



# Academisation consultation: FAQs template

## What is ...

### ... an academy?

Academies are still state schools, but they're funded and operated a little differently than maintained schools.

Instead of being funded by the local authority, academy trusts are paid directly by the Education and Skills Funding Agency. This means that academies have more control over how they do things, than schools that are not academies.

Academies do not charge fees.

### ... a multi-academy trust?

Academy trusts are not-for-profit companies. They have trustees who are responsible for their performance, in the same way that local authority (LA) maintained schools have governors.

The trustees are both company directors and charity trustees, and the academy trust employs the school staff.

We are proposing to join an existing multi-academy trust "Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy Trust". This means that we'll be part of a community of Catholic schools that are governed by one board of trustees. Each school in the trust has its own local governing body, with some delegated governance responsibilities for that particular school. The trust will also employ a team of central staff to support the group of schools and drive school improvement. As part of a trust with multiple schools, our school will have the opportunity to collaborate and share resources with the other schools across the trust.

### ... the benefit of academisation and joining Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academy Trust for our school?

The benefits for our school will include:

- Protecting the Catholic Nature of our school
- Improving teaching and learning for our pupils, as teaching expertise and resources can be shared across the trust with trust wide training opportunities for our staff
- Greater freedom in deciding how to spend government funding
- The opportunity to collaborate
- Greater financial efficiency by procuring goods and services at a larger scale across the trust and by sharing staff, including specialist staff who work centrally across the trust

## Finances...

### ... will the trust or trustees make a profit from the school?

No. Academy trusts are charities, and any surplus or other income must be used to benefit pupils.

### ... will the trust take any money away from our school?

The trust will receive a partnership contribution from the general annual grant (GAG) to pay for some central services. However, the trust will:

- Carefully consider the funding needs and allocations of each academy
- Include what services the trust will provide centrally that you will no longer have to purchase elsewhere, such as from your LA
- Not top-slice or pool other funding outside of the GAG

### **... how much is academy conversion going to cost?**

The cost of conversion is covered by a £25,000 grant the Department of Education.

### **When our school is an academy ...**

#### **... will it still be inspected by Ofsted?**

Academies are inspected by Ofsted, and are held to the same standards as other state-run schools.

#### **... will it follow the National Curriculum?**

Academies do not have to follow the National Curriculum. We will follow the National Curriculum.

#### **... will we change our name/logo/uniform?**

No, our uniform and logo will stay the same.

#### **... will our term times change?**

No, we will follow other Catholic Schools in Newham and be guided by Newham term dates.

#### **... will our catchment area or admissions policy change?**

No

### **How will academisation affect ...**

#### **... our pupils?**

Pupils will not notice a big difference in the day-to-day operation of the school, but they will benefit in the long term from the opportunities provided by academisation through partnership working across the trust.

#### **... our provision for special educational needs and disabilities (SEND)?**

Provision will remain as before. Academies have the same requirements when it comes to SEND as other state schools, as set out in the SEND Code of Practice.

#### **... our school staff?**

At the point of being granted an academy order, the employer of school staff must follow the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) process with staff.

#### **... our school's religious character?** Our religious character will not change.