

Title: Dixons Music Primary
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Impact Assessment – Section 9 Academies Act Duty

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Section 9 of the Academies Act 2010 places a duty upon the Secretary of State to take into account what the impact of establishing the additional school would be likely to be on maintained schools, Academies and Further Education institutions within the area in which the additional school is (or is proposed to be) situated. Any adverse impact will need to be balanced against the benefits of establishing the new school.

Background

Dixon Music Primary is a primary school proposed to open in Bradford in September 2012. The school will have a music specialism. In 2012, the PAN has been restricted to 30. Thereafter, it will take in 60 pupils into reception. Once it reaches full capacity the school will hold 420 pupils.

Dixons Music Primary will be run by the Dixons City Academy Trust. The Trust runs two existing Academies in Bradford. Dixons City Academy is an 11-18 school. It was rated outstanding by Ofsted at its last inspection in 2011 and is heavily oversubscribed. The Trust also sponsored the conversion of Dixons Allerton Academy in 2009. The Trust plans to open both Dixons Music Primary and a new secondary school on the same site in the BD5 area of Bradford in September 2012.

As part of their consultation, the Trust wrote to the Local Authority, local schools, families and other interested parties about Dixons Music Primary and Dixons Trinity Academy Secondary Free School, which will open on the same site. They also used their website to release new information as it became available, for example on the location and site of the two schools, and held an open public meeting.

Admissions policy, catchment area and character

During the process of developing their Admissions Policy, Dixons Music Primary met with the Bradford Local Authority, and ran a subsequent public consultation on the admissions arrangements.

The Dixons Music Primary admissions policy is fully compliant with the School Admissions Code. The school's catchment is city-wide. Some concerns were raised during consultation by parents of younger children about a city-wide catchment rather than a local, smaller one; however even those who would prefer a school closer to their home understand that a city-wide catchment could break the mono-ethnic pattern of school provision in central Bradford.

Parents also supported the school's rationale of supporting those who work in the city centre.

After children with a statement of Special Educational Needs naming the school, Looked-after children and the siblings of children already attending the school, if the school is over-subscribed, priority will be given in the following order:

- 25% places will be awarded to children living within 1.5 miles from the school or nearer;
- 75% places will be awarded to children living more than 1.5 miles from the school. Of these, places will be allocated in the following order of priority:
 - a. up to 10% of places will be awarded to children who show a particular interest or aptitude (i.e. potential) for music and who are committed to studying it.
 - b. children with siblings at the school at the time of entry. (The term sibling includes legally adopted children, and step- and half-brothers or sisters living at the same address.)
 - c. other children on the basis of independently scrutinised random allocation.

Dixons Music Primary will operate a waiting list. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria above.

As the school has a city-wide catchment area, it is possible that parents will apply from all areas of the city. However, as the children are of primary age it is unlikely that many will travel any great distance to school and likely that the majority will be within a radius close to the Free School. We have therefore created a proxy catchment area based on the maximum distance of one mile (average of 0.5 miles) travelled to primary school by a significant majority (80%) of pupils in Bradford. The impact assessment will therefore consider schools within a one-mile radius of Dixons Music Primary, which are likely to feel most impact. In addition, given that the admission number for the first year is small – 30 children – and the density of primary schools locally is quite high, it is likely that any impact will be spread across a wide area with minimal effect.

Local Authority opinion

The Department wrote to the LA on 8 December 2011 to seek their views on Dixons Music Primary. The LA responded on 1 February 2012. They confirmed that Bradford has a shortage of primary school places, and significant expansion of the primary sector is needed to accommodate projected primary need to 2015. To meet this need, they have begun a programme of expansion of a number of existing primary schools. In their

response they expressed concern that their planned programme of school expansion would have to be re-assessed if the Free School was successful in opening in September. However, the Local Authority plans have not yet been implemented and as such, they should not be considered when assessing the Free School's impact on existing provision.

