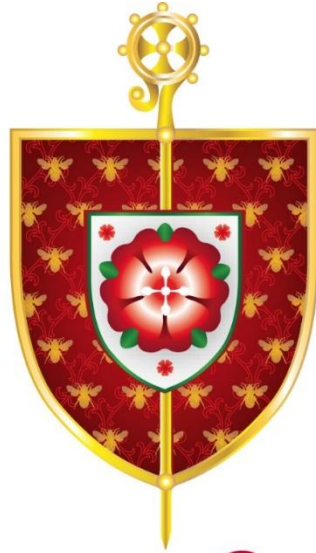


Diocesan Department for Education



DIOCESE OF SALFORD

Application guidance, key dates and contacts for schools planning to join a Catholic Academy Trust

Stay with us, Lord, on our journey

Revised - October 2023

Diocese of Salford guidance – Joining a Catholic Academy Trust (CAT)

The information contained in the following pages updates some of the general guidance published May 2017 in the document ‘**Diocese of Salford MAT advice for Headteachers and Governing Bodies**’. This summary document outlines the necessary steps to be taken by a school planning to join a Catholic Academy Trust (CAT)

The basic process is outlined as follows:

- The Governing Body decides to join a CAT (as a Voluntary converter) or the Governing Body is required, through a Directive academy order, to convert and join a CAT (as a sponsored converter)
- The first step is to identify which of the three Diocesan CATs your school has been assigned to join (See CAT footprint table below)
- Inform the Diocese of your interest/intention by submitting **Stage 1 Conditional Consent** via email to Angela Williams (angela.williams@dioceseofsalford.org.uk)
- Formally engage with the CAT and Diocesan officers who will support you through every phase of both the process of conversion and in joining the CAT as outlined in the flow chart below
- Develop a broad idea of the timescale of the process ensuring that you feel comfortable with such timescales and are able to keep all parties well informed
- Work with the CAT to undertake the standard Due Diligence report. Formally advise the Diocesan Trustees of your intentions to proceed to conversion by submitting the **Stage 2 Conditional Consent form and Due Diligence report** to Angela Williams (angela.williams@dioceseofsalford.org.uk)
- The Trustees will consider your application and either **approve without further condition** or **approve with further conditions**. Approval with further conditions is not a NO, it is a NOT JUST YET - and would typically relate to risks raised during the due diligence process which need to be resolved prior to the conversion process progressing any further.
- Once approval is given the school should submit the **DfE on-line application form** – the Trust will support you with this
- Your application is considered by a Regional Director **Advisory Board** and if approved the Secretary of State for Education will write to you confirming approval to become an academy and join the CAT named on your application form
- A series of **project planning meetings** then begin with DfE, school, diocese, CAT and LA regularly meeting to plan the conversion (see Indicative Academy Conversion Timescale below)

