

# Full Proposal Document

**Thornton Primary School**

*Proposal to Alter the Lower  
Age Range of a Community  
Mainstream School from 4 to  
11 years to 7 to 11 years*

## PROPOSALS FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS OTHER THAN FOUNDATION PROPOSALS: Information to be included in a complete proposal.

### Section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

#### **In respect of a Governing Body Proposal: School and governing body's details**

*The name, address and category of the school for which the governing body are publishing the proposals.*

**Not Applicable**

#### **In respect of an LEA Proposal: School and local authority details**

1. The name, address and category of the school.

Birmingham City Council, Education & Skills Infrastructure, PO BOX 15843, Birmingham B2 2RT  
Thornton Primary School, Thornton Road, Ward End, Birmingham B8 2LQ, a community primary school

#### **Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation**

2. The date on which the proposals are planned to be implemented, and if they are to be implemented in stages, a description of what is planned for each stage, and the number of stages intended and the dates of each stage.

1<sup>st</sup> September 2017

#### **Objections and comments**

3. A statement explaining the procedure for making representations, including —
- (a) the date prescribed in accordance with Schedule 3 of The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 20013, by which objections or comments should be sent to the local authority; and
  - (b) the address of the authority to which objections or comments should be sent.

Copies of the full proposal and ability to comment online are here:

[www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/thornton](http://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/thornton)

Any person may comment on or object to the proposal within four weeks of the date of publication of this proposal. Anyone wishing to make representation about this proposal is encouraged to do so through the web site above. If the proposal is required in another format, contact the School Organisation Team, Education and Skills Infrastructure, PO Box 15843, Birmingham B2 2RT; or: [eds.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk](mailto:eds.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk)

**Comments or objections must be received no later than 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016.**

#### **Alteration description**

4. A description of the proposed alteration and in the case of special school proposals, a description of the current special needs provision.

The proposed change is to alter the lower age range of Thornton Primary School from 4 years to 7 years. As a result of these proposals the KS1 (infant) phase of the school would be phased out and the schools lower limit will be 7 years by September 2019, when all the current KS1 (infant) pupils have progressed through the school.

The Office of Schools Adjudicator has approved the Council's in year variation for September 2017, to not admit any pupils in Reception in September 2017 (Appendix 1)

Thornton Primary School will lower the admission number at Year 3 to 120 from September 2020 when all Thornton Pupils have progressed beyond year 3.

Thornton Primary will give priority to the admission of Sladefield Infant School, their linked infant school.

Proposed model:

Stage	Year	REC	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Current	2016	30	30	30	150	150	150	150	690
Approved	2017		30	30	150	150	150	150	660
Proposed	2018			30	150	150	150	150	630
Proposed	2019				150	150	150	150	600
Proposed	2020				120	150	150	150	570
Proposed	2021				120	120	150	150	540
Proposed	2022				120	120	120	150	510
Proposed	2023				120	120	120	120	480

### School capacity

5.—(1) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within Schedule 2 alterations other than alterations proposed in foundation proposals which may be published by a governing body or local authority as specified in Regulations 4 and 5 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013, the proposals include —

- (a) details of the current capacity of the school and, where the proposals will alter the capacity of the school, the proposed capacity of the school after the alteration;

School	Current Net Capacity	Proposed Net Capacity
Thornton Primary School	720	480

The final net capacity will be achieved over a period of time and will be 480 by September 2023. Please see table in Part 4 which details the phased reduction.

- (b) details of the current number of pupils admitted to the school in each relevant age group, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of pupils to be admitted in each relevant age group in the first school year in which the proposals will have been implemented;

Stage	Year	REC	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total
Current	2016	30	30	30	150	150	150	150	690
Approved	2017		30	30	150	150	150	150	660

Proposed	2018			30	150	150	150	150	630
Proposed	2019				150	150	150	150	600
Proposed	2020				120	150	150	150	570
Proposed	2021				120	120	150	150	540
Proposed	2022				120	120	120	150	510
Proposed	2023				120	120	120	120	480

(c) where it is intended that proposals should be in stages, the number of pupils to be admitted to the school in the first school year in which each stage will have been implemented;

- The school has admitted 30 pupils in Reception in 2016.
- The Adjudicator has approved that no Reception pupils be admitted in September 2017.
- It is proposed that no pupils will be admitted from Reception 2018.
- At the end of academic year 2018/19 the last infant class will have progressed through the infant phase of the school.
- September 2020 the school will only admit KS2 (junior) pupils.
- September 2021 the school will lower the admission number in year 3 from 150 to 120 as there will not be 30 pupils transferring from the infant phase.
- Priority will continue to be given to up to 120 pupils transferring from Sladefield Infant which is Thornton's linked school.
- By the end of academic year 2022/23 the cohort with the 30 additional pupils will have progressed through the school.
- From September 2021 all year groups in Thornton will admit up to 120 pupils. The overall capacity will be 480.

