

Our Ref: SAS/AW

1st March 2022

Dear Colleague

Rebuilding the Church, fit for future generations

I am writing today in response to a number of meetings of diocesan trustees in relation to our schools. The schools' sector has faced monumental and unprecedented challenges over the last two years and now, more than ever, the family of schools in the Diocese of Salford need to be in solidarity and communion with each other. The department of education motto, from John 10-10, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full", has never been so relevant.

There is a compelling narrative emerging locally and nationally, now supported by positive experiences and testimonies direct from our schools, that formal partnerships and alignment with a Catholic Academy Trust provide tangible short, medium and long term benefits. Our challenge as school leaders is to secure high quality, excellent Catholic education for the benefit of our current pupils and build a diocesan system of schools fit for future generations for decades to come.

How can this be experienced by all our family of schools in Salford? This is why we are now entering into a period of discernment.

There is a longing for a deeper collaboration with a range of partners so that our schools may be more effectively integrated into parishes and local networks - not all of them necessarily Catholic networks. To some extent, we have begun this work by establishing our three CATs. As has been stressed already, these CATs belong to all of us. They are part of, and integral to, the family of schools in the diocese of Salford.

The current landscape in which our schools work is set out in the accompanying document.

A number of opportunities will present themselves in the coming months to assist us in discerning the next stage of our journey from here. With the constant objective to 'rebuild our church' through the work taking place in our schools we seek to consider together, in an open and genuine manner, the best way to progress as a caring, supportive and formative family of schools.

As well as sourcing further information from the 'academies strategy' page on the diocesan website, further enquiries from individual schools should continue to be addressed as before to the appropriate diocesan personnel who will be happy to listen to your views and ideas, discuss matters and answer any questions.

Yours sincerely



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