



Equalities Impact Assessment

**Yenton Primary School
Academy Conversion**

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide for the Governing Board of Yenton Primary School an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) of their proposal for the school to convert to an academy.

The report has been prepared by Robin Hood Multi Academy Trust following an examination of published material including school policies and an interview with a senior member of the school leadership team.

The key question to be addressed is whether or not the conversion to academy will result in quantifiable or different outcomes for different groups or differential access to the services provided by the school.

The impact of the academy proposal is considered below in relation to the following standard Impact Strands:

- Gender;
- Race;
- Disability;
- Sexual Orientation;
- Religion and Belief;
- Age;
- Social Inclusion; and
- Community Cohesion.

In addition, in a school context, the arrangements for admissions are an important consideration for parents, students and other stakeholders. Accordingly the position on admissions has also been reviewed.

In conducting this study, no evidence has been found to indicate the proposal to convert to an academy will have any negative impact in any Equality Strand.

On the contrary; the decision of the governing board proposing to adopt a Robin Hood MAT governance and ethos for the school on conversion is indicative of a desire to further embed the school's already enviable capacity to drive equality of opportunity and outcomes for learners and equality of opportunity for staff.

It can be expected that the school's established policies and practices will be strengthened through the flexibilities of academy status.

The conversion to academy status is expected to result in an overall positive equalities impact.

Admissions

The academy conversion consultation has made it clear the academy will continue to operate in full the local authority admissions policy.

In accordance with this policy, places will normally only be offered up to the published admission number (PAN), which is the number of places available at the school in the year of entry. Currently at Yenton Primary School this sits at 510 places although this number is increasing year on year due to expansion. A child cannot be refused admission to the normal year of entry on the grounds of prejudice to the provision of efficient education and efficient use of resources unless the published admission number has been reached.

Outside of the normal Reception entry year, admissions will be accepted where places are available in that year group.

Oversubscription criteria will continue to be applied where there are more applicants than places available for admission into Reception. All applicants will be placed in a priority order which will be in line with Birmingham City Council's admission policy.

This means the conversion to academy status will not result in a change to the admissions arrangements for the school and therefore no adverse impact will directly arise for any equality strand.

It should be noted, however, that the conversion to Robin Hood MAT academy will require a line of democratic accountability to the local community, parents, students and other stakeholders; thereby ensuring consultation and local decision making if any changes to admissions arrangements should be proposed in the future. This is a positive strength, increasing local democratic influence on admissions.

Gender

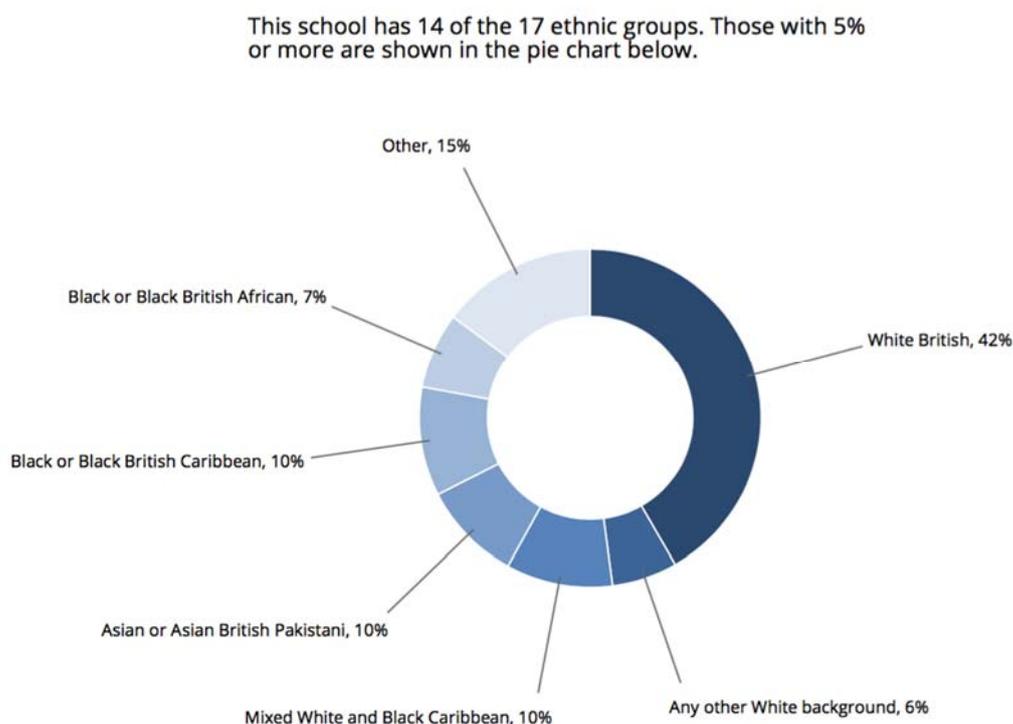
There are currently more boys on roll than there are girls although the split is 47% girls and 53% boys.