The council also highlighted their concern that as applications to the Dixons Music Primary are being made outside the LA's co-ordinated process for 2012, many parents who would prefer a place at the Free School have applied for 'back-up' places in maintained schools. Should Dixons Music Primary not open in September 2012, the LA would be obliged to create additional places in existing schools, and commit extra resources to accommodate all those who could have been placed at the Free School. As the Free School is on schedule to open in 2012, this concern does not apply.

However, we do not consider this will have huge impact, as the Free School PAN for 2012 has been restricted to 30, so there would not be a great number of children for whom the LA would need to make provision in the short term.

Given the need for additional primary places across Bradford, and the absence of any serious representations opposing the opening of the Free School made during the consultation, it would appear unlikely that any single school is likely to suffer uniquely or significantly as a result of the creation of Dixons Music Primary.

Basic need

The LA projects that the primary population in Bradford will increase over the next few years by 11.2%. If no new school places were added they predict there would be a 7.2% shortfall of primary places by 2015/16. The LA is addressing this by expanding a number of existing primary schools and expanding some existing Academies to all-through schools. Any potential negative impact felt by local schools from the opening of Dixons Music Primary School could be mitigated by the growing population. We have therefore considered the impact of Dixons Music Primary in the context of the predicted growth in population. Currently all places for the reception class in September 2012 Dixons Music Primary have been filled.

		Academic year 2010/11		Academic year 2015/16		2010/11 – 2015/16
LA	Number of places in 2011	No of pupils	Surplus %	No. of pupils	Surplus %	% increase in population
Bradford	50,389	48,575	3.6%	54,037	-7.2%	11.2%

Impact on maintained primary schools

In an area of high basic need, such as this, it is likely that the impact on other maintained primary schools will be largely minimal. Most schools will continue to attract pupils and any pupils who choose the Free School above other existing schools will be countered by the high demand for primary places in the area. In general terms, those schools who may experience a higher impact as a result of the Free School are those who are situated close to the Free School site and have either poor Ofsted reports or low pupil attainment when compared to other local schools or hold existing surplus places. In these instances it is likely that high numbers of parents would choose the Free School ahead of the existing school.

The strong track record of the Dixons proposer group indicated that the Dixons Music Primary will be a strong school. Any negative impact on particular institutions is therefore outweighed by the positive impact that Dixons Music Primary will have on parental choice and driving up standards in local primary schools.

The table below shows that Dixons Music Primary will have a minimal impact on eleven schools and a moderate impact on two.

Schools with a minimal impact rating			
School name	Distance (miles)	Ofsted	% of Y6 pupils attaining Level 4 in English and maths in 2011
Copthorne Primary School	0.47	Outstanding	96
Newby Primary School	0.5	Outstanding	63
St Stephen's CofE Primary School	0.6	Outstanding	97
Horton Park Primary School	0.7	Good	62
Farnham Primary School	0.78	Good	67
Bowling Park Primary School	0.82	Good	57
Marshfield Primary School	0.83	Good	72
Princeville Primary School	0.85	Good	72
Horton Grange Primary School	0.89	Good	74

St Oswald's CofE Primary School	0.91	Good	55
Bankfoot Primary School	0.93	Good	67

Schools with a moderate impact rating			
School name	Distance (miles)	Ofsted	% of Y6 pupils attaining Level 4 in English and maths in 2011
All Saints CofE Primary School	0.18	Satisfactory	69
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	0.23	Good	77

There are a total of 13 maintained primary schools within the one-mile area of the site of Dixons Music Primary:

- Three schools are rated as outstanding by Ofsted, all of which are operating at capacity. It is therefore unlikely that parents will choose these schools ahead of the Free School and any places are likely to be taken up by other pupils in the area. The impact on these schools is therefore assessed as minimal
- Nine schools are rated as good. Three of these schools are already operating above capacity and as a result, the impact on these schools has been assessed as minimal. The remaining schools are all operating around capacity; four are also located at the outer reaches of the area under consideration and as such it is unlikely that the Free School will attract pupils in large numbers who would otherwise have attended these schools. The effect on these schools is therefore assessed as minimal. One school rated good is located close to the Free School (0.23 miles) and although operating at capacity, parents may choose to send their child to the Free School ahead of this school. The impact on this school has therefore been assessed as moderate.
- One school is rated satisfactory by Ofsted and is the closest maintained primary school to the Free School site (0.18 miles). It is, however, operating at capacity and is a faith school which suggests that parents may not choose the non-faith Free School over this school. The impact on this school has been assessed as moderate.

