



The Marist Catholic Primary School

Together, Achieving, Loving, Learning

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24th February 2017

Dear Staff and Parents,

At the presentation on priorities for school improvement on January 17th, there was a mention of academies and that Governors were currently carrying out investigations and would report in due course. This work has progressed and is about complete: we have a clearer view of what it means to become an academy and what the benefits will be. The information will be shared with staff and parents but before that it is worth informing you on some of the basics.

First of all what is an academy? It is a publicly funded state school that is independent of the Local Authority and receives funding directly from central government. In the case of a Catholic school like the Marist, the School will still be a Catholic School under the authority of the Bishop of Arundel & Brighton and its religious designation will not change.

An academy on its own will find itself disadvantaged as it will increase its administration and costs so academies group together to support one another, realise benefits and share costs. The grouping that would apply here is that of a multi-academy trust (MAT). The Bishop has told Catholic Schools in this diocese that we can only become academies in deaneries within the Diocese and that each MAT should cover two deaneries and be cross-phase (Primary and Secondary together). In our case this brings together the Woking and Weybridge Deaneries and this is called the Xavier Trust. To get an understanding of this Trust and its benefits you may look at its website: <http://www.xaviercet.org.uk/index.html>

The decision for any school to become an academy rests with its Governing Board. Before a decision is taken on academy status, the staff and parents whose children attend the school in question will be consulted on their views.

At this stage, we are not yet committing the School to conversion to Academy status. We are starting to consult: we would like to know what you think of our plans and will be inviting you to take part in this consultation. The consultation will consist of a Q and A session for staff on Friday 3rd March during the school day; and a similar evening for both staff and parents on the 13th March. More details of these events will follow in due course.

We aim to come to a decision by the end of this term.

Chair of Governors



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