The gender difference is not deemed to be significant and is only marginally below the national figure for girls. In the recent OFSTED inspection dated March 2018 no evidence was found of a wide gender imbalance which is clear evidence that the school is motivated to support all pupils.

The opportunities from 'marketing' the school as an academy and the positive decision to operate Robin Hood MAT values, including equality, as an explicit element of the school's ethos is likely to further reinforce the position of the school as an establishment aiming to meet the needs of students irrespective of gender.

Race

The school roll is representative of a diverse range of ethnic heritage, as illustrated in the chart below which was taken from the Inspection Data Summary Report of November 2017.



Yenton Primary School works tirelessly to cater for all ethnic groups with the aims remaining to support the best possible outcomes for all.

The move to academy status is expected to increase budgetary flexibility (due to the offer of centralised services) to better allow the school to target resources effectively. Furthermore, the adoption of a Robin Hood MAT ethos for the academy and the application of the Values & Principles of the UNICEF Rights of a Child (including equality, equity, and fairness) will provide additional opportunities to embed the significance of equality within the curriculum and in the ethos of the school.

All members of staff are entitled to appropriate training, in order that they can play their full part in ensuring that the school promotes racial equality. Training is linked to priorities within the School Development Plan. The Academy directors will also identify their own training needs in relation to race equality.

Disability

The proportion of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is marginally above national average.

There is a Disability Equality Scheme in place which includes a DDA Accessibility Plan. The school's approach is not focused solely on physical buildings issues (though these are addressed) but to embed equality for disabled children and adults into the culture of the school in practical ways. This includes accessibility, academic support and social and emotional development strategies for students with disabilities and impairments.

The school works closely with Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service (CAHMS) and to support students with impairing or disabling mental health. There is a facility for students to find support on site and there is extensive safeguarding provision – this was noted in the recent OFSTED inspection.

The change to academy status will allow the SENCO of Yenton to further link with and liaise across Robin Hood Multi Academy Trust to share best practice. Where a child has an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), the home local authority will continue to be responsible for funding but the processes for admitting a child with an ECHP will be similar to the existing arrangements.

The academy will continue to work with local authorities, NHS agencies and other partners to help ensure good opportunities and outcomes for students with special needs, impairments and disabilities.

Staff will transfer to the academy with their terms and conditions of employment unchanged. The school will continue to operate employment policies and practices based on those operated by the local authority.

Sexual Orientation

The school aims to demonstrate mutual respect between all members of the school community. The school's Equality Policy recognises the general duty to have due regard for the need to eliminate unlawful sexual discrimination and to eliminate sexual harassment.

This approach will extend to the academy.

Religion and Belief

Ofsted have found relationships between staff and students and across religious and ethnic differences to be supportive; stating *"The vast majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school and appreciate the improvements you are making. Several had chosen this school because of the positive ethos and the focus on individual children. This was despite it not being their local school. Other parents commented on the improved quality of teaching and the good progress their child was now making"*.

Provision is made to cater for the cultural, moral and spiritual needs of all children through planning of assemblies, classroom based and off---site activities; pupils' views are actively encouraged and respected.

In the curriculum the aim has been and will continue to be to provide all pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, teaching and learning processes will ensure equality of access for all pupils, preparing them for life in a diverse society.

Students appreciate religious difference and cultural diversity. They already value equality and hold a strong sense of social justice.

Students are appropriately respectful of religious events and realise the consequences of prejudice, challenging this where needed.

