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*“To live, love and learn in a caring Christian Community”*

18<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Dear Parents,

You may be aware that some Diocese in other part of the country have already moved all their Catholic schools into Multi Academy Trusts (MATs) – grouping schools together to operate as Charitable Trusts. This has been a topic of discussion amongst governing bodies and headteachers across our Lea Valley Deanery area for some time now.

Through dialogue with the Diocese and the Lea Valley Deanery, it is evident that there are potential advantages when a Deanery or small group of schools works together as a Trust. It offers benefits that could suit schools – pupils, parents and staff alike - and is certainly worthy of exploration.

Part of that exploration is to seek detailed commentary from the body who decides upon Trust Applications: the Regional Schools Commissioner, and the Department for Education. In order to gain that information, we are obliged to submit a draft application to create a small MAT, similar in size and extent to our Lea Valley Deanery, irrespective of whether we agree to take things further.

I would like to stress that this does not commit us to anything, nor is it an indication of intent, but many in the Deanery see that there are potential benefits for all by working together as a MAT. Be assured, any creation of a Multi Academy Trust would only be considered if there were benefits for each school; it is a requisite of the process that no school is ever worse off as a result of joining a MAT. The educational experience and feel of a school should not change by becoming a MAT, other than for the better through greater opportunities of collaboration, sharing and economies of scale such as generating savings through bulk-purchasing across several schools rather than individual schools buying alone.

I will write again with an update in the New Year 2020. By then, there will also perhaps be some certainty on the political situation and any new National Education Policy, and I will keep a watching brief on any related developments. Whilst I will have no further details to share until the New Year, I would ask for your continued support in prayer as we work together.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Coldwell  
Headteacher