[Recipient Address]

[Reference]

[Date]

Dear [   ]

Consultation to Convert to Academy Status

You may well be aware that the Government is encouraging all schools to consider converting to Academy status. After careful consideration and preliminary discussion with the Diocese, the School's Governing Body has decided that they wish to explore conversion to Academy status and, in particular, formation of a Multi Academy Trust [with [name of schools]][1]. We are writing to consult with staff, parents, local community partners [insert others that the school will consult with, for example, local parish church, feeder schools] to determine whether the School should proceed with conversion and we would like to invite your views on the matter.

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 Bishop of Arundel & Brighton and its religious designation will not change.

Why is this being considered?

As a successful Voluntary Aided School, gaining Academy status would [give us the autonomy to continue to develop our School and to continue to achieve high standards]. As a Multi Academy Trust, there will be 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 would enable the Governors to better secure the long term future of our School.]

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[1] If the consultation is at the early stages, then the identification of the cluster could be deleted. Obviously, the more information the better, but if a group is identified then the consultation needs to be co-ordinated and should identify the shared vision of the schools.

[In addition to this we believe that the formal partnership with [name of other schools] will have a number of benefits for both schools. This includes a more targeted approach to the long term future of both schools, strengthening our Catholic identity, pooling of resources which will improve teaching and management practice within the schools as well as a greater control of our finances and better management of these for the benefit of children attending the schools.]

[There are some specific educational benefits as follows:][2]

<u>What are the disadvantages of conversion?</u>

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

<u>Will any changes to the School be made as a result of conversion?</u>

[We intend to make the following changes on conversion/ We do not intend to make any changes on conversion].

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

<u>How to take part in the consultation process</u>

At this stage we are not committing the School to conversion to Academy status. We are consulting with everyone associated with our School before Governors meet again to make a final decision.

We would ask that you let us have your views by emailing [email address] by [time and date].

OR

[There will be an open meeting for you to come and raise any queries you may have or make comments about this on <u>[date/time] at [location].</u> If you are unable to make this meeting but would like to ask any questions or make any comments please either telephone and ask to speak to [   ] or email [   ] us by [date/time].

The consultation will close on [   ]. The Governors will meet after this date to consider how to proceed.

Yours sincerely,

Chair of Governors   Headteacher

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[2] Ideally you will be able to identify some of these, but do not worry if the detail cannot be articulated at this time.

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