to our church papers and our relationship with the church? | The Trust can’t make any changes to the paperwork without the DBE’s permission which would not be granted unless it was to strengthen the church school nature. Also the Church Supplemental Agreement retains the land with the Site Trustees and the Site Trustees must ensure that the land is used for a church school as required by the Trust deed. |
| St Andrews | If the governors are no longer the employers, how does this impact recruitment? Practically, will they still be involved in the recruitment process? | Schools will be fully involved with recruitment to their staff.  The Trust will be involved in recruitment to senior roles within schools such as the appointment of a new Headteacher. As will the DBE. |
| St Andrews | Being aware of start-up costs, did St. Andrew’s apply in time for the £25,000 grant? | Yes |
| St Andrews | What cost of other schools joining in the future would be placed on our school? | There will be no particular impact on the budget of St Andrew’s. We are looking at how the costs of conversions for other schools can be managed. |
| St Andrews | Beyond the initial seven schools joining, have any other schools been a part of the CDLT process and withdrawn? | We have two additional schools who are consulting and wishing to join. We have a further school who is reviewing its finances and staffing before it takes this any further but is still keen to be part of the Trust. One school came to the very first expression of interest meeting but didn’t engage with any further development. |
| St Andrews | If we decided it was not for us, when can we withdraw? | Governing bodies can choose to withdraw from the process anytime up to the day before a school is due to join a MAT. |
| Davenham | Why has CDAT been ruled out as an option? | The decision was made to create a new MAT so that schools in the area had a choice of MAT to join rather than all schools having to join CDAT. CDAT is already well developed and this has given us an opportunity to shape the MAT but it is also more geographically based which we felt was more appropriate for our needs. |
| Davenham | The letter mentions a board of skilled and experienced directors, are you able to give more information on these people and what their experiences are? | **Andrew Warren** - recently retired Regional Director for the West Midlands (the body that makes decisions on academy conversions and school improvement for the region) also ex CEO of a church academy trust.  **David Hermitt** - Member of the DBE, Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance, ex CEO of a MAT and a current Ofsted inspector.  **Gail Webb** - ex LA adviser and headteacher, currently sitting on an RC MAT board and some DBE governing boards.  **Adrian Lee -**  recently retired secretary for the University of Chester and solicitor.  **Emerald Thomas** - Accountant who specialises in academies and charities.  **Dayan Atenyam** - CFO of a MAT based in Manchester and experience of charitable companies.  **Chris Penn -** Diocesan Director of Education, Member of CDAT Board. |
| Davenham | Are any schools confirmed as joining the CDLT or are all in the consultation period? | All schools are in the consultation period. This parent and community consultation is the first step in the process. |
| Davenham | The letter says that this is a consultation period, but finishes by saying,  “ Any decision as to whether to become part of Chester Diocesan Learning Trust **has been**  **taken** by the full Governing Body based on what is best for our children, our families, our staff and our wider community.”  Does this mean that the decision has already been made? | The Governors of each school have taken the decision to pursue the formation of a new MAT and we are currently in the consultation period.  This consultation document will be used by Governors and Directors to make an informed decision whether to move forward with the conversion process and onto a formal staff consultation after Easter. |
| Hoylake | Why did we not join the other trust (CDAT)? | We considered this and there were various reasons  why we didn’t choose to join, ultimately it didn’t feel  like the right fit for our school.  CDAT is Diocesan wide but this trust is looking to be more geographical which we preferred. |
| Hoylake | There seem to be multiple CEOs in the other trust, how many CEOs will there be? | There is only one CEO at CDAT as well as Chief Financial Officer (CFO) which is required by the academies handbook. The Central team has recently expanded to include a Chief Operating Officer (COO) who reports to the CEO. CDLT will have a CEO, CFO and, as it grows, possibly a school improvement lead. |
| Hoylake | Finance support is provided in this new MAT, will there need to make any changes to the school admin team? | Don’t foresee any changes in administration  structure and don’t envisage any changes to run the operation of the school.  There will be a change in the software we use and admin staff will be trained on how to use this. |
| Hoylake | How will EHCPs operate? | Still responsibility of the LA and funding will still come from the LA. We hope the new MAT will be in a position to provide access to speech and language/EP service etc to support our EHCP process. Of all the services which we allocate funds, SEND is a key area and it is currently not sustainable for us. With economies of scale, hopefully the school can procure these services more cost effectively as part of a MAT. |
| Hoylake | What are the risks? | Risks are that it is a new Trust with no track record but genuinely feel that the benefits outweigh the risks. The school is choosing to join and be part of the creation. Accept that there is always a risk and this is why as a governing body we have taken so long to come to this point and are still questioning  all aspects of how it will work with a new CEO.  There is a risk with every aspect and being first brings greater risk but on balance, we feel that the benefit of being a part of this from the outset outweighs the risks. |
| Hoylake | Parent Governor. Do you still have this role as a MAT? | Yes. This would still operate as a local governing board and have 2 parent governors. |
| Hoylake | Staff are TUPE but what about new staff? Will it employ non-qualified teachers? | CDLT will not be employing unqualified teachers to teacher roles. This will be a freedom that is removed from academies anyway when the Children’s wellbeing and schools bill goes through parliament. |
| Hoylake | Overall, are staff happy with the decision? | Yes, they are aware that we have taken time to reach this decision and we have talked with them throughout the process. They see the benefits and feel that if this is a way to increase retention of good staff, this provides opportunities and can help to keep staff. It does often become difficult in a small  school and hopefully this will provide more  opportunities and staff see the benefits. If staff have fewer constraints and access to more resources, this will benefit the pupils. The staff have been involved along the journey. |
| Hoylake | Allocation of funding from PTA. Will our school fundraising go into a pot to share with all schools or will we be able to retain our own PTA funds? | This will not change and we will still have our own fundraising with no pooling of resources. Identity stays the same. |
| Hoylake | What are the benefits to the children? What will they gain rather than the office/finances? | More skilled workforce. They are one of a bigger group and we hope the children will feel they are part of something bigger. Enrichment can hopefully be improved and have wider opportunities for our children. |
