

St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School and socio-economic selection

Fair Admissions Campaign paper, prepared September 2015

We submitted several sets of comments with respect to St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School and socio-economic selection. These are all included in order in what follows.

Initial comments, 30 June 2014

1. When sufficiently oversubscribed, St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School in Bristol selects up to 200 of its 216 pupils on the basis of religion. Four of these places are given to children of faiths other than Christian, whereas the remaining 196 (minus looked after, formally looked after and statemented children) are allocated to Christians. There are three criteria of religious selection, the most stringent of which requires parent and/or child to attend worship three times a month for three years, the next requiring two times a month for two years, and the last requiring four times in the last year. The primary tie-breaker is distance from the school.
2. The school is academically strong and rated outstanding by Ofsted. As a consequence it is heavily oversubscribed, having received 521 applications in 2013 and for at least the last three years allocating the maximum possible number of places on the basis of faith. For 2013 and 2014 all of these places were allocated to the most observant faith criteria, whereas in 2012 almost all were.¹
3. Paragraph 1.8 of the School Admissions Code says that 'Admission authorities must ensure that their arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social... group'. We believe that the religious selection requirements in St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School's admissions arrangements indirectly disadvantage children from low income social groups.
4. The Department for Education's annual school census provides data on the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.² For the St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School, the January 2014 Census (the most recent available) records that 96 of 1,581 pupils, or 6.1%, are eligible for free school meals.

Comparing this to the local area

¹ As per

- page 61 of http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/children_and_young_people/schools/school_admissions/BD4279%20-%20Secondary%20School%20Admissions%202013-14_FINAL%20WEB_.pdf
- page 10 of http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/children_and_young_people/schools/school_admissions/1stroundAllocationCombinedSecondary2013.pdf
- http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/children_and_young_people/schools/school_admissions/StMRTAllocation%20Statement%20-%20Feb%202014_0.pdf
- page 14 of http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/children_and_young_people/schools/school_admissions/secondary_admissions/Secondary%20first%20round%20allocation%20Sept%202012_0.pdf

² See SFR15_2014_school_level_pupils_UD in the Underlying Data zip file at

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2014>

5. Until January 2010, the DfE also provided data from its census of the proportion of pupils living in any given locality that are eligible for free school meals. The school's 2001 middle super output area (MSOA) is Bristol 031. This contains 1,210 pupils at mainstream state schools aged between 5 and 15, of whom 623 (or 51.4%) are eligible for free school meals – a much higher figure.³
6. Of course, the school has many more pupils aged 11-18 than its MSOA does, so it is worth looking at wider areas as well. The MSOAs neighbouring the school are Bristol 023, Bristol 024, Bristol 025, Bristol 029, Bristol 032, Bristol 035, Bristol 037 and Bristol 039. These MSOAs and Bristol 031 have 7,876 pupils in them, of whom 2,586 are eligible for free school meals (or 32.8%).
7. Still in 2010, Bristol as a whole had 43,589 resident mainstream state school pupils aged 5 to 15, of whom 10,006 (23.0%) are eligible for free school meals. As of January 2014, it has 16,565 pupils attending mainstream state secondary schools, with 4,215 (25.4%) being eligible for free school meals.
8. The Fair Admissions Campaign's map builds up a 'local profile' for each school by looking at its MSOA and adding neighbouring MSOAs in the same ward/first half of postcode/local authority until the local profile has as many pupils as the school. This also makes adjustments to the local profile to account for differences in age. This estimates that if the school simply takes in its local pupils, it should have about 35.7% eligible for free school meals. The disparity between the school and its area makes the school one of the most socio-economically selective in the country.⁴

Comparing this to other schools nearby

9. For reference, here are the figures for all the mainstream state secondary schools in Bristol:

School name	Religious Character	% faith selection	Number of pupils	Eligible for free school meals	School FSM %	Local FSM % ⁵	Diff.
St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School	Church of England	93	1581	96	6.1%	35.7%	-29.6%
Bristol Cathedral Choir School	Church of England	0	736	46	6.3%	31.9%	-25.7%
St Bede's Catholic College	Roman Catholic	100	948	63	6.6%	25.2%	-18.6%
Bristol Free School	None	0	393	53	13.5%	25.6%	-12.1%
Bedminster Down	None	0	765	118	15.4%	23.3%	-7.8%

³

<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=280216&c=Bristol+031&d=140&e=5&g=399255&i=1001x1003x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1403904493410&enc=1&dsFamilyId=1961>. The age of the 2010 data may mean that numbers have changed slightly but this shouldn't make a big difference. The differences in the age ranges probably work against the school as primary pupils are more likely than secondary pupils to be eligible for free school meals – but this would only make a difference by 1.5% nationally, i.e. much less than the gap between this school and its area.

⁴ <http://fairadmissions.org.uk/map/>

⁵ As per the Fair Admissions Campaign's map. Note the average diff. weighted to school size is 0.4%.

School							
Colston's Girls' School	None	0	736	77	10.5%	18.2%	-7.7%
Redland Green School	None	0	1358	50	3.7%	8.4%	-4.8%
St Bernadette Catholic Secondary School	Roman Catholic	100	725	91	12.6%	16.3%	-3.7%
Ashton Park School	None	0	1181	169	14.3%	16.6%	-2.3%
Brislington Enterprise College	None	0	1196	214	17.9%	16.5%	1.3%
Cotham School	None	0	1394	192	13.8%	11.3%	2.5%
Fairfield High School	None	0	614	164	26.7%	23.1%	3.6%
Oasis Academy Brightstowe	None	0	604	192	31.8%	28.2%	3.6%
Bristol Brunel Academy	None	0	1071	291	27.2%	19.7%	7.5%
Orchard School Bristol	None	0	655	205	31.3%	21.2%	10.1%
Henbury School	None	0	624	215	34.5%	22.8%	11.7%
Merchants' Academy	None	0	1032	408	39.5%	27.4%	12.2%
Bristol Metropolitan Academy	None	0	707	210	29.7%	17.1%	12.6%
Oasis Academy John Williams	None	0	724	236	32.6%	16.5%	16.1%
Bridge Learning Campus	None	0	1058	519	49.1%	26.3%	22.7%
The City Academy Bristol	None	0	908	606	66.7%	32.0%	34.7%