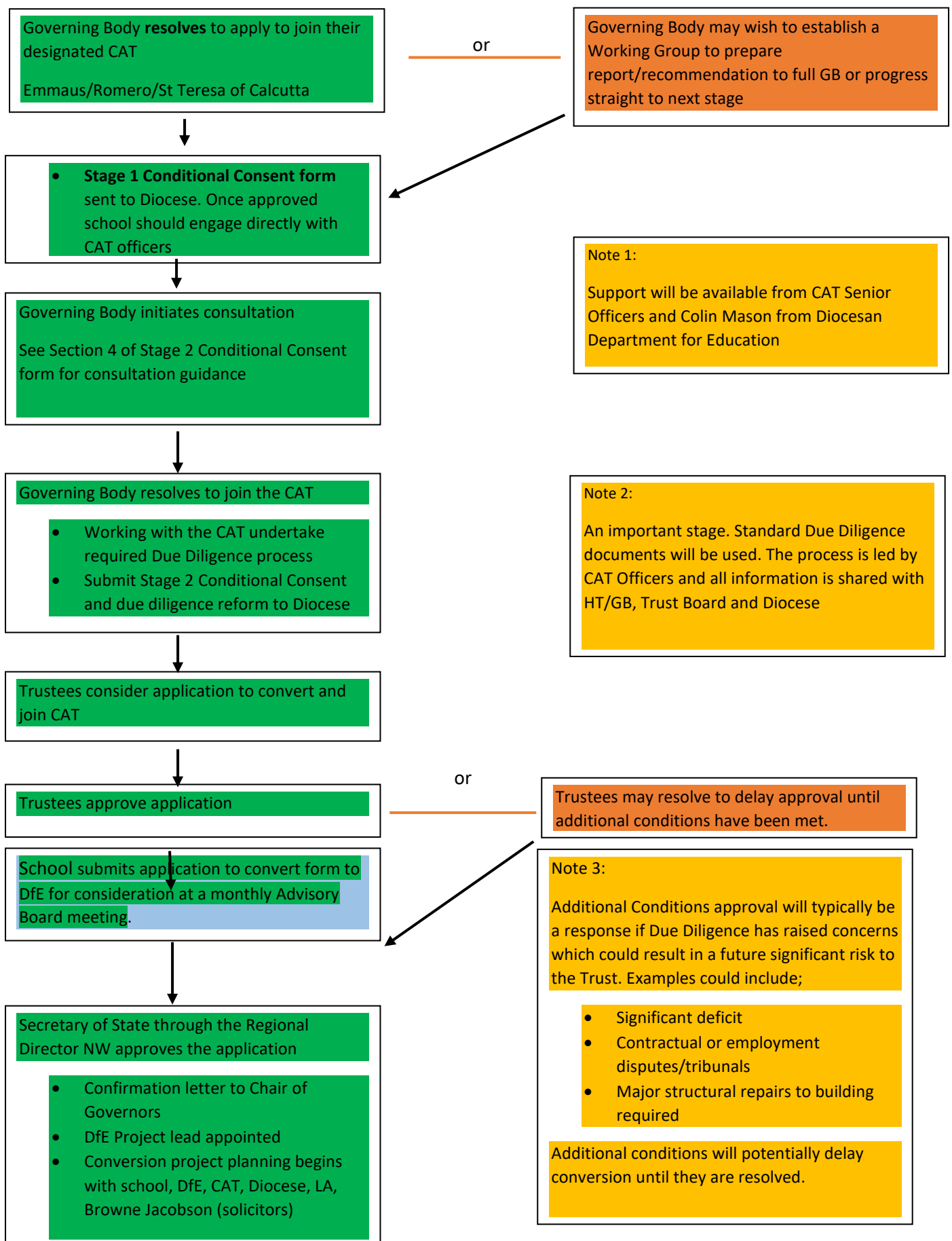
Key information and contacts:

In March 2019 the Diocesan Trustees approved the creation of three Catholic Academy Trusts across the diocese;

Emmaus CAT	Romero CAT	St Teresa of Calcutta CAT
Covering schools in the following Local Authority areas; Manchester, Stockport, Oldham, Trafford and Tameside	Covering schools in the following Local Authority areas; Blackburn with Darwen, Calderdale and Lancashire	Covering schools in the following Local Authority areas; Bolton, Wigan, Bury, Rochdale and Salford
The Senior Catholic Executive Leader (CSEL)/CEO for this CAT is; Daniel Copley Daniel.copley@emmauscat.com	The Senior Catholic Executive Leader (CSEL)/CEO for this CAT is; Des Callaghan Dcallaghan@romerocat.com	The Senior Catholic Executive Leader (CSEL)/CEO for this CAT is; Chris Foley cfoley@stoc.cat

Diocese of Salford Department for Education	Department for Education (DfE)/Regional Director for North West Region
Colin Mason – Academies Lead officer Colin.mason@dioceseofsalford.org.uk 07745659821	Deborah Dempsey – RD Strategic Lead Deborah.dempsey@education.gov.uk 07384520975

Flow chart outlining the process of joining a Diocese of Salford Catholic Academy Trust



Indicative Academy Conversion Timeline

Intended Conversion Date: 1st October 202

Activity	School	Diocese	DfE
Governing body resolves to explore academy conversion and completes Stage 1 Consent form as an expression of interest and send to Diocese and CAT who will support school throughout the process	November 2023		
Soft/informal consultation begins	December 2023		
Consultation concludes	Early Feb 2024		
School submits application for Stage 2 consent to Diocese at least 2 weeks prior to next Trustees meeting	22 Feb 2024		
Trustees consider/approve application		8 March 2024	
School submits application to DfE. The DfE must receive the application at least 8 weeks prior to the Advisory Board agenda being published on Gov.uk.	23 March 2024		
DfE approve application Only at this point should school formally engage Browne Jacobson as legal advisors			23 May 2024
TUPE process starts	June 2024		
TUPE process completed	July 2024		
Register with exam boards – new school details	July 2024		
Deadline for Trust Board and Diocesan Trustees to approve documents	August/Sept 2024	8 th Aug 2024	
DfE progress checks and planning meetings, involving school, LA, Diocese and CAT will be held throughout the year			
Deadline for submitting draft Articles of Association, Memorandum of Understanding and Funding Agreement	3 Sept 2024		
Last meeting of school Governing Body, followed by the first meeting of the Local Governing body (3 weeks before conversion date)			
Deadline for submitting signed Funding Agreement and annexes to DfE	11 Sept 2024		
Deadline that the following are agreed, Commercial Transfer Agreement and Lease agreement	15 Sept 2024		
Latest date by which the EFA to have received school bank account details	22 Sept 2024		
ESFA pays the £25k conversion grant to Trust			30 Sept 2024
School converts	1 October 2024		