(d) where the number of pupils in any relevant age group is lower than the indicated admission number for that relevant age group a statement to this effect and details of the indicated admission number in question.

Where the number of pupils on roll in any relevant year group is lower than the admission number, this is as a result of movement during the year. Birmingham currently has a high level of net cohort growth meaning that the level of places available can change greatly over the year in different areas of the city as families arrive requiring school provision. The expectation is for the school to fill to its proposed admission number.

(2) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within Schedule 2 alterations other than alterations proposed in foundation proposals which may be published by a governing body or local authority as specified in Regulations 4 and 5 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 a statement of the number of pupils at the school at the time of the publication of the proposals.

At the time of publication, the total number of students on roll is: 686

## **Implementation**

**6.** *Where the proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary controlled school a statement as to whether the proposals are to be implemented by the local education authority or by the governing body, and, if the proposals are to be implemented by both, a statement as to the extent to which they are to be implemented by each body.*

**Not Applicable**

## **Additional Site**

**7.**—(1) *A statement as to whether any new or additional site will be required if proposals are implemented and if so the location of the site if the school is to occupy a split site.*

**Not Applicable**

## **Changes in boarding arrangements**

**8.** —(1) *Where the proposals are for the introduction or removal of boarding provision, or the alteration of existing boarding provision such as is mentioned Schedule 2 alterations other than alterations proposed in foundation proposals which may be published by a governing body or local authority as specified in Regulations 4 and 5 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 —*

**Not Applicable**

## **Transfer to new site**

**9.** *Where the proposals are to transfer a school to a new site the following information—*

*(a) the location of the proposed site (including details of whether the school is to occupy a single or split site), and including where appropriate the postal address;*

**Not Applicable**

## **Objectives**

**10.** The objectives of the proposals.

We are proposing to alter the lower age range of Thornton Primary School from 4 years to 7 years. By doing this the Key stage 1 (infant phase) will be phased out (please see details of phasing above.) The objective is for Thornton Primary School to become a 4 form entry primary school admitting up to 120 pupils in years 3-6, with an overall capacity of 480.

The school will remain linked to Sladefield Infant School and priority will be given to up to 120 pupils transferring at year 3 from Sladefield as per the admission criteria.

## **Consultation**

**11.** Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including—

a list of persons who were consulted;

minutes of all public consultation meetings;

the views of the persons consulted;

a statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with; and

copies of all consultation documents and a statement on how these documents were made available.

All statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with. Due regard and careful consideration was given to the guidance contained within The Department for Education's "Making "prescribed alterations" to maintained schools – Statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers' document, April 2016. All individuals or bodies suggested in the guidance are being consulted and their views considered.

All pupils, parents, Governors, teaching and non-teaching staff were sent a proposal document pack (Appendix 1) week commencing 26<sup>th</sup> September 2016.

All teaching associations and trade unions, The Archdiocese and The Anglican Diocese of Birmingham, Executive Members for Hodge Hill and respective ward councillors, and all neighbouring authorities were advised of the consultation by email and advised how to obtain consultation packs.

A public notice was published on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2016 (see Appendix 3). This appeared in the Birmingham Post on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2016 and was displayed at all entrances to the school. The notice detailed how comments/objections could be made either via the BeHeard consultation website, [www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/thornton](http://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/thornton) or in writing to School Organisation Team, Education & Skills Infrastructure, PO Box 15843, Birmingham B2 2RT by 1<sup>st</sup> December 2016.

### Project costs

**12.** A statement of the estimated total capital cost of the proposals and the breakdown of the costs that are to be met by the governing body, the local authority, and any other party.

**13.** A copy of confirmation from the Secretary of State, local authority and the Learning and Skills Council for England (as the case may be) that funds will be made available (including costs to cover any necessary site purchase).

There are no project costs for this proposal

### Age range

**14.** Where the proposals relate to a change in age range, the current age range for the school.

4 – 11 years

### Early year's provision

**15.** Where the proposals are to alter the lower age limit of a mainstream school so that it provides for pupils aged between 2 and 5—

**Not Applicable**

### Changes to sixth form provision

**16.** (a) Where the proposals are to alter the upper age limit of the school so that the school provides sixth form education or additional sixth form education,

**Not Applicable**

### Special educational needs

**18.** Where the proposals are to establish or change provision for special educational needs—

**Not Applicable**

**19.** *Where the proposals are to discontinue provision for special educational needs—*

**Not Applicable**

**20.** *Where the proposals will lead to alternative provision for children with special educational needs, as a result of the establishment, alteration or discontinuance of existing provision, the specific educational benefits that will flow from the*

**Not Applicable**

**Sex of pupils**

**21.** *Where the proposals are to make an alteration to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of one sex only becomes an establishment which admits pupils of both sexes—*

