

ACADEMIES PACK: DOCUMENT I
Letter from Chris Shepperd



Diocesan Director of Education Chris Shepperd

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To: DBE Board members;
Bishops Council;
Rural Deans;
Headteachers,
Chairs of Governors and ex-officio foundation governors of
Church of England schools in the Diocese of Salisbury

June 2011

Dear Colleagues

Establishing an Academy Trust Structure for the Schools of the Diocese of Salisbury

The attached policy sets out the guiding principles for the Diocesan Board of Education's response to the Government's drive towards Academy Status. We are committed to empowering professionals, sustaining the family of Church schools and working cooperatively and collaboratively whilst putting children at the heart of all we do.

The White Paper, Education Bill and all policy emanating from the DfE makes it clear that Academy status is considered to be the norm for all schools in the future. One result of this is that the capacity of our local authorities to provide the level of support and service that schools have become accustomed to is being greatly reduced. It is especially important to us to provide help and support to all our schools as they adjust to these new ways of working.

Traditionally, the Board of Education has focused its work on Church schools as that is where our statutory responsibility lies. The practice of our clergy at a local level though, has been to work to support all the schools in their parish or benefice regardless of designation. This commitment to working with all schools is an excellent starting point from which to support schools as they seek to develop local partnerships, against a background of changes to the role of local authorities.

A Way Forward for Schools within the Diocesan Family

We are therefore well placed to support schools in the development of effective local partnerships with one another which secure their mutual futures. Our VA and VC schools are the wonderful legacy of a 200 year old vision by the National Society of the Church of England to provide a system of free education available throughout the nation.

In proposing this way forward we are not moving away from our commitment and willingness to co-operate with local authorities; we have established effective working relationships with local authorities over the years which have been of considerable benefit to schools and will continue to do so.



THE SALISBURY DIOCESAN
BOARD OF EDUCATION

'Working for children, young people, schools and parishes'

Email education@salisbury.anglican.org

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The Salisbury Diocesan Board of Education is a company limited by guarantee (No. 464306) and is registered as a charity (No. 1059195)

We believe that the James Review (the Government's enquiry into ways of procuring new schools and providing funds to improve existing school buildings) will enable Dioceses to remain key partners in the negotiation of funds for capital improvement works with local authorities.

The attached paper sets out the details, but in summary the Diocesan Board of Education has established an Umbrella Company (the Diocese of Salisbury Education Trust – DSET) which will encompass all of our church academies, as well as being available for our family of existing VA and VC schools as well as our associate community schools. DSET will provide support and broker or provide additional functions among schools as needed. Schools who wish to convert to Academy status may do so as a single academy company or as part of a local multi-academy trust.

As well as addressing the Academy Trust and Governance issues, the policy also outlines our desire to facilitate the provision of mutual support and services between our schools, along a cooperative model. In order to facilitate the provision of services at a very local level, schools may wish DSET to set up trading subsidiaries for mutual benefit, or they may wish to avail themselves of services provided through our existing trading company Saled Ltd.

We are also mindful of the many good and collaborative partnerships that Church of England schools enjoy with neighbouring community schools, we welcome the possibility of community schools joining in with our arrangements without them necessarily having to convert to become church schools.

Best wishes,



Chris Shepperd
Diocesan Director of Education



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