

St. Augustine's Catholic Primary School



'Loving, Learning, Achieving, Believing'

23rd March 2022

Dear Parishioners,

Archbishop John Wilson of Southwark Archdiocese has asked all non-academised Catholic schools in the diocese to consider joining the Kent Catholic Schools Partnership (KCSP). In Kent there are 32 Catholic schools of which 8 are not academies, St Augustine's is one of the eight.

This is part of the letter sent to the parents this week.

Over the past few months the Governing Board of St Augustine's have been discussing the implications of becoming an academy and if/when this should be done. Following a meeting of the school's governors on 17th March 2022, we are pleased to inform you that the governors unanimously voted in favour of applying to become an academy as part of the Kent Catholic Schools 'Partnership (KCSP). We will be working towards a conversion date of 1st September 2022, the beginning of the new academic year.

We, the board appreciate that you will have questions for us. Some of the most common questions which arise are:

Will we lose our school name or individuality?

St Augustine's will continue to look and feel the same, with the same Catholic ethos, friendly family feel, place in the community, staff, curriculum and even uniform!

Usually parents and staff barely notice the difference. The school will be joining a Catholic family of schools who work closely together and support each other, and will benefit from this support and financially. We will still maintain all our other partnerships, for example with other local schools in Hythe.

Will the school still be a Catholic school?

Yes, the school will remain a Catholic school within the Archdiocese of Southwark. The Archbishop recommended KCSP as the best way for the Archdiocese to ensure the continuing success of Catholic education in Kent. The Education Commission and the Trust itself has a strong Catholic ethos and vision which underpins all it does for its family of schools.

Will we lose our teachers?

No, the current team will become employees of the Trust, but their roles at the school will be unchanged.

Do we have to re-apply for a school place?

No, when the school converts to an academy all pupils will automatically remain on the school register.

My child has special educational needs. What happens to their funding?

All funding will continue to be allocated in the same way as now and will be provided by the local authority - Kent County Council.

I personally have been associated with the school since 1985 when the first of my 5 children passed through the hands of the marvellous staff at St Augustine's. I can assure you that I have the best interests of the school in my mind with this decision to become an academy.

This letter is to inform you of our decision and to keep you informed on what is happening. Attached to this letter are documents which give details of academisation and a Q and A document. The questions were set by the board and the answers given by KCSP. Please read them in your through in your own time.

Yours sincerely

Ivan Hart

Chairman of the Board of Governors,
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School

What is a Multi-Academy Trust?

Academies are publicly funded schools, independent of the local authority, held accountable through a legally binding funding agreement with the Department for Education (DfE). Staff are employed by the multi-academy trust.

Multi-academy trusts (MATs) are groups of academies that have come together to form a charitable company, with a single group of 'members' (who have an overview of the governance arrangements) and a single board of trustees.

As part of a MAT:

individual schools remain as separate entities, with separate names and DfE numbers.

individual schools still receive separate Ofsted judgements and performance tables are still based on individual schools.

You can find out more about the structure of the KCSP MAT on their website:
<https://www.kcsp.org.uk/governance-1/>

The Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership (KCSP)

The Kent Catholic Schools' Partnership was conceived at a meeting of all of Kent's Catholic schools and the then Director of the Education Commission in January 2012, and in response to the request of the Archbishop of Southwark:

KCSP was formally incorporated on 10 August 2012 by the Archbishop of Southwark, and the Trust has grown rapidly since its creation and currently comprises of 24 schools (19 primaries and 5 secondaries) educating almost 10,000 pupils. You can find out more about our schools here: <https://www.kcsp.org.uk/special/academies/>

KCSP's core purpose is:

Jesus came to give us 'life in all its fullness' and that is what KCSP's partnership of schools aims to do.

KCSP understand that working together we can share outstanding expertise, offer support and challenge when needed, and keep everyone in our school communities safe.

KCSP can offer an ambitious, world class education which ensures the potential of everyone is fulfilled; whatever their need.

KCSP can build systems across the Trust which ensure clarity of purpose, secure finance, and safe environments which are fit for purpose.

Why should St Augustine's join KCSP?

Our school will be able to benefit from being in the Trust in a number of ways:

KCSP have a strong school improvement team who are able to support our school to be the best they can be.

KCSP are able to offer a high-quality professional development package to our teachers and support staff ensuring they deliver high quality lessons but also developing their leadership, communication and IT skills.

KCSP are able to attract high quality staff who can share their skills across our school and others within the Trust.

KCSP can offer attractive career opportunities keeping our strongest and most skilled colleagues within the organisation so to the benefit of all schools.

Our school will also be able to benefit from reduced costs by merging contracts, buying in bulk and sharing resources.

KCSP also provide a strong central services team which support HR, payroll and finance.