10. As can be seen, the school takes a much lower proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals than most other Bristol schools. It also compares the least favourably to its area. Bristol Cathedral Choir School, St Bede's Catholic School and Bristol Free School also compare unfavourably. But:

- Bristol Cathedral Choir School uses random allocation, not distance, as its primary admissions criteria and so would not be expected to be fully comparable to its area. It also uses banding, with the band splits being based on applicant abilities and not the local/national range of abilities; and it selects 10% of places on the basis of music aptitude; and 8 places go to choristers at Bristol Cathedral. All three of these things likely contribute to socio-economic selection and the latter probably breaks the Admissions Code. The school has also just been found by the OSA to break the Code in a number of other places.⁶
- Bristol Free School does not measure proximity to the school for 80% of its places but instead uses proximity to another point – something uniquely permitted by the school's funding agreement.
- And St Bede's is also religiously selective and might be socio-economically selective for similar reasons.

11. Other schools are more socio-economically inclusive with the nearest to St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School, bar Bristol Cathedral Choir School, being The City Academy Bristol, the most inclusive of all.

Comparing this regionally and nationally

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/bristol-cathedral-choir-school>

12. No doubt St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School will object to the above comparisons to MSOAs and to other schools by saying that the school has a mission to serve the Christian community city-wide, and therefore such local comparisons are *too* local for this school. But we have already compared the school to the local authority as a whole and found it wanting. Let us now turn to considering whether or not the school is socio-economically selective when compared to wider areas still.
13. Last year's year 7 intake came almost entirely from Bristol, but a few pupils came from South Gloucestershire or North Somerset.⁷ In 2010 these three boroughs together had 15,634 of 101,002 pupils (or 15.5%) at mainstream schools eligible for free school meals. Including Bath and North East Somerset, which also borders Bristol, we get that 17,490 of 119,406 pupils (or 14.6%) who were eligible.
14. Finally, the south-west as a whole has 73,260 of 598,879 pupils (or 12.2%) eligible for free school meals. And nationally the figure stands at 18% at the primary level and 15% at the secondary level.
15. So whichever way you look at it, the conclusion is the same – the school takes significantly fewer pupils eligible for free school meals than the local, city-wide, regional and national averages.

Academic research

16. As the Fair Admissions Campaign says on its website:

In 2012 [Shepherd and Rogers](#) found similar patterns of low numbers of pupils eligible for FSM in English faith schools. 76% of Catholic primary schools and 65% of Catholic secondary schools were found to have a smaller proportion of pupils eligible for FSM than was representative of their postcode. 63.5% of Church of England primary schools and 40% of Church of England secondary schools were also found to have a smaller proportion eligible for FSM than was representative of their postcode. Although 40% perhaps does not sound particularly high on first reading, only 29% of secondary schools without a religious character were found to take a smaller proportion of pupils on FSM than was representative of their postcode. This means that both Catholic and Church of England secondary schools are significantly more likely than secondary schools without a religious character to have student bodies which under-represent students eligible for FSM, which corroborates the Fair Admissions Campaign research presented here.

Many studies have also found evidence that those faith schools which are their own admissions authorities (which are more likely to be religiously selective) exhibit a greater degree of socio-economic selection than other faith schools, and this is corroborated by our findings on faith schools that have not had any external restrictions on how religiously selective they can be. In 2007 [Tough and Brookes](#) found that 'Faith schools which are their own admission authorities are ten times more likely to be highly unrepresentative of their surrounding area than faith schools where the local authority is the admission authority.' They also found that 'Non-religious schools which are their own admissions authorities [which, at the

⁷ See the postcodes on page 13 of

http://www.smrt.bristol.sch.uk/images/stories/Admissions/Statistical_Appendix_2013_Oct.pdf

time, were predominantly grammar schools] are six times more likely to be highly unrepresentative.'

In 2011, [Dr Richard Harris](#) found that 'The proportion of pupils in the London data who were eligible for FSM in 2008 was 0.266. The mean (and median) proportion in... VA CoE schools... was 0.242 (0.181), in VA RC schools, 0.201 (0.174), and in schools of the other faith group, 0.138 (0.128). Each of these school types is, on average, recruiting disproportionately few FSM-eligible pupils, with the proportion for VA CoE schools closest to the expected value. Insofar as FSM eligibility is a marker of economic disadvantage, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that... faith schools, on average, are socially selective.'

Extensive research on this issue has also been conducted by Dr Rebecca Allen and Professor Anne West. In [August 2011](#), they reported that 'schools with a religious character (or faith schools) have fewer FSM pupils and more top ability pupils and that, in general, they are more affluent in their intake than the neighbourhoods they are located in.' In [2009](#), they concluded that 'It is clear from our analysis that many religious secondary schools in London are not serving the most disadvantaged pupils. Overall, religious schools educate a much smaller proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals and their intakes are significantly more affluent than the neighbourhood in which they are located.' And in 2008, when being interviewed by the [House of Commons Children, Schools and Families Committee](#), Rebecca Allen noted that 'In my most recent research... I was able to show that religious schools have higher ability and lower free school meal intakes compared with the neighbourhoods in which they are located. To give you an idea of the magnitude of those effects, if we take a community school and a voluntary-aided religious school, both located in a neighbourhood with exactly the same levels of deprivation, the community school is likely to have about 50% more free school meal children than the voluntary-aided school... We can show that there really is a direct correlation between the number of potentially selective admissions criteria that schools use, and the extent to which their intakes are advantaged.'

