



St Barnabas CE First and Middle School

Dream Believe Succeed

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Persore Consultation

We have received a number of questions about the proposed age changes in our neighbouring schools. Here is our response to some questions we have received so far. We will send out regular updates as we receive questions or gain new information.

Is two tier better than three tier?

To be honest, there's not a lot in it. At the end of Key Stage 4, when you compare results, it varies as to which system produces the better results. It's only a small difference and shows that the system isn't the issue, it's the teaching that counts. Worcestershire data for the last set of results isn't available at the moment but in 2016/17 the three tier system in Worcestershire outperformed the two tier. National data for 2017 is available and shows that the three tier system outperformed the two tier nationally. Worcestershire data is not yet available.

Won't the children be better prepared for GCSEs if they start Persore in Year 7?

We know from recent years that St Barnabas children do very well at GCSE and beyond. We work closely with the High School to coordinate our curriculum. Some High Schools in the County do not receive students until Year 9 and still have very good results. Prince Henry's for instance, consistently outperforms other High Schools in the County. Again, it's not the system, it's the quality of provision that matters and the three tier system offers high quality education and access to specialist teachers earlier than the two tier.

Are some parents unsure about what they are voting for if they haven't experienced a Middle School?

We agree, if you have only experienced one system, it's hard to judge another. The point was made at the public meeting that many parents did not appreciate what Middle Schools offer until their children moved into them. In order to help parents make an informed decision we will be arranging an opportunity for parents of our First Schools to visit our Middle School to see what we offer on Tuesday 28th November. We are proud of what we offer children and want to share our successes. We would encourage all of our own First School parents to come along on that day too, it is your children that will be most affected by any change and any potential loss of facilities.

If the change goes ahead, can parents from NJK still send their children to St Barnabas?

There's no reason why this shouldn't happen. The Avonreach MAT are keen that their proposal is seen in terms of increased parental choice. Choosing to come to St Barnabas is part of that. As long as we have sufficient demand we will continue to offer places at Year 5 to our feeder schools.

At the meeting, one person said that Middle Schools that became primaries in the Wyre Forest lost their specialist rooms. Will the same happen at St Barnabas?

Whatever happens, we will not lose our specialist facilities - science lab, art rooms, ICT suites etc.. The decision in the Wyre Forest was made by the Local Authority who coordinated the changes. As an Academy, we will be free to decide to keep our facilities although we will have the constraints of a greatly reduced budget.





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Is Year 7 at a Middle School a waste of time?

Definitely not. Our pupils continue to make very good progress in Year 7.

Last Years results show this (see below), the figures in brackets show the percentages for the same children at the end of year 6. This shows the very good progress made in Year 7 and also shows how those children who just missed the Age Related Expectations (ARE) level in Year 6 were able to catch up and meet or exceed the Year 7 expected level. This might not have been the case if they had had to move schools at the end of Year 6.

St Barnabas Key Stage 3, Year 7 2017

		ARE	Exc.	ARE	Exc	ARE	Exc
YEAR 7	N	READING		WRITING		MATHS	
ALL	78	88 (65)	58 (17)	82 (59)	52(26)	83 (49)	42 (10)
Boys	42	78 (55)	43 (12)	73 (43)	32 (12)	81 (45)	38 (7)
Girls	36	97 (78)	72 (22)	91 (78)	72 (42)	86 (53)	47 (14)
Disad	15	60 (53)	40 (13)	60 (33)	40 (13)	50 (27)	40 (0)
SEND	12	60 (42)	30 (0)	40 (17)	20 (0)	70 (17)	20 (8)

(Interesting read: Key Stage 3: the wasted years?, Published by Ofsted)

Won't one transition be better for children than two?

Not necessarily. Parents appreciate the fact that a move from First to Middle School takes place at the start of Year 5 as good preparation for the more significant move later. Moving from a First to a Middle School is a big step but not as big as moving from a Primary to a Secondary. We have a very good system in place to allow children to get used to the Middle School and very good liaison with our First School colleagues.

Middle Schools nationally have been recognised as having good transition procedures. Last Year Worcestershire Middles were involved in a project and met with the DFE to see what lessons could be learnt from the three tier system and shared with two tier. When moving to High School we again work closely with High School colleagues to ensure a smooth transition.

Many parents tell us that they appreciate the extra year at St Barnabas as their children would not have coped well with a move at the end of Year 6. Some parents say that their children would have managed a move at Year 6 without problem, they appreciate the fact that Year 7 is challenging and prepares them well for Year 8.

It is interesting to note that data shows that disadvantaged pupils do better in the three tier system, especially as you might consider these children would be expected to cope less well with change. We believe this is due to the care we take in transition and the pastoral support we have in place.

We should also remember that two transitions is not just seen in the Middle School system. Many areas of the country operate Infant, Junior and High School systems which also include two transitions. The data for these schools is included in the Primary data being used to say that the two tier system is better.