The information above is an indicative timeline. More precise date scheduling will be co-ordinated by the DfE project lead at the first joint planning meeting when typically the indicative conversion date will be agreed. It is possible to reduce the overall timescale to closer to 6 to 9 months if each key milestone is reached without holdups.

As can be seen, the final month prior to conversion is particularly busy. Schools should therefore consider carefully their intended conversion date particularly if there are any school holidays in the month prior to conversion.

Joining a Diocesan CAT

Indicative timeline with outline activities

Month	Activities and Required actions		Term
1	School is in scope within diocesan sequencing plan or school wishes to apply for Stage 1	Stage 1 approved and school begins engagement with the Trust	T E R M 1
2	School proactively engages with the Trust to complete due diligence and conclude 'soft consultation' activities		
3	School submits Stage 2 application and Trust/School Due Diligence report to diocesan trustees	Stage 2 consent approved	
4	School works with Trust to complete the online DfE application	DfE on line application submitted	
5			T E R M 2
6	School application considered by DfE Advisory Board.	School receives DfE approval via letter from DfE. Engage Browne Jacobson LLP	
7	Formal Project Planning Meetings (PPM) arranged by DfE commence. Target conversion date agreed	At first PPM target conversion date to be agreed	
8	TUPE begins, legal and land related activities commence. PPM's continue		
9	TUPE concludes, legal and land documents drafted	LGB reconstitution begins	T E R M 3
10	Legal actions concluded. Earliest possible conversion date	School joins Trust on 1 st of month	
11	Outstanding legal or land issues resolved. Probable conversion date	School joins Trust on 1 st of month	
12	Reserve conversion date with all matter resolved	School joins Trust on 1 st of month	

For specific dates relating to Diocesan Trustees meetings and DfE application submissions please see table below.

Deadlines for conversion applications to be considered at Advisory Board meeting

***Please note that these dates are indicative as some dates for 2024/25 are not yet confirmed**

All applications to convert **must** initially be considered and approved by Diocesan Trustees and only then can the application be formally made to the DfE. This application is considered by an Advisory Board who have monthly scheduled meetings. The agenda for these meetings is however published several weeks prior to the meeting so therefore **applications to convert must be with the DfE at least 8 weeks in advance of the meeting at which the application will be considered by the Advisory Board.**

We as a diocese have no flexibility with the DfE dates.

Stage 2 consent application submitted to diocese	Stage 2 Consent considered at Trustees Schools Committe	Deadline for voluntary converter application to DfE*	Agenda published on Gov.uk*	Advisory Board Meeting	Earliest conversion date
16 Aug 2023	6 Sept 2023	28 September	23 November	13 December	1 May 2024
No January Advisory Board meeting					
19 Oct 2023	7 Nov 2023	10 November	14 January	6 February	1 July 2024
		27 December	22 February	12 March	1 Oct 2024
21 Dec 2023	9 Jan 2024	8 February	6 April	23 April	1 October 2024
		8 March	2 May	21 May	1 November 2024
22 Feb 2024	5 March 2024	10 April	31 May	18 June	1 December 2024
		1 May	25 June	16 July	1 Feb 2025
No August Advisory Board meeting					
24 April 2024	7 May 2024	29 June	24 August	14 September*	1 March 2025
		11 August	29 September	20 October*	1 May 2025
22 June 2024	9 July 2024	1 September	27 October	17 November*	1 June 2025

- *unconfirmed dates

DIOCESE OF SALFORD

APPLICATION FOR TRUSTEES' CONDITIONAL CONSENT - STAGE 1

PURPOSE

The purpose of these papers is to provide the Bishop and Trustees with certain guarantees, information and evidence which will enable them to evaluate properly a school's request to become an academy as well as the implications for other schools, both in the Diocese and within the local education community, and for the Diocese itself. This information will be taken into consideration in the decision to give conditional consent to the Governing Body to submit an application for conversion to academy status.

NOTIFICATION AND STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLES

The Governing Body of (Name of School)wishes to consider conversion to academy status and, following consultation with stakeholders and the exercise of due diligence, may formally apply to the Diocesan Trustees for conditional consent to seek conversion.