17. Meanwhile, the overall conclusion from the Fair Admissions Campaign's map was that:

- Comprehensive secondary schools with no religious character admit 11% more pupils eligible for free school meals than live in their local areas. Comprehensive Church of England secondaries admit 10% fewer; Roman Catholic secondaries 24% fewer; Jewish secondaries 61% fewer; and Muslim secondaries 25% fewer.
- A clear correlation is found between the degree of religious selection and how socio-economically exclusive schools are. Comprehensive schools with no religious character typically admit 11% more pupils eligible for free school meals than would be expected given their areas. Religious comprehensives that do not select by religion typically admit 3% more, but those whose admissions criteria allow religious selection for all places typically admit 27% fewer.
- The correlation between religious and socio-economic selection holds even if we focus on comprehensive CofE schools alone: those that don't select admit 4% more than would be expected, while those that fully select admit 31% fewer.
- Only 16% of schools select by religion but they are vastly overrepresented in the 100 worst offenders on free school meal eligibility and English as an additional language. They make up 46 of the worst 100 schools on FSM eligibility and 50 of the worst 100 on EAL. (If grammar schools, University Technical Colleges and Studio schools are excluded,

religiously selective schools account for 73 of the worst 100 on FSM eligibility and 59 of the worst 100 on EAL.)

Conclusion

18. We are also complaining about several other aspects of the admissions policy. However these are all relatively minor and so we do not believe these are sufficient to explain the socio-economic selection.
19. Instead we think it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that if the school did not allocate so many places on the basis of faith, it would have a significantly higher proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals. Therefore we submit that the school is breaking paragraph 1.8 of the School Admissions Code's statement that 'Admission authorities must ensure that their arrangements will not disadvantage unfairly, either directly or indirectly, a child from a particular social... group'.
20. The remedy to this is to reduce the degree of religious selection or end such selection entirely.

Further comments, 18 August 2014

We do not agree with the school's response here at all and think their comparison of pupil premium statistics to free school meal eligibility statistics is highly misleading.

First of all, the existence of the sixth form at all accounts for just 1.2% of the shortfall of this school's numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals when compared to other schools. *Schools, pupils and their characteristics: January 2014* says that St Mary Redcliffe and Temple has 1,076 pupils in the main school (i.e. excluding sixth form), of whom just 79 are eligible for free school meals, giving a figure of 7.3%.⁸ This is slightly higher than the 6.1% we quoted in our paper – but still far short of the figures for its immediate vicinity (51.4%), slightly wider locale (32.8%), Bristol as a whole (23%), other Bristol schools (25.4%), or neighbouring boroughs (15.5%).

Instead of highlighting and addressing the 7.3% figure, the school has instead relied on its pupil premium figure of 17.0%. But the problem with doing this is that there is a difference between free school meal eligibility and the pupil premium, namely the latter is a measure of the number of pupils who have been eligible for free school meals *at any point in the last six years* (the 'ever 6' measure). Therefore, comparing the pupil premium figure for the school to FSM eligibility figures elsewhere will inevitably make the school look much better than it does.

In other words: we either need to compare FSM eligibility at the school to FSM eligibility elsewhere, or need to compare pupil premium at the school to pupil premium elsewhere. The former is what we did in our previous paper. The latter is what we will do now.

As of writing, the most recent pupil premium figures that are publicly available are those for January 2013.⁹ These figures record the school as having 1,081 pupils in years 7-11, of whom 180 are eligible for the pupil premium – or 16.7%. Below we have given the figures for other schools across Bristol:

School Name	Number of Secondary pupils on roll	Number of Secondary pupils eligible for the Deprivation Pupil Premium	Percentage of Secondary pupils eligible for the Deprivation Pupil Premium
Bristol Free School	216	64	29.6
Orchard School Bristol	708	393	55.5
Ashton Park School	1,019	276	27.1
Henbury School	695	349	50.3
Brislington Enterprise College	1,216	421	34.6
Bedminster Down School	836	260	31.1
Bridge Learning Campus - Secondary	609	377	61.9
Cotham School	979	299	30.5
Fairfield High School	669	322	48.1
St Bede's Catholic College	915	114	12.5

⁸ See SFR15_2014_school_level_pupils_UD in the Underlying Data zip file at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2014-row-5951>, columns EE-EG. The metadata explains that 'Performance Tables' essentially means ages 0-15 at the start of the school year i.e. years 7-11.

⁹ Available in the illustrative tables at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-2014-to-2015-illustrative-allocation-tables> – St Mary Redcliffe and Temple is row 7142 of the second sheet.

St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School	1,081	180	16.7
Redland Green	951	78	8.2
St Bernadette Catholic Secondary School	726	171	23.6
The City Academy Bristol	754	546	72.4
Bristol Brunel Academy	1,002	400	39.9
Bristol Cathedral Choir School	566	66	11.7
Colston's Girls' School	588	174	29.6
Merchants' Academy	704	442	62.8
Oasis Academy John Williams	601	325	54.1
Oasis Academy Brightstowe	572	293	51.3
Bristol Metropolitan Academy	583	295	50.5

The only schools with a lower figure than St Mary Redcliffe and Temple are Redland Green (8.2%) and Bristol Cathedral Choir School (11.7%). But Redland Green School has a standard catchment-based admissions policy administered by the local authority – it just happens to be in a very wealthy part of Bristol. This is why in the table on our previous paper it did not show up as having a much different intake than its area. As for Bristol Cathedral Choir School, we discussed its admissions policy in paragraph 10 of our previous paper – including the fact that the school probably breaks the Admissions Code.

What we find is that across Bristol as a whole, some 5,843 of 15,988 pupils – or 36.5% - are eligible for the pupil premium. The school therefore has less than half as many pupils eligible for the pupil premium as it should, if its intake was reflective of the socio-economic makeup of Bristol as a whole.

The school also makes a number of other claims. It says that our data is ‘out of date’. It is true that some of the figures in the previous paper were from 2010 – but these are backed up by January 2014 figures showing the same issues.

