

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member and Advisors for Children, Young People and Families' Services
2.	Date:	15th January 2014
3.	Title:	Proposal to amalgamate Brampton the Ellis Junior and Infant Schools by the closure of the Junior School and the expansion and change of age range of the Infant School
4.	Directorate:	Children and Young People's Services

5. Summary

It is proposed to commence pre statutory consultation on proposals to amalgamate Brampton the Ellis Infant and Junior Schools. This will be by the closure of the Junior School and the expansion and change of age range of the Infant School.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Family services approves the commencement of pre statutory consultation on the proposal to amalgamate Brampton the Ellis Infant and Junior Schools by the closure of the Junior School and the expansion and change of age range of the Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11. A further report will be brought to Members detailing the outcome of the consultation in due course.

7. Proposals and Details

This proposal is also linked to the proposals to expand Cortonwood Infant School from a published Admission Number (PAN) of 40 to 50 with effect from 1st September 2017 and expand Brampton the Ellis Junior School from a Published Admission Number of 70 to 80 by 1st September 2014 to accommodate rising feeder school numbers and to 90 in due course (2020/21 academic year) to accommodate rising pupil number cohorts following the expansion of Cortonwood Infant School.

The proposed 'through' School would have 120 infant places (40 X 3 = 120 FS2/Reception to Y2) and 280 Junior places (70 X 4 = 280 presently, rising to 80 X 4 = 320 WEF 1st September 2014 and eventually 90 x 4 = 360). The school would

have a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 40 for the Infant School and 80 (rising to 90 for the Junior School).

The principal objectives of amalgamation are:

- 1) to provide a continuous primary entitlement across the key stages; and
- 2) to provide a unified management structure with a single school ethos which will be more efficient and make more effective use of resources.

8. Finance

The proposed amalgamation will allow the Headteacher and Governing Body to structure financial resources to best support a through school ethos across the Infant and Junior sites.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Advantages and Disadvantages

The principal ADVANTAGES of amalgamation arise from the continuous primary education entitlement:

- removal of the school transfer at the end of Key Stage 1;
- provision of a whole school curriculum across the primary age range;
- a unified management structure with a single school ethos;
- the potential to organise and arrange the staffing structure and to safeguard the staffing establishment when pupil numbers change across the key stages;
- a whole school approach to staff development across the primary phase;
- more efficient and effective use of resources, especially accommodation, when numbers fluctuate across the infant and junior phases.

The principal DISADVANTAGES of amalgamation are:

- potential difficulties in bringing together two different sets of working practice;
- possible fear of and resistance to change amongst staff, governors and parents;
- in some (but by no means all) cases, a lack of staff expertise in teaching and management across the two key stages.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The major theme supported by the proposal is 'to ensure that everyone has access to skills, knowledge and information to enable them to play their part in society'. The principle advantages of amalgamation arise from the continuous primary education entitlements which are:-

- Removal of the need for formal school transfer processes at the end of Key Stage1
- Provision of a whole school curriculum across the primary age range
- A unified management structure with a single school ethos
- A whole school approach to staff development across the primary phase
- More efficient and effective use of resources

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The School Organisation (prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007.

Proposed consultation timeline

Cabinet Member to agree to consultation	15 th January 2014
Pre statutory consultation period Commences including meetings with governors, Staff and parents etc.	
Report to the Cabinet Member seeking approval to commence Statutory Consultation	12 th March 2014
Publication of statutory notices and notification to DfE of proposals	21 st March 2014
6 week period for representations and objections closes	2 nd May 2014
Report to Cabinet Member and final Determination of proposals and notification to Secretary of State for Education	21 st May 2014
Implementation	2 nd June 2014

Consultation meetings should be undertaken with the Governing Bodies of both Schools, Staff and Trade Unions, Parents (families) of pupils at the schools, local Councillors, any local Parish Council and the local MP.

Additionally consultation will also need to be undertaken with the Governing bodies of any other school that may be affected plus the Diocese of any school likely to be affected.

These proposals are linked to the proposals to expand Cortonwood Infant School from a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 40 to 50 from 1st September 2017 and proposals to expand Brampton the Ellis Junior School from a Published Admission Number Pan of 70 to 80 from 1st September 2014 and 80 to 90 from 1st September 2020. These proposals are currently under pre statutory consultation following the initial report to Cabinet Member on 24th July 2013.

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