

Head Teachers' Bulletin - St Clare's CMAT Development – 25th April

This week

Head's Clinic – Wed 27th April 1.30-2.30

Drop in opportunity if you want to talk through anything with me (via Zoom)

Briefings for heads &/or chairs –Wed 27th April 5-6pm

This is a repeat of the briefing from Wed 20th April, so no need to if you were at that one. It will cover updates on the next steps for consultation and/or preparation to join St Clare's CMAT. The briefing will take place via Zoom

Upcoming Events

Head's Forum - Wed 11th May 1.30 – 3.00pm

Please note, this is a change of date. I had made an error on my last bulletin. Apologies if this has caused any inconvenience.

New Updates (since last bulletin)

Advisory board and timeline updates

You will have received an update from the Diocese regarding the CMAT project.

The following is a summary of the key points that I shared in the briefing last week that will be repeated this week. It just goes into a little more detail about the implications of the developments over Easter for St Clare schools.

- The RSC have agreed to consider St Clare's and St Francis separately i.e. they will now consider approving one without the other. They have made it clear, however, that they still wish to see a two MAT solution in the Diocese.
- I understand this position in the context of the White Paper. The RSC are clearly keen to see capacity established in the Diocese which can ultimately accommodate all schools by 2030 and they believe a single MAT of 47 schools developed in that timescale is too large to be safe. MATs of around 7500 students are highlighted in the White Paper, which would be the size of St Clare and St Francis if all the schools joined.
- St Clare's CMAT has been given support of the RSC and the Diocese to try to get onto the May Advisory board. As resolutions are needed from the schools in order to be considered at an advisory board, this means we can only progress with those schools who have already engaged in consultation and indeed passed resolutions. The DfE do need to see updated resolutions from these schools, as a sign that their wish to join St Clare has not changed.
- Those schools who have not yet consulted or resolved to join St Clare will have the opportunity for consultation, starting with consideration of a sensible timeline for you within the parameters offered by the DfE and the Diocese. We recognise that some schools will be disappointed not to be able to move on with a view to a September start, while for others this will suit you better. We will want to hear all perspectives to share in our ongoing dialogue with the Diocese and the RSC.

Should St Clare get onto the May advisory board and be approved, it will allow us to concentrate with

certainty on planning to open as a CMAT in September. Adnan and I will be liaising with those schools regarding a plan for preparation and work with you. That plan will involve a re-opening of TUPE to ensure that all staff have had as full an opportunity as possible to have their questions answered and to ensure that all perspectives are properly considered in our planning.

Alongside this work, the directors along with Adnan and I will continue to work with all schools who are keen to continue to engage with us.

Update on other CMAT work

- A great deal of time has been taken up with work on papers for the advisory board and indeed the related discussions with the DfE, the Diocese and with you. Thank you for your patience and your understanding in responding to requests for updated information that has been needed as part of this process.
- Adnan has also been working on a paper outlining financial planning assumptions to inform budget setting which he will share soon. We will share this paper with all schools for you to use if it is useful. If we are successful at a May advisory board, this paper will be particularly important for the schools who would be joining in September as it will help to ensure that all our planning is based on a common set of assumptions about what the future will bring.
- Adnan, the directors and I have been really pleased to continue to be asked to visit and work with schools in various ways. We will only come if invited, but really appreciate those invitations, the opportunities to answer questions and gain an ever greater understanding of the priorities and strengths that each school offers to inform our collaborative work.
- Chairs forums continue to be well attended. Directors are planning a focus on the White Paper at a future meeting, with a view to have time to consider together what it means for our schools and our potential priorities as a CMAT.
- Our directors are also planning a focus on SEND at a future meeting, responding to the common issues you have highlighted and the Green Paper. Directors will reflect on messages heard from schools, in the context of the Green paper, to consider what new opportunities may be open to us through collaboration in a CMAT to support schools with some of the common challenges that we clearly all face. We will of course share these developing thoughts with you for your feedback.

Items copied from previous weeks' bulletins for reference

Update on school improvement discussion paper feedback

Thank you to everyone who has managed to find time to respond to the School Improvement Discussion Paper. I have included below a link so that you can see the results to date and a further link so that you can add a response if you haven't done so already.

We had originally set 31st March as a deadline, but given the delay in dates for starting the CMAT it seems sensible to allow more time if others of you wish to add your feedback. I have attached for your convenience another copy of the discussion paper that the feedback form refers to.

Schools White Paper

I am sure that you will have seen the publication of the School's White Paper earlier this week. This is the first schools White Paper in six years, and sets out the Government's long-term vision for the

school system.

Here is a link to the paper for your convenience; [Schools White Paper delivers real action to level up education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/schools-white-paper)

The White Paper summarises presents a strategy in 4 'pillars' as follows:

- An excellent teacher for every child, through 500,000 teacher training and development opportunities by 2024, and teacher starting salaries are set to rise to £30,000 to attract and retain the best teachers.
- High standards of curriculum, behaviour and attendance leading to calm and collaborative environments, with access to funded training for a senior mental health lead to deliver a whole school approach to health and wellbeing, and Oak National Academy becoming a government body with sole focus on supporting teachers to deliver the very best lesson content.
- Targeted support for every child who needs it, enshrined in a pledge to parents, supported by the existing commitment of up to 6 million tutoring courses by 2024 and action to cement tuition as a permanent feature of the school system.
- A stronger and fairer school system ensuring all children benefit from being taught in a strong family of schools, within a system with clear roles and accountability.

This last point is particularly relevant to the context for the way in which the DfE our approaching work with Hallam Diocese on CMAT formation. The paper sets out the governments ambition for all schools being in a MAT or having plans to join one by 2030. I have summarised below some of the key points from the paper that, I think, help to clarify what is informing the thinking of the DfE in the way they are working with the Diocese:

- Investment of £86m in trust capacity funding over the next three years, plus £40m of additional funding for bespoke interventions to address local needs, in 55 Education Investment Areas (EIAs), and particularly in a subset of 24 Priority Education Investment Areas
- Move schools that have received two consecutive below 'Good' judgements into strong trusts, starting in the EIAs
- Launch a new multi academy trust CEO development programme
- Expect most trusts to be at or working towards serving at least 7,500 pupils or running at least 10 schools
- Limit the proportion of schools in a local area that can be run by an individual trust
- Consult on allowing LA maintained specialist providers to move into either specialist-only or mixed trusts
- Discuss how to implement an expectation that all trusts should have local governance arrangements for their schools
- Ensure all types of school can help build the fully trust led system
- Support new trusts to develop where needed
- Enable LAs to establish new MATs, which will be regulated in the same way as any other trust, with safeguards to manage potential conflicts of interest
- Ensure statutory freedoms and protections of church and faith schools remain when they join or form trusts
- Financially support and protect schools in sparsely populated areas from closure
- Set out a clear timeframe to achieve a fully trust-led system
- Introduce new powers to bring LA maintained schools into the academy system at LA request
- Engage with the sector on how all schools can to be in or joining a strong trust by 2030