

Statutory proposal for making prescribed alterations at St Andrew's CE Infant School and Great Linford Primary School

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), the '[Making significant changes \('prescribed alterations'\) to maintained schools – Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers – March 2025](#)', and the '[Opening and closing maintained schools – Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers – October 2024](#)', that **Milton Keynes City Council (MKCC)** intends to amalgamate St Andrew's CE Infant School and Great Linford Primary School **with effect from 1 January 2026**.

Notice date: 15 September 2025

Schools and local authority details:

Proposer: Simon Sims, Head of Children's Sufficiency and Access to Education, Employment, and Training, Milton Keynes City Council, Civic, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes, MK9 3EJ

Schools	Address	Admission number	Age range
St Andrew's CE Infant (Voluntary Controlled)	High Street, Great Linford, Milton Keynes MK14 5AX	Year R to Year 2 – 10	4 to 7
Great Linford Primary (Community)	St Ledger Drive, Great Linford, Milton Keynes, MK14 5BL	Year to Year 2 – 45 Year 3 to Year 6 - 60	4 to 11

Description

There are two steps to achieve the amalgamation, often known as a 'merger'. The local authority (MKCC) is publishing this proposal to close one school, St Andrew's CE Infant School, (part 1) and enlarge Great Linford Primary School (part 2) in order to accommodate the displaced pupils from St Andrew's CE Infant School. Great Linford Primary School will retain its original Department for Education school number (826/2303), as it is not a new school.

The merger will mean that the two schools will operate as a single entity. While the site at St Andrew's CE Infant School will close as a mainstream school, it may continue to be used for educational purposes. Options for the future use of the building are currently being considered.

Implementation plan

The representation period for this statutory proposal ends on **12 October 2025**. Following this, officers will consider any comments received and the council's Cabinet Member for Children and Young People will take a delegated decision on 25 November 2025 on whether to proceed with the proposal. If the decision is to implement the proposal, St Andrew's will formally close on 31 December 2025 and all remaining pupils will transfer to Great Linford Primary at the start of the spring term in January 2026.

Pupil numbers and admissions

The table below shows the number of pupils on roll at each of the schools as at May 2025 and reported on the School Census. Both schools accommodate boys and girls and neither school has a department for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities but do have pupils on roll with an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Year group	St Andrew's	EHCP	Great Linford Primary	EHCP
Year R	8	2	30	1
Year 1	8	0	41	2
Year 2	5	0	46	2
Year 3	n/a		46	0
Year 4	n/a		56	5
Year 5	n/a		39	4
Year 6	n/a		52	4
Total	21	2	310	18

To accommodate the additional pupils, the PAN at Great Linford Primary will increase to 60. As the Year 3 entry point is specifically intended for pupils transitioning from St Andrew's at the end of Year 2, it will be removed if the proposal progresses. There are no other planned changes to admission arrangements.

Reason for change

St Andrew's is a small, voluntary controlled Church of England maintained school serving pupils from Year R to Year 2. Located in the historic village of Great Linford, in the north of Milton Keynes, the village predates the growth of Milton Keynes and has since been surrounded by the city's expansion. The school was rated 'Good' by Ofsted at the last full inspection in 2019 and at an ungraded inspection in March 2024.

Great Linford Primary, also rated 'Good' by Ofsted in 2025, is a community maintained school serving pupils from Year R to Year 6. It was established to support the expanding local community surrounding the original village. Both schools share the same catchment area and are located just 0.194 miles apart by walking distance, resulting in minimal to no travel implications for pupils. Great Linford Primary also admits pupils at Year 3, providing a natural transition for pupils leaving St Andrew's at the end of Year 2.

In 2017, St Andrew's joined the Village Schools Federation - a group of six schools – aimed at enhancing long term sustainability. To address ongoing operational and financial challenges linked to declining pupil numbers, the school's Published Admission Number (PAN) was reduced from 20 to 10 per year group in September 2024.