**Not Applicable**

**22.** *Where the proposals are to make an alteration to a school to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of both sexes becomes an establishment which admits pupils of one sex only—*

**Not Applicable**

**Extended services**

**23.** *If the proposed alterations affect the provision of the school's extended services, details of the current extended services the school is offering and details of any proposed change as a result of the alterations.*

**Not Applicable**

**Need or demand for additional places**

**24.** If the proposals involve adding places—

(a) a statement and supporting evidence of the need or demand for the particular places in the area;

Please find here a link to the Education Sufficiency Requirements document published in November 2015: [www.birmingham.gov.uk/schools/esr](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/schools/esr). The headlines are as follows: Birmingham City Council as the local authority for Birmingham has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.

- The city of Birmingham has a growing population with one of the youngest populations in Europe and the number of births in the city has risen rapidly over the last few years.
- To compound this Birmingham is also experiencing high levels of in year growth in the city.
- Certain areas of the city have experienced a larger increase in the birth rate than others. As a result, demand for places has grown and unless action is taken, there will not be sufficient places for each child in the ward.
- Our projected pupil numbers showed that we needed to provide an additional 600 Reception places in the city by 2017.

Whilst the removal of the KS1 provision at Thornton Primary will potentially leave a shortfall of 30 key stage one places in the district, discussions have taken place between Education and Skills Infrastructure and Washwood Heath Academy to become an all-

through school by altering their lower age range from 11 to 4. The new proposed age range for this school is 4–18 years with the proposed admission number for Reception is 30 from September 2017. This proposed change would address the shortfall in Washwood Heath ward providing a possibility to create additional in-year places in primary year groups to meet local growth as well as directly replacing the loss of infant provision from the proposed changes at Thornton Primary School. The Academy Trust carried out a consultation in July and following this has forwarded a business case to the Education Funding Agency (EFA) and as at publication of this proposal is still awaiting a decision from the Regional Schools Commissioner.

- (b) *where the school has a religious character, a statement and supporting evidence of the demand in the area for education in accordance with the tenets of the religion or religious denomination;*

**Not Applicable**

- (c) *where the school adheres to a particular philosophy, evidence of the demand for education in accordance with the philosophy in question and any associated change to the admission arrangements for the school.*

**Not Applicable**

**25. If the proposals involve removing places—**

- (a) a statement and supporting evidence of the reasons for the removal, including an assessment of the impact on parental choice; and

The major reasons for the removal of the KS1 (infant phase) are detailed below;

**Management & Resourcing**

The set up/configuration of Thornton Primary with a one form of entry in infant and a five form of entry junior school was unique, however due to the imbalance of age groups the managing and resourcing of such a configuration has proven to be very difficult and increasingly unviable from a resource perspective. In a recent OFSTED inspection the Inspectors found that the Reception and Year 1 class being situated in an annex building separated by a road from the main building has caused these year groups to be isolated.

**Standards & Attainment**

The school was inspected in October 2015 and was found to be requiring improvement. As the school continues on their school improvement journey it would be more beneficial for resources to be focused on improving the attainment and standards in the junior school, which has the larger capacity and the where the school has the greater expertise in terms of resources.

**School Community Cohesion**

The transition from infant to junior is often an unsettling time for children. In Thornton School, pupils from Sladefield and Thornton School come together at Year 3 which can create barriers to learning whilst pupils try to adapt to new peer/friendship groups and thus cause further unsettlement for some pupils.

**School Buildings**

The building solution that was provided has not proved to be the most efficient to run and manage and the layout of the school has proved to not be fully viable. Some of the school buildings are increasingly becoming unfit for purpose and the current set up of the school does not allow for a natural progression of year groups through the school. Reception and Year 1 are accommodated in an annex building across a road and OFSTED found these



classes to be isolated due to this factor.

Discussions have taken place between Education and Skills Infrastructure and Washwood Academy Trust, for the school to become an all through school by altering their lower age range from 11 to 4. The new proposed age range is 4-18 years, the proposed admission number at Reception is 30 from September 2017. The Academy consulted stakeholders in July and has forwarded a business case to the Education Funding Agency for approval of these proposals. As at publication date of 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2016 the academy were awaiting a decision. Should this proposal not be approved we would ensure additional places were provided elsewhere within the ward to compensate for the reduction at Thornton.

(b) a statement on the local capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

There will be no displacement of current pupils. All the existing infant classes will work their way through the school until they leave the school at the end of year 6. The LA are currently working with Washwood Heath Multi Academy trust to provide the alternative KS 1 provision in the area.

All the following appendices can be accessed via: [www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/thornton](http://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/thornton)

**Appendix 1 - In year variation approval from Adjudicator**

**Appendix 2 - Proposal document**

**Appendix 3 - Public Notice**