



# St Thomas Becket

Catholic Primary School

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Headteacher  
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## Re: Catholic Academy Trust membership

Dear Parents & Carers,

In recent years, the Archbishop, who has the ultimate authority over Catholic schools in Southwark, has made his expectation clear that all schools under his care become members of a Catholic Academy Trust (CAT). CATs have a similar structure to multi academy trusts, some of which you will have heard of (such as Harris or Oasis) but all schools in CATs are Catholic schools.

The governors of St Thomas Becket have considered this and have met with various Catholic Academy Trusts informally over the last year to identify which of them would best meet the needs of our pupils, parents & carers, staff and other stakeholders. Following this process, St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust was identified as the CAT that would be the best fit for St Thomas Becket. Most importantly, we felt it was the trust that succeeded most in putting the pupils themselves at the heart of all of their decision making. Governors recently sought and received approval from the diocese to begin formal engagement with St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust. This process will involve consultations for staff, parents & carers and other stakeholders, financial due diligence and a process of ensuring that the trust is in fact the best-fit for our school.

St Thomas Becket school and St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust both feel strongly that effective communication with all stakeholders at all points along this journey is vital to reassure our community that your voices are heard and listened to. It is difficult to say exactly how long this process will take, as stakeholders such as the DfE and Regional Schools Commissioner will have influence over the start time and pace of formal due diligence. We currently understand that the process may take between six and twelve months, with further information for parents to be provided in the spring, including a timeline of consultations, meetings for parents etc. In the meantime, you can find out more about St Benedict's here: [Welcome to St Benedict Catholic Academy Trust](#)

It is important to consider that this is the start rather than the end of a journey, and a final decision has not been made on St Thomas Becket school joining St Benedict, or any other CAT. The decision will be for governors to make, guided by the views of all of our stakeholders.

Kind regards,

Mr Diarmuid Skehan  
Headteacher