



Draft Proposal Document

St Benedict's Infant School

*Proposal to Alter the Age
Range of a Community
School with effect from 1st
September 2018*

Introduction

Birmingham City Council, as the local authority for Birmingham, in collaboration with the school leadership and governing body, is consulting on a proposal to make certain changes to St Benedict's Infant School. The changes are explained in the sections below.

School Information

Type:	Community		
Name:	St Benedict's Infant School	DFE:	330 2183
Address:	St Benedict's Road, Small Heath, Birmingham. B10 9DP.		
Ward:	Bordesley Green	District:	Hodge Hill
Age Range:	3 – 7 years	Capacity:	450
Last Ofsted:	27 th June 2017	Ofsted Rating	Good

The School is currently linked with Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy. Pupils from St Benedict's have the right to transfer to Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy at the beginning of Year 3.

In previous years St Benedict's Infant School had an admission number (number of places offered in Reception) of 150.

The Office of the School's Adjudicator has approved a reduction in the admission number at St Benedict's Infant School as follows:

September 2017: 90

September 2018: 60

These changes were requested as a result of falling rolls at the school.

What changes are proposed?

We are proposing to carry out the following changes to St Benedict's Infant School:

- Alter the upper age limit from age 7 years to age 11 years with effect from 1st September 2018. The school's age range will change from 3 - 7 years to 3- 11 years. The school will be for pupils across Reception through to Year 6.
- It is proposed that the admission number at the school will be 60. The intake year will be Reception; there will be no separate intake at Year 3.

The proposal effectively changes the school from an infant school to become a primary school. Pupils at St Benedict's will no longer be required to transfer to Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy (or another school) at Year 3, but will be able to continue their education at St Benedict's through to the end of Year 6.

As St Benedict's numbers reduce over time and the cohorts (year groups) remain at the school through to the junior phase, the school will gradually become a primary

school with 2 forms of entry (2 classes of 30 per year) by September 2024. The School currently operates with 15 classrooms, (5 classes of 30 in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.). As a primary school, 14 classrooms will be required (2 classes of 30 in Reception, Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6.)

The table below details how the transition is proposed to take place.

Proposed Reconfiguration of St Benedict's from infant to primary school

St Benedict's	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Classrooms
2016	150	150	150					450	15
2017	90 ₁	120 ₂	120 ₂					330	11
2018	60 ₁	90	120	120				390	13
2019	60	60	90	120	120			450	15
2020	60	60	60	90	120	120		510	17
2021	60	60	60	60	90	120	120	570	19
2022	60	60	60	60	60	90	120	510	17
2023	60	60	60	60	60	60	90	450	15
2024	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	420	14

₁ In-year variation approved by School Adjudicator for reduced intake PANs

₂ Agreed revised admission limits with local authority as a result of reducing roll at the school

Why do we want to do this?

Birmingham City Council is proposing the above with the full support of the Governing Body and Leadership of the school. St Benedict's has had less applications and a lower number of pupils on roll for the last couple of years. This is due to a new school opening in the area and a drop in the birth rate across the City.

In 2015 the Department for Education approved the opening of a 100 place, all-through free school less than 0.5km from St Benedict's Infants School. The free school offers education for pupils aged 4-16 years; Reception – Year 11. This additional capacity at the free school is having a direct impact on the number of pupils at St Benedict's Infant School and it is anticipated will continue to do so.

For schools operating with a large number of surplus places there can be a risk that they become financially unviable. If a school has a financial deficit, this can impact on staffing, standards and attainment; and, ultimately, the future of the school. Action is required to stabilise the school to allow them to avoid any financial deficit and plan ahead.

The school becoming a two form of entry primary school will remove the necessity for pupils to transfer to a separate junior school at the end of Year 3 (i.e. Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy). It will also allow the school to staff appropriately and manage their budgets, so improve the future stability of the school.

When will these changes happen?

If the proposal is approved by the decision makers at Birmingham City Council (following full consultation), it is intended that the change in age range be implemented from **1st September 2018**.

Will there be any effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area?

Yes. St Benedict's Infant School is currently linked to Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy.

This means;

- pupils from St Benedict's Infant School transfer to Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy at Year 3.
- pupils applying for St Benedict's Infant School are asked to list any siblings at Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy on the preference form. Sibling claims include those who will be in attendance either in St Benedict's Infant School or Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy at the time of admission.

It is the intention of the school to change its admission arrangements by removing the link to Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy from September 2019. These changes will be consulted on during the Admission Consultation which commenced in December 2017 and runs until 22nd January 2018 and details of which can be found via the following link:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20119/school_admissions/1457/proposed_admission_arrangements_2019_to_2020

If approved, the admission arrangements will be changed to remove any links to Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy for September 2019 entry.

If the proposal for St Benedict's Infant School to become a primary school is approved, Birmingham City Council will write to all parents/carers of current year 2 pupils at the school and offer them the opportunity to remain at St Benedict's Primary School in year 3 for September 2018.

Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy

Ark Multi Academy Trust (MAT) has received approval for Perry Beeches V (PBV) to join the Ark network from 1st March 2018. PBV will be renamed Ark Victoria Academy.

Ark MAT is now consulting on the amalgamation of Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy with PBV (Ark Victoria) to create a four form entry all-through school from September 2018. We understand that their consultation period runs until Weds 7th Feb 2018, during which time Ark MAT will be holding consultation meetings with staff and parents at Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy and PBV. After the consultation Ark MAT will apply to the Regional Schools Commissioner for a decision on the proposed amalgamation. Please contact Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy for more information on this proposal.

