

BIRMINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

CABINET MEMBER

FRIDAY, 02 SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 00:00 HOURS
IN CABINET MEMBERS OFFICE, COUNCIL HOUSE, VICTORIA
SQUARE, BIRMINGHAM, B1 1BB

A G E N D A

3 - 48

- 1 **CHANGE THE CATEGORY OF AL -FURQAN PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM**
VOLUNTARY AIDED TO VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED

Report of Strategic Director for Children & Families

Birmingham City Council

Report to Cabinet Member for Children Young People and Families

2nd September 2022



Subject: CHANGE THE CATEGORY OF AL-FURQAN PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM VOLUNTARY AIDED TO VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED

Report of: Sue Harrison, Strategic Director for Children and Families

Relevant Cabinet Member: Cllr Karen McCarthy: Children Young People and Families

Relevant O &S Chair(s): Cllr Kerry Jenkins: Education and Children's Social Care

Report author: Jaswinder Didially
Head of Service, Education Infrastructure; Telephone No: 0121 303 8847
E-mail address: jaswinder.didially@birmingham.gov.uk

Are specific wards affected?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No – All wards affected
If yes, name(s) of ward(s): Hall Green North is mainly affected.		
Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, add Forward Plan Reference:		
Is the decision eligible for call-in?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state which appendix is exempt, and provide exempt information paragraph number or reason if confidential:		

1 Executive Summary

- 1.1 To seek the determination of a statutory proposal by The Interim Executive Board (IEB) of Al-Furqan Primary School (the School) to
- Change the category of the School from Voluntary Aided (VA) to Voluntary Controlled (VC).

2 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families, having considered the statutory guidance, approves the statutory proposal to change the category of the School from Voluntary Aided (VA) to Voluntary Controlled (VC).

3 Background

- 3.1 Al-Furqan Primary School (the School) is a Voluntary Aided school situated on Reddings Lane, Birmingham, B11 3EY, which is within Hall Green North ward and the Hall Green constituency of Birmingham.
- 3.2 The School was rated 'Good' by Ofsted in June 2017.
- 3.3 The School currently offers 630 pupil places for pupils.
- 3.4 In November 2012, Ofsted judged the School to be 'Inadequate'. In February 2013 Ofsted deemed the improvement plan put forward by the school to be "not fit for purpose". As a result of this the Council, with the consent of the Secretary of State for Education, appointed an Interim Executive Board (IEB). The IEB has been in place at the School since April 2013.
- 3.5 The following concerns were identified following the inspection by Ofsted in 2012:
- Leadership and Management, Quality of teaching and Achievement were all judged 'Inadequate'
- Behavior and Safety of Pupils was judged as 'Requires Improvement'
- 3.6 Regular Ofsted monitoring inspections took place from November 2012 and two subsequent full inspections have been carried out: one in November 2014, when the School was judged as 'Requires Improvement' and the second in June 2017 when the School was judged to be 'Good'.
- 3.7 Since the IEB has been overseeing the strategic direction of the School it has improved in all the areas listed in 3.5 to become good, and has also made further improvements in the following areas:
- Safeguarding practice
- Financial management and control
- 3.8 At the time of the Inadequate judgement, the Head teacher was one of the trustees of the Al Furqan Education Trust (AFET), the School's foundation. Other AFET trustees also had significant involvement in the day to day management of the school and the use of the school premises. Since the IEB has been in place,

AFET representatives have visited the School on a half-termly basis to ensure that the school's religious ethos is being maintained, (see also FAQ p7). If the change of category were approved, the Council would support the School with the process of constituting a normally constituted VC Governing Board, which would replace the IEB. AFET would appoint two members of the Governing Board as foundation governors, whose role would include ensuring that the ethos of the School is maintained.

- 3.9 The funding for the change of category is described in section 9 of this report.
- 3.10 In compliance with the DfE guidance, a statutory notice and complete proposal were published on 9th June for the prescribed four-week consultation, referred to as the "representation period". The representation period commenced with the publication of a statutory notice in the Birmingham Post newspaper, a notice on the School's website, on the Council's Birmingham BeHeard consultation website and notices published on all the school entrances. In addition, there was notice to stakeholders and groups by letter and email (see also section 5 - Consultation).
- 3.11 During the representation period, comments on the IEB's proposal could be submitted in writing to Education Infrastructure via the BeHeard website online-survey, by email or letter. A copy of the public notice can be found in **Appendix 1** of this report.

Responses received by the close of the representation period, on 21st July 2022, are summarised as follows:

A total of 95 responses were received - 21 in favour, 69 opposed, 5 neither/don't know.

The responses were from - 2 pupils, 58 parents, 2 governors, 13 staff members, 10 local residents and 10 others.

The outcome of the consultation is set out in **Appendix 3** to this report.

The main objections to the proposal were regarding:

- Concern that the school would lose its religious character / ethos (* responded to in FAQ document);
- Opinion that there has been a lack of engagement / communication between parents and AFET – (this was raised by parents during the stakeholder meeting – Council officers explained that members of AFET had been invited to the meeting but had declined to attend);
- Suggestion that the IEB continue to explore options to remain VA (* responded to in FAQ document);
- Concern about communication with stakeholders that have English as second language - (mitigated by drop in sessions – one set of parents came with a translator so they could ask questions)
- Concern that there should be parent membership on IEB / VC board (*responded to in FAQ document);
- Concern that the ethos of the school should be reflected in the VC Instrument of Government - (a draft IoG was shared with all stakeholders

during consultation to illustrate that a change of category from VA to VC would not change the school's ethos)

- Concern that the school will change its Religious Education curriculum or lose its IQA (Islamic, Quranic and Arabic) curriculum (* responded to in FAQ document);

A frequently asked question document (Appendix 5) was developed and published following the pre-publication period (informal consultation) which addressed the common concerns, opinions and suggestions, including those marked with a * above.

Officers are aware of a petition that was opened online from February 2022 in opposition to a then speculated change of category. This petition was not submitted by way of a formal representation during the consultation process and has never been formally submitted to the Council. The petition is opposed to the proposed change of category and has been signed by approximately 800 people.

- 3.12 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Regulation 7 of The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 (the Prescribed Alterations Regulations) state the Council must have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State when making a decision on such proposals. The relevant statutory guidance is: Making Significant Changes ('prescribed alterations') to Maintained Schools – statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers - October 2018, published by the Department for Education. The Education and Inspections Act 2006, and Paragraph 5 of Schedule 3 to the Prescribed Alterations Regulations allows for the proposals to be:

- approved;
- approved with modification;
- approved subject to meeting a prescribed condition; or
- rejected.

- 3.13 If the proposal for Al-Furqan Primary School is approved, it is planned that the School category will change from voluntary aided (VA) to voluntary controlled (VC) on 1st January 2023.

4 Options considered and Recommended Proposal

- 4.1 It is recommended that the proposal to change the category of the School from voluntary aided (VA) to voluntary controlled (VC), from 1st January 2023, is approved.

- 4.2 Various options have been taken into consideration and examined by the IEB including:

4.2.1 remaining VA;

4.2.2 changing category to VC; and

4.2.3 conversion to an Academy.

- 4.3 Having evaluated the options, the IEB believes that a change of the category of the School to VC is the preferred option for the School as it continues its improvement journey.

During the period since the School achieved 'Good', there has been no evidence that a governing board with a majority of members appointed by the Al-Furqan Education Trust (AFET) would be able to replace the IEB or maintain and continue the improvement journey of the School.

- 4.4 If this proposal is rejected, the IEB and the LA will need to consider alternatives for the School. This would include the possibility of the conversion of AFPS to an Academy.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 The statutory proposal was consulted upon in line with the requirements set out in the relevant guidance from the Secretary of State (as noted in 3.11 of this report). The outcome of the consultation is set out in Appendix 3 to this report.

5.2 Internal:

Information on the proposal was shared with all Birmingham Ward Councillors (see appendix 4) with additional correspondence sent to councillors in the wards where most Al-Furqan pupils live, namely, Acocks Green, Billesley, Bordesley Green, Hall Green North, Hall Green South, Moseley, Small Heath, Sparkbrook and Balsall Heath, Sparkhill and Tyseley & Hay Mills wards. Officers from services across the Council which includes Admissions, Finance, School and Governor Support, Human Resources, Legal, Planning, Research and Statistics Officers and colleagues in Education Infrastructure were also consulted.

5.3 External:

Information on the proposal was shared with: pupils, parents/carers of pupils, staff and members of the IEB of Al-Furqan Primary School, Birmingham Schools, AFET, The Association of Muslim Schools, Professional Associations and Trade Unions, Neighbouring Local Authorities, The local Member of Parliament and Ward Councillors, Local NHS partners, The Department for Education – School Organisation and the Office of The Schools Adjudicator and by public notice in a newspaper (as described in section 3.12 of this report).

6 Risk Management

- 6.1 As also described in section 4.4 of this report: if the proposal is rejected, the School will remain a Voluntary Aided school.
- 6.2 If this proposal is rejected the IEB would then have to consider all options again before proposing a solution for the continued improvement of the School. The options would include: to do nothing; conversion to an Academy; or to remain VA. However, it is important to note that the option of doing nothing is untenable as

the IEB cannot continue to remain in place (see Appendix 2 p2 for details). As described in 4.3, the IEB do not believe that remaining VA is in the best interest of the School as there is no evidence that a governing board with a majority of members appointed by the Al-Furqan Education Trust (AFET) would be able to replace the IEB or maintain and continue the improvement journey of the School.

7 Compliance Issues:

7.1 How are the recommended decisions consistent with the City Council's priorities, plans and strategies?

7.1.1 The proposal to change category of Al-Furqan Primary School from VA to VC would meet the following aims of the Council:

- Give all children from every background and community the best start in life with a clear pathway to achieve success and realise their potential;
- To fulfil landlord responsibilities to ensure that schools are Health and Safety compliant and fit for purpose;
- To meet the aims set out in the Council's Education Services Delivery and Improvement Plan.

8 Legal Implications

8.1 This report relates to the powers in sections 18 and 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and Regulation 4(3) and paragraph 16(b) of Schedule 2 of The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 (the "Prescribed Alterations Regulations"), whereby the governing body of a voluntary school can propose a change of category from VA to VC. Under section 21(2)(f) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and paragraph 3 of Schedule 3 of the Prescribed Alterations Regulations, the Council is the decision maker for this statutory proposal.

8.2 The recommendations in this report facilitate the discharge of functions contained within section 13A of the Education Act 1996 whereby the Council has a duty to ensure that their education functions are exercised with a view to promoting high standards, ensuring fair access to educational opportunity and promoting the fulfilment by every child concerned of their educational potential.

9 Financial Implications

9.1 There are no direct costs related to a change of category (the school branding and uniform would remain the same).

9.2 The change in category would result in the School not being able to apply for the Condition Improvement Funding directly from Department of Education (DFE) for Capital works. If the proposal is approved, the Local Authority will receive

additional Schools Condition Allocation funding to fund any Capital works required at the school.

- 9.3 There is no change to the Devolved Capital allocation. This will still be paid directly to the school by the Dfe.

