



# Saint Edmund Arrowsmith

## CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

22nd March 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

### **Conversion to an Academy**

You may be aware that an academy order has been made in respect of the School, and the Governing Body is under a duty to take steps to progress towards joining a multi academy trust (MAT). The School is being supported by Diocesan officers as well as the Archdiocese of Liverpool Secondary School Improvement Trust (ALSSIT). The approval of Archbishop Malcolm and the Diocesan Trustees is required before the School can join any MAT approved by the Diocese.

A new multi academy trust has been established by the Archdiocese and is sponsored by ALSSIT called the **Pope Francis Multi Academy Trust**. Saint Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic High School will be the first school to join this MAT. The planned conversion date is 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021. This conversion has been approved by the Archbishop, Archdiocese Trustees, Knowsley LA and the Regional School Commissioner. Governors are now sharing this decision with staff, parents and carers, local parishioners and other local schools.

### **What is an Academy?**

Academies are publicly funded state schools that are independent of the Local Authority and receive funding directly from Central Government. The School will still be a Catholic School under the authority of the Archbishop of Liverpool and its religious designation will not change.

### **Why is this happening?**

The school has been issued an academy order by the Secretary of State for Education, so it has to become an academy, there is no choice. We believe gaining Academy status and joining The Pope Francis Academy Trust will enable us to access support which might not otherwise be available as a Voluntary Aided School and being an Academy in the MAT will give us greater opportunities for working more closely with other local Catholic schools and the wider community of schools.

### **What are the advantages of conversion?**

The Government is clear that the greater freedoms enjoyed by Academies are designed to allow schools to develop and to build on individual strengths in response to the needs of the community. We feel that the additional freedoms and flexibilities and the support that will be provided as part of the MAT would enable the Governors to better secure the long term future of our School.

In addition, it will strengthen our Catholic identity, enable the pooling of some resources which will improve teaching and management practice within the schools and achieve a greater degree of

Cumber Lane • Whiston • Knowsley • Merseyside • L35 2XG

Telephone: 0151 477 8770 • Email: [admin@seaonline.org.uk](mailto:admin@seaonline.org.uk)

Twitter: [@StEdArrKnowsley](https://twitter.com/StEdArrKnowsley) • Website: [www.stedmundarrowsmith.org.uk](http://www.stedmundarrowsmith.org.uk)

Headteacher: Mrs. H. Pinnington BSc (Hons), PGCE, MEd, NPQH



Saint Edmund Arrowsmith  
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

control of our finances which will help us to safeguard these funds for the benefit of children attending the School.

**What are the disadvantages of conversion?**

Greater freedoms do bring additional responsibilities including statutory duties as an academy trust company, but the School is confident it can manage these with the support of the MAT.

Academy conversion is not a panacea for all ills and we are aware of some difference in opinion as to the effectiveness of multi academy trusts.

We believe that there is greater scrutiny of academies now than for voluntary aided schools and Governors are confident that this will have a positive impact on standards and enable the School to continue to fully engage with its community.

**Will any changes to the School be made as a result of conversion?**

There are very few changes we intend to make as the school converts to an academy.

We will introduce some additional governance accountability that comes with working within a multi academy trust. There will also be an election for a new parent governor and staff governor in the summer term.

We are taking this opportunity to change the School's name to **Saint Edmund Arrowsmith Catholic Academy**.

Please be assured that the Catholic character, ethos and values of the School would remain unchanged as Academy conversion take place.

**The school uniform will remain the same and will not change.**

**Mrs Pinnington will remain as the Headteacher.**

Thank you for supporting us with this decision. I am confident that this decision will enable us to continue to support Mrs Pinnington and the staff at the school to continue with the positive changes that SEA has begun.



Saint Edmund Arrowsmith  
CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'K Tomlinson'.

K. Tomlinson (Mrs)

Chair of Governors