The school points out that 68.6% of the children who have gained entry to the school through the 16 local places are eligible for the pupil premium. This shows that if the school took in more local pupils, then it would be more socio-economically diverse.

However the school also claims that the 16 local places are ‘very rarely all filled’. We would be interested to see the full historical data on that point: certainly for the last two years they have been.¹⁰ It would be unusual for people to not apply for open places at a high performing school, unless there is a lack of awareness of their availability or people conclude that they wouldn’t stand a chance of getting in.

Finally, the school points to its diversity in terms of BME and looked after children. While this diversity is commendable, they do not mean that the school can ignore its duties under paragraph 1.8 to not discriminate against particular social groups.

¹⁰ As per

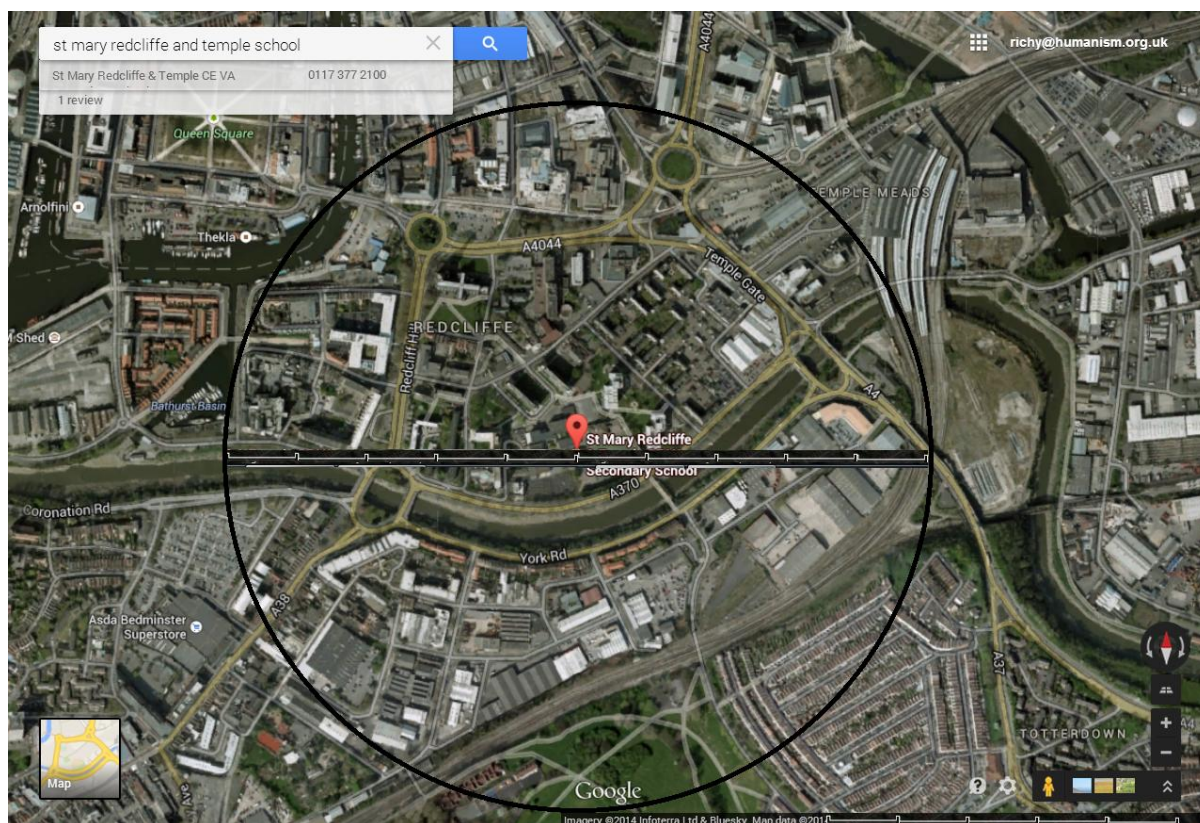
http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/children_and_young_people/school_admissions/StMRTAllocation%20Statement%20-%20Feb%202014_0.pdf and page 10 of http://www.bristol.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/children_and_young_people/school_admissions/1stroundAllocationCombinedSecondary2013.pdf

Email of 3 September 2014

The school's reply (particularly the part that says 'that there are very few children in the local area of secondary school age due to a high percentage of business properties') prompts us to wonder what the school-age population of the 500 m catchment area is. Would it be possible to ask the school if they know?

Would it also be possible to see the school's map of the 500 metre boundary it employs for criterion B? We have produced the attached approximation but this may be inaccurate.

The school says that "This, together with the erroneous inclusion of sixth form students in the FAC calculation, help to explain why our percentage of FSM is lower than that for the local area, i.e. that there are very few children in the local area of secondary school age due to a high percentage of business properties." Perhaps the fact that there are very few children locally explains why criterion B is not consistently oversubscribed. However it and the sixth form issue do not explain why the school's FSM eligibility percentage is so low: as we said in our last response, "*Schools, pupils and their characteristics: January 2014* says that St Mary Redcliffe and Temple has 1,076 pupils in the main school (i.e. excluding sixth form), of whom just 79 are eligible for free school meals, giving a figure of 7.3%. This is slightly higher than the 6.1% we quoted in our paper – but still far short of the figures for its immediate vicinity (51.4%), slightly wider locale (32.8%), Bristol as a whole (23%), other Bristol schools (25.4%), or neighbouring boroughs (15.5%)."



Further paper, 10 October 2014

In the hopes of providing a clearer picture for the adjudicator, and following on from the presentation given by [Teacher A, name anonymised] of St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School at the meeting of 2 October, we decided it would be helpful to provide an overview of all the different measures of inclusivity which have been discussed and draw conclusions with respect to each one. We will try and avoid being overly repetitive of our previous correspondence.