10 Procurement Implications (if required)

- 10.1 Not Applicable

11 Human Resources Implications (if required)

- 11.1 If the proposal to change the category of the School from VA to VC is approved, Birmingham City Council will become the employer of the staff at the school, rather than the Governing Board/IEB. The transfer of undertakings (protection of employment) process (TUPE) will be undertaken.

- 11.2 Any changes to existing terms and conditions resulting from the transfer would be in full consultation with the trade unions and teaching associations.

12 Public Sector Equality Duty

- 12.1 An updated Equality Assessment initial screening was carried out in October 2018 (EQUA221) against The School Organisation Change process, which identified that a full impact assessment was not required. No events have occurred since then which would require the preparation of a fresh screening in respect of The School organisation process. This proposal relates to citizens of school age and of Muslim faith; however, this proposal does not change the age range nor designated religious character of the School. The recommendations in this report are likely to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it and it has been decided that a full equality analysis is not required.

13 Appendices

- Appendix 1:** Public Notice
- Appendix 2:** Full Proposal document
- Appendix 3a:** Consultation results - Summary
- Appendix 3b:** Consultation results - All Comments
- Appendix 4:** Councillors Consulted
- Appendix 5:** Frequently Asked Question

14 Background Documents

- Education and Inspections Act 2006

- Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools: "Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers" published by the Department for Education (DfE) October 2018.

Statutory Notice

Proposal of the Interim Executive Board of Al-Furqan Primary School Change of status from Voluntary Aided to Voluntary Controlled

Notice is given in accordance with Section 19(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that the Interim Executive Board of Al-Furqan Primary School intends to make a prescribed alteration to Al-Furqan Primary School, Reddings Lane, Birmingham B11 3EY from 1st April 2022.

It is proposed by the Interim Executive Board to change the status of the school from Voluntary Aided to Voluntary Controlled. The proposed alteration would not change the religious character of Al-Furqan Primary School – it would remain designated as a Muslim Faith School. The proposed changes would alter the composition of the Governing Body and would transfer some responsibilities for the employment of staff and maintenance of school premises from the Trustees and the Governing Body to the Local Authority. This notice is an extract from the complete proposal document. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from the BeHeard consultation website at www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/al-furqanpart2

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may support, object to or make comments on the proposal. Anyone who wishes to make representations about this proposal should do so through the BeHeard web site; www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/al-furqanpart2 or via email to edsi.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk or in writing to the Property Management Team, Education and Skills Infrastructure, PO BOX 15843, Birmingham B2 2RT
Please include Al-Furqan in the title of any correspondence.
Comments or objections must be received by no later than this date: 21st July 2022

Signed: Sylvia Fry
Chair of the Interim Executive Board -Al-Furqan Primary School

Publication date: Thursday 23rd June 2022



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

**Al-Furqan Primary School**Every Child Matters
Quality Mark Silver

Reddings Lane - Tyseley - Birmingham - B11 3EY - Tel: 0121 777 2222 - Fax: 0121 777 2277
Email: enquiries@al-furqan-pri.bham.sch.uk - Web: www.al-furqan-pri.bham.sch.uk

Statutory Proposal by the Interim Executive Board

Al-Furqan Primary School

*Proposal to Change the category
from Voluntary Aided to
Voluntary Controlled.*

Introduction

Al-Furqan Primary School (AFPS) is an Islamic faith primary school in the Hall Green North ward of the Hall Green district of the City. The designated religious character of the school is Muslim. The school admits up to 90 pupils per year in reception.

School Information

Type:	Voluntary Aided (VA)		
Name:	Al-Furqan Primary School	DFE:	330 5949
Address:	Reddings Lane, Birmingham B11 3EY		
Ward:	Hall Green North	District:	Hall Green
Age Range:	4 – 11 years	Capacity:	630
Last Ofsted:	8th June 2017	Ofsted Rating	2 (good)

What changes are proposed?

The Interim Executive Board working in full collaboration with the Local Authority (LA) is proposing to carry out the following change to AFPS;

- Change the category of the school from Voluntary Aided (VA) to Voluntary Controlled (VC)

Why do we want to do this?

In November 2012, Ofsted judged the school to be “inadequate”. An Interim Executive Board (IEB) has been in place at the school since April 2013 in place of the former Governing Board.

(An IEB is a small board appointed for a temporary period, by a Local Authority with the consent of the Secretary of State for Education, to replace the Governing Board and to lead a school that is judged to be in urgent need of improvement.)

When the school was inspected by Ofsted in 2012 (report can be found [here](#)) the inspectors identified the concerns listed below. The IEB has taken action and made significant improvements in all of the listed areas.

- **Leadership and Management** was judged as **Inadequate**. The inspection report said:
 - “The school’s leaders, including governors, have low expectations of what pupils should be achieving and do not have a good enough understanding of how pupils are progressing. They are unaware of weaknesses in teaching, so they are not improving its quality or managing teachers’ performance adequately.
 - Lines of communication with many parents and carers have broken down, leading to high levels of dissatisfaction.”
- **Quality of teaching** and **Achievement of pupils** were both judged **Inadequate**. The inspection report said:
 - “Much of the teaching in Years 1 to 6 is inadequate, which leads to widespread underachievement.
 - Teachers do not expect enough of pupils or give them work that is matched to their abilities.
 - Teachers set homework only sporadically and do not mark books well enough, which does not help pupils know how to improve their work.

- Groups of pupils are taught for long periods by teaching assistants and they do not make enough progress.
 - In some lessons, insufficient resources, especially books, slow pupils' progress."
- **Behaviour and Safety of Pupils** was judged as **Requires Improvement**. The inspection report said:
 - "Some older pupils misbehave when teaching is weak."

In addition, improvements have been made by the IEB in the following areas:

- Safeguarding practice
- Financial management and control

Regular monitoring inspections have been carried out by OFSTED since November 2012, when the school received their judgment of "inadequate". Two subsequent full inspections have been carried out, one in November 2014, when the school was judged to "require improvement", and the second in June 2017, when the school was judged to be "good".

The IEB has been overseeing the strategic direction of the school. Various options have been examined including remaining VA, changing category to VC, and conversion to an Academy.

The IEB believes that a change of the category of the school to VC is the preferred option for AFPS as they continue their improvement journey. During the period since the school achieved 'Good', there has been no evidence that a governing board with a majority of members appointed by the Al-Furqan Education Trust (AFET) would be able to replace the IEB or maintain and continue the improvement journey of the school. The council and a new VC governing board would continue to work closely with AFET, and AFET would appoint two members of the governing board as foundation governors, whose role would include ensuring that the ethos of the school is maintained. The expectations regarding this are also set out in the draft proposed Instrument of Government which is also provided as part of the consultation.

The view of the IEB and Al-Furqan Education Trust at present is that a voluntary aided shadow governing board is not the right option for the school at this time. This may be reconsidered following the outcome of the next stage of consultation. [For more details about this, please see the FAQ document.]

What is the difference for AFPS between being a Voluntary Aided (VA) and a Voluntary Controlled (VC) School?

	Voluntary Aided (VA)	Voluntary Controlled (VC)
Religious character	AFPS School is designated by the Secretary of State as a school having a Muslim religious character.	AFPS would keep its Muslim religious character. Changing from VA to VC would not change the designated religious character of the school or cause it to lose its religious character.
Staff	Appointed and employed by the Governing Board (GB).	Appointed by the Governing Board and employed by the Local Authority.

Governance	<p>The school is currently governed by an Interim Executive Board (IEB). As a VA school, if an IEB is not in place, the majority of Governors for AFPS are appointed by the Al Furqan Educational Trust (AFET)</p>	<p>The new GB would consist of: at least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • two parent governors (elected by the parents); • the Headteacher; • one staff governor (elected by the staff); • one local authority governor; • as many co-opted governors as the GB consider necessary; • at least two (but no more than one quarter of the total) foundation governors (appointed by the Trust)
Finance	<p>The Governing Board receives individual school budget from LA to cover running costs. A VA school has access to grant funding directly from the Department for Education (DfE) to support capital expenditure (this was previously known as Local Authority Co-ordinated Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP))</p>	<p>The school receives an annual allocation of Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) to support Capital Expenditure. The Governing Board receives individual school budget from the LA to cover running costs. A VC school has access to School Condition Allocation (SCA) funding for capital works.</p>
<p>Religious Education Curriculum (RE)</p> <p>[See below for more details about the IQA]</p>	<p>At AFPS, RE is currently taught using the LA's agreed syllabus.</p> <p>In VA schools, RE must be taught according to the tenets of the school's designated faith and any provision in the school's trust deed, except that if a parent requests that a pupil is taught RE according to the LA agreed syllabus the GB must make arrangements for this.</p>	<p>RE would remain the same and would be taught using the LA's agreed syllabus.</p> <p>In VC schools, RE must be taught according to the LA agreed syllabus, except that if a parent requests that a pupil is taught RE according to the tenets of the school's designated faith and any provision in the school's trust deed; the foundation governors must arrange such RE teaching for up to two periods per week.</p>
Collective Worship	<p>Collective worship must be in accordance with the tenets and practices of the school's designated faith, and any relevant provisions of the school's trust deed</p>	<p>The same requirements apply to VC schools with a religious character as to VA schools</p>

	There is a school prayer hall (Masjid) that is used by Y2 – Y6 on a daily basis. [In more usual non-Covid times]	The use of the prayer hall (Masjid) would continue.
Admissions	The Governing Board consults on and sets the school's admission criteria. Criteria may be based on faith.	The Local Authority consults on and sets the school's admission criteria for VC schools. Criteria may be based on faith.
Land	AFET hold the land on trust for the purposes of the school but the IEB have control of the land.	AFET trust will continue to hold the land on trust for the purposes of the school but the new governing board will have control of the land.

When will these changes happen?

If the proposal is approved by the decision makers (following full consultation) it is intended that the proposal to change the category of Al-Furqan from Voluntary Aided to Voluntary Controlled will come into effect from **1st January 2023**.

How will the proposal improve educational standards and increase parental choice?

If the proposals are approved, a new Governing Board will be formed upon implementation of the change of category of the school to VC. A new VC Governing Board would build on the improvements made by the IEB and will provide stability for the school going forward.

Will there be any effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area?

There will be no effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions in the area. It is a change to the category of the school only. The admission number is not increasing, and the faith character of the school will remain unchanged.

What are the project costs for this proposal and how is it funded?

The only project costs for the proposed change to voluntary controlled category is the cost of the public notice in the Birmingham Post. The notice is posted in the public notice section of the paper on the first day of the statutory consultation. This is a statutory requirement under the school organisation process.

How will this affect staff?

If the proposal to change the category of the school from VA to VC is approved, Birmingham City Council will become the employer of all the staff. The transfer of undertakings (protection of employment) process (TUPE) will be undertaken.

Any changes to existing terms and conditions resulting from the transfer would be in full consultation with the trade unions and teaching associations.

How will this affect pupils at the school?

The pupils should not notice any changes, should the proposal to change to VC be approved. The implementation of the permanent VC Governing Board would further help the school to build on the improvements that the IEB have implemented over the past 8 years.

Will there be any change to the admissions arrangements?

Yes, Birmingham City Council (as the Local Authority) will manage and coordinate the admissions at the school.