| Hoylake | Is it entirely democratic or theoretically, if the  majority decide to do something and employ non qualified teachers, what power do you have to disagree? What if everyone makes a decision we don’t agree with? | The trust may make a policy direction but as a school Headteacher, the decision can be taken at school level. It does state that the CEO does have the right to override a decision. |
| Hoylake | Has anything stopped collaboration in the past? | No - nothing has stopped us and we have good collaborative partners but cannot ignore the position the school finds itself in and the long term plan. It is about commitment and formality which embeds it in an organisation. The picture has changed in Deeside over the last 5 years with many schools forming formal partnerships with their own MATs. This is about HHT creating a new formal  partnership and collaboration. |
| Hoylake | Funding and investment. | School budgets and investment are not necessarily about joining a MAT. Hopefully over time we will make savings but this isn’t our reason for joining. Capital funding is allocated differently in academies  and hopefully we will have more access to funds through the MAT’s ability to make bids. Hopefully not worse off but definitely hope to be better off in terms of finances in the longer term. |
| Hoylake | Will a business development role be a shared role in the MAT? | We don’t know the answer to this but we do know there will be the business function in the CFO and  in the back office team who will work with our team. |
| Hoylake | Have they appointed a CEO? Where would they come from? Who would they likely be? | No, there is no CEO and this will take place after the conversion. I would like to think that the Head will consider what they want from the role or it could be one of the founding Headteachers? A rigorous appointment process will be conducted as it is a critical appointment and their vision and values  must align with those of the MAT. |
| Hoylake | Will the governing body and parents shape the role of the CEO? | The consultation process will feed back all  stakeholder views and help to shape the  appointment. |
| Hoylake | From a financial point of view, can the head still make decisions or is there a cut-off? | The Scheme of Delegation sets out the decision delegated to the Head and limits financially imposed. Similarly, governors will need to approve some financial decisions and different levels of decision making by the Trust. |
| Hoylake | Will things like homework and approaches to  teaching and learning change? | No - we will still make the decision which fits with our school development plan and priorities. We will retain our autonomy as a school whilst also being in the position to learn from and share with others but still make our own decisions. |
| Hoylake | What about new schools and how will that work?  Could it be hundreds? | CDAT has been established for a number of years and currently has 18 schools. MATs need to grow so be able to increase capacity. |
| Lostock Gralam | There is a focus on the positives. What are the negatives? | *If I felt there were negatives I wouldn't be going into this and when I looked at other MATS I felt that they did not fit us.* |
| Lostock Gralam | How does our school stay as we are? | *Yes , uniform, mission statement - everything!* |
| Lostock Gralam | How would it the support change for the SEND children/would it change? | *Nothing would change but our hope is that working with other schools and sharing good practice will improve outcomes for every child.* |
| Davenham | The presentation refers a lot to the advantages of the MAT. What are the disadvantages? | The advantages are already clear and obvious, since working together.  Over the time, we have been aware of potential negatives as well. These have been discussed at length with the governing body.  When we have considered the possible disadvantages, we have been reassured by the following…  We will keep our own identity.  This is a diocesan trust, and we feel we have protection as a result.  CDAT the existing diocesan trust benefits are aligned (Martin)  We take confidence from CDAT (Rob)  (Vicky) Was originally concerned about spread of schools, but CDLT is geographically based.  (Vicky) Also looked at cost-benefit analysis, economies of scale.  (David) Sense of community has grown as we have explored, “it feels right.” |
| Davenham | If you are stepping away from the LA, will we diverge from National Curriculum? | No, the current government has mandated that all schools must follow the National Curriculum. This had been optional in the past.  We will learn from good practice across the MAT – for example we may look at one school who has a strength in the geography curriculum. We may then adapt our Geography curriculum because of that collaborative work but we would still follow the National Curriculum. |
| Davenham | You can get all the things you have described from the LA. They provide training and support in those areas. Why don’t you already do this? | We already work closely with other local schools – for example through the Northwich Education Partnership. Our SENDCO attended training just this week. We would continue with this as good practice. This is however led by schools and not the LA.  The services from the LA are reducing all the time. For example, the IT support package has been very recently withdrawn. This means that we now must source our own IT support. As a group of schools, we can do this together. Other examples include support for SEND children. (Jo) |
| Davenham | Will this overcome lower LA funding? | No, funding will be the same. We currently pay the LA for services such as HR and IT support. We would still have to pay for these, but the costs could be met from the top slice each school pays into the trust.  We can however share resources which could provide saving. For example, we can share CPD, so can save budget, and reinvest back to the children. Sport and moderation are other examples. |
| Davenham | Can we use other school’s facilities / space? | Yes, we have explored commonality and challenges, so can support one another (e.g. can share halls). |
| Davenham | I have read the NEU guidance, and I am now very worried.  This is not a good time to be doing this. Once you come away from the LA could the money run out and you become bankrupt.  On the Parents Whatsapp, parents are very worried. They could not make a 5 pm meeting. This has huge implications for parents who have chosen Davenham for their Reception children next year or in the future. Why have you not consulted them or Early Years experts? | There are strict guidelines around financial management. Schools cannot for example predict a deficit budget. Trusts are charitable organisations and are as such highly regulated. The DBE provides a confidence around this. There is a high level of accountability. Headteachers have already been asked for a wealth of information around budgets.  There are a group of trustees with a wealth of experience and there will be a CEO and CFO. Headteachers will be held to account by all.  Information about the meeting was published some time ago and there is also the option to ask questions via the dedicated email. I have not had any emails about the timing of the meeting or parents/ carers not being able to attend. Nothing came via Parent Council about this.  We have consulted all current stakeholders. It is not possible to contact future stakeholders as we do not know who they are.  The schools within the trust have been advised about the process to follow in terms of consultation. We have all done the same thing. We have paired up with Lostock and attended one another’s meetings. |
