

## Strategy for Multi-Academy Trusts

The Derby Diocesan Board of Education (DBE) has agreed the following strategy in light of the Department for Education's White Paper, '[Opportunity for all: strong schools with great teachers for your child](#)' and the published [Memorandum of Understanding \(MoU\) 2016](#) which has been agreed between the National Society and the Department for Education (DfE). Derby DBE has also considered its statutory role in line with the [DBE Measure 2021](#).

The principles underlying this strategy are in relation to Derby DBE's intent to maintain a **cohesive Diocesan family of schools** which will effectively deliver its vision of:

### Transforming Lives, Growing Faith, Building Community

Derby DBE recognises that the DfE's aspiration is that all schools are academies and that the vast majority of these will be within Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs).

Derby DBE has considered various MAT strategies adopted by other DBEs and has determined this strategy based on its analysis of its context with significant consideration of the strategic needs of its family of schools.

A Majority MAT<sup>1</sup>, the Diocese of Derby Academy Trust (DDAT), has been established in the Diocese which any of the church school family along with community schools may join.

Derby DBE will work with schools and academy trusts to establish one or two Majority MATs in addition to DDAT to provide choice for schools. This is because the greatest benefits from a MAT partnership can be achieved once a certain size (pupil numbers) has been reached. This aligns with the DfE's view that a strong trust consists of 7,500 pupils.

Maintained Schools that wish to convert, Single Academy Trusts that wish to join a MAT, and MATs that wish to merge, will only be given consent to join an established Church Majority MAT within the Diocese of Derby.

- The Diocesan Director of Education (DDE) will support schools by ensuring that they are 'connected' and working in partnerships which are maintaining and developing school effectiveness. The trajectory is for academisation within MATs and so the DDE will, on behalf of the DBE, encourage schools and academies to seriously consider their response to this agenda.
- All Church schools beginning to consider their MAT options must, in the first instance, contact the DDE to explore what may be available to them. Schools are advised not to pursue conversations with potential academy partners until contact has been made with the DDE and their guidance and support received.
- Schools within the Diocese of Derby may consider joining any of the Majority MATs within the Diocese of Derby. The DDE will advise schools to reflect on a range of considerations, including geography and capacity. Schools judged as good or better, will determine their own processes for selecting a MAT but must have due regard to DDE advice.

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<sup>1</sup> A Church majority MAT does not require a majority of Church schools but describes a MAT which can incorporate VA, VC and community schools. Local governance arrangements reflect the previous status of the school and academy trusts will be expected to maintain Local Governing Bodies. Academy Trusts are governed by a board of directors who are appointed by members. In a majority MAT, the Church of England will have a majority of members. Directors are appointed on the basis of skills.

- The DDE will work together with MAT leaders to ensure that they are connected and supported in their system leadership capacity.
- Derby DBE continues to welcome community schools into Church Majority MAT partnerships and believes that many will be attracted to the Church of England's proven track record and ethos. The DDE will support schools to understand the role of Members as distinct from Directors.
- In line with the MoU, schools requiring sponsorship should be sponsored by a MAT with appropriate Church of England governance. The DDE will work with the Regional School Commissioner (RSC) to determine the most appropriate solution.