Birmingham City Council admission arrangements for Voluntary Controlled schools will apply.

Proposed Oversubscription Criteria for Al-Furqan Primary School as a Voluntary Controlled School.

If the proposal to change the category of AFPS to VC is approved, where applications for admissions exceed the number of places available, the following criteria (in descending order) will be applied;

Any child with an Education, Health and Care Plan is required to be admitted to the school that is named in the plan. This gives such children overall priority for admission to the named school. This is not an oversubscription criterion.

1. Children who are in the care of the Local Authority (looked after children) or were previously looked after or provided with accommodation by them (e.g. children with foster parents) (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) and including previously looked after children from outside England.
2. Children with siblings (who will still be attending Al-Furqan on the date the child who is applying is admitted) at Al-Furqan. The Local Authority 'Sibling' definition has been adopted.
3. For all other children of Islamic faith, priority will be given to those children whose parent/guardian is a practising Muslim. This will be confirmed by the parent/carer filling in the Local Authority supplementary information form and relevant sections completed by the Imam of their local Mosque.
4. Children who live closest to the school.

NB (i): If there is oversubscription within a category priority will be given to those children living closest to the school. The local authority's 'distance' definition has been adopted. Distances are calculated on the basis of a straight-line measurement between the applicant's home address and the main school gate on Formans Road. The Local Authority uses a computerised system, which measures all distances in metres. Ordnance Survey supplies the co-ordinates that are used to plot an applicant's home address and the address of the school.

NB(ii)

- Looked after children of all faiths are given priority in the case of over subscription policy.
- Birmingham City Council (as the admissions authority) does not include criteria regarding children of staff as this would bring a level of inequity into the system and would potentially deprive a local child of a place, giving it instead to the child of a member of staff.

It is important to note that staff members' children who are already on roll at the school would not be affected, and their sibling priority would also remain in place for any siblings seeking

places at the school (with a sibling still in attendance at the school when admission is sought).

Will there be a change to the Religious Education (RE) at the school?

No, if the proposal to change the category of the school to VC is approved, the school will continue to teach the agreed Birmingham LA syllabus for RE.

Will there be a change to the curriculum of the school?

No, the school will continue to teach the National Curriculum. In addition, the school teaches Islamic, Quranic and Arabic studies (IQA). Arabic is the Modern Foreign Language that is taught at the school. This is in addition to the National Curriculum and the current governing board are clear that this enhances the school.

What changes will be made to the Governing Board at the School

Prior to the IEB being established at the school, AFPS had a VA Governing Board. The majority of the members on a VA school's Governing Board were appointed by the Al Furqan Education Trust (AFET)

If the proposal to change the category of the school to VC is approved, the Governing Board will be made up as follows:

- at least two parent governors, elected by the parents
- the Headteacher, unless the Headteacher chooses not to be a governor
- one staff governor, elected by the staff
- one local authority governor, nominated by the local authority and appointed by the board
- at least two (but no more than one quarter of the total) foundation governors, appointed by the AFET.

The board can also appoint as many co-opted governors as they consider necessary. In relation to co-opted governors, there are restrictions on the proportion of governors who, in broad terms, are also staff at the school. When counted together, the Headteacher, staff governor and any co-opted governors who are also members of staff must not exceed a third of the total membership of the governing board.

Will this definitely happen?

There is government guidance and a statutory process the IEB must follow to make this type of change to a school. The IEB is consulting in two parts, as follows:

Part 1: Informal Consultation ('pre-publication' period): Completed.

Part 1 was completed between Tuesday 25th January and Monday 14th February 2022. All comments received during the pre-publication period have been considered by the IEB when deciding to continue to part 2.

(Please note: Comments received during part 1 were for the IEB to consider in collaboration with the Local Authority; and are not intended for the final decision maker*.)

A FAQ document was produced for stakeholders as a result of the comments received during part 1. This is available from the school and the BeHeard consultation webpage (see section: How do I make my views known).

Part 2: Formal Consultation ('representation period'): Current.

The current part is the representation period, a formal consultation (statutory: required by law). A public notice and this proposal document have been published Thursday 16th June 2022 and allows four weeks for anyone to comment in writing (see the section below: "How can I make my views known?").

Representation period is from **Thursday 23rd June 2022** until **Thursday 21st July 2022** (*Please note: Only comments received during part 2 will be forwarded to the decision maker for their consideration.)

Decision process:

Following the end of part 2, the formal consultation ('representation period'), a report must be produced and passed to the decision maker to consider. The decision maker for this IEB proposal is the Local Authority (the Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture.) Should the decision maker not reach a decision within two months of the end of the representation period, i.e. by **21st September 2022**, the proposal must be passed to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for a final decision, for which there will be no right of appeal by the IEB or the LA.

It is only after the final decision that we would be able to say with certainty whether the school will change the category to VC with effect from **1st January 2023**.

What will happen if this proposal is rejected?

If this proposal is rejected the IEB and LA will need to consider alternatives for the school. This would include the possibility of the conversion of AFPS to an Academy.

How can I make my views known during part 2: representation period?

Comments are welcome from anyone interested in this proposal.

Comments must be received within the four-week period:

- from **Thursday 23rd June 2022** until **Thursday 21st July 2022**.

Anyone wishing to make comments, support or object to this proposal during part 2, may do so through the BeHeard consultation website:

www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/al-furqanpart2

or in writing to:

Birmingham City Council's School Organisation Team
Education and Infrastructure
PO Box 15843
Birmingham B2 2RT

Or by emailing: eds.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk

Please include **Al-Furqan part 2** in the letter/email subject heading.

A consultation response form can be found at the end of this document and can be used if anyone would like to use it to send their comments in writing or by email.

What happens next?

The dates set out below meet the government requirements for the IEB to consult fully with the people affected by the proposal.

Key dates (subject to change with notice):

Action	Date
Part 2 - Statutory notice to be published	Thursday 23rd June 2022
Beginning of 4-week consultation period	Thursday 23rd June 2022
End of 4-week consultation period	Thursday 21st July 2022
Final decision to be made no later than	21st September 2022
Changes implemented	1st January 2023

Parents' Meeting: Tuesday 5th July - 6pm – AFPS School Hall

This is an opportunity for parents of current pupils at the school to hear from the IEB about this part of the process and ask any questions. There will be members of the IEB, senior staff and Birmingham City Council Representatives at the meeting. This meeting is open to all parents of current pupils and does not require any booking.

Individual Drop-in sessions for Parents:

If any parents of current pupil(s) at the school would like to speak individually to the IEB, senior school staff and Council representatives about this proposal, please contact the school office to book one of the following sessions (subject to availability).

Date	Time
Tuesday 28 th June 2022	9.00 – 9.30am
Friday 1 st July 2022	2.30 – 3.00pm
Tuesday 5 th July 2022	5.00 – 5.30pm
Friday 8 th July 2022	9.00 – 9.30am
Tuesday 12 th July 2022	9.00 – 0.30am
Thursday 14 th July 2022	4.30 – 5.00pm
Monday 18 th July 2022	9.00 – 9.30am
Wednesday 20 th July 2022	2.00 – 2.30pm

Al-Furqan Primary School: Proposal by the IEB to change the category of the school from Voluntary Aided to Voluntary Controlled.

Thank you for taking the time to send your thoughts on this proposal.

Part 2 – Statutory Consultation Response Form

Please help us to analyse your response by completing the following:

Your name (optional):

Your contact details (optional, if you would like a reply)

Who are you, what type of interested person? (please indicate one of the below):

Pupil of AFPS	
Parent/Carer of pupils at AFPS	
School Governor of AFPS	
School Staff of AFPS	
Local Resident	
Elected Birmingham Councillor	
Member of Parliament	
Other (please specify e.g. stakeholder of other school, prospective parent/pupil)	

Are you in favour of the proposal ? (please circle one answer only)

Please include any **written comments** on the proposal here (continue over the page as required):

Yes	No	Neither/Don't know
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DRAFT - confidential

School Organisation: Consultation Results: Al Furqan Change in category

Summary Table

Total number of responses:	95
Number in favour or against the proposal:	
In favour	21
Against	69
Don't know	5
Not indicated	0
Method of response:	
Website / online survey (Birmingham BeHeard)	93
Email	2
Letter	0
Respondent by type:	
Pupil at the School	2
Parent/Carer of pupil at the School	58
Governor at the School	2
Staff at the School	13
Local Resident	10
Birmingham City Councillor	0
Member of Parliament	0
Other (describe as required)	10
Comment themes: (counted per mention of 63 total comments*)	Result
Concern - Loss of religious character/ Ethos	42
Generally object	1
Concern - instrument of Government	13
Opinion - change VC good for the school	6
Opinion/ concern - loss of staff priority pupil places	1
Concern/ opinion - lack of engagement/ communication between parents and AFET	22
Generally not in favour	1
opinion - acknowledge school/ IEB Ofsted now good	1
Opinion/ support - change VC good for the school	1
Concern - change/ loss of IQA/ RE curriculum	12
Concern/opinion - to continue to explore to remain VA	20
Concern - started an online petition	3
Concern/ Opinion - IEB/ BCC confusing/ conflicting information ref VA status	1
Concern - process and communication with English as second language	18
Concern - no parent membership on IEB/ VC board	14
Opinion - change VC good for the school	1
opinion - acknowledge school/ IEB ofsted now good	5
Opinion - AFET could improve and remain as VA	1
Option - other options have not been considered	7
Concern - AFET low membership on IEB/ VC board	1

School Organisation: Consultation Results: Al Furqan Change in category

Concern - AFET low membership on IEB/ VC board	1
Opinion - AFET could improve and remain as VA	3
Opinion/ Concern - BCC stripping/ stripped of leadership	1
Opinion/ support - religious character/ ethos will continue as VC	2
Concern - lack of engagement/ communication between IEB and AFET	5
Concern - not enough time given for the consultation	3
Concern/ Opinion - IEB/ BCC confusing/ conflicting information ref VA status	6
popular school (over subscribed)	1
opinion - to continue to explore the shadowing Governing body	7
Concern/ opinion - lack of engagement/ communication between parents and IEB	1
Concern/ opinion - lack of engagement/ communication between IEB and AFET	1
Concern/ opinion - lack of engagement/ communication between parents and IEB	1

*Examples:

A total of 10 comments, 3 responses mention traffic concerns; result is: Traffic 3/10.

The same 3 people mention parking and 3 others mentions parking; result is: Parking 6/10.