The local authority is working with all schools locally to ensure that there are enough places for children in the future.

How will this affect pupils at the school?

Pupils will notice some changes as the building will need to be adapted for Key Stage 2 (junior) children. Any building work will be managed carefully so that it does not adversely affect the education of pupils.

Current pupils at the school may notice the reduced number of pupils at the school in the early stages, but as each year group is admitted the school will become a primary school with up to 60 pupils in each year group by 2024.

- In 2018, Year 2 pupils will no longer need to transfer to the linked junior school, however as parents will have applied to Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy or an alternative school at year 3, Birmingham City Council will write to all parents of year 2 pupils offering them the opportunity for their child to remain at St Benedict's if they would prefer this.
- In 2019, Year 2 pupils will automatically remain at St Benedict's Infant School and will enter Year 3 in September 2019; there will no longer be a need to apply for a junior place.

How will this affect staff?

It is hoped that any effect on staff will be limited. The school, whilst decreasing in the year of admission will still have larger cohort groups working through the school. The number of classes required fluctuates slightly from year to year and it will be up to the Leadership Team at the School to manage this transition period. Any staff reductions will be with full consultation with the trade unions and teaching associations. A school offering both Infant (key stage 1) and Junior (key stage 2) provision may offer staff the opportunity for career development.

Will there be changes to the school building?

Some refurbishment, additional space and internal reconfiguration will be required at the school to become a primary. This will involve some building work. Flexible additional space will be required during the changes as there will potentially be a peak in pupil population from 2020 to 2022 when the number of classrooms required could increase to 19 in 2021. This is to accommodate the existing larger year groups as they work their way through the school before leaving for secondary education. Flexible arrangements will need to be implemented to allow the school to change the use of rooms and classrooms during and after the transition period.

The Head teacher and governors will have a say in the design process, as strategic partners of Birmingham City Council and as representatives of the pupils and staff. The Leadership Team along with Birmingham City Council's Education Infrastructure

Capital Team will manage this project with the contractors to ensure there is minimum disruption at the school for the pupils. There is sufficient available space at the school to accommodate year 3 pupils in September 2018 however; further remodelling work will be required for future cohorts.

Will this definitely happen?

No, there is a statutory process we must follow to make these sorts of changes to schools. We are publishing this draft proposal document for parents, pupils, staff, Governors and any other interested people to comment* before the statutory process begins. All comments on the draft proposal will be reviewed before considering or preparing a final proposal for statutory (formal) consultation. We will inform all parents, pupils, staff, Governors and other interested people with details when a final proposal is published for statutory consultation. The statutory consultation is a four week period for people to formally comment* on the final proposal - this is referred to as the 'representation period'.

Within two months of the end of the representation period, a decision must be made by the Council's Cabinet Member for Children Families and Schools, jointly with the Interim Corporate Director for Children and Young People.

It is only at the point when a decision has been made that we will be able to say with certainty that the school will change their age range to become a primary school.

What will happen if this proposal is rejected?

If a decision is taken that St Benedict's Infant School should not lower the age range and become a 2 form entry primary school, the school will remain as an infant school. An alternative arrangement will need to be negotiated at an alternative school to ensure pupils from St Benedict's have access to junior school provision at year 3. Alternative options will need to be investigated to ensure the future viability of the school. These will need to be considered in conjunction with Ark Chamberlain Primary Academy.

***How can I make my views known?**

We invite all interested people to give us their comments on this draft proposal.
Any comments must be received no later than 9th February 2018.

You can comment online via:

<https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/stbenedictsdraft>

You can write to us at the Local Authority:

- By email: eds.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk
- By completing the attached comments form to:
 Birmingham City Council,
 School Organisation Team,
 PO Box 15843,
 Birmingham, B2 2RT.

What happens next?

The following key dates are for guidance only. At any point during the process, the proposal might be withdrawn or rejected by the City Council. The dates set out below meet the government requirements for us to consult fully with the people affected by the proposal and every effort will be made to keep to them.

Key dates (subject to change)

Action	Date
Pre Statutory Consultation	15 th January 2018 – 9 th February 2018.
Consideration of consultation results	12 th – 23rd February 2018
Public Notice	27 th February 2018
Statutory consultation (representation)	27 th February 2018 – 27 th March 2018
Decision required no later than	27 th May 2018
If approved St Benedict's changes age range to 3 -11 years with an intake of 60	1 st September 2018

Proposal to Alter the Age Range of St Benedict's Infant School, a Community School, with effect from 1st September 2018

We are consulting on the proposals for four weeks from 15th January 2018 to 9th February 2018.

You can make your views known by visiting:

<https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/stbenedictsdraft> to send us your thoughts by **Friday 9th February 2018** or alternatively complete and return the form below to the following address: School Organisation Team, Education and Skills Infrastructure, PO Box 15843, Birmingham, B2 2RT.

Thank you for taking the time to send us your thoughts on these proposals.

Consultation Response Form

Please help us to analyse your response by completing the following:

Your name (optional): _____

Your contact details (optional, if you would like a reply)

Your interest in the proposal (please indicate one of the below):

Pupil	
Parent	
School Governor	
School Staff	
Local resident	
Local Councillor	
Member of Parliament	
Other (please specify)	

Please provide your comments in support or challenge to the proposal.

Additional comments: