

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**



**CONSULTATION ON  
THE FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR PRIMARY  
EDUCATION IN**

**Elmhurst Infant School  
Elmhurst Junior School**

**March 2007**

## **1. Introduction**

This document has been produced by Buckinghamshire County Council (Local Authority) after consultation with the governing bodies of Elmhurst Infant and Junior Schools.

## **2. What is the proposal?**

The proposals on which the Local Authority is consulting parents, staff and the Elmhurst community are:-

- The Junior School would be enlarged to become a Combined School from 1 September 2007 and the Infant School would be closed with effect from 31 August 2007.
- The new all age Primary School would have an admission number of 45 and become a 315 place school. It would continue to have an Infant and Junior Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) department as an integral part of the new school.
- A Children's Centre would be created on the campus to provide access to additional services for parents and the community and Adult Learning would continue to provide services on the campus.

## **3. Why is the proposal being made now?**

The Infant School and Junior Schools were both inspected by Ofsted before Christmas 2006 but whereas the Junior School was considered to be satisfactory, the Infant School was placed in a category of concern by Ofsted as requiring Special Measures. The Local Authority, under guidance published by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), is required to take action to urgently to address the issues identified by Ofsted.

The Local Authority has been able to secure funding from the developers at Weedon Hill that will enable some immediate enhancements to be made to the campus.

It is current Local Authority policy to amalgamate infant and junior schools where this is reasonable. After discussions with the governing bodies of both schools it has been proposed to close the Infant School and to enlarge the Junior School to create a combined school on the campus. The new combined school will open on 1 September 2007.

## **4. Admission arrangements**

The Local Authority remains the admission authority and the governing body will continue to use the admission criteria which apply to all community and voluntary controlled schools.

**5. What are the advantages of the proposal?**

STAKEHOLDER	ADVANTAGES
CHILDREN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Co-ordinated approach across all three phases of primary education (Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2)</li> <li>• Better opportunities and use of specialised staff</li> <li>• Improved tracking of children's progress</li> <li>• Co-ordinated support for behaviour management</li> <li>• Eliminates the need for children to change school at the end of Year 2</li> <li>• Extends extra-curricular provision</li> <li>• Greater opportunities for curriculum enrichment activities</li> <li>• Enhanced links in Early Years</li> </ul>
PARENTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seamless transition from Foundation Stage to KS2</li> <li>• Single admissions procedure</li> <li>• Site improvements</li> <li>• Improved educational standards in the Infant phase</li> <li>• Continuation and development of the ASD Department</li> <li>• Opportunity to appoint a full-time speech therapist to support children in the ASD department</li> <li>• Enhanced shared resources</li> <li>• Creation of a Children's Centre on site</li> <li>• Access to a range of extended services</li> </ul>
GOVERNORS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Larger governing body with greater scope for specialisation</li> <li>• Larger pool for parent governors</li> <li>• Improved adaptability to change</li> <li>• More competitive in the context of falling rolls</li> </ul>
COMMUNITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased flexibility to provide wrap-around childcare</li> <li>• Access to the services provided through a Children's Centre</li> </ul>
STAFF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunities for greater specialisation</li> <li>• Increased opportunities to share good practice across phases</li> <li>• More resilient, flexible and dynamic staffing structure capable of responding more effectively to change</li> <li>• Wider distribution of responsibilities</li> <li>• Opportunity to share expertise and resources</li> </ul>
LOCAL AUTHORITY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economies of scale and better value for money</li> <li>• Greater efficiency in terms of LA monitoring and evaluation</li> </ul>

## **6. What are the challenges that the proposal may create?**

There may be some disruption when any building work takes place but the governing body will work with the Local Authority and partners to ensure that this is kept to a minimum and that many of the improvements will take place over the summer.

## **7. Staff consultation arrangements**

The teachers' associations and UNISON have been informed of the proposals and staff meetings will be held at which staff and their representatives will have the appropriate personnel procedures explained and will have the opportunity to raise any issues or concerns. Staff will be supported throughout the process for the creation of a new team under a new headteacher for the combined school.

## **8. Those that are being consulted:**

As part of the consultation the Local Authority is keen to consult widely on the proposals and the following groups/organisations will be contacted during or actively involved in the consultation process:

- Cabinet Member (Achievement and Learning)
- Local County Councillors
- Local Member(s) of Parliament
- Aylesbury Vale District Council
- Headteachers and chairmen of governors of local schools
- Residents
- Parents/carers of children currently at the school
- Staff at both schools
- Early Years Childcare and Development Partnership
- Teachers' Associations and UNISON
- Traffic Management and Safer Routes to Schools teams
- Primary Care Trust
- Local Playgroups and nurseries
- Buckinghamshire branch of National Autistic Society
- Representatives of all groups using the campus

## **9. What will happen now?**

By distributing this consultation document we are asking for your views on the proposal. Please either complete the form at the back of this consultation and take it to the collection boxes in the schools or post your replies to:-

Andrew Tusting, Ref Elm/AT  
Children and Young People's Service  
Elmhurst Schools Consultation  
5<sup>th</sup> floor County Hall  
Aylesbury  
Buckinghamshire HP20 1UZ

**You can also email replies to [elmhurstconsult@bucksc.gov.uk](mailto:elmhurstconsult@bucksc.gov.uk)**

**The deadline for responses is 12 noon on Friday 27 April 2007**

## **10. Next steps**

The Local Authority and the two governing bodies will at the same time publish a statutory notice in the Bucks Herald in March 2007 to ensure that all interested parties are aware of the proposal and to enable due process to take place in the required timeline.

By law this "notice" must remain public for six weeks. During this time, any elector is entitled to comment on the proposals by writing to Andrew Tusting at the above address.

If there are no objections, the Local Authority is then able to determine the notices. This means that the Cabinet Member for Achievement and Learning can decide to approve the proposals to close the Infant School and enlarge the Junior School into a new combined school.

Under current legislation if objections are received, the Local Authority will refer the matter to the independent School Organisation Committee. The School Organisation Committee would have the power to decide whether or not to accept the proposals at its meeting in May. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 has indicated that School Organisation Committees will cease in 2007 but no details have been given of new arrangements.

If the School Organisation Committee is not able to agree on a decision then the proposal would have to be referred to the "Adjudicator" - a senior Government appointee who decides such matters for a large part of the south-east of England.

**PROPOSAL TO CLOSE ELMHURST INFANT SCHOOL ON 31 AUGUST 2007 AND TO ENLARGE ELMHURST JUNIOR SCHOOL TO CREATE FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2007 A COMBINED SCHOOL ON THE CAMPUS**

**Response to Consultation**

1. Please indicate whether you are a:

Parent or carer

Staff member

Other (please specify below)

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2. Do you support the proposal of Elmhurst Infant and Elmhurst Junior Governing Bodies and Buckinghamshire County Council to close the Infant School and to enlarge the Junior School to create a Combined School on the Junior School campus?

Yes

No

3. Do you have any comments you wish to make on the proposal or let us know of any particular issues you wish us to consider? Please continue on a separate sheet if you want to.

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Surname \_\_\_\_\_

**Please respond by 12 noon on Friday 27 April 2007  
Individual responses will be kept confidential.**

It would help the Local Authority if you would complete the following information but please note that this is **entirely voluntary**:

**Gender**

Male   Female

**I have a recognised disability (Y/N)**

Please specify \_\_\_\_\_

**Ethnicity: please specify**

White British  White Irish  Any other white background

Caribbean  African  Any other black background

Indian  Bangladeshi  Any other Asian background

Pakistani  Chinese

Mixed white and black background

Mixed white and black African

Mixed white and Asian

Any other ethnic grouping