

POLICY ON ACADEMIES

DIOCESAN SCHOOLS SEEKING ACADEMY STATUS

1. Any Church of England school seeking Academy status, either individually or as part of a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), must agree to meet the following criteria before the Diocesan Board of Education's approval is given for an application to be made to the Secretary of State:
 - (i) the Funding Agreement for the Academy or MAT must be that produced by the National Society's legal advisers (LBMW), including the model Memorandum and Articles, with minimal amendment or revision;
 - (ii) A CE Academy (whether a single Academy or part of a MAT) will be designated formally as a 'school with religious character' and will include appropriate provision for the teaching of Religious Education and Collective Worship, developing a strong Anglican ethos under Diocesan guidance.
 - (iii) those appointed as Principal and other senior Leaders of a CE Academy (including CE Academies within a MAT), including an Executive Principal for the MAT and staff responsible for Religious Education, should be practising Christians (a member of a denomination belonging to Churches Together in Britain and Ireland or a church which at a local level works closely with a CE church);
 - (iv) the CE Academy accords advisory rights to the Diocesan Director of Education, or his/her representative, on the appointment of the Principal, senior leadership team and, where appropriate, the Head of Religious Education and the Chaplain;
 - (v) the CE Academy/MAT will continue to be committed to the wider families of Church schools and other local schools and will support the raising of standards in other Church schools, if requested to do so by the Diocesan Director of Education;
 - (vi) Section 48 Inspections shall continue in consultation with the Diocesan Education Department;

- (vii) the CE Academy/MAT will facilitate an annual monitoring visit by a Diocesan Schools Adviser or representative (NLE or LA Officer) for which a small additional charge will be included in the Diocesan Family of Schools Service Agreement, to which it will subscribe;
- (viii) if in the reasonable judgement of the Diocesan Education Department the CE Academy/MAT becomes a cause for concern, the Academy will agree an action plan with the Diocesan Education Department and meet the costs of implementing such a plan;
- (ix) the CE Academy's resources and buildings will not be used for any activity contrary to its Christian Ethos;
- (x) the CE Academy/MAT agrees to consult with the Diocese on its Admissions Policy (or policies relating to CE Academies within a MAT) and on any subsequent changes, having regard to Diocesan guidance on admissions;
- (xi) the Academy/MAT will share its educational, financial and buildings maintenance data and plans with the Diocesan Education Department annually;
- (xii) the Academy/MAT will not erect any buildings or make alterations without the agreement of the owner of the land and the Diocese, if not the owner;
- (xiii) the Academy/MAT will not sub-let any part of its site without the agreement of the owner of the land and the Diocese, if not the owner;
- (xiv) all reasonable costs incurred by the Diocese in giving permission for buildings-related work are to be reimbursed by the Academy/MAT;
- (xv) the Academy Trust/MAT has responsibility to maintain the buildings and grounds in good repair for the present and future pupils;
- (xvi) a commitment by the Academy Trust (including a MAT) must be given to retain the national terms and conditions of service as a minimum standard for the employment of Academy staff;
- (xvii) a commitment by the Academy Trust must be given to retain all national standards enforced in LA maintained schools concerning pupil welfare, including those relating to the provision of school meals.
- (xviii) the full cost of converting to Academy status, including the cost to the Diocese, must be met by the school;

- (xix) the Governing Body must produce a fully costed business plan for the proposed Academy, including the costs of fulfilling the responsibilities currently undertaken by the Local Authority and the cost of insuring against the risks currently covered by the Local Authority;
 - (xx) the Governing Body must have obtained the approval of any other trustees of the school for this proposal;
 - (xxi) the Governing Body must have consulted with its staff, parents and other stakeholders, including its Local Authority.
2. The above criteria will be the basis of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Diocesan Board of Education and Church of England schools becoming Academies, with the addition of the following clause for any school not judged 'outstanding' or 'good' by Ofsted.
- (xix) any formal partnership with an 'outstanding' or 'good' Academy required for the school to achieve Academy status must be with a Church of England Academy, unless the Diocesan Board of Education is satisfied that this is not possible.

ACADEMY TRUST ARRANGEMENTS

3. At Academy level, Diocesan policy is that:
- (i) Church schools in the Diocese that become Academies should do so under either a single Academy Trust or a Multi-Academy Trust, the latter consisting predominantly of Church schools that were previously either all Voluntary Aided or all Voluntary Controlled, including, if appropriate, community schools;
 - (ii) the Diocese of Liverpool, through the Liverpool Diocesan Educational Trust (LDET), should be a member of each Academy Trust, appointing a majority of Members in every case, except where the Academy had previously had Voluntary Controlled status;
 - (iii) the draft constitution and Memorandum and Articles for single and Multi-Academy Trusts produced by LBMW and the National Society should be used with only minor amendments or variations to reflect local circumstances.
4. At Diocesan level, policy is that:
- (i) the Executive Committee (Schools) of the Diocesan Board of Education will act as the Diocesan umbrella trust, the Liverpool Diocesan

Educational Trust (LDET), of which a majority of members are also members of the DBE, with four additional members co-opted from Academies and schools.

- (ii) the LDET will be responsible for implementing all Diocesan Board of Education policy with its Academies, in addition to working under delegated powers with LA maintained Church schools;
- (iii) the LDET, together with DBE Services, will continue to provide to Academies, on behalf of the Diocese, the traded services it currently provides to all Diocesan schools.

SPONSORED ACADEMIES

5. The policy of the Diocese with regard to underperforming schools deemed by the Secretary of State to require Sponsored Academy status is that the Board of Education will:

- (i) explore carefully with its LA partners the alternative options to sponsored Academy status for any Church of England schools deemed to be failing and that it should, as far as possible, identify schools 'at risk' well in advance and seek to implement appropriate measures to rectify the situation; and that it will
- (ii) only seek to become the sponsor of a failing school converting to Academy status if it is satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that an appropriate partner is available to undertake the school improvement work involved and that sufficient funding is available to support this work, there being a presumption against Diocesan sponsorship.

OTHER ACADEMIES

6. Any Diocesan involvement in Free School, UTC or Studio School projects will only occur if the following conditions are satisfied:

- (i) there must be a clearly identified local need for such an Academy;
- (ii) the opening of such an Academy would not create a threat to other nearby schools, be they of Church or Community status;
- (iii) there must be an appropriate moral, ethical and social basis for the proposals before becoming associated with them;
- (iv) such an Academy must be inclusive and committed to developing a distinctive Christian ethos in the traditions of the Church of England.

(Revised, July 2014)