| Davenham | Parents have little choice. Schools are full up. Parents have viewed the school and decided not knowing this information. | The Church school ethos is key in all the decisions we have made and continue to make. The Davenham vision and values will not change. We will we believe become stronger by joining the trust.  (Jo) If when prospective parents/ carers viewed the school, they felt it was right for them, then that will remain the case. The trust is child centred just like we are as a school – we will be stronger together. This will we believe benefit the children and staff in school now and in the future. |
| Davenham | What changes will the children see? | We do not expect the children to feel any change. |
| Davenham | Will they mix with one another? | We would hope so. We currently do this with other Northwich schools but would hope to do things within the trust. |
| Davenham | How do the staff feel? | Staff have been kept well informed.  They understand the benefits of the trust. They like the fact that we have some control in shaping the trust by being one of the founder schools.  There is a formal consultation process for staff after Easter, but we have had lots of discussions already with staff. They have had the opportunity to ask questions. |
| Davenham | How big will the trust get? | We do not know that at the moment, but it is expected that other schools will join. There is however a struct process for this and schools must be approved by the Dfe. |
| Davenham | Can you change trusts? | This is not impossible but is a lengthy process. |
| Davenham | Who governs the trust? | There are a group of trustees who have been appointed. They come with a wealth of experience of different areas, such as education and law. Heads and Chairs have met with the trustees.  We were very impressed by the calibre of the trustees (Martin). |
| Davenham | I have read that there are fewer TAs and teachers, and that staff wellbeing is not as good. Also, that there is higher workload. | Staffing can change for a number of reasons, but it is not expected that our staffing will change as a direct consequence of joining the trust.  The headteacher of the school will make decisions around staff wellbeing. This is always high on our agenda, and this would not change.  There is no expectation that the workload for teachers will change significantly because of joining the trust. |
| Davenham | Will there be a second consultation?  Can you organise another meeting later in the evening so more people can attend? | This is the formal consultation for parents. There are now 4 weeks for comments and questions.  There will not be another meeting. If parents / carers have questions or want to make comments, then they need to email as explained in the letter.  The presentation will be uploaded to the website. |
| Davenham | I have read that MATS have lots of unqualified teachers. Would you do that? | Our teaching staff will not change as a direct result of joining the trust. Unqualified teachers are always supervised by qualified teachers. |
| Davenham | If the world changes what happens, if new Head enters for example? | A new headteacher could be appointed at any time if the current headteacher were to leave.  The governing body would consider what they would want in a new headteacher in the same way as they would do now. |
| Davenham | CEO pay can be extremely high. | This will be managed by the DBE when appointing a CEO. |
| Davenham | In terms of accountability, what changes? | The trust now has a board of trustees.  A CEO and CFO will be appointed in due course.  As heads there will be a higher level of accountability in many ways. |
| Davenham | How will the transformation impact different stakeholders? | We do not believe parents/ carers or children will see a difference but children may have more opportunity to share / mix with children in other schools within the trust.  Teachers will benefit (in terms of training etc). It is hoped that this will in turn support flourishing for both adults working in school and children. It may improve outcomes in some areas by working collaboratively. |
| Davenham | How big could the MAT become? Is it the right MAT? | There are currently seven founder schools.  Two other schools are looking to join at a later date.  CDLT was started because CDAT had grown considerably and the diocese were looking towards a more geographically based trust.  (Vicky) I have a lot of experience as a teacher and in three MATs. Having similar schools and outlooks and this is an opportunity with like-minded schools. I believe it is right for the school.  (Jo) We have an opportunity to have an element of choice, and to shape this trust.  Like minded schools working together as Church schools mean we share common values. It is child- centred.  I would not join the trust if I did not believe it was right for Davenham. |
| Davenham | What about the impact on EHCP application? | The process remains the same, funding is the same (Jo) However, we will have access to local expertise, which may be timelier and more responsive than current LA central service. |
| Davenham | What about finances? How is it fair? Would we ever have to bale another school out financially? | All schools will pay a percentage top slice to the MAT.  Services and salaries come from that central pot.  We would not have to ‘bale’ another school out because of the strict financial regulations. We may choose  to support one another within the trust but not ‘rescue’ schools financially.  Maintenance due diligence will take place. |
| Davenham | Is it a total severance from LA? | No some services will still link to the LA – statutory assessments for example. |
| Davenham | Will there be a MAT level evaluation down the line 3 to 4 years? | Trustees will hold to account from the start. |
| Davenham | Will new applicants be “vetted”? Could we have schools foisted on us in need of improvement? | There is a process to apply to be an academy / join a trust with strict due diligence.  Academies were originally set up to improve failing schools. Ofsted framework will change. We do not know how the process will work and what this may mean moving forward. |
| Davenham | Where will the central office be? | CDAT was originally in Church House. We do not know at this time where CDLT will be based. |
| Davenham | Would there be any changes to SEN/suspected SEN teachings, funding, and provisions? If so, what would they be? | SEN funding is currently and remains the responsibility of the LA regardless of whether the school is an LA school or an academy. We believe that working together as a MAT we can pool expertise and share ideas to support the SEN pupils in our care even more effectively. |
| Davenham | If the Academy business were to fail, which other Academy would the School likely be placed under? Does it go by the next nearest? (As I believe the decision to become an Academy is irreversible?) | This would be a decision for the DfE. and the DBE |
| Davenham | Will any TA roles be cut as has happened in other Academies? | There are no plans to cut any job roles as a result of converting to become an academy. |
| Davenham | Who will have overall say in decisions regarding Davenham Primary? | The Headteacher, the Governing body in conjunction with the Trust Board. |
| St Bridgets | Why has conversion to academy come onto the table at this particular time? | Conversations about the possible move to a MAT have been taking place for some time as this has been the direction of travel for lots of schools. As this is a brand new Trust being shaped by its headteachers this seemed to be the best option. |
| St Bridgets | What are perceived to be the day to day benefits for teaching, bearing in mind the standard of education in the school has recently been judged as Outstanding by Ofsted? | staff will still be gaining lots from experience and expertise in the other schools. There is always something to learn and staff will have the opportunity to collaborate closely with teachers that share their subject or key stage giving additional support and strength to the teaching team. |
