



Introducing CDAT

A brief history of CDAT

CDAT was established by Chester Diocese in 2013/14 to enable diocesan schools to become academies while preserving their church school status; CDAT still works in close partnership with the Diocesan Board of Education.

The trust has always recognised the importance of each school maintaining its own unique identity – CDAT does not take a top-down, corporate approach. There is no set template for a ‘CDAT school’.

The trust grew slowly at first but has grown more quickly over the past 2/3 years – there are currently 18 schools in the CDAT family – around 500 staff and 2800 pupils.

CDAT's Vision & Philosophy

CDAT is a trust made up entirely of church schools. One thing that all of our schools have in common is their strong Christian ethos.

Jesus said, 'I have come in order that you might have life—life in all its fullness' (John 10:10) – both CDAT's vision and the Church of England's Vision for Education

As a Trust, our aim is to ensure that all of our pupils are able to benefit from and enjoy 'life in all its fullness.'

How does CDAT work?

CDAT is a multi-academy trust (MAT). MATs are not-for-profit organisations that manage a group of schools. All of CDAT's schools are Church of England primary schools in Chester Diocese.

CDAT provides its schools with a wide range of services – from school improvement to finance, payroll and HR. All our schools are supported by our experienced central team.

CDAT has its own board of governors (called trustees) who oversee the trust's work in just the same way that school governors oversee the work of a school.

All CDAT schools still have their own governing body – called the Local Governance Committee. This includes church, staff and parent representatives.

School Identity

All of our schools are unique, and we just want to help them to be the very best they can be. Under our Scheme of Delegation, the day-to-day running of the school is still the responsibility of the headteacher and other school leaders. We will support, advise and signpost to good practice as needed.

There is no set CDAT curriculum: all our schools are different, and we believe that each school needs a curriculum that is right for its children. Our role is to help schools to develop their curricular offer, and to help them monitor and refine it over time.

This is the same with schemes etc. – we don't insist on all CDAT schools using the same phonics scheme or maths scheme, but we can help if schools are looking for new resources etc.

Unlike some multi-academy trusts, CDAT doesn't change the school uniform, badge or times of the school day when a new school joins the trust. We love the fact that all of our schools are unique!

Key Points for Staff

Staff TUPE on current pay & conditions. The trust follows STPCD and NJC agreements for teachers & support staff and we are members of the Teachers' Pensions Scheme and LGPS.

Staff are employed by CDAT – but have their own school as their named place of work. We don't make staff move from one school to another.

What are the Benefits?

The benefits of being part of CDAT vary from school to school – but some of the benefits our schools have found are:

- Our services are swift and responsive – we can provide help and support quickly when it is needed;
- Financial benefits – as a larger trust, we can procure goods and services at better rates;
- Access to training and development opportunities – and the chance to share and learn from good practice across the trust – has helped raise standards;
- Being part of CDAT has strengthened links with the Diocese and with other local CDAT schools;
- Children get to take part in trust-wide events, and in different projects run across our CDAT schools.

The Conversion Process

Becoming an academy and joining CDAT is a lengthy process. There are a number of different stages:

- Initial fact-finding and due diligence – typically around 6-12 months
- Consultation – around 1 month
- Application preparation – typically 2/3 months
- Application is approved by DfE Regional Advisory Board
- Conversion process – this involves all of the legal side of the conversion: land and buildings, TUPE etc – typically takes 5-8 months

We are currently at the consultation stage. If consultation is positive, it is likely to be around 12 months before conversion takes place.