Students engender a positive and inclusive school community ethos which is centred around the school's core values. It is anticipated that the conversion to academy status using the Robin Hood MAT model will further strengthen and embed the positive and inclusive school community ethos. This is because of the Values and Principles of Robin Hood MAT (Integrity, Equality, Positive Change, Collaboration and Self Improvement).

A Robin Hood MAT approach in the governance, curriculum and pedagogy of the academy will be ethically based and faith neutral as Yenton Primary already is. This will allow the school to set out and sustain a tolerant and non-discriminatory ethos that should be acceptable to all with a religious faith and those with none.

Age

The school has committed to strive to ensure that all students, at every age and ability level, have an excellent foundation for future success.

The school makes clear its consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of age. To secure the best possible outcomes a range of teaching methods is used throughout the school ensuring that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.

The existing employment policies relating to age, including retirement age and pensions provision will continue to be aligned to local policies. Teachers will continue to have access to the Teachers Pensions Scheme and support staff to the Local Government Pensions Scheme.

The move to Robin Hood MAT academy status will not result in measures to change terms and conditions of employment nor any changes to pension entitlements as provided for in the Teachers and Local Government Pension Schemes.

Social Inclusion

The school is situated in the Erdington area which has a broad socio-economic and ethnic background. The school has a deprivation index of 0.3 which is in the top 20% of schools nationally and above national.

The level of pupils entering Reception has traditionally been below the national average. Once the children have started school; Yenton works hard to narrow this gap.

The percentage of students known to be entitled to FSM is in the top 20% of schools nationally and considerably larger than the national average.

The school is determined to give children from poorer backgrounds support, encouragement and aspiration. The school uses effective monitoring and targeted support. OFSTED commented in the last inspection:

“The progress and attainment of disadvantaged pupils are a key priority for leaders and governors. They have high expectations for every pupil and put no ceiling on what pupils can achieve. Leaders monitor the progress disadvantaged pupils make very closely. They use regular opportunities to discuss pupils’ progress with every teacher. They make sure that any pupil at risk of falling behind is identified early. They work with teachers to make sure that a planned programme of support is implemented. Additional adults provide effective support. This work is kept under regular review. This helps leaders and teachers to respond where they need to take action, for example where attendance is affecting progress. Class by class, and half-term by half-term, the progress disadvantaged pupils make in reading, writing and mathematics is analysed carefully. Governors evaluate the use of additional funding to support these pupils. They ensure that funding is spent well and that pupils are making good progress as a result. School data shows that, in four out of six year groups, the differences in achievement are diminishing rapidly in all three key subjects.”

Parental engagement is seen as important in this regard and the school works hard to engage with the local community. Members of staff will often write to parents, contact them by telephone or invite them in to discuss issues of importance about their child’s welfare and progress. Conversely, parents are encouraged to contact the school if they have any concerns they would like to discuss.

There are regular Parents’ Evenings throughout the school year where parents can speak to their child’s subject teachers and governors are present at these events to talk to parents. There is a strong Parents’ Association which meets regularly to discuss the development of the school.

On conversion to a Robin Hood MAT academy the school’s engagement with parents as a driver for improving social inclusion will be further enhanced through the development of a community forum.

Community Cohesion

The ambition and belief of the governors (to be carried across to the academy), is for the school to be an excellent local community asset; and a place where all students can reach their potential and achieve the highest standards. A central aim is to ensure fairness and to make sure that all children can succeed, whatever their background.

This ambition is the main reason for the proposal to convert to an academy to ensure long term success for Yenton Primary School. The Governing Board, supported by the staff, have expressed a determination to work hard for the school and the wider community.

The Governing Board have taken time (twelve months) to consider the options for the future organisation of the school. After careful deliberation they have concluded that in order to safeguard their vision of a primary school firmly embedded in the life of the Yenton community, the way forward is to convert to an academy.

The change is intended to further strengthen the qualities identified in the most recent Ofsted inspection.

The school has been able to build upon its cultural and religious diversity to help promote the social, moral, cultural and spiritual development of students. The move to a Robin Hood MAT academy will increase the opportunities for this work especially through the 'No Outsiders' programme. It will also assist the school in ensuring all parents and carers are encouraged to participate in the life of the school.