

Consultation on bringing together Oak Farm Infant and Nursey School and Oak Farm Junior School to form a single three-form primary school

To: staff, parents, carers, guardians, and community members

Consultation opening date: Friday 11th December 2020

Consultation closing date: Thursday 21^h January 2021

The Federated Governing Board of Oak Farm Infant and Nursery School and Oak Farm Junior School, together with the London Borough of Hillingdon, are consulting on a proposal to support the achievement of high standards in both schools under the unified leadership of one headteacher. The proposal is for the two schools to amalgamate to form a single primary school for children aged 3 to 11 years with effect from 1st September 2021.

Please have your say on this proposal before Thursday 21st January 2021 by using the form at the end of this document. A copy of this consultation is also available at:

- <https://www.oak.farm>
- Emailing: schoolgovernance@hillingsdon.gov.uk
- Writing to: School Governance Team, Education Service, 4E/07, Civic Centre, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW
- Hard copies of this proposal can be obtained by contacting the Oak Farm Infant and Nursery School or the Oak Farm Junior School offices.

Why is amalgamation being proposed?

The Governing Board and the Council both see significant advantages in combining the existing schools into a new primary school. This would involve the formal closure of Oak Farm Junior School and the expansion and change of age range of Oak Farm Infant and Nursery School to provide education from nursery age right through to children in Year 6. It is proposed that the Junior School would close on 31st August 2021 and the Infant School expand to become a primary and nursery school on the existing site with effect from 1st September 2021. **Children already at either the Infant and Nursery or the Junior School would not be affected directly by the changes, as they would transfer automatically to the newly formed primary school.**

What are some of the advantages of amalgamation?

The Federated Governing Board and the Council believe that amalgamation would have the following benefits:

- Monitoring pupil progress from age 3 through to age 11 enables staff to build up a comprehensive profile of each child and build consistently on their achievements.
- Consistency of approach to teaching and learning policies, curriculum planning, behaviour management and equal opportunities across all Key Stages.
- Children would move seamlessly through the school as there would be no need for them to change schools between Years 2 and 3, reducing transition concerns and pressures on children and parents.
- Continuity of experience and provision, especially for vulnerable children and those with special needs.
- Opportunities for increased social development - children can come together for social, pastoral and creative activities.
- Improved safeguarding through consistent management and seamless knowledge through all Key Stages.
- Planning and delivery of a continuous and coherent curriculum - Ofsted reports show that planning for progression and continuity for Key Stage 2 is better in primary schools than Junior Schools.
- It will be easier to achieve continuity and progression in children's learning and development from 3 through to age 11.
- Working in partnership as one school with the community.
- The opportunity for staff to build partnerships with pupils, parents and families over a longer period of time.
- The sharing of curriculum and other resources and avoidance of unnecessary duplication.
- Stability of staffing and improved staffing structures as well as increased opportunities for staff development.
- Improved use of facilities – e.g. specialist teaching spaces, reception areas, outdoor areas.

The proposal to amalgamate the schools is underpinned by the intention of the Governing Board to further improve the quality of provision already in place at both schools by ensuring a consistent approach to teaching and learning. This will be delivered through models of curriculum planning which can take into account all three stages of the primary phase of education and will be supported by a whole school approach.

Opportunities for staff development will be further enhanced by enabling both teaching and support staff to draw upon their current expertise, experience and specialist knowledge in order to share and develop best practice more effectively.

The new school will continue to provide an education that offers equality of opportunity for all pupils regardless of age, gender, and ethnicity, learning ability, religious or social background and attainment, including special needs and disabilities.

The proposal will enable the two current schools to merge and strengthen their community links and to develop the extended school's programme in both schools.

Who will be the headteacher of the primary school?

The Federated Governing Board, together with the Council, will be appointing a new **permanent headteacher** who, will play a key role in the amalgamation process should it go ahead after this consultation.

Will the teachers and support staff stay the same?

The Federated Governing Body is the underlying employer in both the Infant and Nursery school and the Junior School; it will also be the underlying employer in the proposed Primary and Nursery school. As such, if the amalgamation goes ahead, the place of work for employees will change to the Primary and Nursery school and there will be no change in employer. Pupil number forecasts indicate that the Primary school will need as many classes as there are currently in the Infant and Junior schools separately. If the decision is made to amalgamate the two schools, then a staffing structure for the Primary and Nursery school would be drawn-up as part of the planning process and both staff and recognised trade unions would be consulted on this.

Who will be the Headteachers of the two schools during the interim period?

