



Ridgeway Conversion to Secondary Status Q&A March 2015

Following our recent announcement that the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) has granted us permission to convert to a Secondary School, we wanted to take the opportunity to answer some questions that stakeholders have. Rather than answer these individually, we have collated the questions to answer them in one document, much the same as we did after our consultation period. Most of the answers are taken directly from our business plan that was approved by the RSC.

How will you be minimising the impact of such change on our children?

It will be education as usual at Ridgeway. The change from a Middle to a Secondary school is a gradual one and as we grow so will the children. We are committed to delivering the best outcomes for our children and they will continue to receive the highest level of academic and pastoral support from all Ridgeway staff.

9-16 year olds isn't a Secondary School or Middle School!

Ridgeway is already a Middle School (deemed Secondary) and we will be a Secondary school from 2016. As a result of our consultation process we identified a concern around the potential shortfall in places that this change could cause in Yr5+6. Following further detailed discussions with local First Schools about their ability to expand we will continue to accept children in Yr5+6 until 2018 when we hope the First Schools will be in a better position to accommodate them.

How does this affect my child?

We appreciate that the transition from Middle to Secondary may seem confusing for some children and parents. Please see the table below for year by year September intake ages:

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Yr5	150	120	120	120	120			
Yr6	150	150	120	120	120	120		
Yr7	90	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
Yr8	90	90	120	120	120	120	120	120
Yr9					120	120	120	120
Yr10						120	120	120
Yr11							120	120
TOTAL	480	480	480	480	600	600	600	600

Notes: **Highlighted boxes are Admission points for Ridgeway**

How many children will you be accepting per year group?

Initially our consultation said our PAN (Pupil Admission Number) would be 90. Feedback from the consultation process told us that stakeholders felt this wasn't enough so we increased it to 120 in our business case submission. We are planning to admit 120 children into Year 7 from 2016 and Year 5 will also admit 120 children until 2018, as other local schools move to Primary status. This includes Astwood Bank First School and Webheath First School Academy who have already completed consultations to move to Primary status.

Will my daughter who is a current Y5 be able to stay at Ridgeway to sit her GCSEs?

Yes, the current Year 5 children will be the first to have the opportunity to sit their GCSEs at Ridgeway Academy. They will need to apply for places in Year 7 (by October 2015) as part of the Admissions process for a place in September 2016 and our Admissions policy will be amended to take into account children already at Ridgeway Middle School when they apply to.



We are hoping to be offered a space for my son to start at Ridgeway in September 2015, how will he be impacted?

Children joining us in September 2015 will be able to stay and complete their GCSEs at Ridgeway. They will need to apply for places in Year 7 (by October 2016) as part of the Admissions process for a place in September 2017 and our Admissions policy will be amended to prioritise children already at Ridgeway when they apply.

Will my current Y6 be able to stay at Ridgeway to complete years 9-11 here?

In our initial proposals we wanted to convert to a Secondary School from 2015 and, as such, the current Year 6 would have been able to sit their GCSEs at Ridgeway. Given the fact that we will now start the transition to secondary status from September 2016, our current Year 6 will not be able to stay at Ridgeway rather they will take their GCSEs at their choice of current High Schools. We would love to take these pupils into a secondary at Ridgeway now, however the admissions process states that the earliest we can do this is 2016.

What percentage of responses received by the school during the consultation process were in favour of changing from a Middle to a Secondary School?

59% of responses received during our consultation period were in favour of our proposals. 36% were against the proposals and 5% didn't know.

How can Ridgeway afford this?

We already have two Science Labs, a Food Tech Room, a DT room and an IT suite. We have recently invested in new computers and lap tops which has enabled us to kit out our study centre as a second IT suite. Our business case identified the need to purchase certain Science and DT related equipment which we are able to find from current school reserves. We have a robust strategic plan to become a Secondary School which includes a strong financial budget element to support that plan.

What building work would you anticipate in order to accommodate additional pupils in the school and when would this start?

We are continually investing in our school buildings, we already have a premises strategy in place for the next few years that involves both development and maintenance of the site and we will continue to adapt this to the needs of the school in the future. Last year we created new SEN areas within the school. This year we have replaced the roof on the South Main Block and the Art Room. We are awaiting a decision from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to gain funding to double glaze the whole school (due end of March) and we have a rolling programme of decoration to lighten and brighten the whole school. We have internal options to create additional learning space simply by knocking down internal walls or putting up partitions.

Are there going to be redundancies?

We will be meeting all staff over the next month to discuss the opportunities that the change to Secondary presents us with. We have no plans to make redundancies.

Are the teachers trained to deliver KS4 + GCSE's?

The majority of them are yes, we have a staff member who is an examiner, moderator and team leader for a public exam board and teachers already deliver learning for the achievement of Functional Skills Exams. We are also teaching Gifted and Talented children to GCSE level in school already.

How will you get all of the teachers ready to teach GCSE's?

We are continually investing in the development of our staff through internal training as well as external courses plus the use of experts in school. This will continue and be targeted at the needs of our Staff and the school as it always has been.



If you take Y5 in the academic year 2018/19 are you anticipating that the local First Schools won't have converted to Primary Schools by then?

In response to the feedback gained from local First Schools during our consultation process, we recognised that they had concerns about their ability to offer Primary education from 2016. We are committed to the education of the children in our community and proposed that we would retain Years 5&6 until at least 2018/19 in order to give the First Schools time to make decisions around their futures. This includes Astwood Bank First School and Webheath First School Academy who have already completed consultations to move to Primary status.

Will you be talking again with those first schools who had announced that you were in talks with them about forming the Multi Academy Trust?

These discussions have been ongoing since the consultation was completed in December 2014. No final decision has been made on whether to submit a MAT business case to the EFA/RSC for their consideration at this time. We will advise you should this change.

How can you work with TGAR in the pyramid if now you are both 'competing' for the same children?

We currently work with other local Middle Schools for the mutual benefit of the children. We also work with First Schools sharing expertise and resources. We would continue to do this with all local schools, whether they are in our Pyramid or not, whatever the age of the children.

We will continue to update you when further details are available. Should you have any further queries, questions or comments please email agechange@ridgeway.worcs.sch.uk