Response ID	Type of respondent	Are you in favour of the proposal?	Are you in favour of the proposal
ANON-UWFX-DFZB-G	Parent	No	No Comment
ANON-UWFX-DFZ8-6	Parent	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFZM-U	Parent	No	To whom it may concern, I object the proposal I am for Al Furqan Primary school to remain VA. Preserving our Islamic ethos at Al Furqan Primary allowing new trustees to be appointed based on their merits, integrity and a drive to make Al Furqan an even greater a model school for others. VA is an option allow it to be just that shadowing an outstanding school that can work in partnership with Al Furqan primary. All options should be given rather than having to accept what is given to become of Al Furqan Primary which will inevitably change the face of Al Furqan as we know it. So as a parent I object to such a change and would like Al Furqan to remain VA. Yours sincerely
ANON-UWFX-DFZD-J	Parent	No	To whom it may concern, I object the proposal I am for Al Furqan Primary school to remain VA. Preserving our Islamic ethos at Al Furqan Primary allowing new trustees to be appointed based on their merits, integrity and a drive to make Al Furqan an even greater a model school for others. VA is an option allow it to be just that shadowing an outstanding school that can work in partnership with Al Furqan primary. All options should be given rather than having to accept what is given to become of Al Furqan Primary which will inevitably change the face of Al Furqan as we know it. So as a parent I object to such a change and would like Al Furqan to remain VA. Yours sincerely
ANON-UWFX-DFZU-3	Parent	Yes	To whom it may concern, I object the proposal I am for Al Furqan Primary school to remain VA. Preserving our Islamic ethos at Al Furqan Primary allowing new trustees to be appointed based on their merits, integrity and a drive to make Al Furqan an even greater a model school for others. VA is an option allow it to be just that shadowing an outstanding school that can work in partnership with Al Furqan primary. All options should be given rather than having to accept what is given to become of Al Furqan Primary which will inevitably change the face of Al Furqan as we know it. So as a parent I object to such a change and would like Al Furqan to remain VA. Yours sincerely
ANON-UWFX-DFZ9-7	Parent	Yes	To whom it may concern, I object the proposal I am for Al Furqan Primary school to remain VA. Preserving our Islamic ethos at Al Furqan Primary allowing new trustees to be appointed based on their merits, integrity and a drive to make Al Furqan an even greater a model school for others. VA is an option allow it to be just that shadowing an outstanding school that can work in partnership with Al Furqan primary. All options should be given rather than having to accept what is given to become of Al Furqan Primary which will inevitably change the face of Al Furqan as we know it. So as a parent I object to such a change and would like Al Furqan to remain VA. Yours sincerely
ANON-UWFX-DFZE-K	Parent	Yes	To whom it may concern, I object the proposal I am for Al Furqan Primary school to remain VA. Preserving our Islamic ethos at Al Furqan Primary allowing new trustees to be appointed based on their merits, integrity and a drive to make Al Furqan an even greater a model school for others. VA is an option allow it to be just that shadowing an outstanding school that can work in partnership with Al Furqan primary. All options should be given rather than having to accept what is given to become of Al Furqan Primary which will inevitably change the face of Al Furqan as we know it. So as a parent I object to such a change and would like Al Furqan to remain VA. Yours sincerely
ANON-UWFX-DFZH-P	Parent	No	I wouldnt want to have the change to VC and prefer VA after looking at all the relevant information
ANON-UWFX-DFZK-S	Parent	Yes	To whom it may concern, I object the proposal I am for Al Furqan Primary school to remain VA. Preserving our Islamic ethos at Al Furqan Primary allowing new trustees to be appointed based on their merits, integrity and a drive to make Al Furqan an even greater a model school for others. VA is an option allow it to be just that shadowing an outstanding school that can work in partnership with Al Furqan primary. All options should be given rather than having to accept what is given to become of Al Furqan Primary which will inevitably change the face of Al Furqan as we know it. So as a parent I object to such a change and would like Al Furqan to remain VA. Yours sincerely
ANON-UWFX-DFZV-4	Parent	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFZS-1	Parent	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFZC-H	Parent	No	To whom it may concern, I object the proposal I am for Al Furqan Primary school to remain VA. Preserving our Islamic ethos at Al Furqan Primary allowing new trustees to be appointed based on their merits, integrity and a drive to make Al Furqan an even greater a model school for others. VA is an option allow it to be just that shadowing an outstanding school that can work in partnership with Al Furqan primary. All options should be given rather than having to accept what is given to become of Al Furqan Primary which will inevitably change the face of Al Furqan as we know it. So as a parent I object to such a change and would like Al Furqan to remain VA. Yours sincerely
ANON-UWFX-DFZP-X	Parent	No	While we appreciate that many of the things will stay the same, one primary problem with the proposal is the governance of the school. Given the current proportions of governing board, particularly with AFET having only two members with unlimited co-opted members, I don't think that the proposal will best protect the school ethos.
ANON-UWFX-DFZ2-Z	Parent	No	To whom it may concern, I object the proposal I am for Al Furqan Primary school to remain VA. Preserving our Islamic ethos at Al Furqan Primary allowing new trustees to be appointed based on their merits, integrity and a drive to make Al Furqan an even greater a model school for others. VA is an option allow it to be just that shadowing an outstanding school that can work in partnership with Al Furqan primary. All options should be given rather than having to accept what is given to become of Al Furqan Primary which will inevitably change the face of Al Furqan as we know it. So as a parent I object to such a change and would like Al Furqan to remain VA. Yours sincerely
ANON-UWFX-DFZ3-1	Parent	No	No comment

			<p>The Interim Executive Board (IEB) of Al-Furqan Primary School (hereafter referred to as the school) is consulting on a proposal to convert the school from its current Voluntary Aided (VA) status to Voluntary Controlled (VC). Al-Furqan Educational Trust (AFET), hereafter referred to as the Trust, has three key roles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To hold the land and buildings on Reddings Lane/Formans Road in trust, for the purposes of Al-Furqan Primary School and masjid in accordance with the trust deed. 2. To uphold the ethos (including IQA and Salah in the Masjid) of the school in line with the Instrument of Government which is derived from the trust deed. This is done through governance, regular visits to support staff development, monitoring and celebration of pupil achievements. 3. To appoint Foundation governors who work with the Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team to drive the strategic development of the school, raise standards of achievement and uphold the Instrument of Government. <p>The ability of the Trust to safeguard the ethos including IQA and Salah in Masjid at the school will be significantly diminished under Voluntary Control arrangements, as the balance of power shifts to the Local Authority. The IEB and the Local Authority (LA) have given assurances that the ethos within the Instrument of Government will remain in place without alteration and incorporated directly into a VC Instrument of Government. However it our understanding that under VC arrangements a future governing body could change the Instrument of Government, given that Foundation governors would make up a quarter of the board, this issue is of concern to the trust. We have had a number of discussions with colleagues in the LA, however have not yet come across a satisfactory solution to this issue.</p> <p>In the light of the changing education environment, there is an increasing expectation that those who involved in school provision will be held accountable for all the education provision within them. The Trust had in the past ceded the responsibility for the quality of education to the Local Authority and focused on the development of the distinctive character of the school. Recent experience has bought to the forefront the Trust's increasing responsibility for the quality of education within the school.</p> <p>The ethos of the school, including IQA and Salah has a fundamental role in achieving the highest possible standards of education. The Trust wants to continue to work in partnership with the Local Authority but needs to build resilience. It is meeting this challenge through a number of mechanisms including broadening the advice it receives, brokering consultants, expanding the development of school-to-school and peer-led improvement groups, harnessing the good and outstanding practice within Muslim VA schools and beyond through collaboration and partnership. The Trust aims to provide the critical friendship needed to ensure that the school is the very best it can be and build on the current Ofsted rating. For continued development of the school, high quality governance is essential. Sourcing governors with skills, experience, and expertise to provide strategic oversight and direction is essential. The trust is currently going through a process to recruit such governors.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFZT-2	Other, VA Trust for this school.	No	
ANON-UWFX-DFZ4-2	Staff Member	Yes	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFZQ-Y	Staff Member	Yes	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFZ5-3	Staff Member	Yes	It is the best decision for the future of the School
ANON-UWFX-DFZ6-4	Staff Member	Yes	It is the best thing for the school in order for it to continue being good, and move from strength to strength .
ANON-UWFX-DFZF-M	Staff Member	Yes	It is best thing for the school at this moment in time.
ANON-UWFX-DFZA-F	Parent	Neither/Don't know	Not happy that staff do not get priority for places. Also the islamic aspect must not change at all.
ANON-UWFX-DFZY-7	Staff Member	Yes	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFZN-V	Parent	Neither/Don't know	When this proposal first came about I was leaning towards VC but when I started to learn more about VA and VC schools I hoped that we could remain as VA if we were able to support AFET with more governors and resources. We tried to speak to AFET through various parent contacts unfortunately we only recieved an official letter from them with no email address or other real means of communication... they left us with a feeling of lack of responsibility from their behalf for the school. I believe the school management team should demand a meeting for parents with one of the AFET governors, this is to allow parents to make an informed decision on what is best for the school... We need to hear AFET speak to be able to truly gauge whether VA or VC is best for the school. If AFET then are unable meet the required standards, then naturally my vote would be for VC, but I then make that decision with a clear conscious. I attended the meetings a few months ago and decided this time to take a back seat and I have not attended any of the meetings... its not the IEB or the council that we need to hear from... they have kindly put all the information to us a few months ago... what we really need to make this a fair and informed process is to have a meeting with AFET to see what they believe they can offer the school. Once we have the two sides then we can vote with confidence and clarity. So I kindly ask the reader to please arrange a virtual or face to face meeting with AFET before the proposal closing date.
ANON-UWFX-DFZI-R	Parent	No	I am not comfortable with the school becoming a VC school
ANON-UWFX-DFZ1-Y	Staff Member	Yes	The school is doing great and this is a wonderful opportunity for all the children and members of the Al Furqan family.
ANON-UWFX-DFZR-Z	Parent	No	I would like the school to stay voluntary aided as I do not agree with some aspects of the proposal change. I feel the school will over time lose it's founding Ethos and by lightening the criteria for school admission to all faiths, this will over time change the whole face of the school and it's principles. By leaving it in control of the Birmingham city council it is stripping the school of its own leadership. I feel over the years the school has improved it's ofsted to a good standard and children are happy and achieving well- above the national average mostly. All the school needs more than a change to VC, is some secure parent governors in place whom have a voice that can make a change. Also if it was to become VC, the governing body would be able to change the instrument of Governance that the school is built on, again changing its values. It is currently an over subscribed Muslim faith school as parents are keen for their children to be in an education environment that promotes excellence in academic studies but also dedicated Quran and salah times. It promotes teaching of the Muslim festivals and works alongside parents in easing the way for children to prosper in their faith and studies. I fear a change to VC would change this and the school would be no different to any other mainstream school, simple with a title of Muslim faith school.
ANON-UWFX-DFPZ-X	Staff Member	Yes	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFP8-V	Staff Member	Yes	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFPX-V	School Governor	Yes	The school has had an Interim Executive Board in place for a significant time and during that time the school has made excellent progress. However, it is now appropriate for the school to move forward and for a Governing Body to continue the work started by the I.E.B. with a Governing Body that includes representation from the community.
ANON-UWFX-DFPM-H	Staff Member	Yes	Birmingham City Council will support and respect the ethos and values of the school and the school can continue on its improvement journey.
ANON-UWFX-DFPD-8	Parent	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFPU-S	Pupil	No	No Comment
ANON-UWFX-DFP9-W	Staff Member	Yes	After talking with the council people and them giving us assurance that the islamic IQA will remain the same. The school became controlled will be nice for the school because when ever anything wants to be repaired or we need something new put in Birmingham CityCouncil will always be there to do this things for school.