Free school meal eligibility

As per our paper of 30 June, the January 2014 Census (the most recent available) records that including sixth formers, 96 of 1,581 pupils, or 6.1%, are eligible for free school meals. Excluding sixth formers, 79 of 1,076 pupils, or 7.3%, are eligible for free school meals.¹¹

This is lower than the January 2010 Census figures for all mainstream state school pupils aged 5-15 living in the immediate vicinity (51.4%),¹² slightly wider locale (32.8%), Bristol as a whole (23%), or Bristol and neighbouring boroughs (15.5%).¹³ It also compares unfavourably to the January 2014 Census figures for other mainstream Bristol secondary schools (22.1% including sixth forms and 23.6% excluding sixth forms).¹⁴

Further details on this are included in our previous two papers, including discussion of the academic literature and how it shows that religious and socio-economic selection correlate.

Pupil premium

The pupil premium measures the number of pupils who have been eligible for FSM at any point in the past six years. The most recent public figures, from the January 2013 Census, record 180 of 1,081 pupils in years 7-11 being eligible for the pupil premium (16.7%), compared to 5,843 of 15,988 pupils in other mainstream Bristol secondaries (or 36.5%).¹⁵ No other local comparison figures are available. Again, further details on this are included in our last paper.

IDACI

¹¹ See SFR15_2014_school_level_pupils_UD in the Underlying Data zip file at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2014-row-5951>, columns EE-EG. The metadata explains that 'Performance Tables' essentially means ages 0-15 at the start of the school year i.e. years 7-11.

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<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadTableView.do?a=7&b=280216&c=Bristol+031&d=140&e=5&g=399255&i=1001x1003x1004&m=0&r=1&s=1403904493410&enc=1&dsFamilyId=1961>. The age of the 2010 data may mean that numbers have changed slightly but this shouldn't make a big difference. The differences in the age ranges probably work against the school as primary pupils are more likely than secondary pupils to be eligible for free school meals – but this would only make a difference by 1.5% nationally, i.e. much less than the gap between this school and its area.

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[http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/DownloadData.zip?\\$ph=60_61_65&step=6&downloadLargeFile=true&fileIndex=0](http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/DownloadData.zip?$ph=60_61_65&step=6&downloadLargeFile=true&fileIndex=0)

¹⁴ SFR15_2014_school_level_pupils_UD in the Underlying Data zip file at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2014-row-5951>. Note we previously mistakenly stated this figure as 25.4% – apologies for this mistake but it is of little consequence.

¹⁵ Available in the illustrative tables at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pupil-premium-2014-to-2015-illustrative-allocation-tables> – St Mary Redcliffe and Temple is row 7142 of the second sheet.

In the meeting of 2 October, [Teacher A] raised RAISEonline's 'School deprivation indicator' (SDI). The metadata RAISEonline provides defines this as 'single or main registered students with a known Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) value assigned to their home postcode'¹⁶ – with the value assigned to each postcode being the average value of all the children living in the lower super output area containing that postcode. Each LSOA contains between 1,000 and 3,000 people. In other words, SDI it is the average IDACI percentile rank of all the LSOAs of all the pupils attending the school (with LSOAs being counted multiple times, once for each pupil).¹⁷

IDACI scores are calculated from 'the proportion of all children aged 0-15 living in income deprived families', with deprived families being 'defined as either families receiving Income Support or income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Pension Credit (Guarantee) or those not in receipt of these benefits but in receipt of Child Tax Credit with an equivalised income (excluding housing benefits) below 60% of the national median before housing costs.'¹⁸ This is almost identical to the definition of FSM eligibility,¹⁹ except that the latter looks at each individual pupil instead of calculating a rank for each LSOA as a whole and then applying *that* score to each individual pupil.

In the notes of his presentation, [Teacher A] writes:

SDI is a more sophisticated measure than just FSM. It includes FSM and postcode, as well as other factors. FSM is widely used by the DfE simply because it is easy to gather (although not all families that are eligible actually claim FSM and it is only those who inform schools, i.e. claim, who are included in the data). It also takes no account of low income families just above the FSM threshold (SDI does). Most statisticians recognise FSM alone as a very crude measure.

Actually, FSM eligibility is harder to gather than IDACI, because, as [Teacher A] notes, parents may not register for FSM.

On the other hand, IDACI is less accurate because it only measures the average deprivation of the 1,000-3,000 people living around each pupil, and not the pupil themselves (which is what FSM eligibility does). And I am not sure on what basis [Teacher A] claims that IDACI takes into account low income families living just above the FSM threshold. Perhaps he means that it shows how deprived the area each family lives in is – but it doesn't actually show each family's income, just how many of their neighbours are eligible for FSM (a school could, conceivably, be creaming off the richer pupils in its surrounding LSOAs). To work out each family's income, you would need to look at a measure of deprivation for the individual families – not simply for the areas in which they live. This is what the FSM eligibility measure does, admittedly in a binary way, but nonetheless in a manner that is more precise to the pupils actually at the school than IDACI. This is the reason why the DfE and researchers all prefer to look at FSM eligibility than IDACI.

[Teacher A] goes on to provide some figures: 'SDI for 2011: 0.21 (Nat 0.21); SDI for 2012: 0.21 (Nat 0.21). Source of SDI values: DfE RaiseonLine 2013 for SMRT [i.e. January 2013 Schools Census].' But even if we are to consider IDACI as a valid alternative to FSM eligibility, comparing an inner-city

¹⁶ <https://www.raiseonline.org/opendocument.aspx?document=108>

¹⁷ IDACI value for any postcode can be looked up at <http://www.education.gov.uk/cgi-bin/inyourarea/idaci.pl>

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<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/statistics/pdf/1870718.pdf>

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-working-tax-credit-and-free-school-meals-entitlement/changes-to-working-tax-credit-and-free-school-meals-entitlement>

school to the national average is problematic. It would be much better to compare the school to other schools in Bristol, or to the weighted average of all the LSOAs in the city.