Despite sustained efforts to support its viability, St Andrew's continues to face a falling roll, with only 21 pupils on roll at the end of the 2024/25 academic year. Most pupils initially allocated places at St Andrew's for Year R in September 2025 have since applied for alternative schools, primarily Great Linford Primary. Similarly, pupils due to move into Years 1 and 2 have also secured places elsewhere, again predominantly at Great Linford Primary.

As at 8 September 2025, there are **no** pupils on roll at St Andrew's.

The continued decline in pupil numbers at St Andrew's has resulted in a growing annual budget deficit. As school funding is based on pupil numbers, the school is no longer financially viable as a standalone institution, even within the federation. School level projections show a surplus of school places in the area and there is no longer a need for two separate schools to meet local demand.

Great Linford Primary has sufficient capacity and facilities, including playing fields, to accommodate all current and prospective pupils from St Andrew's. It is already equipped to serve the full primary age range and would streamline the admissions process by removing the need for Year 2 pupils to apply for a junior school place.

Objective

The objective of the proposal is to ensure that the council can continue meeting its statutory duty to provide sufficient, high quality school places in this area. Following careful consideration by the council and the governing boards of both schools, the merger is expected to deliver the following educational and community benefits:

- A strengthened, sustainable, consolidated solution for delivering high quality education, building on the existing close working relationship between the two schools
- Improved long term financial stability through a single, larger organisation
- Minimal disruption for current pupils, parents and staff
- Parents of pupils attending St Andrew's will no longer need to apply for a Year 3 place at Great Linford Primary
- Continued community involvement in shaping the future of their local school
- Opportunities for staff, making it more likely that existing high quality staff would be retained
- Opportunities for staff to share planning, resources, skills and expertise
- Potential to repurpose the St Andrew's site for other educational purposes (e.g. additional SEND provision to support local needs).

Displaced pupils

Any pupils enrolled at St Andrew's at the point of merger will automatically transfer to the roll of Great Linford Primary from the start of the spring term in January 2026, therefore no pupils will be displaced, and no revised travel arrangements will be required. Any pupils attending St Andrew's that have an EHCP can have their needs met at Great Linford Primary. Parents may choose to apply to other primary schools with vacancies if they wish. Current pupil projections indicate there are sufficient places to meet demand following this proposed change.

Impact on the community

The impact on the local community is expected to be minimal as St Andrew's and Great Linford Primary serve the same catchment area with most pupils transitioning from St Andrew's to Great Linford Primary at the end of Year 2. There will still be a local school serving the community and the amalgamation will enhance the sustainability and quality of educational provision.

Balance of denominational provision

As there are other Church of England schools, as well as other faith schools in Milton Keynes, the proposed amalgamation will have minimal impact on the balance of denominational school provision in the city.

The effect on other educational institutions within the area

The council has assessed the potential impact of the proposed merger and anticipates no negative effect on nearby schools. St Andrew's and Great Linford Primary already share an identical catchment area and no changes to this catchment area are planned following the merger.

Costs and how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved

There are no costs linked to the merger. Schools are funded from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) using a formula based on pupil numbers recorded at census. Due to a decline in birth rates, both locally and nationally, there is currently a significant surplus of school places across established communities. This has impacted on the falling roll at St Andrew's resulting in an increasing budget deficit. Despite implementing all feasible organisational changes to reduce costs, the school remains financially unsustainable. Without the proposed merger, the deficit is expected to worsen. Consolidating into a single, larger organisation would enhance long term financial stability and ensure more efficient use of resources.

How to respond to the statutory proposal

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal (15 September 2025) any person may support, object or make comments by completing the online form or by sending an email to sufficiencyandaccess@milton-keynes.gov.uk or in writing to:

Access to Education, Employment and Training
Milton Keynes City Council
Civic
1 Saxon Gate East
Milton Keynes
MK9 3EJ