
The Diocesan Board of Education

20 March 2026

**For the attention of the Headteacher
and Governing Board.**

Dear Colleagues,

Invitation for Church Schools and Non-Church MATs to establish a new 'majority' church MAT

I would like to provide you with a key update regarding the Lincoln Diocesan Strategy for Academisation.

You will be aware that the Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education (LDBE) has a strategy in place to provide a strong infrastructure of church multi-academy trusts (MATs) to serve the Diocese of Lincoln.

This strategy is aligned to the ambitions of the recently published White Paper, 'Every Child Achieving and Thriving'. In the White Paper, it states that enabling every child to achieve and thrive cannot be achieved by schools acting alone. The Government's ambition is that they 'will put collaboration at the heart of the system by moving to all schools joining or forming high-quality trusts'.

As you know, the LDBE respects the decision of a Governing Board in terms of joining a MAT but you will be aware it is LDBE's 'desire and preference' for all church schools to join a church MAT. The LDBE encourages schools to join MATs because they are able to support schools to secure a strong and sustainable future in a climate where there are increasing pressures on schools e.g. budget, staffing, SEND etc.

Currently, there are four active church MATs that are established in the diocese. They are:

- [The Lincoln Anglican Academies Trust](#)
- [The Infinity Academies Trust](#)
- [The St Lawrence Academies Trust](#)
- [Keystone Academy Trust](#)

The Abbey Academies Trust is currently exploring a 'voluntary merger' with the Infinity Academies Trust.



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INVITATION

In order to have a choice of five strong church MATs in every area of the diocese, the LDBE has identified that there is a need to further develop church MAT capacity in the diocese. This a rare and exciting opportunity to form and establish a new church MAT in the diocese. The LDBE welcomes 'expressions of interest' from groups of church schools and non-church MATs to become a church MAT.

Please note that an individual school cannot apply to become a MAT. The LDBE would be able to accept 'expressions of interests' from non-church MATs or a group of three church schools who are collectively able to meet the criteria attached to this letter.

If you are interested in establishing a new church MAT and you believe you meet the criteria attached to this letter, please submit an 'expression of interest' to the Diocesan Director of Education, Canon Paul Thompson by **Monday 18th May**.

The 'expression of interest' can be in the form of an e-mail stating your interest in establishing a church MAT and providing an outline of how you meet the criteria listed above. At this stage, there is no requirement to submit a formal application or to provide supplementary evidence and information in relation to the criteria.

The DBE will consider all expressions of interests using the criteria as a point of reference. In mid-June, the DBE will then invite those with credible expressions of interest to formulate a more detailed proposal. More details will follow about this.

The LDBE looks forward to receiving expressions of interest.

A Governing Board/Trust Board decision

The LDBE recognises that the decision to submit an expression of interest to establish a church MAT rests with the Governing Board (within the parameters of the DBE and government policy). With this in mind, we request that this letter is shared at the next Governing Board / Trust Board meeting so that all governors/ trustees are up to date with the diocesan MAT strategy.

If you would like more information about the Diocesan MAT strategy, please visit the diocesan website via this [link](#) or email the Diocesan Director of Education at paul.thompson@lincoln.anglican.org

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Yours sincerely,

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Chair of Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education

Canon Paul Thompson
Diocesan Director of Education