The date of proposed conversion is

The timeline for conversion is dependent on receiving Trustees' final unconditional consent prior to completing the DfE processes. This can take up to 6 months from the date of receiving an Academy Order from the DfE.

The Governing Body endorses the following statement of principles in submitting this notification and requesting diocesan support.

1. All Diocesan schools, whether academy or voluntary aided status, will continue to be members of the Diocesan family of schools and will not be left to work in isolation.
2. All Diocesan schools will continue to work for the Common Good and promote community cohesion.
3. The Headteacher, Deputy Headteacher and any member of staff appointed to deputise for the Headteacher, and the Head or Co-ordinator of Religious Education in a Diocesan Catholic school must be a practising Catholic as determined by the Bishops' Conference Memorandum of Appointment.
4. Religious Education must be taught:-
 - a) In line with the Curriculum Directory and any directive given by the Bishop with regard to specific programmes of study; and
 - b) In line with the Bishops' Conference which specifies 10% of curriculum time required in Key Stages 1-4 and 5% in Key Stage 5.

5. Religious Worship will be in accordance with the rites, practices, disciplines and liturgical norms of the Catholic Church.
6. The Governing Body will resolve to sign the Statement of Guarantee annexed to the Stage 2 document.
7. Personal Health and Social Education and in particular, Sex and Relationship Education must be taught in line with DfE guidance and in accordance with the teaching of the Catholic Church.
8. Foundation Governors must be in the majority of at least two on the Governing Body of any diocesan Catholic Voluntary Academy. The Chair of Governors of a diocesan Catholic Voluntary Academy must be a Foundation Governor.
9. Diocesan schools will be lead, managed and governed according to the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church. They will express a preferential option for the poor and disadvantaged, particularly those with Special Needs and those in Public Care.
10. Governors and staff will ensure that priority is given to promoting good relationships with homes and parishes of the children.
11. All diocesan schools will be obliged to work collaboratively with diocesan and local families of schools.

The Governing Body understands it will be required to resolve to sign the Statement of Guarantee attached to this document if it submits a formal application for Trustees' conditional consent to make an application for conversion to academy status.

Signed

.....
Chair of Governors

.....
Headteacher

Date

Please return this Stage 1 application to Angela Williams at the Cathedral Centre.

DIOCESE OF SALFORD

APPLICATION FOR TRUSTEES' CONDITIONAL CONSENT - STAGE 2

The Governing Body of wishes to make a formal application to the Diocesan Trustees for conditional consent to seek conversion to academy status.

The Governing Body understands that:

- any consent granted is conditional only, and allows the full exploration of the school becoming a Catholic Voluntary Academy;
- conditional consent is not guaranteed to any School applying to receive it;
- final consent will be subject to satisfactory outcome of the various reviews required by the Trustees;

In applying for conditional consent, the school submits the following information in support of its application and undertakes to carry out any other steps or due diligence exercises required by the Trustees:

1. MISSION AS A CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Please describe how conversion to academy status would better enable the school to fulfil and develop further its mission as a Catholic school and serve the common good.

2. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

2.1 Current Ofsted category:

2.2 Date of inspection:

2.3 Date of last Section 48 inspection/CSI :

2.4 Governing Body's strategies for identifying underperformance and securing school improvement:

3 CATHOLIC ACADEMY TRUST STATUS

3.1 We have been allocated to Catholic Academy Trust.

3.2 We confirm that we have consulted with the Directors of Catholic Academy Trust.

4. CONSULTATION

We confirm that consultation with the following stakeholders has taken/is taking place:

- parents/carers of pupils at the school
- for secondary, parents/carers of pupils in years 5 and 6 of any primary schools in the area
- for primary, parents/carers of pupils offered a place at the school for the next academic year
- staff working at the school and any staff due to be employed at the school from the next academic year
- for secondary, pupils at the school
- other local Catholic schools
- other local schools
- local clergy
- the Local Authority
- the CAT we are proposing to join

5. PARTNERSHIP

5.1 Our school currently undertakes the following work within the diocesan family of schools:

5.2 We are also involved in the following partnership work:

6. DUE DILIGENCE

We confirm that we have engaged with the Trust Central Team and jointly created an accurate Due diligence Report which will be attached to this application to support Trustee consideration of our application.

7. REASONS FOR SEEKING CONVERSION

Academy status is the way forward for our school because we see the following benefits:

8. GUARANTEES

We ask that the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher sign the Statement of Guarantee below on behalf of the school Governing Body.

STATEMENT OF GUARANTEE

A. LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS

We confirm that the school will use the legal firm nominated by the Diocese for academy conversion - Browne Jacobson.

