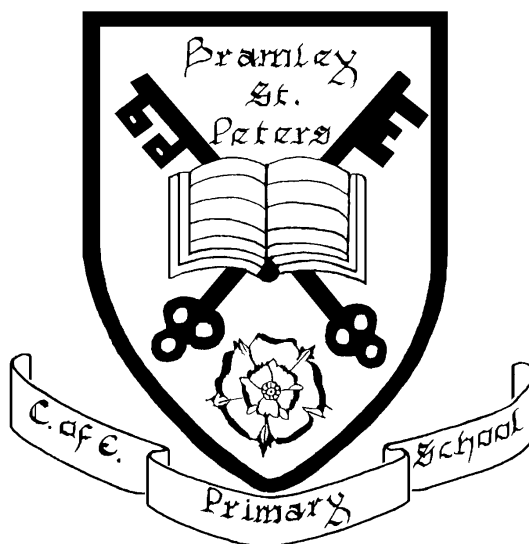


APPENDIX A

Consultation Document



Bramley St Peter's C of E Primary School

Proposal to seek a change of category from Voluntary
Controlled to Voluntary Aided

The background

Bramley St Peter's Church of England School was founded in 1709 to provide an education for the local children of Bramley. The original school served the children of Bramley in a range of different guises from this period to the present day, including Bramley St Peter's middle school. In 1992 St Peter's was converted to a primary school in the building that was the middle school. From that point in time Bramley St Peter's continues to provide primary education for children living within the Bramley area. The school works in close co-operation within the 'family' of primary schools. The 'family' comprises of 152 other church schools in the Leeds and Ripon Diocese and, more locally the 'family' of 8 primary schools within the Bramley Cluster.

Reasons for the change

- In this fast changing educational climate the school and its governors feel that it is important to align more securely with the church thereby securing the future of the schools Christian tradition.
- There is a potential to access a significant building fund held by the Diocese for school improvements important in the light of the current economic climate
- To strengthen partnership with the church
- Increase the range and choice of educational provision within Bramley, our school would be the only Church of England Aided School
- Greater independence for the Governing Body

St Peter's would remain a maintained school, funded by Leeds City Council.

The three main reasons are outlined below in more detail.

- **To preserve the ethos of our school**

The climate in education is undergoing constant change. Academies seem to be the main focus of the current government for all schools. Academies can have a variety of sponsors including some from business. It is the view of Governors that in order to preserve our special identity the first step along this road is to become a Voluntary Aided Church School. In this way the school could have the Diocese, a non-profit making organisation, as a sponsor.

- **To strengthen partnership with the church**

The traditions values and ethos of St Peters makes our school a very special place. It is the view of the Governing Body that this distinctiveness should be reflected in the school's status. Our successful church school inspection reflects the close working relationship between church and school. The current school leadership is very supportive of the church school ethos and some of the current governors are part of the congregation that worship at St Peter's each week. The only way to guarantee a continued relationship with St Peter's is to change the constitution of the Governing Body to secure the church presence in it. This formal way would be to become Voluntary Aided.

- **Increase the range and choice of educational provision within Bramley**

Within the Bramley Family of Schools there is the local Catholic Primary School and St Peter's Church of England Primary. The Catholic school is a Voluntary Aided school and it is the view of the Governors that St Peter's should also become Voluntary Aided to not only secure the nature and ethos of our school but also to offer a distinctive alternative faith school. Our school would be the only Church of England Aided School.

Therefore the Governing Body believe that the future of Bramley St Peter's C of E should be as a Voluntary Aided school.

What would change and what would not change?

The change of status would:

Increase the independence of the school

Strengthen the partnership with the church

Maintain a strong and effective relationship with Leeds City Council

Add to the diversity of primary educational provision in Bramley and the surrounding area.

Some further elements of the school's work will become the direct responsibility of the Governing Body. This increased independence is in line with the current government's view on greater autonomy for schools.