			<p>Now IEB let us down as parents/community as whole.</p> <p>•IEB communication is absolutely not affective (broken down) we as parents are dissatisfied with how we're always turned down with our concerns.</p> <p>•No parent governors (we were denied voice) IEB didn't listen to parents.</p> <p>•Not consulting with the trustees AFET (information from the founders it's not coming to us as parents)</p> <p>•Alfurqan as a trustee school (is currently made up of AFET and IEB) This message could've easily being made clear to parents from the start so we are fully informed about our school's situation.</p> <p>•Language barrier (a lot of the people do not understand the change/ happening) this isn't fair. We, as parents have made this clear to the IEB at 1st consultation meeting, but our concern has been once again ignored.</p> <p>•Meetings just confused us more (the IEB wasn't transparent and said many conflicting things in the meetings) such as VA isn't an option and when the LA representative attended the 2nd meeting we were told VA still remains as an option.</p> <p>•Inconvenient time (deadlines rushed). We feel as parents and community that there could've been time given to us and opportunity to work with IEB to move forward with VA and not go backwards.</p> <p>•We were pushed to believe either VC or acadamy which is not an option for Alfurqan since it's rated good for its latest OFSTED report.</p> <p>•IEB overstayed (with no exit plan) with no tangible reason. By this time they should've explained to us their plan for handing over the office with overshadowed governing body who can take the work forward.</p> <p>•However, Alfurqan is something special because its admission oversubscription alone shows how our city celebrates diversity of faith and culture.</p> <p>•We as community cherish such opportunity and it's not fair to just dismiss our needs as residents of BCC.</p> <p>•Birmingham city council proudly aids other VA schools (14 or more schools) who are doing good, why not allow the first and only Islamic school which is government funded to stand as beaming example for other Muslims to follow.</p> <p>•Lastly, the IEB is able to appoint new trustees as shadowing governing body which doesn't need to be from AFET. The IEB should do this to help our community maintain VA.</p> <p>•</p> <p>•Staff</p> <p>•Low IQA staff means our children are not progressing in their Islamic knowledges</p> <p>•Under VC: There is direct link between staff employment and keeping the character of the school (Islamic ethos). For instance, staff from none Islamic background would not be able to guide or assist our children in the way that a Muslim staff would ie a Muslim dinner lady would remind/help the pupils read (dua/prayer) before eating or during congregational prayer assist pupils how they should perform the prayer etc. (read arabic).</p> <p>•RE:</p> <p>•The faith (Islam) teaching reduces under VC. Under VA we now have more opportunities to celebrate our faith (pupils doing assemblies about the prophets, charity fundraising etc).</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFPE-9	Parent	No	
ANON-UWFX-DFPK-F	Other, please specify	No	<p>Limiting IQA to 2 days and pupils praying in school instead of mosque are not acceptable. IQA should be running throughout the week just like other subjects. The very reason we have this school and my children go there is to know and understand their faith which shouldn't not be taken away from them. Thank you</p> <p>I am a new parent at the school with my daughter due to start reception class in September 2022.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFPV-T	Parent	No	I have only just heard from another parent about this and do not feel we have been given enough time or information about exactly what is going on. Nor do we see it as fair as we have put our children down to enter this school the way it currently is with the Islamic ethos and do not feel like you have assured us or given us enough guarantee that this will stay the same should the school change to VC.
ANON-UWFX-DFPS-Q	Staff Member	Yes	No Comment
ANON-UWFX-DFPP-M	Parent	No	<p>I oppose the proposal for changing the status of the school to Voluntary Controlled as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. As a parent, I have not any direct communication with Al- Furqan Educational Trust (AFET) to confirm or deny the IEB's statement that AFET would not be able to continue the school's improvement journey. Nor has the IEB produced any evidence of their statement about AFET. This does not help me in understanding why remaining a VA school would not be a preferred option. 2. The draft Instrument of Government by the IEB presumably is replacing the existing Instrument of Government (IOG). The IEB has not provided the existing IOG for me to compare if the proposed changes ensure all the vital elements of the Islamic ethos still remain. 3. I agree the IEB has improved the school's National Curriculum standards. However, there have not been any checks done on Religious provision especially when there has been a severe shortage of the IQA staff in the school which have left my son without a suitable place to pray his Dhuhr Salah and my daughter without an IQA teacher for half a term. If the IQA teaching standards have already been compromised under the IEB, what certainty do I have that they may not continue to be compromised? 4. The meetings that the IEB have had with parents have heavily focussed on the main option for the school changing to Voluntary Controlled. The IEB have not fully disclosed the other options available in order for me to make a more informed choice. When questioned about this, the IEB members have said 'we would have to explore other options,' leaving me unclear about the other suitable options available. 5. The IEB has not opened the doors for any parent representation during their 9 year stay at the school. This has prevented any parent's voice in key decision-making for the school. This has caused a lot of frustration and loss of confidence with the IEB making good choices for the school. This proposal for me has increased the anxiety with the governing of the school. 6. The Part 2 stage of the proposal has been timed inconveniently (July period) for parents who have several children going through school transition periods, parents' assessment of reports, holiday planning, Eid celebrations, attendance at Sports days, assemblies and Parent-School meetings. It is unfair to expect parents to be able to devote a proportionate time to decipher the proposal during this extremely busy period. 7. Additionally, a large proportion of the parent community like my husband has not been able to access the proposal due to language barriers. The proposal should have been made available in different languages, but the IEB did not do this. <p>I conclude that the IEB has not made matters very clear for their proposal and uncertainty (as stated above) remains as to the benefits of changing over to Voluntary Controlled status.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFPC-7	Parent	No	<p>I would like the school to remain Voluntary Aided. There has been a lot of confusion about whether VA was even an option. More time is required to investigate if voluntary aided status can be maintained. This whole proposal has been thrust upon us and many parents believed AFET would suggest a proposal, but since they haven't more time is needed to see if VA is an option and how this could be achieved.</p> <p>The community are very anxious about the changes and there is a clear desire to keep the school VA as can be seen in the petition attached with 800 signatures:</p> <p>https://www.change.org/p/help-us-protect-al-furqan-primary-school-s-voluntary-aided-va-status</p> <p>The timing of this second stage has been terrible as school winds down and staff, students and parents are particularly busy with end of year trips, transition between schools, assessments not to mention the intense heatwave of late. The community feel this process has heard but not truly listened to our concerns.</p> <p>The Muslim community in Birmingham seem to be ignored by the LA/IEB at every turn. Individuals have been told to pass on contact details for specific questions to be answered by LA/IEB but this has not happened. Why are we so easily fobbed off? Why don't we deserve all the information promised in the first stage?</p> <p>I do not believe a full Equality Impact assessment has been done for this change. The impact will slowly but surely change the identity of the school.</p> <p>Even with other Islamic schools in the area, Al Furqan is still oversubscribed due to its unique place in the community. Change to VC may not immediately change this but will not strive to protect it the way VA status allows.</p> <p>Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school. 2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents. 3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1. 4) No access to AFET through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency? 5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children. 6) *Staff recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models. 7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC faith-based learning would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum. <p>All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFP3-Q	Parent	No	
ANON-UWFX-DFPT-R	Parent	No	I want Al furqan to continue as faith school.

			https://www.change.org/p/help-us-protect-al-furqan-primary-school-s-voluntary-aided-va-status Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal: 1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school. 2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents. 3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1. 4) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency? 5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children. 6) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models. 7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum. All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.
ANON-UWFX-DFPW-U	Parent	No	
ANON-UWFX-DFP4-R	Parent	No	No Comment
ANON-UWFX-DFPQ-N	Pupil	No	No Comment
ANON-UWFX-DFP5-S	Parent	No	No Comment
ANON-UWFX-DFP6-T	Parent	No	Reading through the proposal I see inconsistency in what is written compared to what was claimed in the meetings. I am convinced that our IQA will be less. And that's the main reason to why parents choose the school.
ANON-UWFX-DFPF-A	Parent	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFPA-5	Parent	No	Very concerned about the following Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal: 1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school. 2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents. 3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1. 4) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency? 5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children. 6) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models. 7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum. All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.
ANON-UWFX-DFPY-W	Not Answered	No	Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal: 1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school. 2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents. 3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1. 4) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency? 5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children. 6) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models. 7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum. All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.
ANON-UWFX-DFPN-J	Parent	No	Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal: 1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school. 2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents. 3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1. 4) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency? 5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children. 6) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models. 7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum. All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.
ANON-UWFX-DFPJ-E	Parent	No	No Comment
ANON-UWFX-DFP1-N	Parent	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFPR-P	Other, Governance Professional	Yes	I fully support the conversion of AFPS IEB to become a Voluntary Controlled School to ensure that the school continues to improve.

			<p>Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal:</p> <p>1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school.</p> <p>2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents.</p> <p>3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1.</p> <p>4) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency?</p> <p>5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children.</p> <p>6) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models.</p> <p>7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum.</p> <p>All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFGB-W	Parent	No	I don't want the school to change from being a VA school.
ANON-UWFX-DFGZ-N	Parent	No	There is currently no parent representative, we have not been given no feedback. I feel the proposal has been rushed and the parents have not been listened to.
ANON-UWFX-DFG8-K	Parent	No	No comment
			<p>We do not feel reassured by the first stage of the proposal. Parents have not been given feedback on issues they were told they would get back to us on e.g. staff recruitment, measures taken to try to maintain vA status and open communication with afet and parents.</p> <p>Denying parent representation in school over the years means we feel this process has not been transparent and has not fully considered the needs of the local BAME community. We appreciate the progress made by the school but do not understand why no attempt was made to set up a shadow governing body over the decade. Why do the IEB have no faith in the school community to maintain progress if they could coach a team to do so as a VA school?</p> <p>Petition below reflects the deep anxiety felt by the local community. Not all can access the online survey so a petition was set up.</p> <p>https://www.change.org/p/help-us-protect-al-furqan-primary-school-s-voluntary-aided-va-status</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFGX-K	Parent	No	I do not understand the need. How have the school shown they cannot continue the good progress set up by the IEB? What evidence is this based on? What have the school community/AFET done that is so bad that in 9 years they were not given a chance to try to work with IEB?
ANON-UWFX-DFGM-8	Local Resident	Neither/Don't know	Feels like the Muslim community is not trusted and being ignored and victimised by LA...
			<p>Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal:</p> <p>1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school.</p> <p>2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents.</p> <p>3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1.</p> <p>4) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency?</p> <p>5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children.</p> <p>6) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models.</p> <p>7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum.</p> <p>All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFGD-Y	Local Resident	No	As long as the faith elements of the school remain infinitely legally binding and sealed without the chances of future amendments by a quorum and parents have a part in the governance, the proposal can be considered acceptable.
ANON-UWFX-DFG9-M	Parent	Neither/Don't know	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFG7-J	Parent	Yes	
			Al furqan is a unique school which caters to a vast Muslim population. It is a much needed school in Birmingham as it truly celebrates the Muslim faith throughout the day. The children have access to a mosque and daily worship is encouraged throughout the day with prayers and the teaching of good manners.
ANON-UWFX-DFGE-Z	Local Resident	No	I believe that as it is a unique school the council should do all it can to preserve it's VA status. It's a better option than homeschooling for a lot of parents and should continue as it is.
ANON-UWFX-DFGH-3	Staff Member	Yes	I am happy for the school to become VC as I believe it will be a good choice for the future of our school.
ANON-UWFX-DFGV-H	Other, Former Student	No	I did my early years of education in this school and I found that it strengthened my identity in my faith. The IQA element of the school increased my knowledge profoundly which I have benefited from. The mosque helped me to expand my understanding of prayer which I appreciate. If all of this changes I feel that the students won't get the same opportunities as I did which helped me a lot in my life. Under the new proposal I still feel uncertain that the children will receive exactly the same provisions that I did.
			<p>I am in favour as no other viable option has been made available. The choice of staying as VA doesn't seem to be on the table as AFET have not communicated their plans (if any) with parents. In fact there has been no communication with parents by AFET at all which has been very disheartening.</p> <p>I'd like to emphasise the concerns that myself and other parents have in terms of protecting the Islamic Ethos of the school. We do not, in any way want this to be eroded in the future. I would like a guarantee that the IQA part of the curriculum and Arabic as a language are protected as part of the curriculum now and in the future. My children have benefited a great deal from the IQA and have been super proud when they have achieved the trophies.</p> <p>The need for KS2 to pray in their lunch hour should remain an integral part of their school day. The discipline and self care element are only a small part of the advantages this brings to the children from a young age.</p> <p>The faith element should also be kept as integral across the curriculum as it is now, and not just limited to an hour or two a week.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFGS-E	Parent	Yes	My two elder children who are now at grammar schools, have benefited greatly from the teaching and ethos at Al Furqan and my younger two are currently benefiting greatly. They are growing up to be confident young Muslims that take great pride in being students of Al Furqan Primary.
ANON-UWFX-DFGP-B	Parent	Neither/Don't know	No comment
			<p>Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal:</p> <p>1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school.</p> <p>2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents.</p> <p>3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1.</p> <p>4) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency?</p> <p>5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children.</p> <p>6) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models.</p> <p>7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum.</p> <p>All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFGC-X	Parent	No	

