

Consultation on the Proposal for a New Church Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) in the Diocese of Lincoln



The Diocesan
Board of
Education

1st September 2026

Dear Colleagues,

Introduction

In line with the current government policy, the Lincoln Diocesan Board of Education (LDBE) is required to have a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) Strategy.

Over the last decade, LDBE has developed a strong church MAT infrastructure to support LDBE to deliver its vision for education which is underpinned by our vision, C.A.R.E (Called, Aspirational, Rooted and Empowering).



It is important to us all that church schools thrive so that children and adults flourish. We are all striving to further develop strategies, systems and processes in schools so that we can improve outcomes for all pupils. However, we are all acutely aware that the pressures placed on school leaders, staff and governors continue to increase. We are working hard in a climate with budget limitations, recruitment and retention issues and an overwhelming wave of initiatives coming through from the government.

In the Government White Paper, 'Every Child Achieving and Thriving (February 2026), it states

'Enabling Every Child to achieve and thrive cannot be achieved by individual schools acting alone... We will put collaboration at the heart of the system by moving all schools joining or forming high-quality school trusts...' (p85)

To help ease pressures school leaders face in their pursuit for sustaining high-quality church school education, LDBE has stated it is their 'desire and preference' for all church schools to join a church MAT.

However, the LDBE have always maintained that it is the Governing Board's decision to join a MAT. It is important that Governing Boards keep abreast of the pressures upon their schools and act strategically to manage any potential risks to the school's ability to preserve the Christian foundation and successful performance of the school.

At the last LDBE meeting in June 2026, LDBE approved seven applications from schools wanting to join our Diocesan Church MATs. These applications were from forward thinking Governing Boards who have seen potential challenges over the horizon and decided their schools would be best placed in a MAT with its central team and infrastructure to help them face the future with optimism.

I invite you to explore for yourself what each of the current Diocesan Church MATs have to offer our schools. A good starting point for exploration is their websites. The links are as follows:

[Lincoln Anglican Academy Trust](#)

[Infinity Academies Trust](#)

[The St Lawrence Academies Trust](#)

[Keystone Academy Trust](#)

Expressions of Interest to become a new Church MAT

As we are beginning to see a new wave of schools wanting to join a church MAT, the LDBE and DfE have agreed that another church MAT is required to serve the Diocese of Lincoln. The new MAT we establish will replace the Abbey Academies Trust which merged with the Infinity Academies Trust on 1st September.

LDBE is currently considering five Expressions of Interest for new Church MATs in the diocese. As part of LDBE's robust due diligence process, we would like to seek views about the expressions of interest from key partners and stakeholders in the diocese.

In the chart below, there is an overview of each Expression of Interest. For more information, you are invited to visit the applicants' websites to learn more about their potential to become a successful Church MAT.

Have your say

To share your views about these MAT proposals, please complete the simple response form via this link [Consultation on the Proposal for a New Church Multi-Academy Trust – Fill in form](#)

There are four questions for each MAT proposal and a general question to enable you to share any other comments.

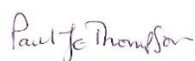
The questions on the Microsoft form for you to consider are:

1. Do you think the (name of applicant) should become a church MAT in the diocese of Lincoln?
2. What are the advantages of (name of applicant) becoming a church MAT?
3. What concerns do you have about (name of applicant) becoming a church MAT?
4. Please add additional comments about these Expressions of Interest in the box below.
5. General question: What do you consider is the most important quality for any new church MAT in the diocese?

For your views to be considered as part of our evaluations, please return the form no later than **Friday 2nd October 2026 at 12 noon.**

Thank you for your support in securing a sustainable future for distinctive and effective church schools that enable all adults and pupils to flourish.

Yours sincerely



Canon Paul Thompson

Diocesan Director of Education

Respond to the Consultation by Friday 2nd October, 12 noon, by clicking this link: Consultation on the Proposal for a New Church Multi-Academy Trust – Fill in form
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Five Expressions of Interest to become a Church MAT in the Diocese of Lincoln

	Voyage Education Partnership	Anthem Schools Trust	William Farr Church Of England Academy in partnership with Nettleham CE Junior School	North Cotes / Fulstow and Scamblesby	Spalding St John the Baptist CE Primary School
Location	Based at the Boston Enterprise Centre	Main office is in London but has an office attached to the Lincoln Carlton Academy	William Farr CE Academy in Welton, Lincolnshire	Based at North Cotes, Fulstow and Scamblesby CE Primary Schools	Based in Spalding, Lincolnshire
MAT Status	Established non-Church MAT	Established MAT with one church school in the Diocese of Southwark	Proposal from Diocesan Church School(s)	Proposal from Diocesan Church School(s)	Proposal from Diocesan Church School(s)
CEO or Lead	Emma Hadley (CEO)	David Hatchett (CEO)	Grant Edgar (Headteacher)	Jonathan Grant (Executive Headteacher)	Clare Robinson (Headteacher)
Number of schools currently in the MAT or group	11 schools including: • 10 primary schools • 1 secondary school All community schools Currently no church schools.	15 schools including • 10 primary schools • 1 infant school • 4 secondary schools 5 of the schools are in Lincolnshire 1 is a secondary church school in London	2 schools William Farr is a church secondary school Nettleham is a church junior school	3 schools North Cotes, Fulstow and Scamblesby are three village church schools	1 school Spalding St John the Baptist is a church primary school
Number of Pupils currently	Nearly 4,000 pupils (secondary and primary)	Nearly 8,000 pupils (secondary and primary)	Approximately 1,500 secondary pupils and 240 junior pupils	Approximately 110 pupils across the three schools	Approximately 420 pupils

in MAT or group					
Ofsted Outcomes	All primary schools are at least good or 'expected' standard. The secondary school has recently been inspected and the report is expected to be published in early September.	2 outstanding schools including Church secondary school 2 secondary schools require improvement for quality of education All other schools in the Trust are at least good.	Both schools graded at good.	All three schools graded as good	School is graded as good overall.
SIAMS inspection outcomes	Not applicable – no church schools	Church Secondary is 'living up to its foundation as a church school.'	Secondary school graded as 'excellent' overall and Junior School graded as 'good' overall.	Fulstow not inspected yet as a church school. Other schools are either 'good' or living up to the Christian foundation	Graded as a 'good' church school.
Website	https://www.voyage-education.org/	https://www.anthemtrust.uk/	https://www.williamfarr.lincs.sch.uk/ https://www.nettleham-junior.lincs.sch.uk/	https://northcotesprimary.co.uk/ https://www.fulstowprimary.co.uk/ https://www.scamblesby.lincs.sch.uk/	https://www.st-john.lincs.sch.uk/