| St Bridgets | Are there any budgetary implications of joining the MAT (Multi Academy Trust)? Noting there is usually an amount taken from the school’s budget to go towards the costs of the MAT. | The amount taken by the MAT will be on a par with the money that is topsliced by the LA under the current arrangements. |
| St Bridgets | Will the Headteacher still be 100% focused on the school? (some Heads in MATs have more than one school to manage). | There are no plans to change any of the school structures. |
| St Bridgets | Will the governing body remain the same and will there be any changes in the governing body’s authorities? (There will be a MAT board so could this mean some local autonomy is lost). | Each school will retain a Local Governing Body and many of their responsibilities will remain the same with an even stronger focus on safeguarding and standards within individual schools. Sitting above the LGB will be a Board of Directors made up of experts from various fields such as Education, Finance and HR. The Headteacher and the Governing Board are accountable to the Trust Board. There will be a two way flow of information and reporting between the Governing Board and the Trust Board. Currently the governing board has its powers delegated to it by the LA who have the power to step in if they feel the school is failing academically or financially. The delegated powers will come from the Trust Board through the scheme of delegation which delegates lots of powers to the LGB. |
| St Bridgets | What is an academy? | An academy school is a state-funded school in England that is independent of local authorities. Academies are run by academy trusts and receive funding directly from the Department for Education (DfE). |
| St Bridgets | Will slides and information from the meeting be shared? | Yes |
| St Bridgets | What if other schools within the academy trust make a decision about e.g. uniform, policies-does the majority decision win ? | Any decisions such as uniform will remain the decision of the Headteacher and Governing Body of the school. |
| St Bridgets | What if the headteacher changes? | A new headteacher could be appointed at any time if the current headteacher were to leave.  The governing body would consider what they would want in a new headteacher in the same way as they would do now. |
| St Bridgets | Will the local governing board have the same powers as they do now? | Some of the powers of the governing board and their support for decision making at a local, school level will remain. Some of their role will change as the academy will be overseen by a board of trustees. |
| St Bridgets | Could there be over-ruling by other schools or the academy itself when decisions are being made? | No, Schools will not have power over other schools. |
| St Bridgets | What are the differences between CDLT and CDAT? | CDLT has been established for a number of years and has wider geographical reach than CDLT. CDAT was established initially to provide a network of support for schools that needed development and support. CDLT will be formed of good/outstanding founding schools who have chosen to work together as they believe this is in the best interest of their school communities. |
| St Bridgets | Why didn’t we join CDAT? | We wanted a more geographically local offer should we join an academy and want to be part of the shaping of a new trust. As a school our results have been excellent over time and so we are not a school that has needed additional support. |
| St Bridgets | What can we learn from CDAT? | The importance of working within a geographic locality; the systems and structures that work well in setting up and maintaining a trust of schools.  CDAT has good knowledge of working across multiple schools. |
| St Bridgets | This is a 125 year relationship; will there be anything in the articles about limits and boundaries? | The land that the school buildings and hard areas sits on is owned by Site Trustees who are tasked with ensuring that the land is used only for a church school. This remains with the Trustees through a Church Supplemental Agreement. This document will stipulate the boundaries. |
| St Bridgets | Is this conversation closely related to OFSTED and the OFSTED outcome? | No, this decision has no link to OFSTED or OFSTED outcomes. |
| St Bridgets | Is the decision to join an academy time dependent because partners schools to work with are dwindling? | Yes, we are increasingly losing a network of schools to work with as many local schools have joined a range of academy trusts. |
| St Bridgets | Will there be one school that takes the lead in the academy trust? | No, each school will have the same importance and value within the trust. |
| St Bridgets | Is there a management team? | There will be a CEO appointed by the Trust Board and in time a Management Team such as Chief Finance Officer to ensure the stable running of the MAT. |
| St Bridgets | Will we lose some of our great staff to other schools in the trust? | No, but staff will have the opportunity to work and engage in CPD across the trust schools. Staff may eventually move to roles within the trust if they become available as staff might naturally move to other schools now. |
| St Bridgets | Will the management team have a say in which schools join in the future? | Yes |
| St Bridgets | Will there be any redistribution of schools across the Chester Diocese trusts? | No |
| St Bridgets | Who sets the strategies and priorities within the trust? | The Trust Board and CEO using information gathered from the schools within the MAT. |
| St Bridgets | Are the trustees voted onto the board? | Yes, the Trust Members appoint Trustees. |
| St Bridgets | What happens to our governors? | We will continue to have a local governing board. |
| St Bridgets | You are really positive about this but what are the negatives we and you should be looking out for? | We would see the negatives as not joining and being left without collaborative partners. |
| St Bridgets | In the next nine months what would put you off doing this? |  |
| St Bridgets | Can you give us an idiot’s guide to trustees, CEO and the academy structure? | **In a Nutshell:**   * **Trustees:** Set the direction and make sure everything's running legally and financially sound. * **CEO:** Makes the day to day decisions, and implements the trustees strategic plans. * **Academy Structure:** The framework within which the trustees and CEO operate, allowing for greater school autonomy. |
| St Bridgets | Who are the trustees? | **Andrew Warren** - recently retired Regional Director for the West Midlands (the body that makes decisions on academy conversions and school improvement for the region) also ex CEO of a church academy trust.  **David Hermitt** - Member of the DBE, Chair of the Diocesan Board of Finance, ex CEO of a MAT and a current Ofsted inspector.  **Gail Webb** - ex LA adviser and headteacher, currently sitting on an RC MAT board and some DBE governing boards.  **Adrian Lee -**  recently retired secretary for the University of Chester and solicitor.  **Emerald Thomas** - Accountant who specialises in academies and charities.  **Dayan Atenyam** - CFO of a MAT based in Manchester and experience of charitable companies.  **Chris Penn -** Diocesan Director of Education |
| St Bridgets | Are any trustees local? | As Above |
| St Bridgets | Have the trustees already been set? | There is currently an interim Trust Board. MATs cannot form a full board until the Trust is created. The Interim board is made up of experts in the fields of Education, HR, Finance and much more. |