Ms Michelle Kenny will continue as the Executive Headteacher of the Junior School until Easter 2021 at which point the Federated Governing Board will consider options.

Ms Susan Perry will continue as the Acting Headteacher of the Infant and Nursery School until a substantive Headteacher for the Infant and Nursery School is permanently in post. A recruitment process is currently underway with interviews planned for January 2021. Should the proposed amalgamation go ahead, this person will become the Headteacher of the Primary School.

Will there be any changes to the size of the school and the school buildings?

No, the size of the school and building will remain exactly the same. The proposed Primary school will have a *published admission number* equal to the sum of the current Infant, Nursery and Junior schools' numbers. Therefore there would be **no change to the capacity** of the proposed amalgamated Primary school if the decision were made to proceed.

Who will be the governors of the primary school?

If amalgamation does go ahead, then the existing Federated Governing Board would remain in place. If vacancies exist for new governors, they would be recruited following the same process that is currently in place.

How can I make my views known?

The current restrictions mean we are not able to run the consultation process in exactly the way we would like, for example by holding open meetings and drop in sessions. Instead, you

may wish to write to the Council with your comments. This will assist the Council and the Federated Governing Board in reaching a clear understanding of the views held. You may use the form at the end of this letter, or write separately to the address provided at the end, or email:

schoolgovernance@hillingdon.gov.uk

All written comments should be received by the Council by **5pm on Thursday 21st January 2021**. The Council handles all information in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 to ensure that all personal information retained through this process is stored safely, only accessed by people who need to access it, used safely and responsibly, and disposed of safely and securely when no longer required. This also includes transporting data, either physically or electronically. Your answers to this consultation will only be used to assess the stakeholders' view of the proposed amalgamation and not for any other purpose.

If you have any questions about the consultation, please contact the School Governance Team by emailing: schoolgovernance@hillingdon.gov.uk

At this stage, no decision has been made. All the views received, either at the meetings or separately in writing, will be considered prior to a decision being taken as to whether or not to go ahead with the proposal. Hopefully this will give an opportunity for as many people as possible to find out about the proposed new Primary school and to give their views.

Discussion with pupils of the schools

This will be undertaken in school using current pupil voice methods.

The Council and the Federated Governing Board will also be seeking the views of other interested parties, such as the Children's Centre on site.

Discussion with staff

Initial informal meetings with staff of both the Infant and Nursery school and Junior school have taken place to advise of the proposed amalgamation. A further meeting with staff will be held immediately after the Christmas holiday as outlined in the timescale below and trade union colleagues are welcome to attend.

What happens next?

At the end of the consultation period, the Federated Governing Board and the Council will consider all of the views expressed by all interested parties during the consultation period and decide whether or not to go ahead with the proposal.

If the decision is to proceed to an amalgamation, then a Statutory Notice will be published in the local press and displayed at the main entrances to the schools and at other conspicuous places in the area served by the schools for a four week period. This four week representation period will provide the final opportunity for people and organisations to comment on, or submit objections to, the proposal.

At the end of the four week period any objections to or comments on the proposal will be considered by the Council and a final decision will be made.

Proposed timescale

Date	Activity
Friday 11 th December 2020	Consultation proposal opens and document distributed
Wednesday 6 th January 2021	Meetings for staff and trade unions
Thursday 21 st January 2021	End of consultation period

If the decision at the end of the consultation is to amalgamate, then the dates of the statutory notice period will be as follows –

Monday 25 th January	Publication of Statutory Notice
Friday 19 th February	End of period of statutory representations
Monday 22 nd February	Decision on proposal made

Consultation Response Form

Proposed amalgamation of Oak Farm Infant and Nursery School and Oak Farm Junior School

Please indicate below with a ✓ whether or not you support the proposal

I/We support the proposal to close Oak Farm Junior School and extend the age range of Oak Farm Infant and Nursery School to become an all-through primary school.	
I/We do not support the proposal to close Oak Farm Junior School and extend the age range of Oak Farm Infant and Nursery School to become an all-through primary school.	
I/We/ am/are not sure about the proposal to close Oak Farm Junior School and extend the age range of Oak Farm Infant and Nursey School to become an all-through primary school.	

Please provide any supporting information for your preference and / or any other comments

Full name/s:

Full postal address:

Email:

Tick which group you represent: staff / parents /carers / local community / other _____

To be received no later than Thursday 21st January 2020

School Governance Team, Education Service, 4E/07, Civic Centre, Uxbridge, UB8 1UW

schoolgovernance@hillingdon.gov.uk

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