



The Ven Dr Justine Allain Chapman
Chair, Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education

13th January 2023

Diocesan Multi-Academy Trust Strategy

Dear Colleagues,

As you will be aware from the briefings and consultations last year, the Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education (LDBE) has a strategy in place to create an infrastructure of church multi-academy trusts (MATs) to serve the Diocese of Lincoln.

The aim is to have a choice of six strong ‘majority’ church MATs for church schools (and partner community schools) to explore as possible options for sustaining high-quality education with a distinctively Christian foundation.

I am delighted to inform you that following a very rigorous application process, the LDBE has given ‘conditional consent’ to two new church MATs. The two MATs are:

The Meridian Education Trust – this will be a brand-new MAT being formed from a group of nine church and non-church primary and secondary schools in the Alford / Louth area of the diocese. Communication for the MAT will be led by James Siddle, Headteacher of St Margaret’s Church of England Primary School and Director of Kyra Research School.

The Keystone Academy Trust – this is currently an established non-church MAT with seven community primary schools in the south of Lincolnshire. It will become a ‘majority’ church MAT to serve church and non-church schools, primarily in the Lincoln/North Kesteven area of the diocese. This MAT is led by Elaine Radley, CEO of the Keystone Academy Trust. The website address is <https://www.keystoneacademytrust.org.uk/>

The Lincoln DBE is confident that these two MATs will be a valuable addition to the four existing church MATs that are established in the diocese. They are:

- The Lincoln Anglican Academies Trust - <https://thelaat.co.uk/>
- The Infinity Academies Trust - <https://www.infinityacademies.co.uk/>
- The St Lawrence Academies Trust - <https://slatrtrust.co.uk/>
- The Abbey Academies Trust - <https://www.abbeyacademies.co.uk/>

Of course, the two new MATs are not able to take in church schools just yet. The next stage of the process is that they must seek approval from the Department for Education. The LDBE has

continued to work closely with the DFE on the diocesan MAT strategy. The DFE have agreed that they will work with the LDBE and the Trust leaders to establish the new MATs this year. It is hoped that the Keystone Academy Trust will be available for church schools in this academic year and the Meridian Education Trust will be set up by September 2023. We will keep you posted about timescales.

To learn more about all six church MATs in the diocese, there will be representatives from each MAT at the diocesan leadership conference on 29th March 2023. There will be information stalls and drop in sessions at this event. For more details of the conference and to book your place, please click [here](#).

The LDBE recognises that the decision to join a MAT rests with the Governing Board (unless the school is eligible for DFE intervention). With this in mind, we request that this letter is shared at the next Governing Board meeting this term so that all governors are aware of the diocesan MAT strategy. If your school is not already in a MAT, the governors will be able to consider if now is the time to explore the possibilities for joining a church MAT.

This diocesan approach means that the Governing Board has a good sustainable choice for the future of your school. If your school is a LA maintained church school, you can choose to stay as you are or you can choose one of the six church MATs in the diocese.

If you would like more information about the process for exploring and joining a MAT, please visit the diocesan website [here](#) or email the Diocesan Director of Education at paul.thompson@lincoln.anglican.org

Yours sincerely



The Ven Dr Justine Allain Chapman
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