Unfortunately this data is not publicly available (it requires access to the national pupil database) and so we cannot make this comparison. But there is one bit of publicly available data which is quite helpful in illustrating why the school's use of IDACI is unhelpful:

Every year, in the Catholic School Census, the Catholic Education Service provides a breakdown of the distribution of pupils in Catholic and non-Catholic schools, based on decile bands. This shows that more pupils at Catholic schools are in the most deprived deciles than all other schools – something the CES has claimed shows their schools are more inclusive than others. However, in May the FAC took the postcodes of all Catholic and non-Catholic schools and performed exactly the same calculation using those postcodes. This showed that Catholic schools are themselves also more likely to be in deprived areas than other schools – much more so, in fact, at the primary level in particular. More details of this can be found on the FAC website.²⁰

Are Christians less deprived than others?

[Teacher A] goes on to say, 'Accounting for lower than average FSM (20th-40th %tile): Recent research (Uni. Of Virginia) – 35% lower separation rate for protestant couples (c.f. average population) – more low paid families just above FSM limit'. He also refers to another (this time British) paper, "Does Religion Make a Difference? Assessing the Effects of Christian Affiliation and Practice on Marital Solidarity and Divorce in Britain, 1985-2005" by Village, Andrew; Williams, Emyr; Francis, Leslie J. Journal of Divorce and Remarriage, 08/2010, Volume 51, Issue 6'. This, he says, shows that '[frequently] church going couples are 1.5 times less likely to divorce than [non-affiliates]' – and similarly, infrequent church goers are 1.3 times less likely to divorce than non-affiliates.

The notion that lower divorce rates amongst observant Christians will cause lower FSM eligibility amongst them than the population as a whole is an interesting idea but doesn't seem to be able to explain the whole situation. We have obtained the paper (it accompanies this email) and looking at page 333-334, it can be seen that the 1.5 figure is based on the odds ratio that comes out after performing a regression analysis, i.e. after controlling for everything else, observant Christians are 1.5 times less likely to be divorced/separated than the non-religious. However, this doesn't tell us much about what the real world difference is between these two figures. Another problem with this ratio specifically is that it relates to the whole of the period 1985-2009. Figure 2 shows that the percentage point difference between our two groups has stayed roughly the same size over the years (i.e. the divorce rate has gone up for both practicing Christians and the non-religious at the same rate), which means that it has proportionally shrunk and so the odds ratio will therefore have reduced over time and be much lower than 1.5 times today.

If we just focus on the raw figures for the most recent year bracket (2000-05), then we can see (from figure 2) that the about 20.9% of the non-religious got divorced, compared with about 16.8% of frequent attenders – a 3.1% difference.

It's obviously not the case that every child of divorced parents is eligible for free school meals when they otherwise wouldn't be. And although data is not provided, presumably the divorce rate is also very low amongst non-Christian religious couples. So these two factors mean that in real life the difference that divorce rates could be said to contribute to FSM eligibility is likely to be lower than

²⁰ <http://fairadmissions.org.uk/catholic-schools-and-the-income-deprivation-affecting-children-index/>

3.1 percentage points. A factor working in the opposite direction is that the divorce rate might be higher in Bristol than across the country as a whole – but this data is not available.

However, even if we assume that the 3.1 percentage point figure is right, then it is still much less than the 15.7 percentage point difference between the FSM eligibility rates at the school and Bristol as a whole.

Considering the issue of deprivation vs faith more generally, the FAC website says:

It is worth considering whether these data are affected by the propensity of different religious groups to be poor or wealthy. Data compiled by the [National Equality Panel for the Government Equality Office](#), during the passage of the Equality Act 2010, can shed light on this. It shows that Jews in the UK are much wealthier than average, both in terms of income and total wealth; conversely, Muslims are poorer than average, especially in terms of total wealth. This sheds interesting light on the Jewish and Muslim figures, perhaps explaining why Jewish schools are the very worst in terms of socio-economic selection. However, a comparison of the two dominant groups in the UK, namely Christians and those of no religion, shows less difference: Christians are significantly wealthier, perhaps reflecting the fact that they are typically older, but actually earn slightly less per hour on average.

We can control somewhat for these differences by looking at how change of selection within a particular denomination alters the figures. Thanks to the great variety of types of establishment and in the degree to which their oversubscription criteria allow them to select, we can do this for Church of England secondary schools. Here we can see that socio-economic and ethnic selection increases as religious selection increases.²¹

It is unlikely that any differences of this nature can account for the magnitude of difference in the FSM figures the school presents.

English as an additional language and ethnicity

[Teacher A] goes on to quote other figures on EAL and BME: 'EAL pupils: SMRT – 14.3%; National – 13.6% (60th-80th %tile)... BME pupils: SMRT – 31.0%; National – 24.5% (60th-80th %tile); Bristol – 28%; We have the 7th highest BME population of the 21 Bristol secondary schools.'

Again, national comparisons are problematic. In terms of EAL, the 2014 School Census records the school has having 217 of 1,581 pupils speaking EAL (including sixth form – unfortunately non-sixth form values are not available), or 13.7%, while the figure for all Bristol secondaries is 14.7%. Using Census data, the FAC's map suggests that the local profile of the school (i.e. adding up surrounding MSOAs until we match the number of pupils in the school) is 50.8% EAL.

Meanwhile, 440 of 1,581 pupils (again including sixth form) are BME (27.8%) compared to 27.0% across all Bristol secondaries.

However we are not challenging the school on the basis of EAL or BME. We are only challenging the school on the basis of FSM eligibility. It is true that those who speak English as an additional language or are BME are more likely to be deprived. But the FSM eligibility stats measure the deprivation at the school directly, and show a significant difference.

²¹ <http://fairadmissions.org.uk/map/>

The 16 local places

[Teacher A] writes that 'FSM for Y7-11 local children: SMRT – 55.6% (2013-2014 School data); local area FSM – 35.7%... This shows that we are more than representative of the social make-up of the local area.' The 35.7% figure is attributed to us.

