

# **Antrobus St Mark's CofE Primary School**

## **Academy Conversion Consultation**

**The Federation of Antrobus St Marks and Great  
Budworth CE (A) Primary School**

**Parents & Carers Consultation  
8<sup>th</sup> March 2023**



# Antrobus St Mark's Primary School Vision Statement

Antrobus St Mark's is a Voluntary Aided Church of England school where every person:

- Lives out Christian values
- Is valued and respected as an individual
- Is encouraged to achieve their potential
- Belongs to a happy, caring and friendly school family

Therefore becoming:

- Happy, independent and motivated children who achieve excellence and enjoyment
- Confident and respectful young people with strong aspirations for their future

We particularly value parental involvement. We believe in working together in partnership to ensure every child is a happy, confident and motivated learner.



# Introduction - Agenda

- ▶ **Welcome & Introductions**
- ▶ **What is an academy?**
- ▶ **Reasons for considering to convert to academy status**
- ▶ **Why Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT)?**



# What is an academy?

- ▶ Academies receive funding directly from the government and are run by an Academy Trust.
- ▶ Academies have more autonomy over how they do things.
- ▶ Academies are inspected by Ofsted.
- ▶ Academy Trusts are not-for-profit companies. They employ the staff and have trustees who are responsible for the performance of the academies in the trust.
- ▶ Conversion usually takes around 6 months.



# Reasons we are considering academy status

- ▶ A MAT is a community, an organisation that works together to support all the children and the staff in the Trust.
- ▶ Together as an educational organisation, like-minded schools can share expertise; gain knowledge and skills, working in unison to enhance provision for all pupils in our care.
- ▶ Provision will focus on high quality education, provided through strong leadership, a diverse and rich curriculum, taught through excellent classroom practice.
- ▶ Small schools face the difficulty of marketing and gaining numbers. CDAT will support us in this process and allow us to pull on their expertise and marketing strategies to help both schools grow.



# Why Convert Now?

- ▶ Joining a MAT has been high on the agenda and has been a focus of many discussions over the past couple of years. We have decided that now is a good time to join a MAT to get ahead of the game, where we have a choice of which MAT to join with.
- ▶ We are in a good position, as a federation, since both schools have recently been rated as Good by OFSTED.
- ▶ We are willing to share our good practice with other like-minded schools as well as learn from them.
- ▶ The transition process takes time and as we are not in the OFSTED window or directly awaiting SIAMs, this is the perfect time to make the move as we can fully focus on it.



# Why Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT)?

- ▶ Having looked at other MATs and their aims, we - as a governing body and leadership team - felt that as church schools, founded upon the Christian values, we wanted to join a MAT that shared the same Christian ethos as well as enable us to keep our own uniqueness as individual schools.
- ▶ It is important to us that there is continuity in a shared Christian ethos that underpins our curriculum, behaviour and service as part of the community.
- ▶ The Church of England's vision for education closely matched our vision through Faith, Hope and Love, we at Antrobus St Marks and Great Budworth aim to nurture children's development, identifying individual talents enabling every child to flourish and develop a sense of self-worth and fulfilment in life.



# Why Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT)?

- ▶ Historically and in recent years, we have worked positively with Chester diocese seeking their support in moving to aided status, school governance, school improvement and staffing as well as facilitating networks with other church schools. This has been invaluable in recent transitions within leadership.
- ▶ Many church schools are small and in established rural communities. CDAT recognises and understands the strengths and difficulties faced by small rural schools such as ours, in terms of class sizes, knowing pupils individually, enabling whole school visits, sense of family, maintaining pupil numbers, budgets, data and recruitment and retainment of staff.
- ▶ CDAT recognises the individual strengths and characteristics of each school and encourages sharing of expertise to bring further enrichment for all within the trust.





# What will stay the same?

- ▶ No changes to:
  - ▶ The school name
  - ▶ The school day
  - ▶ Curriculum
  - ▶ Uniform
  - ▶ The LGB will continue to provide support and challenge



# The Proposal

Proposal is for Antrobus St Mark's CofE Primary School and Great Budworth CofE Primary School to convert to academy status and join Chester Diocesan Academies Trust (CDAT) on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023



# CDAT's Vision

Rooted in Christian values, CDAT is committed to:

- Valuing the uniqueness of every child
- Aspiring to excellence
- Being a nurturing learning community for all

**Jesus said, 'I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness' (John 10:10).**

As a Trust, our aim is to ensure that all of our pupils are able to benefit from and enjoy 'life in all its fullness.'



# CDAT “Musts”

- ▶ Christian Ethos
- ▶ Collaboration, not Isolation
- ▶ Quality of Education – “stick of rock”
  - ▶ High expectations
  - ▶ Investment in staff development
  - ▶ Train, recruit & retain great staff
  - ▶ Sharing best practice



# CDAT's Approach

CDAT doesn't take a corporate approach with its schools – we don't look to change school names/uniforms/badges, nor do we have a 'CDAT curriculum' that we expect all schools to follow, or insist on all schools using the same 'schemes' for maths, phonics and the like.

We recognise that our schools are very different – each serving its own community – and that a 'one size fits all' approach wouldn't work: our aim is to help each school be the very best version of itself that it can be.

Across the Trust there is an enormous amount of expertise and excellent practice. We see the Trust as a thriving learning community where staff and schools work together to help each other to continually improve.



# CDAT Family

While our schools all have their own unique identity, they are also all part of the CDAT family of schools. All are church schools within Chester Diocese.

Currently 12 schools within the Trust. Our 12 current schools are in Cheshire, Stockport/Tameside and the Wirral.

1 school has converted on 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2023; 2 schools are currently going through the conversion process; and 9 more at the consultation or formal application stage.

Central Team based at Church House in Daresbury but most often seen visiting schools.



# Timeline of activity

- ▶ Formal consultation 16<sup>th</sup> February 2023 to 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2023
- ▶ Consultation report and findings – March 2023
- ▶ Governors to make a decision on whether to proceed
- ▶ Proposed opening date of conversion and joining CDAT – 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023
- ▶ Regular communication with staff / parents / carers / pupils / community



# *Any thoughts or questions?*

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