

Headteacher:  
Mrs C Doherty, BSC (Hons), PGCE, NPQH



Founded in 1717

# BAINES SCHOOL

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Our Ref: CDo/PWh

6<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Dear Parents & Carers

## Consultation to Convert to Academy Status

After careful consideration and discussions with the Diocese, the School's Governing Body has decided that they wish to explore conversion to Academy Status as a member of the Cidari Multi Academy Trust. We are writing to consult with staff, parents and wider stakeholders to determine your views on the matter.

### What is an Academy?

Academies are publicly funded state schools that are independent of the Local Authority and receive funding directly from Central Government.

### What is a Multi Academy Trust?

A Multi Academy Trust (MAT) is a collection of Academies within a single organisation. The Trust acts as the responsible body and is legally responsible for its Academies. Founded in 2013 and with 14 Academies, Cidari is a Charitable Trust governed by a Board of Trustees, and a Not for Profit company limited by guarantee.

### Why is this being considered?

Academy status would give us the autonomy to continue to develop our School and to focus on our goal of achieving the best academic, spiritual and emotional outcomes for our children, in line with our Vision. The MAT has other schools similar to ours and we want to work collaboratively to learn from each other in order to secure the best possible outcomes for our children. The Governors explain this in more detail in the accompanying rationale document.

### What are the advantages of conversion?

The Government is clear that the greater freedoms enjoyed by Academies are designed to allow schools to develop and to build on individual strengths in response to the needs of the community. We feel that these additional freedoms and flexibilities would enable the Governors to better secure the long term future of our School.

In addition to this, we believe that the formal partnership with other Academies in Cidari will have a number of benefits for the Trust. This includes a collective culture and shared values, protection of our identity and pooling of resources which will improve teaching and management practice within the schools, as well as a greater control of our finances and greater efficiencies being part of a group of Academies for the benefit of children attending the schools.



**What are the disadvantages of conversion?**

Greater freedoms do bring additional responsibilities including statutory duties, however these are managed centrally by the Trust who provide compliance and governance support to its Academies.

**Will any changes to the School be made as a result of conversion?**

We will remain a non-denominational school. There are other changes in statutory accountability where the Trust becomes the responsible body. Crucially, within Cidari, School's retain autonomy to set their own curriculum and Headteachers are empowered to lead their schools to deliver excellence for their community.

**Will there be changes to the admissions criteria for the school?**

Becoming an Academy does not require any changes to the admissions policy.

**What happens to the staff?**

Becoming an Academy will not alter any of the internal staffing structures of the Academy. Staff will be consulted separately through TUPE as Cidari becomes the employer rather than the Governors. Mrs C Doherty will continue to be Headteacher with full responsibility for recruiting and managing the team at Baines.

**How to take part in the consultation process**

Governors have already met and agreed that conversion to an Academy within Cidari is the right decision in the next step on our improvement journey. The enclosed rationale details this further. We are now consulting with our wider school community before Governors meet again to make a final decision.

We would ask that you let us have your views by visiting the following website where you can find out more about Cidari Multi Academy Trust and ask any questions.

<https://sites.google.com/cidari.co.uk/bainesconsultation>

Alternatively you can scan the QR code to visit the site.



We will also be holding an open meeting on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December from 5-6pm for you to come and listen to our rationale in person and meet representatives from Cidari in the school hall. There may be further meetings arranged to feedback to any questions or comments that are raised during the consultation.

The consultation will close on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The Governors will meet after this date to consider how to proceed.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Doherty'.

Mrs C Doherty  
Headteacher