| St Bridgets | Is the budgeting all done centrally and how is this different to the current situation? | As now the Headteacher and SBM will be supported in the development of the school’s individual budget based on the school priorities. The academy handbook stipulates that we cannot set a deficit budget. As the Trust Board is ultimately accountable to the Secretary of State they have to have the final sign off for the budget following local governors involvement. |
| St Bridgets | Ultimately, will the trust get bigger? | Yes |
| St Bridgets | Who decides if schools are eligible to join the trust? | The Members, trustees and management team scrutinised further by the DfE. |
| St Bridgets | Who makes the final decision as to whether St. Bridget’s joins the trust? | The Governing Body |
| St Bridgets | Is there a risk that our operating budget will be reduced due to the management fee? | No |
| St Bridgets | Is the management fee within scope for us? | Yes |
| St Bridgets | Can the management fee be changed? | This will be reviewed annually |
| St Bridgets | Why is it so important that we start/join a new trust rather than an established trust? | We will have the opportunity to help create, shape and mould the vision for the trust. |
| St Bridgets | Why the 1st October? | This is easier for administrative purposes due to the summer break. |
| St Bridgets | Can you talk us through the flow of financing? | Schools will receive an annual allocation known as General Annual Grant (GAG), this is a direct replacement for the current School Budget Share received by LA schools. The LA currently de-delegate some funding to support the LA central services. The MAT will take 5% of GAG funding to fund the central services provided to schools, which will replace numerous SLAs. The GAG is paid on a monthly basis. Other government grants are received at the same time as LA schools. GAG funds will be sent to each school’s bank account monthly and schools will manage expenditure accordingly, with support from the MAT with consideration to annual budgets. |
| St Bridgets | Is the funding per pupil centrally the same? | Yes |
| St Bridgets | Can you talk through the control and limitations for any risks and the process itself? | The MAT will retain a Risk Register which will be continually analysed and added to as appropriate. The Trust Board will be made up of experts in the fields of Education, Finance, HR and much more. |
| St Bridgets | Will there be reports and publications made available to us? | Local Governing minutes will be published as standard, as well as the minutes from each board meeting. The Trust has to produce a financial report and statement of accounts each year which is published on Companies House. |
| St Bridgets | What impact will our children see? | The children should notice very little changes. However, the impact of working collaboratively with high performing schools, sharing CPD and excellence will positively impact on the quality of education for each child. |
| St Bridgets | Is there any possibility of other schools joining the founding seven at this stage? | No but there are schools who have expressed interest in joining at a later stage. |
| St Bridgets | When would there be a phase 2? Would this be quite soon after phase 1? | This would possibly be from about 6 months onwards. |
| St Bridgets | Would the curriculum change? | No, our curriculum offer is outstanding and works well for our children and therefore there is no need to make changes at the present. |
| St Bridgets | Would there be pressure to change the curriculum? | No |
| St Bridgets | Is the curriculum in religion the same across all CDAT schools? | The schools are a mix of voluntary aided schools who follow the Chester Diocese curriculum and voluntary controlled schools who follow their locally agreed curriculum. As a voluntary controlled school we follow our locally agreed curriculum. |
| St Bridgets | Have the other six schools signed up or are they at the same stage as us? | All schools are at the same stage |
| St Bridgets | Do parents, teachers and governors have any say over the trustees? Would they have any say in the future? | The Trustees are appointed by the Members - they are appointed for their skills and ability to manage an organisation that is made up of multiple sites. |
| St Bridgets | What is the process of appointing trustees? | An advert was sent out across the Diocese with a list of desirable skills for the shadow Board. Applications were received and scrutinised by the Members who made the appointments. These applications then went to the DfE advisory board for them to agree to the formation of the Trust. It is anticipated that the shadow board will become the substantive board once the Trust is incorporated. There are a couple of gaps on the Board and applications are still welcome - especially with regards to experience in HR. IT and buildings and maintenance |
| St Bridgets | Do trustees have limited terms of office? | Yes 4 years like governors |
| St Bridgets | How can the wider the community be knowledgeable about the roles and recruitment process of trustees and management within the trust? | The information given above can be widely shared. |
| St Bridgets | Why has conversion to academy come onto the table at this particular time? | This question was answered earlier on. |
| St Bridgets | What are perceived to be the day to day benefits for teaching, bearing in mind the standard of education in the school has recently been judged as Outstanding by Ofsted? | This question was answered earlier on |
| St Bridgets | Are there any budgetary implications of joining the MAT (Multi Academy Trust)? Noting there is usually an amount taken from the school’s budget to go towards the costs of the MAT. | Currently the LA topslice our budget to pay for central services. The payment to the MAT will replace this payment to the LA. This question was answered earlier on |
| St Bridgets | Will the Headteacher still be 100% focused on the school? (some Heads in MATs have more than one school to manage). | Yes, at the current time there are no plans for an Executive Headteaher structure. This question was answered earlier on |
| St Bridgets | Will the new Local Governing Body have any **statutory** powers whatsoever? | The Governing Board will have delegated responsibilities from the Board of Trustees. |
| St Bridgets | Will St Bridget’s Church still have the right to appoint 3 Foundation Governors and for the Rector to be a Governor?  Will this right be enshrined in the trust documentation? | Yes The model church Articles stipulate that local governance reflects the prior category of the school (so at least 25% local governors approved by the Diocesan Corporate member) the DBE has governor recruitment procedure for local governor recruitment in academies which reflects its procedure for foundation governor appointments. |
| St Bridgets | To what extent would the LGB be involved in the appointment of a new headteacher (obviously in 25 years’ time or so!!)? | The LGB would work in partnership with the Trustees and CEO, and DBE to appoint a new Headteacher when the situation arises. |
| St Bridgets | Would the LGB have a veto or could a new headteacher be imposed on the school against their will? | Any new Headteacher will be appointed by collaboration between the Governing Board, the CEO, the DBE and Trustees. |
| St Bridgets | Currently as I understand it there is a definite requirement that any Headteacher should be a practising Christian. Will this requirement be maintained, and how? If it is maintained would the trustees be able to override it? | As a voluntary controlled school this cannot be a requirement of the headteacher, governors can only require the head to be supportive of this ethos. This will be the same in the academy as the Supplemental Funding Agreement will keep a number of factors of the school being VC the same. |
