



14th October 2024

Dear Parent/Carer

Proposed Conversion to Academy Status

As you may already be aware, the governing body of Saint John Henry Newman Catholic College have followed the direction set by the Bishop, in becoming an academy under the Academies Act 2010 and is proposing to join Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust. In accordance with the requirements of the Academies Act 2010, the governing body is consulting on whether the college's academy conversion should take place. Further information about what becoming an academy means, and how to comment on the proposals, is set out below.

Will Saint John Henry Newman Catholic College definitely become an Academy?

The governing body has submitted an application to convert to academy status and is working towards a conversion in December 2024. However, the college is not obligated to become an academy until the contract between the academy trust and the Department for Education (known as the Funding Agreement) is signed.

The academy trust will not sign the Funding Agreement until staff, students and parents and carers at the college have had the opportunity to comment on whether the college's academy conversion should take place. We have written to all parents and carers to learn more about the proposals to become an academy, or to comment on the proposals. We will also be holding meetings with staff and will be keeping students informed throughout the process.

Any comments or representations which are made about the proposals will be considered by the academy trust before a decision is taken to sign the Funding Agreement. Details of how to provide comments and representations are set out below.

The academy trust will not sign the Funding Agreement unless they are content that conversion would be in the best interests of the college taking account of all the legal and practical ramifications.

What is an academy?

An academy is essentially an independent school which is funded by the state. It is independent of the local authority and receives its funding direct from central government.

It is proposed that Saint John Henry Newman Catholic College will become an academy as part of Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust. This means that the college will be part of an academy group comprising:

- St Anne's RC Voluntary Academy
- St Antony's Roman Catholic School
- St Matthews RC High School
- St Chads RC Primary School
- Mount Carmel RC Primary School



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HEADTEACHER
MR GLYN POTTS MBE DL

- Holy Family RC Primary School
- St Joseph's RC Primary School
- St Edwards's RC Primary School
- St Mary's RC Primary School
- St Kentigern's RC Primary School
- St Francis RC Primary School
- St Stephen's RC Primary School

What are the benefits of being an academy?

In the college's opinion the benefits are numerous:

- **academies are independent of local authority control** – this means that academies have more freedom about how they conduct themselves
- **academies receive their funding direct from central government** – this means that academies have more autonomy over their funding because none is retained by the local authority for the provision of central services
- **academies have more freedom over the curriculum taught** – this means that academies do not need to teach parts of the National Curriculum which they do not consider appropriate for their students
- **academies can set their own pay and conditions of service for their staff** – academies have the freedom to alter the pay and conditions of their staff (subject to normal employment law protections for staff) and so can provide staff with better pay and conditions than previously
- **academies have more freedom to undertake innovative projects** – academies are companies and so have more freedom to undertake innovative projects, such as setting up and utilising trading subsidiaries

Are there any disadvantages to becoming an academy?

The Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust will be directly liable for matters such as insurance, employment liabilities, pensions, health and safety and property maintenance. The Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust already deals with these matters for the other schools within the trust.

Will the admissions arrangements change?

As a voluntary aided college, Saint John Henry Newman Catholic College already deals with its own admission arrangements. As an academy, the Emmaus Catholic Academy Trust will deal with admission arrangements and would also still be bound by the national Admissions Code, and Admissions Appeals Code.

The current admission arrangements will remain in place for the time being. If the academy wanted to change its admission arrangements consultation would be required.

Will staff leave?

If the college converts to an academy, all staff currently employed by the college will automatically transfer to the new academy on their current pay and conditions. Although the academy will have more freedom to amend those pay and conditions in the future, the Governing Body does not intend to take such a step in the foreseeable future and in any event, any change to pay and conditions would need to be consulted upon with staff representatives.





HEADTEACHER
MR GLYN POTTS MBE DL

Will Saint John Henry Newman Catholic College change?

We do not intend to change Saint John Henry Newman Catholic College except in ways which we think will improve the college even more. For students, it is unlikely that they will see much, if any, change in their day-to-day college lives.

Academies do have the power to vary their curriculums and vary the length of the school day, however, it is not intended to take any such steps at this stage and would engage with parents/carers, staff and students if we did ever intend to make such changes in the future.

How can I find out more?

There is also more information about academies on the DfE website:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/academies>

If you can't find the answer to your question here, or on the DfE website, please email academyconsultation@newmanrc.oldham.sch.uk

How can I make representations?

To respond to this consultation on whether the college's academy conversion should take place, representations can be made in writing to:

Saint John Henry Newman Catholic College
Broadway
Chadderton
OL9 9QY

Or by email to:

academyconsultation@newmanrc.oldham.sch.uk

The closing date for representations to be made is Friday 8th November 2024

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Cassin'.

Mr J Cassin
Chair of Governors



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