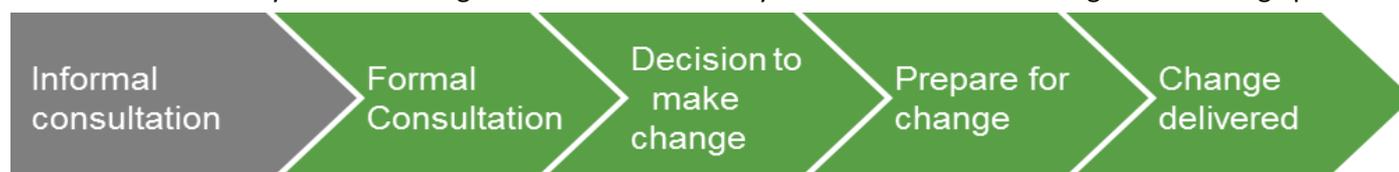


Informal Consultation

Proposal to merge Moorlands Nursery School and Moorland Primary School

This eight week consultation, from 18 September 2018 to 20 November 2018, seeks to gather opinions on a proposal for Moorlands Nursery School to merge with Moorland Primary School. This is the first stage in a five stage process:



What is the current position?

Moorland Primary School

Moorland Primary School is a community school, located in the Beanhill area of Milton Keynes. The catchment area for the school covers the settlement of Beanhill. The school can admit up to 30 pupils per year group for children from Reception to Year 6, and has a nursery class which can accommodate up to 30 children at any time, aged 2 to 4.

The school was judged 'Inadequate' by Ofsted in March 2018. It was placed in special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education.

Experience informs us that when a school is judged to be in special measures, staff retention and recruitment becomes increasingly problematic. In addition, many parents move their children to better performing schools and admission numbers fall consequently reducing the budget available. Under current legislation any school that goes into special measures is automatically put under the jurisdiction of a multi academy trust, however sourcing a good academy sponsor with the capacity and resources to secure improvement is tending to prove problematic at a national level. This is especially true when it is a school in an area of social deprivation with falling rolls, reduced budget and staffing difficulties.

Moorlands Nursery School

Moorlands Nursery School is located in Beanhill and serves the Milton Keynes area, giving priority to children living in the Woughton area. The school currently caters for children aged from 2 to 4 years and can admit up to 72 children. The school is situated in Moorlands Local Centre and shares the building with the family centre.

The school was judged by Ofsted as 'Good' in 2018, and before this was consistently judged to be 'Good' since 2001. The majority of children that attend the nursery live in the areas of Beanhill and Coffee Hall. It is a popular choice for parents seeking nursery provision but as a standalone nursery provision is financially vulnerable.

At the moment, the nursery and family centre operate totally separately to the primary school. This is a costly and non-collaborative model.

What is the opportunity?

Milton Keynes Council, in conjunction with the governing bodies of both schools is considering a merger of Moorlands Nursery School with Moorland Primary School, to create one school. The technical way of achieving this would be to close Moorland Primary School and change the age range at Moorlands Nursery School whilst relocating all children on roll at both schools to the primary site at Maslin Drive.

The merged schools would admit 30 children per year group from Reception, as is currently offered and also admit children to the nursery from 2 to 4 years.

This proposal will secure school improvement for Moorland Primary School whilst also securing the future of the standalone nursery provision, developing a coherent offer between the nursery, the school and the family centre and strengthening the facilities available for the community as a result. There will be one governing body and one leadership team over the whole provision with no duplication of nursery offer. This will mean improved quality and a more coherent offer for the local community of Beanhill.

What are the benefits of merging Moorlands Nursery School and Moorland Primary School?

- ✓ The children of Moorland Primary School will remain at the same site and have access to a high standard of education in as short a time as possible;
- ✓ Secure a consistently high quality education provision for children, which will continue to raise expectations and standards for all learners;
- ✓ Local children will still be able to attend their local school thus continuing their sense of community;
- ✓ Increased financial stability for the educational provision;
- ✓ One governing body and one leadership team over the whole provision will improve quality – the governing board would set the strategic vision across the school and ensure educational and financial accountability;
- ✓ Secure employment in a stable and settled working environment increasing staff retention and providing greater opportunities to share expertise and learn from the expertise of others.

How can I find out more and contribute to this consultation?

The schools and the council have arranged four drop in sessions for parents and the community so that they can find out more and give their views. Drop in sessions will take place on the following dates, and are open to anyone to attend:

Moorland Primary School – Wednesday 10 October 9am-10am and 3.15pm-4.15pm

Moorlands Nursery School – Thursday 11 October 10.30am-11.30am and 4.30pm-5.30pm

This consultation seeks views from parents and staff directly involved with Moorlands Nursery School and Moorland Primary School, from other local schools and any other interested parties. We are keen to hear as many views as possible about this proposal. Please go online and complete the web form at:

<http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/consultations>

If you are unable to access the online form you may respond by email to:

sufficiencyandaccess@milton-keynes.gov.uk

or in writing to Education Sufficiency, Milton Keynes Council, Saxon Court, 502 Avebury Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3HS or by telephone to 01908 253320.

This informal consultation will end on 20 November 2018

Who has this consultation been sent to?

All parents, staff and governors of Moorlands Nursery School, Moorland Primary School and Moorlands Family Centre, as they are directly affected by this proposal; all schools in Milton Keynes; all Academy Trusts who have schools in Milton Keynes; local MPs, Ward Councillors and Parish/Town Councils;

This informal consultation is the first stage in a five stage process which will include:

1. This informal consultation for 8 weeks during term time (13 weeks in total)
2. Consideration in December 2018 by the Cabinet Member for Children and Families of the outcome of this consultation and whether to proceed with a statutory consultation
3. Statutory consultation lasting 4 weeks in January/February 2019. (If you respond to this consultation please do so again for the statutory consultation)
4. Consideration in March 2019 by the Cabinet Member of the outcome of the statutory consultation and a decision whether to proceed with the change of age range at the nursery school
5. If the proposal is agreed the changes will come into effect in September 2019