| St Bridgets | Will the first CEO, bearing in mind that will only be seven schools, be a full-time position? | It is likely that the first substantive CEO will be full time as the central team will be lean at the start. The CEO role can encompass school improvement and business development and so it is not a job that could easily be managed on a part-time basis. |
| St Bridgets | On what basis will the trust allocate capital expenditure over the next five years? | At the start schools/the Trust will need to apply for School Improvement Funding directly from the DfE. If the trust grows to over 3000 pupils then it will receive its own allocation and will need to have a capital strategy in place. |
| St Bridgets | Could we have a list including name, position, and experience, of all the current trustees? | Attach a link to the current Trustees list. |
| St Bridgets | Will the trust itself be subject to Ofsted inspections as well as the individual schools? | At the moment no. But this may change over time. |
| St Bridgets | Will there be any form of ‘get out clause’ at any stage in case the trust is run incredibly badly? | There is no ‘get out’ clause. MATs are subject to far more internal and external scrutiny than maintained schools and therefore the chances of the Trust being run badly are minimised. |
| Capenhurst | Will conversion mean that the current arrangements for Breakfast Club  and After School Club will change? | Don’t see any reason for current arrangements to change.  Conversion should not have a negative impact on Breakfast Club,  After School Club or pre-school arrangements.  Discussion about how there was no change to wrap round care provision in another local primary school which converted to CDAT. |
| Capenhurst | Will the conversion be state funded? | Conversion grant of £25,000 which Capenhurst and the other CDLT schools will qualify for on the basis that the formation of the MAT was approved prior to the conversion grant being withdrawn.  The £25,000 grant will cover most of the costs associated with conversion such as land transfer fees. |
| Capenhurst | It has always been considered the case that academy schools do better  in getting money from government? | Academy schools receive their funding directly but pay a management fee to the Trust. School won’t receive more money, will just receive it in a different, direct way.  Trusts manage finances in different ways, such as GAG pooling, pooled reserves.  Discussions regarding CDLT top slice and financial management systems ongoing.  MATS have traditionally had additional funding streams from which to bid from central Government. |
| Capenhurst | Capenhurst has an old school building. Will the Trust be able to maintain it in the same way? | The LA don’t maintain the building currently. School pay for the upkeep of the building.  There may be at some point a reserve of money in the MAT which can be applied to for payment towards remedial works if needed.  Discussion regarding the additional grants for buildings that were available to academy schools in the past and how these are no longer as available as they were. |
| Hoole | If after consultation, parents and/or staff say ‘no’, what will happen? | Governors will collect/receive all the feedback from all consultations and hold an extra-  ordinary meeting. There will be only one agenda item – academisation – and they will then  vote to see if they wish to convert or otherwise. |
| Hoole | Why set up a new multi-academy trust if CDAT is already in place? | Prior to the formation of the new trust, the governors undertook due diligence around joining  a MAT. At the time the MAT which best suited the vision and values of the school was CDAT  and the governors were happy to consider joining CDAT. At this time, school was  approached to be a founding school of a new diocesan MAT. This was an exciting prospect  for school as it was to be a more narrowly focused MAT in terms of geography which would  better enable networking and collaboration. Joining an established trust such as CDAT  meant school would join a trust with an established vision and values. Being at the start of a  new trust would enable Hoole to take an active role in setting the vision and being engaged  in forming and shaping of the trust. |
| Hoole | Why couldn’t school just set up a network with the other schools rather than form the  trust? | School is already part of a number of networks. They work well but are not necessarily as  efficient as a more formal agreement such as the trust. The trust brings with it shared  accountability across the schools with a shared drive and thirst to be the best for children in  all the schools.  Networks can sometimes be reliant on the individuals driving them and can begin to  breakdown should the individual move on to a different school outside the network. The  formality of a trust negates this happening. |
| Hoole | If a ‘failing’ school or ‘school in need’ joins the trust, will our school lose staff to support  the ‘failing’ school? | Currently schools can be asked if they capacity to support a school in need and some offer  this opportunity to their staff as part of professional development. This can happen on a  formal and informal basis. Trusts work to the benefit of all the children, families and staff  across the trust. |
| Hoole | Will we retain our own budget or will we be asked to share our money with a school who may be in deficit? | Schools will retain their own budgets outside of the management fee and the Trust will support each school in managing its budget. |
| Hoole | What is the relationship between the trustees and the school governors? Trustees are accountable to the DfE. | Schools will retain a local governing board. There will be a scheme of delegation in place. |
| Hoole | As the trust is setting up as a charity, can it generate income? | Yes |
| Hoole | What will be the impact on SEND provision, will it be pooled? | No, this will not be pooled. |
| Hoole | Will the trust expand? How will this impact on the ethos and vision? | It is possible, and probable, that the trust will expand. It is difficult to predict how the trust will develop in the future. |
| Hoole | Can a school ‘unconvert’ from academy status once it has converted? | It would be a very complicated process involving the LA, Diocese and DfE as joining a MAT is a legally binding process. |
| Hoole | You say that CDAT is a highly successful trusts, how do you know this? | CDAT has taken on a number of schools that were in special measures/inadequate that are now good. The trust is on the journey to 31 schools indicating that both schools and the DfE have confidence in it. |
| Hoole | Are there any national studies comparing MATs and maintained schools? (with a focus on successful outcomes) | There has been research into this type of comparison but all research needs to be viewed with the caveat of who and why it was commissioned. Joining CDLT is an opportunity to protect the future of the school with a group of like-minded schools within the diocese.  Should a maintained school fall into struggles at a later date, capacity from the local authority to support the school has reduced over time. |
| Hoole | If the totality of the schools is not 7, how viable if the trust with a smaller number of schools? | Financial modelling has been undertaken looking at a number if scenarios in order to mitigate this. |
| Hoole | As part of an academy, Hoole C of E will be allowed to employ unqualified teachers who have not spent a year studying the PGCE and practising their skills or followed another qualification route. **How will this benefit pupils?** | There are no plans for CDLT to appoint unqualified teachers. The freedom to appoint unqualified teachers in academies will be removed by the children’s wellbeing and schools bill when it is enacted. |
