

30 November 2018



Dear Sir / Madam

## **Rationale for the Religious Designation of Trinity Academy Sowerby Bridge (TASB)**

### **Context**

Trinity Academy Sowerby Bridge joined the Trinity Multi-Academy Trust (MAT), a high-performing Church of England MAT, on 1 October 2018. Before this, the school had been called Sowerby Bridge High School (SBHS) and was under local authority control.

In its previous inspection, as Sowerby Bridge High School, it had been graded as 'inadequate' in all areas; this Ofsted judgment is no longer valid because the school is now (from 1 October 2018) a fresh start academy and, as such, has no Ofsted designation. It is anticipated that the Academy will be next inspected in its third full year of operation i.e. the Academic Year 2020-2021.

In the last academic year, under the leadership of Trinity MAT, Trinity Academy Sowerby Bridge has been transformed. Its Progress 8 measure (the headline figure for secondary schools, used to judge their overall effectiveness) improved from **-0.47** to **+0.40**. This meant that the Academy was in the top 1% of the most improved schools nationally, with a Progress 8 improvement of **+0.87** in just one year. That improvement has also placed Trinity Academy Sowerby Bridge second in the Calderdale secondary league tables, behind only Trinity Academy Halifax (**+0.59**).

*Note: for reference, the full list of secondary outcomes is published on the reverse of this leaflet*

### **Current position**

**The local governing body (LGB) of Trinity Academy Sowerby Bridge has recently decided to consult stakeholders with regard to becoming a religiously designated academy (Church of England).** This consultation is as a result of two specific things:

1. A significant number of current parents of pupils at the academy have repeatedly asked if it could consider becoming religiously designated.
2. Trinity Academy Halifax is also within the Trinity Multi-Academy Trust (MAT) – it is the only Church of England (CE) secondary provision within Calderdale. However, it admits 330 pupils each year and yet receives over 800 applications. There are also more than 20 CE primary schools in the local authority, so there is significant evidence to suggest that there is a need for this provision in this area.

It is our belief that every parent should have the option to send their child to a local secondary church school especially after having enjoyed such an experience at primary level.

Our view is that religious designation will not only address this parental need, it will also further develop the ethos of the Academy as we move forward, centred on the trust's four core values:

**Empathy – Honesty – Respect – Responsibility**

The Diocese of Leeds has been asked for guidance and it is supportive of the Academy undertaking consultation as the next step. The consultation process will run from Friday 30 November 2018 to Monday 7 January 2019 inclusive. This will include an information evening (hosted at the Academy) at 3.45pm and 6.30pm on Wednesday 19 December 2018.

During the evening I will present a more detailed rationale of this proposal and, for completeness, I have enclosed some Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) prior to the meeting. If you have any questions, or would like to make a contribution to the consultation, please contact the Academy via [SGaskin@sowerby.trinitymat.org](mailto:SGaskin@sowerby.trinitymat.org).

Yours sincerely



Charlie Johnson  
Principal

### Calderdale secondary school performance tables 2018

**Note:** Progress 8 measures the progress of all pupils in a school across English, Mathematics, Sciences, History, Geography, Modern Foreign Language and up to three other subjects. It is recognised as the main measure when judging the effectiveness of any secondary school.

Ranking	Name of institution	Progress 8 score	P8 description
1	<b>Trinity Academy Halifax</b>	<b>+0.59</b>	<b>Well above average</b>
2	<b>Trinity Academy Sowerby Bridge</b>	<b>+0.40</b>	<b>Above average</b>
3	Crossley Heath Grammar School	<b>+0.39</b>	<b>Above average</b>
4	Rastrick High School	<b>+0.37</b>	<b>Above average</b>
5	The Halifax Academy	<b>+0.30</b>	<b>Above average</b>
6	Calder High School	<b>+0.20</b>	<b>Above average</b>
7	Ryburn Valley High School	<b>+0.15</b>	<b>Average</b>
8	North Halifax Grammar School	<b>-0.04</b>	<b>Average</b>
9	Brighouse High School	<b>-0.13</b>	<b>Average</b>
10	Brooksbank High School	<b>-0.27</b>	<b>Below average</b>
10	Todmorden High School	<b>-0.27</b>	<b>Below average</b>
12	Lightcliffe Academy	<b>-0.42</b>	<b>Below average</b>
13	Park Lane Academy	<b>-1.25</b>	<b>Well below average</b>
LA avg.		+0.06	
National avg.		-0.02	

Data taken from latest Department for Education (DfE) School Performance Tables:

<https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=default&table=schools&region=381&laname=calderdale&geographic=la&for=secondary&basedon=Overall%20performance&show=All%20pupils&datasetfilter=provisional&searchtype=&laname=calderdale>