			<p>Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal:</p> <p>1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school.</p> <p>2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents.</p> <p>3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1.</p> <p>4) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency?</p> <p>5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children.</p> <p>6) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models.</p> <p>7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum.</p> <p>All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFGG-2	Local Resident	No	
ANON-UWFX-DFG2-D	Other, Family member of student	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFGT-F	Other, Former Student	No	As a former student of the school, I experienced the extreme changeover during the introduction of the IEB. The proposal highlights changes in the admission criteria and the staffing requirements and I feel that this will affect the Islamic education that the children will receive. I believe in the long run that this will bring negative and drastic changes to the children's Islamic culture and faith.
ANON-UWFX-DFGW-J	Local Resident	No	I would not want any child to go through what I did when the IEB took charge of the school.
ANON-UWFX-DFG4-F	Local Resident	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFGQ-C	Other, please specify	No	No comment
		No	My niece will be moving to this school in September from another Islamic school I don't feel the Islamic ethos will be upheld properly. I would like her to receive the same Islamic education she has received in her previous school and don't feel she will receive this with the new proposal.
ANON-UWFX-DFG5-G	Parent	No	<p>As a caring parent I respectfully disagree with the proposal and think it's not in the best interest of the community due to the following:</p> <p>1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school.</p> <p>2) *Shahada* *certificate* not a component of admissions criteria. A fundamental requirement to maintain and protect the ethos will go.</p> <p>3) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents.</p> <p>4) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1.</p> <p>5) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency?</p> <p>6) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children.</p> <p>7) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models.</p> <p>8) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum.</p> <p>All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.</p>
			My brother who is 3 could possibly be joining the school in the future and I hope the school will be able to give him and other future children a good education it is currently known for.
ANON-UWFX-DFG6-H	Other, Former Student	No	<p>As a former student in this school I enjoyed my time there as me and my friend's got a good education and learned more about our religion in IQA. Also we had good teachers who enjoyed teaching us and helped us to learn the Quran.</p> <p>Since I have left, I believe the school has dropped in quality. I know this as my sister is currently in Yr 3 going to Yr 4. She has learnt a decent amount of Quran but the teachers let her off with many mistakes and it is not good quality. When I used to go to school the IQA department was quite good and I learned the Quran as a person should.</p> <p>As you can see I am an expert on writing this as I was well taught by my teachers from this very school.</p> <p>I hope you put my letter into consideration and identify the problems and fix them rather than making a new policy.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFGF-1	Other, Director of Educational Institute	No	There has been no evidence presented by IEB to show the inadequacy of AFET to govern and manage the school here onwards. Further there is no statistical evidence to support how and if the LA religious syllabus will achieve the desired ethos of the school. It is a failure on behalf of the LA to take over a well established, successfully emerging school which has been set up to cater the majority Muslim community in and around the area.
ANON-UWFX-DFGA-V	Parent	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFGN-9	Local Resident	No	<p>Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal:</p> <p>1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school.</p> <p>2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents.</p> <p>3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1.</p> <p>4) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency?</p> <p>5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children.</p> <p>6) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models.</p> <p>7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum.</p> <p>All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFGY-M	Local Resident	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFG1-C	Other, please specify	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DF4B-A	Parent	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFGR-D	Parent	No	No comment
ANON-UWFX-DFGJ-5	Parent	No	I would like the school to remain Voluntary Aided. For many years the parents have had little or no input. There have been no parent governors for many years now. Parents would like to have a say and an opportunity to explore if Voluntary Aided status can be maintained. The IEB have helped the school to get an ofsted good, which is fantastic. If the IEB worked with a new governing body and helped them to maintain standards then I believe VA is viable. Unfortunately my understanding is that the IEB can't stay any longer. So my problem is that if the IEB knew they could only stay for a limited time why didn't they start preparing by helping a new governing body to take over and support them ensuring standards would remain? Instead of the IEB saying, 'now we have to leave and the school must become Voluntary controlled or an academy. Looks like communication has broken down again.

			<p>I believe that it is very difficult to get a place at Al Furqan School because it is unique and the only one of its kind that encourages children to confidently follow their Muslim customs and also teaches them the National Curriculum.</p> <p>There are no other schools in the wider area that can be as accepting of the Muslim traditions and way of life, under VC the school's faith based teaching and environment will suffer. It is a necessity for the community that the IEB is gradually and sensibly replaced with a workable governing body, as a VA, and I would like the council to try it's very best and make this happen.</p> <p>There are several successful Muslim charities and organisations in Birmingham. Islamic Relief, Green Lane Mosque, Al-Muath Trust, As-Suffa Institution, Birmingham Central Mosque, Sultan Bahu Trust to name a few. Also nationally such as the Muslim Council of Britain.</p> <p>I think it's reasonable to expect that these organisations are considerably better equipped than afet and are capable of overseeing our school's journey. This will mean much needed improvements in IQA whilst continuing to teach the full National Curriculum for Religious Education and other changes that have already been integrated into the day.</p> <p>The main point is that considering how the muslims of the city are considerable in number and undoubtedly follow the very specific tenets of Islam in terms of diet, dress and prayer, it makes sense to keep the school as VA as this is able to incorporate Islam through many daily activities and rituals and not just IQA and collective worship.</p> <p>I know that lots of other schools struggle to accommodate for Muslim pupils and this is to be expected, although adapted provision is made as far as possible. Nevertheless many parents choose to homeschool and this is not the best option as schools provide a more wholesome and social education. Al Furqan is like a home away from home for our children as the environment is in keeping with the way we wish to raise our children.</p> <p>Therefore, when especially in Birmingham we have had many challenges as a city, it makes sense to formulate solutions together. Al Furqan has great leadership and I feel that we can envisage out of the box thinking that works for the Local Authority and caters for the Muslim community's specific needs.</p> <p>I would like to reiterate that the uniqueness of the school can only be maintained under VA. The standard of Islamic education provided is commendable and this is due to the staff having knowledge of the faith and the ability to pronounce the supplications, read Arabic, offer prayers and so on with the children throughout the day. VC would inevitably change this over time, with staff turnover and therefore I do not agree with the proposal.</p> <p>I feel that despite all the meetings and parents asking for clarity we have had a lot of time given to us but no answers nor clarity as to why other options have not been explored. We have not even been given access to afet whom we've never met but are expected to trust that they will work with the school to uphold the ethos. We have never been given access to afet at all, even when facing challenges with IQA or in IQA parents evenings and workshops.</p> <p>The proposal with afer is not acceptable as despite our concerns the revised document is more of the same. The changes in category will have an obvious affect on admissions, staffing and religious education.</p> <p>If at present perhaps this proposal seems to solve management or financial issues then this is not a good enough reason to accept it. I feel that at then end of the day it's the children that matter and their education in a holistic environment that celebrates their identity as British Muslims.</p> <p>As parents we have been needlessly and unjustly denied any representation on the governing body. At this stage once again if parental concerns are ignored and made light of then that will be unacceptable when we have tried our best to support the IEB, repeatedly over the years we have asked for parent governors and now we have engaged with the consultation process.</p> <p>My children have really benefited from the setup of the school and from having Muslim role models, access to the mosque and daily Islamic stories, music and multimedia aside from IQA. I feel it's important to maintain this and would like to request that the respected decision makers can find sustainable and novel solutions so that staffing, admissions and faith based education can continue under the VA model.</p> <p>Thank you for your time</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFP2-P	Parent	No	
			<p>Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal:</p> <p>1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school.</p> <p>2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents.</p> <p>3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1.</p> <p>4) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency?</p> <p>5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children.</p> <p>6) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models.</p> <p>7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum.</p> <p>All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFGU-G	Parent	No	
			<p>Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal:</p> <p>1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for *all* of KS2 to pray *Salah* in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site *Masjid* which is a vital part of the school.</p> <p>2) Proposal not *translated* into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents.</p> <p>3) *No* *feedback* from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1.</p> <p>4) *No* *access* *to* *AFET* through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency?</p> <p>5) We still have no *parent* *representative* after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children.</p> <p>6) *Staff* *recruitment* under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models.</p> <p>7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC *faith* - *based* *learning* would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum.</p> <p>All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DF4Z-2	Parent	No	