| Hoole | The only in-depth study of academy finance by the University on Birmingham proves that academies spend more on back-office costs and less on education and teaching. **Why would the school want to short change our children in this way?** | Currently the LA topslice the funding given to each school to pay for central services. If the school becomes an Academy they will receive the full funding from the DfE and then pay a topslice to the MAT to pay them for central services such as the CEO and CFO. |
| Hoole | Academy trusts do not have to follow the national conditions of pay, pensions etc for teachers and support staff. The TES magazine reports that the average teacher in a MAT is paid £1300 less than none-MAT teachers while the management pay of MATs rises by, on average 30% above other schools. The press is full of stories about the extortionate salaries of executives at academies. **Does this not suggest that the school undervalues its teachers and support staff and the role they play in the school? How will it benefit the pupils?** | CDLT will not deviate from the Teachers Pay and Conditions Document and will continue to pay teachers and support staff within the same National framework. |
| Hoole | A study by the NEU showed that joining a MAT tended to lead to poorer OFSTED ratings as compared with schools which did not join. **Why would the school want to risk its good rating and the quality education that represents?** | We believe that joining our Good and Outstanding schools into a responsible and supportive network will enhance the provision offered at each school, offer more experiences for our pupils and ensure better quality CPD and opportunities for our staff. |
| Hoole | If Hoole C of E joins the academy trust, it will cease to exist as a legal entity and governance decisions will be made by a small number of central “members” who have the job of managing a large number of schools. **Won’t this body be less responsive to the needs of our children and less able to prioritise them?** | The school will still have a Governing Body who work with the Headteacher and the Trust Board to run the school effectively. |
| Hoole | In academy trusts, the management members have the final say about how funding is distributed between the schools in the academy. **How can we be sure that Hoole C of E will continue to get its fair share of the funding available?** | Each school will continue to receive the same funding as they do currently. |
| Hoole | At present Hoole of C of E has governors elected by parents and teachers and chosen by the local authority to represent the community as well as representatives of the foundation. The MAT has almost no democratic input into its governance with minimal parental representation which could be removed at any time and no representation from teachers or the local authority. **Does the school not feel that democracy and the views of a wide range of stake holders are important?** | The school will continue to have an elected Governing Board.  There is a requirement in the model Articles for there to be at least two elected parent governors at local level so this cannot be removed. |
| Hoole | We are a same sex couple and we love the ethos and welcoming nature of the school. Will working more closely with the Diocese affect this? | There will be no change to the inclusive and welcoming ethos of the school. We already work very closely with the Diocese who really value the ethos of our school and this will be fully supported when we create this trust. |
| Hoole | Is there an intention to limit the number of schools that can enter the trust from the outset? Or, if no restrictions, could the trust grow in similar proportions as CDAT?  In essence, what evidence is there from other trusts that show the optimal number of schools within a trust family? | According to current research and education policy discussions, there is no single "optimal" number of schools for a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), but many experts suggest that a minimum viable size is around 10 schools. As well as the 7/8 founding members, there are further schools interested in joining in a second wave. |
| Hoole | Related to the above question, if there is a commitment between schools to support each other as a trust family, does this include financial and resourcing support where a school might fall behind in quality, capacity to deliver, management of buildings, etc.? | The Trust will have central finances and school improvement procedures to support each school in the Trust to safeguard both finances and standards. |
| Hoole | Is each school expected to fund their own improvements, for example in requiring new kitchen equipment or the construction of a new classroom, rather than having to 'bid' or request for the funds from a central trust pot? | If a Trust has under 3000 pupils then Capital work is bid for from the Conditions Improvement Fund (CIF). Once a Trust reaches 3000 pupils then it will receive its own pot of money for capital works. At the start CDLT will be under 3000 pupils so will bid for CIF. |
| Hoole |  | Hoole will receive the same funding as the currently receive now. LA school’s money is paid to the local authority who then topslice this budget to pay for central services offered. As part of a MAT the school will receive their funding directly and then pay a similar amount to the Trust to pay for Central Services. |
| Hoole | Has there been any national comparison evaluations between those schools in a trust and those through LAs? Is evidence available to show that trusts have been successful in maintaining and improving the educational offer to pupils? Is there any national evidence of schools failing or falling behind because of being in a trust? | There is limited research into this as the academy system is still quite new in research terms and has developed rapidly in recent years. |
| Hoole | If the trust is to be registered as a charity, what leverage or opportunities are there in terms of generating greater levels of funding? Whether through grants, commercial partnerships, etc. | An academy, like a VA school, is an exempt charity and so not directly registered with the Charities commission. Grants are available to maintained schools now and the Trust will take advantage of such opportunities. |
| Hoole | How will the management fee be calculated? Will Hoole CofE have the opportunity to influence the decision on what the fee will be?  Is the fee expected to be fixed annually or will there be room for it to be increased in-year depending on funding pressures within the trust? | This has already been discussed with heads and governors and is looking to be 5% which is lower than the national average of 6.5%. Financial modelling has been undertaken to ensure this covers the services required. The management fee will be reviewed as in any Trust to ensure it is appropriate for the Trust each year. |
| Hoole | Will Hoole CofE have the opportunity to influence the governance arrangements of the trust? I.e. Will school Governers/Headteacher have the opportunity to be involved in the recruitment of trust management roles? | Any Trust central management roles will be the responsibility of the Trust Board but involvement of schools in the process will be factored in and welcomed. |
| Hoole | Have the risks, benefits and opportunities for the conversion been formally mapped out, through the use of risk registers and cost/benefit analysis as an example, and are these available to be shared? | Yes, the Interim Trustees have a full Risk Register . |
