

# Hermitage Primary School – Academies Act consultation summary



## The consultation process

The consultation materials consisted of:

- A consultation document
- A more detailed Question and Answer document
- A Question and Answer document that was specifically about HR and was issued only to staff.

The consultation was launched on 1 March by a briefing to staff; consultation materials were then distributed to:

1. All staff
2. All parents / carers
3. All governors
4. The Headteacher of local schools
5. The Director of Children's Services and Lead Member for Children's Services at Hillingdon Council
6. The Hillingdon Council Ward Councillors for the ward where the school is situated
7. The Member of Parliament for the constituency where the school is situated
8. The local authority was requested to distribute the consultation materials to the borough representatives of the trade unions recognised by Hillingdon Council (the Governing Body did not have the appropriate contact details).

All materials were available on the school website.

Online meetings were held with staff and with parents.

People were able to respond:

- By completing the online questionnaire on the school website
- By writing to or emailing the Headteacher
- At the meetings for particular stakeholder groups.

The questionnaire consisted of two qualitative questions as well as quantitative information about the respondent. The qualitative questions were:

- What do you feel are the advantages or opportunities if Hermitage Primary School becomes an academy and joins VLT?
- Are there any concerns or questions that you have about Hermitage Primary School becoming an academy and / or about joining VLT? If so, please write them below.

## The consultation responses

11 staff attended the staff meeting, and 9 the second; 8 parents attended the parent meeting. There were 22 responses to the online questionnaire:

- 7 from staff
- 13 from parents
- 3 from local residents
- 1 from the North Uxbridge Residents Association.

Note – the sum of the respondent categories is more than the number of responses because respondents could identify as more than one category; for example, a respondent could identify as a member of staff, a parent, and a local resident.

## Potential advantages or opportunities raised by respondents

The themes covered in responses included:

- Benefits of collaboration with VLT schools. This included opportunities for pupils and staff to work together, and the potential for KS2/KS3 transition and curriculum
- Priority admission to Vyners [note, this is a benefit that was perceived but is not proposed as VLT stated in the Q&A that there is not an intention to introduce priority for VLT primary schools]

## Potential concerns, other comments, or questions raised by respondents

The following table outlines questions / concerns raised through the consultation and provides a response from the Governing Body.

Issue	Response
Potential changes to terms and conditions of employment, both in short and longer term.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The VLT HR Q&amp;A confirmed that contractual terms would transfer to VLT through TUPE, and confirmed that staff would not need to reapply for their roles.</li> <li>● VLT does not anticipate any changes to terms and conditions in the future and intends to continue to align with national and local terms and conditions.</li> </ul>
Loss of identity / autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● VLT's Governance Framework and Scheme of Delegation, which Hermitage was involved in updating in summer 2020, leaves educational decisions at school level. Trust level decision making focuses upon areas where consistency and compliance are required, such as HR and financial management, or areas with strategic / legal implications.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Governors and the Headteacher believe that the ethos and identity of Hermitage would not be adversely affected by joining VLT, and that indeed the Headteacher and Leadership Team will have more time to focus on these aspects given the VLT central teams will be leading some of the areas that currently require considerable leadership time.</li> </ul>
<p>Whether practical things would change - such as breakfast / after school / holiday clubs, or term dates / school day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● VLT has continued to have term dates that align closely with Hillingdon's to enable consistency for families who have children in more than one school. VLT does not intend to change this approach.</li> <li>● Timings of the school day, and provision of breakfast / after school clubs and holiday activities, remain decisions for the school. None are expected to change if the school joins VLT.</li> </ul>
<p>Secondary school admissions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The admissions process for secondary school would not change - parents would still prioritise local schools on their application form through the co-ordinated admissions system (applying via their home local authority).</li> <li>● The majority of children from Hermitage (nearly 60% for September 2021) progress to Vyners. Their places at Vyners are offered on the basis of the Vyners admissions policy, which prioritises (after looked after children and those with Education, Health and Care Plans) siblings, children of staff, and then based on distance in a straight line from the centre of the school site.</li> <li>● The Q&amp;A document issued with the consultation stated that pupils at Hermitage would not get priority access into Vyners or Ruislip High. There would therefore be no change to the current arrangements if the school joins VLT; several parent responses incorrectly thought that there would be admissions advantages.</li> </ul>