			<p>There are no other schools in the wider area that can be as accepting of the Muslim traditions and way of life, under VC the school's faith based teaching and environment will suffer. It is a necessity for the community that the IEB is gradually and sensibly replaced with a workable governing body, as a VA, and I would like the council to try it's very best and make this happen.</p> <p>There are several successful Muslim charities and organisations in Birmingham. Islamic Relief, Green Lane Mosque, Al-Muath Trust, As-Suffa Institution, Birmingham Central Mosque, Sultan Bahu Trust to name a few. Also nationally such as the Muslim Council of Britain.</p> <p>I think it's reasonable to expect that these organisations are considerably better equipped than afet and are capable of overseeing our school's journey. This will mean much needed improvements in IQA whilst continuing to teach the full National Curriculum for Religious Education and other changes that have already been integrated into the day.</p> <p>The main point is that considering how the muslims of the city are considerable in number and undoubtedly follow the very specific tenets of Islam in terms of diet, dress and prayer, it makes sense to keep the school as VA as this is able to incorporate Islam through many daily activities and rituals and not just IQA and collective worship.</p> <p>I know that lots of other schools struggle to accommodate for Muslim pupils and this is to be expected, although adapted provision is made as far as possible. Nevertheless many parents choose to homeschool and this is not the best option as schools provide a more wholesome and social education. Al Furqan is like a home away from home for our children as the environment is in keeping with the way we wish to raise our children.</p> <p>Therefore, when especially in Birmingham we have had many challenges as a city, it makes sense to formulate solutions together. Al Furqan has great leadership and I feel that we can envisage out of the box thinking that works for the Local Authority and caters for the Muslim community's specific needs.</p> <p>I would like to reiterate that the uniqueness of the school can only be maintained under VA. The standard of Islamic education provided is commendable and this is due to the staff having knowledge of the faith and the ability to pronounce the supplications, read Arabic, offer prayers and so on with the children throughout the day. VC would inevitably change this over time, with staff turnover and therefore I do not agree with the proposal.</p> <p>I feel that despite all the meetings and parents asking for clarity we have had a lot of time given to us but no answers nor clarity as to why other options have not been explored. We have not even been given access to afet whom we've never met but are expected to trust that they will work with the school to uphold the ethos. We have never been given access to afet at all, even when facing challenges with IQA or in IQA parents evenings and workshops.</p> <p>The proposal with afet is not acceptable as despite our concerns the revised document is more of the same. The changes in category will have an obvious affect on admissions, staffing and religious education.</p> <p>If at present perhaps this proposal seems to solve management or financial issues then this is not a good enough reason to accept it. I feel that at the end of the day it's the children that matter and their education in a holistic environment that celebrates their identity as British Muslims.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DF48-Z	Parent	No	As parents we have been needlessly and unjustly denied any representation on the governing body. At this stage once again if parental concerns are ignored and made light of then that will be unacceptable when we have tried our best to support the IEB, repeatedly over the years we have asked for parent governors and
ANON-UWFX-DF4X-Z	Local Resident	No	No comment
			<p>Unresolved issues following stage 1 of VC proposal:</p> <p>1) The newly proposed Instrument of Government does not state the need for "all" of KS2 to pray "Salah" in congregation. It also does not state the need to use the on-site "Masjid" which is a vital part of the school.</p> <p>2) Proposal not "translated" into language for non-native speakers after being promised, denying access to many parents.</p> <p>3) "No" "feedback" from IEB about fully exploring retaining VA status which again was promised in stage 1.</p> <p>4) "No" "access" "to" "AFET" through the school to discuss IQA issues eg. trophy deadlines nevermind the proposal itself. How can we be reassured that the religious element is in safe hands with this lack of communication and transparency?</p> <p>5) We still have no "parent" "representative" after almost a decade. The IEB have denied us this for no clear reason and to the detriment of the school community and children. Parents feel disheartened year in year out. Therefore this proposal does not represent what we feel is best for our school or community. We still have no clarity as to why such a big change needs to happen causing anxiety for parents and children.</p> <p>6) "Staff" "recruitment" under VC means they do not have to be of the faith (Muslim). Over time this will mean the faith element becomes diminished. Children will not have consistency in staff who are able to educate them both academically and spiritually through their inherent knowledge and etiquettes as Muslim role models.</p> <p>7) Currently: assemblies, PSHE, enrichment activities are examples of how the curriculum is taught from a faith perspective. Under VC "faith" - "based" "learning" would be limited to 2 specific hours of learning in the week. The faith element will not necessarily be interwoven into the curriculum.</p> <p>All these points in isolation may seem minor but when happening simultaneously, the identity of the school will inevitably change.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DF4M-N	Local Resident	No	
			<p>I have a parent at Al Furqan for a long time and found it be a good nurturing school for my children. The Islamic provision sets the school apart from other schools in the area and undoubtedly the reason for sending my children here. The proposal made by the IEB to turn the school into a VC school will draw away from what sets the school apart (Islamic ethos). I understand that as a VC school Al Furqan will remain an Islamic school but feel that the ethos will not be as strong as it is under VA. For example the recruitment of staff under VC will change and have a direct impact on the Islamic provision, with only some reserve teachers appointed to teach the faith element. Not all staff will be employed to uphold the Islamic ethos. This will have a direct impact on the Islamic education the school is able to provide. Currently staff are great role models for children and are able to deliver Islamic education through out the day in the form of daily supplications, assemblies, cross curriculum links, Arabic and much more. Islam is not only taught as a stand alone subject but rather a way of life. This can only be done if staff are equipped with the right knowledge of the Quran and hadith.</p> <p>If under VC there will only be a few reserve teachers to teach Islam the children will not get the same quality nor quantity. Will there be a cap on how many reserve teachers there will be? What happens if some leave?</p> <p>The proposal also states only two hours of faith based learning. This will limit teachers to how much they can teach.</p> <p>Lastly the draft instrument of governance does not mention salah/prayer for all of KS2 which has been the case for the school for many years. There is no mention of the mosque which is an important part of the school and something to be celebrated.</p> <p>For the reasons above I am not satisfied that VC is the best route for Al Furqan. It is about time the parents are given the opportunity to govern the school along with able community members. The IEB have made some improvements to the school but have failed to give parents any say in their decisions.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DFGK-6	Parent	No	
			<p>I'm a parent at Al- Furqan Primary school. I have several children registered at the school. I'm writing to object to the current VC proposal proposed by the IEB. I'm objecting to the proposal due to several reasons in which I believe would lead to the school to gradually lose its Muslim identity.</p> <p>I object to the school becoming VC because of the following proposed reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation process- Most of the parents at the school do not speak English as their first language. Most of these parents have not received translation or interpretation services despite their repeated requests in Part 1, and as a result, they are unable to access the proposal. They have not been fully consulted and therefore have been denied the right to make an informed decision. • Admission arrangement- The only VA Islamic school in Birmingham at the moment is Al Furqan Primary School, which is similarly oversubscribed. There is a critical lack of VA Islamic schools like Al Furqan in Birmingham. Despite this, under the proposed oversubscription criteria candidates are not given preference based on their religious beliefs. • Changes in RE syllabus- The RE syllabus has undergone significant changes during the IEB's term period. In VA schools, RE must be taught according to the trust agreement and the teachings of the school's designated faith. Al Furqan, however, is the only VA school where RE is taught in accordance with the LA-approved syllabus. Since making these changes, the IEB has not notified parents of the changes to the RE curriculum, preventing them from making plans to pull their kids out of class. The IEB's present proposal would keep teaching RE in accordance with the LA agreed syllabus which is against the parents' choice of taking their children to a faith school. • Changes in IQA teaching – IQA employees will be designated in the current proposal as "Reserved Teachers" who will only be accessible upon request. This means that they won't be readily available to lead the kids during constructive classroom instruction and communal prayers. The practises and sense of community that the kids need to participate in their group worship will be hampered by this. The Islamic faith depends on the ongoing instruction and monitoring of young children, which is impossible if IQA professionals are only available upon request.
ANON-UWFX-DF4D-C	Parent	No	
			<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>I object the proposal I am for Al Furqan Primary school to remain VA.</p> <p>Preserving our Islamic ethos at Al Furqan Primary allowing new trustees to be appointed based on their merits, integrity and a drive to make Al Furqan an even greater a model school for others.</p> <p>VA is an option allow it to be just that, shadowing an outstanding school that can work in partnership with Al Furqan primary. All options should be given rather than having to accept what is given to become of Al Furqan Primary which will inevitably change the face of Al Furqan as we know it.</p> <p>So as a parent I object to such a change and I request Al Furqan to remain VA.</p>
ANON-UWFX-DF4U-W	Parent	No	

ANON-UWFX-Email001	Parent	No	<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>I object the proposal I am for Al Furqan Primary school to remain VA.</p> <p>Preserving our Islamic ethos at Al Furqan Primary allowing new trustees to be appointed based on their merits, integrity and a drive to make Al Furqan an even greater a model school for others.</p> <p>VA is an option allow it to be just that, shadowing an outstanding school that can work in partnership with Al Furqan primary. All options should be given rather than having to accept what is given to become of Al Furqan Primary which will inevitably change the face of Al Furqan as we know it.</p> <p>So as a parent I object to such a change and I request Al Furqan to remain VA.</p>
ANON-UWFX-Email002	Parent	No	<p>To whom it may concern,</p> <p>I object the proposal I am for Al Furqan Primary school to remain VA.</p> <p>Preserving our Islamic ethos at Al Furqan Primary allowing new trustees to be appointed based on their merits, integrity and a drive to make Al Furqan an even greater a model school for others.</p> <p>VA is an option allow it to be just that, shadowing an outstanding school that can work in partnership with Al Furqan primary. All options should be given rather than having to accept what is given to become of Al Furqan Primary which will inevitably change the face of Al Furqan as we know it.</p> <p>So as a parent I object to such a change and I request Al Furqan to remain VA.</p>

From: [David Board](#) on behalf of [Edsi Enquiries](#)
To: [CLLRConservative](#); [CLLRLabour](#); [CLLRLiberalDemocrat](#); [CLLROther](#); [Hardeep Kainth](#)
Subject: School Organisation Statutory Proposal for Al-Furqan Primary School to Change Category of school
Date: 27 June 2022 17:18:16
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)

Dear Councillors,

This notification is for all Birmingham Councillors to inform you of a statutory proposal by the Interim Executive Board of Al-Furqan Primary School which was published for statutory consultation on 23rd June 2022 and published to the Birmingham BeHeard consultation portal. Please see details below.

<p>Al-Furqan Primary School - Voluntary Aided School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change the category of the school from Voluntary Aided (VA) to Voluntary Controlled (VC). <p>For a copy of the complete proposal document and details of how to submit comments, please visit: School Organisation Al-Furqan Primary School 2022 - Birmingham City Council - Citizen Space (birminghambeheard.org.uk)</p> <p>All comments must be received no later than 21st July 2022.</p>

Please forward this email to anyone you think may be interested in this proposal.

Kind regards,

Education Infrastructure Team

Education Infrastructure

Birmingham City Council

PO Box 15843, Birmingham B2 2RT

0121 303 8847

Please reply to: edsienquiries@Birmingham.gov.uk (not individuals)

Website: <http://www.birminghameducationsupportservices.co.uk/Services/3051>

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Al-Furqan Primary School: Proposal to change from voluntary aided to voluntary controlled

Frequently Asked Questions (last updated Monday 20th June 2022)

The Interim Executive Board (IEB) is proposing to change the category of Al-Furqan Primary School from voluntary aided (VA) to voluntary controlled (VC) in January 2023.

This document sets out answers to the frequently asked questions that have been raised during the consultation process, grouped into the main themes.

This document will be regularly updated throughout the consultation process.

The purpose of this document is to respond to questions and comments raised during the first (informal) stage of the consultation process.

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The proposal

Why is changing the school to voluntary controlled being proposed?

The Interim Executive Board (IEB) has been overseeing the strategic direction of the school since 2013. Various options for the school have been considered, including remaining voluntary aided, changing category to voluntary controlled, and conversion to an academy. The IEB believes that a change of the category of the school to voluntary controlled is the best way to ensure that the school continues to improve.

Why can't the school continue with the IEB?