Schools with a moderate rating

The following section summarises what the potential impact may be for the schools which have a moderate impact. Any predicted loss of pupils to the new Free School in the first few years of its establishment may be mitigated by the increased demand for primary places over the next few years.

All Saints voluntary-controlled Church of England primary school, Bradford

We consider that the impact on this school will be moderate.

This school is a 420-place primary faith school, with 45 per year group. There was no surplus capacity in this school in 2010/11 and it was oversubscribed for entry in 2011/12 with 61 preferences for the 45 places. It was rated as satisfactory by Ofsted in its last inspection in 2009.

The school has below-average attainment at Key Stage 2, with 69% of pupils achieving the expected level in English and maths in 2011 compared with 74% nationally.

The school is located 0.18 miles away, which is below the average distance travelled to primary school in Bradford (0.5 miles) and is the closest alternative school to Dixons Music Primary. In principle this school may lose more pupils to the new school than schools further away.

However, even if it does lose some potential pupils to the Free School, the school was oversubscribed for entry in 2011 so should still be able to fill its places. It is also a faith school, so parents wanting to send their children to this school may not be interested in Dixons Music Primary, which does not have a faith ethos. The provision offered by the two schools is very different, and the opening of Dixons Music Primary will widen choice for parents locally, which should negate any moderate impact felt by this school.

St Joseph's voluntary-aided Roman Catholic school, Bradford

We consider that the impact on this school will be moderate.

This school is a 350-place primary faith school, with 40 per year group. The school had a surplus of 4% of total capacity in 2010/11 but was oversubscribed for entry in 2011/12 with 70 applications for the 40 places.

It was rated as good by Ofsted in its last inspection in 2011.

The school has slightly above-average attainment at Key Stage 2, with 77% of pupils achieving the expected level in English and maths in 2010 compared with 74% nationally.

It is the second closest school to Dixons Music Primary, located 0.23 miles away, which is below the average distance travelled to primary school in

Bradford (0.5 miles) so, in principle, may lose more pupils to the new school than schools further away.

However the school is rated as good by Ofsted and was oversubscribed for entry in 2011 so should still be able to fill all of its places. It is also a faith school, so some parents wanting to send their children to this school may not be interested in the Free School, which does not have a faith ethos. The provision offered by the two schools is very different, and the opening of Dixons Music Primary will widen choice for parents locally, which should negate any moderate impact felt by this school.

Impact on secondary schools, special schools, Alternative Provision and FE institutions

Dixons Music Primary will admit children of primary age. It will begin with an intake of 30 pupils and build up in subsequent years admitting 60 children to reception classes each year. It will have no specialist SEN provision but will work to accommodate the needs of pupils where the school is named in their statement of SEN. It is unlikely to have any impact on local secondary schools, special schools and alternative provision, and even less likely to impact post-16 and FE institutions.

Conclusion

Overall our assessment is that the impact of Dixons Music Primary on other schools in the area will be mostly minimal. Pupils may be drawn away from other local schools but the number being drawn away from individual schools will be small and the high basic need in the area means that any empty places will be filled by other pupils. Our assessment is that the impact will be negligible and all other schools within the area will remain viable.

Any negative impact on particular institutions is outweighed by the positive impact that Dixons Music Primary will have on improving parental choice by widening the number and type of places available in local primary state provision, and may drive up standards in surrounding schools. Both these features are key aims of the Free Schools policy and we would expect Dixons Music Primary to help drive up standards in schools across the board, improving standards for all young people in the area.

Given all this information, we consider that any moderate impact of establishing Dixons Music Primary on maintained schools and Academies in the surrounding area is outweighed by the positive impact that the school will have on parental choice and in driving up standards in nearby institutions.