This isn't accurately comparing like with like. The 35.7% figure is for a much bigger local area than the 500 m radius: it is calculated by adding up MSOAs neighbouring the school until the number of pupils in those MSOAs is greater than that of the school and contains 310 pupils per year, instead of the 15-26 a year covered by the 500 m radius. The school's MSOA itself contains 51.4% eligible for FSM, much more in line with the school's 500 m intake. But even this is a significantly bigger area, containing about 110 pupils per year.

But the important thing to note here is that by looking at LSOA data [Teacher A] estimates that 15 pupils per year live within 500 m of the school. Before the meeting I looked at each individual output area (a smaller geographical cluster containing 100-625 people), used the Census figures to estimate the number of pupils living in each of them, and came up with a figure of about 24 pupils per year.²² However, either way, it seems reasonable to conclude that the reason why the 16 local places are not routinely oversubscribed is because an insufficient number of pupils live in this area.

Conclusion

It was clear from the meeting and tour of the school that the school does a lot to celebrate its diversity and encourage positive views on related issues. We are not accusing the school of any malice. And the school, as it has noted, is also diverse in terms of EAL, BME and other measures.

But none of this alters the fact that the school is highly unrepresentative of Bristol or beyond with respect to FSM eligibility – the primary measure of socio-economic inclusion – and the main driving force behind this is the religious selection in its admissions policy.

Proposed remedy

²² To be technical, I looked at

<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/LeadBoundaryViewerSettings.do?colOpt=0&CCa1=0&CCa2=0&CCa3=0&CCa4=0&CCa5=0&CCa6=0&CCa7=0&CCa8=0&CCa9=0&CCa10=0&CCa11=0&CCb1=1&CCb2=1&CCb3=1&CCb4=1&CCb5=1&CCb6=1&CCb7=1&CCb8=1&CCb9=1&CCb10=1&CCb11=1&CCc1=2&CCc2=2&CCd1=5&CCd2=5&CCd3=5&CCd4=5&CCd5=5&CCd6=5&CCd7=5&CCd8=5&CCd9=5&CCd10=5&CCe1=12&CCe2=12&CCf1=3&CCg1=6&CCg2=6&CCg3=6&CCg4=6&CCg5=6&CCg6=6&CCg7=6&CCg8=6&CCg9=6&CCg10=6&CCg11=6&CCh1=4&CCh2=4&CCh3=4&CCh4=4&CCi1=8&CCi2=8&CCi3=8&CCi4=8&CCi5=8&CCi6=8&CCi7=8&CCi8=8&CCi9=8&CCi10=8&CCi11=8&CCj1=7&CCj2=7&Cck1=10&Cck2=10&Ccl1=13&CCm1=19&CCm2=19&Ln1=sTrue&CCn1=1&CCn2=11&mapBGShown=on&mapAction=centre&mapX=432&mapY=333&mapScale=10010&envelope=357975.358252702%3A171176.461935812%3A360012.038731367%3A172961.536893705&mapWidth=769&mapHeight=674&rightTabWidth=36&xW=1280&xH=1024&panDir=0&showLabels=true&colOpt=0&search=&bCount=1&Bn1=true&exp0=false&exp1=false&exp2=false&exp3=false&exp4=false&exp5=false&exp6=false&exp7=false&exp8=false&exp9=false&exp10=false&exp11=false&exp12=true&exp13=true&mapEvent.x=521&mapEvent.y=500>. I estimated that the following OAs are in the same area as the school: E00073436 (50%), E00073438, E00074002 (10%), E00074007, E00074008, E00074009, E00074010, E00074229, E00074236 (park + school only so 0%), E00074414 (10%), E00074415 (50%), E00074416, E00074419 (50%), E00074435 (park only so 0%), E00077425 (10%), E00174257, E00174262, E00174263 (50%), E00174277 (10%), E00174285 (50%), E00174302, E00174316 (50%), E00174317. I then downloaded 2011 Census South West output areas from <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/ks102ew> and concluded that on average 24 pupils per year aged 5-17 live within 500 m of the school. This varied slightly by year, going up to 28.4ish for the 2013 intake and 26.8ish for the 2014 intake.

If the OSA agrees with us that this school is in breach of paragraph 1.8 then presumably the OSA would be interested in what remedies we would suggest to fix the problem.

As we said in our initial paper, the remedy to this is to reduce the degree of religious selection or end such selection entirely. It is hard to know what degree of reduction would be sufficient to fix the problem. Opening up a wider percentage of places outside of religious selection would be one way, but it is hard to know what percentage would make the school as inclusive as Bristol as a whole.

Reducing the strictness with which the school religiously selects is another option and is the very minimum we would hope to see. Currently the school requires three worships a month for three years to gain highest priority, which is somewhat stricter than the average Church secondary. Shortening this timeframe or decreasing the frequency of worship required would presumably also make the school more inclusive, but again it is difficult to say if this would be sufficient to make the school enough more socio-economically inclusive. However, these are the options that would need to carefully be considered.

Email of 16 October 2014

[After the school provided a breakdown of which LSOAs its pupils came from, we were able to do further calculations. We do not include the underlying data referred to due to the fact that some MSOAs only have one or two pupils in attendance, leading to identification risks.]