| Hoole | Once signed up to be in a trust, has the school the option to opt-out if they feel it no longer serves its purpose or there are concerns with the direction of travel? | Governors have until the day before the Academy paperwork is signed to pull the school out of the process. Once the school has joined the Trust it is very difficult to remove a school from a MAT. There are mechanisms in place to allow for a school to rebrokered into a another Church MAT. |
| Davenham | Will the school remain a two form entry? |  |
| Davenham | What will be the cap on class sizes? |  |
| Davenham | Will the catchment area for the school remain? | Yes |
| Davenham | Will the students be offered additional opportunities? |  |
| Davenham | Are any of the staff jobs at risk? | No more so than in the current structure. There will be no jobs lost as a direct result of joining a MAT. |
| Davenham | Will the TA ratios alter? | As above |
| St Bridgets | Since St Bridget's recently received Outstanding across the board in  its Ofsted inspection, it is evident that the school is currently  managed and run in an exceptional manner. With that in mind, what  benefit is there for the school, it staff, and its pupils of joining or  forming a MAT? | The reason that St Bridget’s is outstanding for teaching and learning is because it is outward facing and always ready to learn from others as well as offer support. This cross collaboration of schools means that professionals come together and gain further experience and ideas from one another. St Bridget’s is constantly moving forward and this is an opportunity to do this with like minded schools. The opportunity for the leadership of St Bridget’s to be involved in the shaping of a brand new Trust is welcomed. |
| St Bridgets | I have witnessed how MATs can become an additional layer of "middle  management" that interfere with the autonomy and independence of  schools. For example, they may choose to dictate the way that subjects  are taught, which would previously have been the role of the SLT and  head of subject area teaching staff. This has a disempowering and  demoralising effect on everybody in the school from the Head and SLT  right through to the teaching staff and support staff. Have the school  and governors considered the impact of this? What reassurances can you  provide about how the MAT will operate to ensure the school staff still  feel empowered to control the direction of their own school and teaching? | There is a wide variety of ways in which MATs can be run. CDLT is being formed by the schools that wish to be the founding members which means they are creating the vision and values by which the trust will manage its business. This vision is reflective of the other Diocesan Trust CDAT which supports its schools to develop their own curriculum unique to their individual context. Similarly CDLT will be made up of a group of schools that are in very differing contexts and so one type of curriculum or teaching style would not be appropriate or beneficial for any of the schools. The scheme of delegation clearly delegates these matters down to school level. |
| St Bridgets | If the MAT is underperforming or the school are unhappy with the MATs  direction or input, what options do the school and school governors have  to remove the school from the MAT? | MATs are tightly scrutinised by the DfE and any underperformance is challenged with some schools being rebrokered to another Trust. This is not a simple process but it can be done, however it would need to be another CofE MAT. |
| Hoole | In your reasons why you propose CDLT you state 'LA is unable to fully support schools as they would wish'- How is the LA unable to support the school? | Unfortunately the funding for Local Authorities has been gradually diminishing, in addition to this the grant they received for school improvement was taken away in the last year and so they don’t have any central allocation that is designed for school improvement which means they are limited in what they can offer in support of teaching and learning in schools. Most other services have to be bought in from the LA through SLAs so they are not provided for free. Some of these services (eg IT) they have said they can no longer provide so schools are having to source these from elsewhere anyway. |
| Hoole | Also in the letter to parents (17,01,2005) it states that ‘*Academy schools have greater freedom to choose how they apply their funding and resources and design their curriculum’.* In what ways do the schools in the CDAT or any other academy school have greater freedom to apply their funding streams than HPS currently as a LA school? What other freedoms would result that would benefit children? For example will the after school clubs that the children attend continue. | Realistically the majority of the general funding is spent on staff just like maintained schools, however there are opportunities for the schools to come together and identify services or other aspects that they feel would benefit their children and negotiate a preferable rate for a group of schools rather than just one. The After school clubs will continue. |
| Hoole | Would the school ever be in a position to have to share resources with other schools? For example if the SENCO in one school left would they as a cost cutting measure not replace that schools SENCO and some staff would be expected to work across 2 schools therefore reducing the time children in school have with them? | Staff will never be required to work on another school or be shared across a role unless they chose to do so. SEND is a key priority for the schools wanting to create CDLT and there are already plans to bring SENDCOs together to share good practice and support one another in their work. |
| Hoole | *‘It is the view of the Board of Governors school that this is the best choice for Hoole Church of England Primary School’. (letter 2025).* What specific reasons do the GB give for this? I feel there were alot of statements in the letter to parents and presentation at the meeting but no reasons behind these statements |  |
| Hoole | The trust would be run by a CEO. Who would decide on the appointment and pay of them? Would the salary of this CEO and other directors of the trust come out of the budgets of the group of schools in the trust? | Trustees would appoint a CEO alongside representative from the Diocese.  Currently the schools pay a top slice to the LA for central services, this will be retained by the schools in a Trust Model and this will be used to pay for central services for the Trust such as the CEO. |
| Hoole | As stated in the presentation at the parents meeting the school will still receive the same pupil premium for each child on roll. Therefore how will the school be better off than the current LA model? Would the trust top slice the money off the budget for their salaries? | Schools would be no worse off as a result of joining a MAT and they would have more freedom as to how to spend the budget allocated to the school. |
| St Bridgets | Will staff keep their jobs? | Yes |
| St Bridgets | Will there be a new school uniform? | No |
| St Bridgets | Will the school's ethos or curriculum change? | No |
| St Bridgets | Will staff have the opportunity to work with others across the Trust? | Yes. Schools are already working together with staff being given the opportunity to work with peers across all of the schools. |
| St Bridgets | Will this change affect admissions into the school? | The LA will continue to run admissions. Any changes to the admissions process will have to undergo a formal consultation. |
| St Bridgets | What happens next in terms of the process? | Due diligence is finalised.  Staff have their own consultation and TUPE period.  The legal team work in the background to finalise the formal paperwork for the DfE. |
| St Bridgets | When will the school officially join the Trust? | It is planned that the Trust will officially be formed on October 1st 2025. |
|  |  |  |