Interim Executive Boards (IEBs) are not intended to be a long-term solution for a school.

An IEB is a small board appointed on a short-term basis to turn around a school that is judged to be in urgent need of rapid improvement. An IEB replaces the governing board of the school and its main function is to provide interim expertise and high-quality governance. This must support future improvement in the school, including the promotion of high standards of educational achievement.

The IEB at Al Furqan replaced the governing board in 2013, after the school was judged to be inadequate under the VA Governing Board structure in place in 2012. The IEB has been in place ever since.

Why can't the school remain voluntary aided as it is now a 'Good' school (Ofsted 2017)?

The IEB and the council have improved on the various matters that were previously inadequate under the direction of the VA governing board. During the period since the school achieved 'Good', there has been no evidence that a governing board with a majority of members appointed by the Al-Furqan Education Trust (AFET) would be able to replace the IEB or maintain and continue the improvement journey of the school. The council and a new VC governing board would continue to work closely with AFET, and AFET would appoint two members of the governing board as foundation governors, whose role would be to ensure that the ethos of the school is maintained in accordance with the trust deed.

[See also the section of this FAQ – "Governance".]

If the school became voluntary controlled, what would change and what would stay the same?

Religious character – Muslim	Stay the same. The designated religious character of the school is mandated in an order signed by the secretary of state and cannot be changed by the school or the council.
Curriculum, RE and IQA	Stay the same.
Collective worship	Stay the same.
Staff	Change. Staff will be employed by the council (staff will still be appointed by the governing board). Please also see section below on: <i>How would the school ensure that teachers recruited in the future uphold the faith of the school?</i>
Governance	Change. VC governing board members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Local Authority governor, • 2 parents, • The Head Teacher, • 1 staff member, • 2 Foundation governors appointed by AFET, • Co-opted governors (number to be decided by the governing board)
Finance	Change. Funding for building and land maintenance would come from the council, rather than from the DfE. All other funding (e.g. pupil funding) would stay the same.
Land	Stay the same. The VC governing board would continue to have control of the land in the same way as the IEB. (AFET will continue to hold the land on trust for the school).

For further details, please see the table in the proposal document and the other sections of this FAQ document.

When will it happen?

If the IEB decides to proceed to the formal part of the consultation, the documentation will set out timescales for this in line with the prescribed school organisation rules and any further consultation with staff regarding their transfer from Trust to council employment.

Will the council make all the decisions for the school going forwards?

No, the VC governing board would make decisions. The governing board will direct the school according to the formal document, “the Instrument of Government” and their statutory duties.

If the school became voluntary controlled, could the council just change things?

No. The governing board would be able to direct and make certain changes. For other changes, the governing board and the council would have to follow specific processes, policies or laws (e.g. this School Organisation process for proposing changes like VA to VC).

How many responses would mean that the proposal would be approved / rejected?

The responses are not counted like a vote - there is no number or percentage of responses that would automatically mean the proposal is rejected or approved. The responses are for consideration by the proposer (i.e. the IEB) and the decision maker (Birmingham City Council).

What would happen if the proposal is rejected?

The IEB would then have to consider all options again before proposing a solution for the continued improvement of the school. The options would include: to make no change; academisation; or remaining VA. However, it is important to note that the option of making no change is untenable as the IEB cannot continue to remain in place (see p2 for details). The IEB are also clear that they do not believe that remaining VA is in the best interest of the school (see p2 for details).

Religious character

Will the Muslim status of the school change?

No, Al-Furqan would keep its Muslim status as a VC school (the “designated religious character”). This is mandated in an order signed by the secretary of state and cannot be changed by the school or the council.

Will there be a change to Religious Education (RE) at the school?

No, the school would continue to teach the same curriculum that it does now - this is the Birmingham Agreed Syllabus for Religious Education. This syllabus is agreed by representatives from all major faith groups, including Muslim representatives.

Would the school continue to teach IQA?

Yes, the school would continue to teach Islamic, Quranic and Arabic studies (IQA) along with the National Curriculum. As part of the IQA, Arabic would continue to be the modern foreign language taught at the school.

The IEB's proposal is made on the basis that the teaching of the IQA and the Arabic language would continue, as these are important and enhancing elements of the school. The ethos of the school will be set out in the proposed Instrument of Government.

How would the school ensure that teachers recruited in the future uphold the faith of the school?

The Equality Act 2010 prohibits religious discrimination in employment. However, there are some limited exceptions for VA and VC schools which have a religious designation – **Sections 58-60 SSFA 1998**.

VA schools may give preference for appointment, remuneration or promotion to teachers who hold religious opinions, attend religious worship, or are willing to give religious education in accordance with the tenets of the school's religion. In terminating teachers' employment, VA schools may also have regard to any conduct incompatible with the tenets of the school's religion. However, VA schools must not disqualify anyone from being employed at the school as non-teaching staff because of their religious opinions or whether they attend religious worship.

In VC schools, the staff must include "reserved teachers" who are specifically appointed to give religious education and selected for their fitness and competence to give religious education in accordance with the trust deed or the tenets of the school's religion. The foundation governors must be consulted on these appointments. The same exceptions to the Equality Act 2010 apply to reserved teachers at VC schools as to teachers at VA schools. In the appointment of head teachers at VC schools, regard may be had to that person's ability and fitness to preserve and develop the religious character of the school, and this applies regardless of whether the head teacher will be a "reserved teacher". Apart from these exceptions, no member of staff at a VC school may be discriminated against on the grounds of their religious opinions or whether they attend religious worship.

Staff

How will this affect staff?

The council would follow a special legal process to become the employer of all the staff: the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) process (TUPE). Any changes to existing terms and conditions resulting from the transfer will be in full consultation with the trade unions and teaching associations.

Would staff still be able to go on Hajj?

An application by a member of staff employed or engaged at the school for leave of absence (unpaid) to perform Hajj for a period of ten days between the 2nd of Dhul Hajj and 11th of Dhul Hajj would be supported, subject to the need to ensure the safeguarding of pupils, the maintenance of educational standards and performance, and the proper and effective use of the school's financial resources.

Admissions

Would the admission arrangements for the school change?

Yes, the council would manage and coordinate the admission arrangements. This would mean some changes to the admissions and “oversubscription criteria”. Please see the proposal document for the full details of the changes that would happen.

How would the admission arrangements affect children of staff who already attend the school?

Staff members’ children who are already on roll at the school would not be affected. The “sibling priority” would also stay the same for any of their siblings applying for a place at the school (provided that a sibling would still be in attendance on the date the other sibling is admitted).

Governance

What issues did the IEB identify at the school when they took over governance? Can the IEB please be transparent about all the issues they picked up at the school when they took over the governance?

In 2012 a VA governing board with a majority of members appointed by AFET was leading the school, and the head teacher was a member of AFET.

When the school was inspected by Ofsted in 2012 (report can be found [here](#)) the inspectors identified the concerns listed below. The IEB has taken action and made significant improvements in all of the listed areas.

- **Leadership and Management** was judged as **Inadequate**. The inspection report said:
 - “The school’s leaders, including governors, have low expectations of what pupils should be achieving and do not have a good enough understanding of how pupils are progressing. They are unaware of weaknesses in teaching, so they are not improving its quality or managing teachers’ performance adequately.
 - Lines of communication with many parents and carers have broken down, leading to high levels of dissatisfaction.”
- **Quality of teaching and Achievement of pupils** were both judged **Inadequate**. The inspection report said:
 - “Much of the teaching in Years 1 to 6 is inadequate, which leads to widespread underachievement.
 - Teachers do not expect enough of pupils or give them work that is matched to their abilities.
 - Teachers set homework only sporadically and do not mark books well enough, which does not help pupils know how to improve their work.
 - Groups of pupils are taught for long periods by teaching assistants and they do not make enough progress.

- In some lessons, insufficient resources, especially books, slow pupils' progress."
- **Behaviour and Safety of Pupils** was judged as **Requires Improvement**.
The inspection report said:
 - "Some older pupils misbehave when teaching is weak."

In addition, improvements have been made by the IEB in the following areas:

- Safeguarding practice
- Financial management and control

What has the Trust had to do with the school since the IEB was in place? What have they been doing since 2012?

Representatives of the Trust have visited the school to review the teaching of the IQA on a half-termly basis.

The Trust entered into Transfer of Control agreements with the IEB to regulate the shared use of the publicly funded Primary School site until the Trust's private Girls' School, Boys' School and Nursery vacated the site.

The Trust entered into a Transfer of Control agreement with the IEB for community use of the primary school's prayer hall outside school hours, and set up a mosque management committee to liaise with the IEB about this

The Trust and IEB have worked together to enable the Trust to apply for public funding for capital projects/building works on the school site.

How much input would the Trust have if the school becomes voluntary controlled?

AFET would appoint two foundation governors to sit on the new VC Governing Board.

Who would be on the new governing board?

- 1 Local Authority governor
- 2 parents
- The Head Teacher
- 1 staff member
- 2 Foundation governors appointed by AFET
- As many co-opted governors as the new Governing Board agrees is necessary to effectively govern the school

When would the new governing board be ready?

A new board would be in place ready to take over governance of the school as soon as it converted to become VC.

What will the new Instrument of Government (IOG) look like? Can you share it with the parents in advance?

The proposed draft IOG is attached to this document.

What is a “shadow governing board” and has this option been explored; why isn’t there one?

In 2010 the DfE issued regulations that confirmed that local authorities can determine in each individual case whether it is appropriate to put in place a shadow governing board, or move straight to establishing a normally-constituted governing board.

A shadow governing board would be appointed by the council to work alongside the IEB for a minimum period of 6 months. The 2010 Regulations specify that the shadow governing board must exercise any functions which have been delegated to them by the IEB.

Once the IEB ceases to operate, the shadow governing board acts alone as the governing board of the school for a minimum period of 6 months, but no longer than 13 months. At the agreed time, the shadow governing board is then replaced by the normally-constituted governing board.

The members of a shadow governing board include the Headteacher, an LA governor, a Staff governor, at least 2 Parent governors, and Foundation governors. The number of Foundation governors will vary depending on the type of school. All shadow governors are appointed by the council but the council must first consult the body entitled to appoint foundation governors. Additional co-opted governors can be appointed, as necessary. All appointed shadow governors are required by the 2010 Regulations “to have the skills required to contribute to the effective governance and success of the school”.

The IEB of Al-Furqan Primary School is proposing to change the school’s status from voluntary aided to voluntary controlled.

The view of the IEB and Al-Furqan Education Trust at present is that a voluntary aided shadow governing board is not the right option for the school at this time.

This may be reconsidered following the outcome of the next stage of consultation.

Land and buildings

What will happen to the school site and buildings if the school changes from voluntary aided to voluntary controlled?

The Trust would continue to hold the land on trust for the purposes of the primary school but the new VC governing board will have control of the land and buildings.

How to contribute

How can parents submit comments; and how will parents be kept informed?

Parents will have another opportunity to submit comments during part 2 of the consultation process if the IEB decides to proceed to the next (formal) stage of the consultation. The IEB will write to parents with all the details needed at that time.

Details of a consultation webpage will also be shared, which will include updates and progress at certain points of the process.