B. SCHOOL PERFORMANCE

We agree to furnish the Diocese with pupil performance data upon request.

C. MULTI ACADEMY TRUST MODEL

The school will follow the CAT model provided by the Diocese and agree to use the model articles of association, funding and supplemental agreements (based on CESEW models) and model scheme of delegation.

D. WORKING WITH PARTNERS

We commit to continuing to work to support the aims and objectives of the Diocese.

We commit to working with other schools in the family of schools across the diocese.

We commit to working in partnership with the Diocesan Department for Education including making our contribution to the Diocesan School Contribution Scheme.

GOVERNING BODY RESOLUTION

We enclose a copy of minutes containing the Governing Body's resolution to convert to academy status and confirmation that the Governing Body has formally agreed to Statements A to E above.

Chair of Governors

Headteacher

Name

Name

Signature _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Date _____

Please return this Stage 2 application, Statement of Guarantee and any accompanying papers to Angela Williams at the Cathedral Centre.

The dates for consideration by Trustees or Advisory Board are indicative and may be subject to change.

Exemplar School Due Diligence Summary

Revised October 2023

This report summaries due diligence findings as schools begin the conversion process. It accompanies the Trust due diligence template and is designed to assure stakeholders that Trust Leaders and Schools have identified key due diligence areas and are clear as to the benefits and risks of conversion.

It will be completed by various members of the Trust central team to support schools and governing bodies within the conversion process.

School Name:

Date of Stage 1/Stage 2 Application/DAO

Stage 1 consent given by Diocesan Trustees -

Stage 2 consent given by Diocesan Trustees -

Area	Brief Summary (5 areas only)	Risks/Next Steps (3 Areas only)	Date
Pupil Numbers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Declared PAN 140. One KS2 class smaller than 20, this is balanced by plus-20 classes within the key stage. September 2023 reception cohort listed as 13. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential decline in numbers given context. Have Governors considered what steps would need to be taken if reception numbers continue to fall? 	
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> X staff members qualified teachers. There is a need to clarify how classes are organised (mixed age teaching?) Several support staff fulfill multiple roles. This needs to be clarified at conversion/TUPE points Confirmation of job titles and meanings is needed (SNA/SMSA etc) Clarity needed on staff who work at the school but are not employed by the school. Key CES policies used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff costs will increase. There is a risk around an increase in cost alongside a decline in pupil numbers. Little risk within TUPE. Current Trust measures would not require amendments. 	
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total income circa £ Year 2 and 3 deficits likely an impact of pupil number bulge/declines. Internal audit has taken place. FMS financial system is used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the strategy of leaders/governors to address forecast deficits; should be noted this is not an uncommon question. Expenditure greater than income 2024/25. 	
Estates	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Catering and cleaning service delivered through SLA's. ASD resource provision will be fully functional by time of conversion. SDSBP scheme still being paid into. Asbestos confirmed in the building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site survey will be required if Diocesan information lacks depth needed. Trust will need to collate all health and safety/compliance information. 	
Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standards are strong. 2023 outcomes are above national averages. OFSTED judged the school as good in all areas in October 2021 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No concerns following due diligence review. 	

Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance SLA ends 31.03.24. This will need to continue for a period of time. • There is a full complement of current governors. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarity will be needed in due course for governors who become local governors post conversion. • Need to onboard LGB effectively as committee structure will cease to exist. 	
Contracts/SLA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most SLA's with LA/council. • Additional leases/SLA's to be reviewed with Trust team. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CTA process will be followed as per Trust onboarding handbook. 	
Asset Leases	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None declared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None declared 	
IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School is currently within LA ICT. • Asset lists outlines current devices tend to be iPad's. • Inventory system used. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As with other LA schools, moving into Trust tenancy will require careful planning. 	
Assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most assets are ICT related or estates related. • Costs of assets at purchase points have been included. This is most helpful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need clarity on LA assets. Are these LA owned or school owned? 	
Suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None declared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplier list will be needed. 	
Wrap Around Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further clarification will be needed prior to conversion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	
Community Use (leases)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School has a playing field that is currently in community use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None 	
School Specific Risks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None noted- CSEL to pick up 21.09.23 		

CSEL Summary

Key Risks

- Pupil numbers are the biggest risk. All other information suggests (school) is well led and in a position of strength.

Capacity needed

- In view of potential deficit - support/capacity would be needed here.

Capacity added

- Headteacher and leaders have driven a culture of improvement and would (it is hoped) be able to add support capacity in due course.
- ASD Resource provision would support broader development of SEN provision and or training for staff in time.