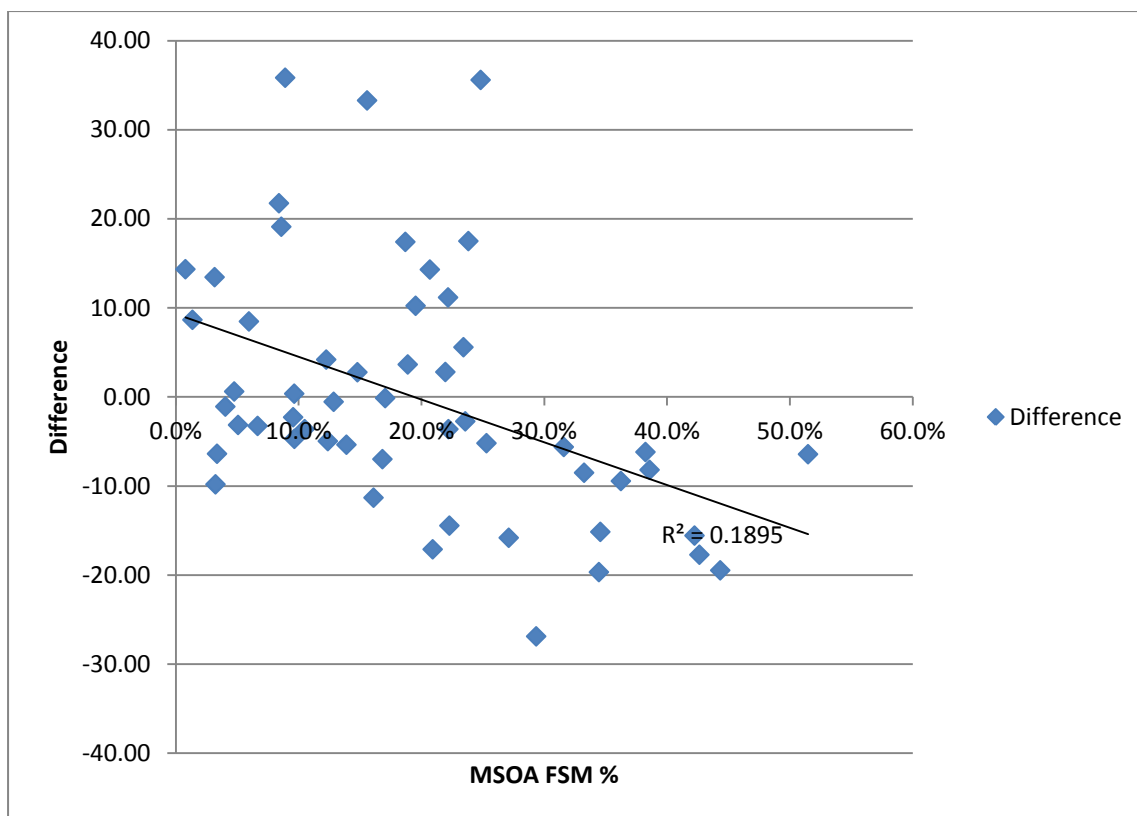
The provision of the LSOA spreadsheet has allowed us to do some further analysis of the School's intake, in terms of its geographic spread across Bristol, and its FSM eligibility rates when compared to this spread. See the attached spreadsheet which I have explained below.

MSOAs - actual vs expected

To outline the columns on this sheet:

- **MSOA name** gives the name of each of the 53 middle super output areas in Bristol
- **MSOA pupils** gives the no of pupils aged 5-15 who live in that MSOA, taken from the 2010 MSOA data from Neighbourhood Statistics, as per my previous papers. (As before, this difference in age range and data age is likely to be of little significance, as the overall figure is comparable to figures for all Bristol secondaries today)
- **MSOA FSM pupils** gives the no of pupils aged 5-15 who live in that MSOA and are eligible for FSM
- **MSOA FSM %** is just *FSM pupils divided by pupils*. The rows are sorted by this so the MSOAs with the most FSM-eligible pupils are at the top
- **StMRT expected pupils** is how many pupils living in that MSOA we would expect to be in St Mary Redcliffe and Temple School, given the size of the school's Bristol intake (916) and the size of the MSOA. We ignore non-Bristol pupils for this purpose. In other words, this is how many pupils the school would take from this MSOA if its Bristol intake is evenly distributed across the city
- **StMRT actual pupils** is the number of pupils it actually takes in. This is found by summing up the number of pupils all the LSOAs contained within each MSOA. (This does mean a slight loss of accuracy but as we don't have local area data for each LSOA it is necessary in order to make a comparison)
- **Difference** is just *StMRT actual pupils - StMRT expected pupils*. Therefore a negative number means the school takes that many fewer pupils from the relevant MSOA than we would expect, if its intake is evenly distributed across the city; a positive number means it takes that many more

I have then plotted MSOA FSM % against Difference. As we can see, the school is less likely to take pupils from deprived MSOAs and more likely to take pupils from rich MSOAs, compared to what an even distribution would predict. The trend is noisy but statistically significant ($R^2 = 0.1895$), suggesting that this is a real phenomenon.



MSOAs - FSM breakdown

The first five columns have already been explained as they match the previous sheet. The sixth column, **StMRT expected FSM**, gives the number of pupils at the School in the relevant MSOA that we would expect to be eligible for free school meals, if they are randomly drawn from it (i.e. *StMRT actual pupils * MSOA FSM %*). This is now excusing the school's geographic intake pattern and instead investigating how representative the school is given this intake pattern.

To give an example, the school has 19 pupils in Bristol 031; 51% of all pupils living in Bristol 031 are FSM eligible, so we would expect $19 * 0.51 = 9.78$ or just under 10 of these 19 pupils to be FSM eligible.

For the pupils from outside of Bristol, I have similarly worked out how many of them might be expected to be eligible for free school meals based on the overall figures for North Somerset, South Gloucestershire and BANES.

I have then summed the figures to come up with an expected no of pupils at the school eligible for FSM, given where the pupils live.

Using this method, I would expect that 187 of 1083 pupils, or 17.3%, would be eligible for free school meals. This is more than double the school's figure of 7.3%.

An interesting point is that 18.7% of the Bristol pupils (i.e. excluding all-non-Bristol pupils) would be expected to be eligible for FSM - a lower figure than the 23% eligibility rate of all Bristol pupils. So this reinforces the notion that some of the difference between the school and its vicinity is the school taking disproportionately many pupils from richer MSOAs of Bristol than the average, but that most of the difference is the school taking the richer pupils within those MSOAs.