Ethos

Parents at present often comment on how much they value the Christian ethos of the school. It has been highly praised in our last OfSTED and Church (SIAS) inspections. A change to Aided category would help to make this ethos more secure in the future.

The National Curriculum

All the requirements of the National Curriculum still apply in a Voluntary Aided school; therefore there would be no changes in the general curriculum of the school. We would continue to work towards high standards of achievement across the school.

Inclusion

St Peter's is privileged to welcome and serve the local children of Bramley. Children of all faiths and of no faith will continue to be welcome.

Staffing

The Governing Body would become the employer of all the staff. The terms, conditions and continuity of service of the current staff would be unaffected. All existing staff will have the same employment rights as they have now. The Governing Body would continue to appoint staff who would support the ethos of the school irrespective of their own faith.

Religious Education

The Governors would have the right to select the religious education syllabus used within the school. In order to maintain continuity, the Local Authority Agreed Syllabus will be used supplemented by Diocesan materials to reflect the church character of the school.

Collective Worship

The collective worship of the school already reflects its Church of England foundation and therefore there would be no changes in content.

Governing Body

A new instrument of government would come into force giving a majority of places to church nominees

In the table below you can see how the composition of the Governing Body would change:

Currently	Proposed
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2 local Authority Governors	1 Local Authority Governor
3 Staff Governors	3 Staff Governors
5 Parent Governors	2 Parent Governor
3 Foundation Governors	8 Foundation Governor (of whom 3 would be parents at the school)
2 Community Governors	No Community Governor

To ensure continuity all current governors would be accommodated under the proposed structure with the total number of parent governors being maintained. You can see that as an Aided school the Governing Body would be made of by a majority of Foundation Governors appointed by the Church after local nomination.

Admissions

At present Leeds City Council is responsible for admissions to the school. Following the change of category the Governing Body would be responsible for admissions. All admission authorities are bound by and must comply with the School Admission and Appeals Codes and the law relating to school admissions including the duty to comply with infant class size legislation and the duty to consult periodically on its proposed admission arrangements. The Governing Body as admissions authority will liaise with the Local Authority as part of the co-ordinated admissions scheme. The Governing Body would also assume responsibility for the presentation of admission appeals to an Independent Admission Appeal Panel. The Governing Body is committed to serving its local community and welcomes this responsibility.

Improvements to the building

Voluntary Aided schools have additional freedoms to improve their physical resources. There is the potential to access additional funds and grants (including from the Diocese).

For improvements to the building the Governing Body must raise 10% of the costs through the school's building fund (this can be underwritten by support in the form of loans and grants from the Diocese). However access to funds held by the Diocesan Board of Education makes future building improvements more likely.

Funding

The school would continue to be funded by Leeds City Council through the mechanisms already established. There would be **no increased expectation** for parents to contribute funds.

Nothing that the Governing Body is proposing would in any way lower standards of education but would help the school to grow and develop in the future.

The Future

As a Voluntary Aided Primary our school will have secured its partnership with the local church of St Peter's and the Diocese and its future as a church school. Its distinctiveness will stand out within Bramley as the only Church of England Aided School in the locality. As a more independent Governing Body we will have increased influence over improving facilities and enhancing teaching and learning.

The Governing Body believe that the future of our school is as an Aided two form (from September 2013) entry primary school with strengthening community links.

The process

Dates	Action	Reason
June 2012	Governing Body Meeting	Consider the possible change of category
10 th September and then 8 th October	Governing Body Working group	Further consider proposed change of category
15 th October – 19 th November With a public meeting wc 5 th November	Public Consultation	Present proposals to all concerned and collate views
27 th November 2012	Governing Body Meeting	Consider views of all parties. Make a formal decision
3 rd December – 7 th January	Public Statutory Notice	Formal Public notification period Notify Local Authority, DfE and local newspapers
Information to LA by	Local Authority Determination	Local Authority approves or

Please return the completed form to school

Thank you for your active contribution to this important decision