

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Education
Date:	18 January 2017
Title:	Amalgamation of Weyford Infant School and Nursery and Weyford Junior School
Reference:	8018
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. On 22 September 2016 the Executive Member for Education decided to publish a statutory notice (Appendix A) in accordance with sections 15 and 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, setting out the County Council's intention to amalgamate Weyford Infant School and Nursery and Weyford Junior School to form a primary school. This is to be achieved through the closure of the infant school, the expansion of the junior school through the utilisation of the infant school's site and buildings, and extension of the junior school's age range to form a 630 place primary school for ages 4-11 plus places in the nursery provision. The report sets out the context leading to that decision and reports back on the representations received to the statutory notice.
- 1.2. This report sets out and comments upon the statutory guidance for decision makers on factors that need to be considered when deciding on proposals to form a primary school through the closure of an infant's school and extension of the age range and enlargement of a junior school.
- 1.3. It is recommended that Weyford Infant School and Nursery be closed with effect from 31 August 2017 and that a split site, three-form entry primary school to cater for 630 pupils plus nursery places aged 2-11 is established on the present schools' sites with effect from 1 September 2017.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. The Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) currently judges both schools to provide a 'good' quality of provision as indicated by the published reports in November 2011 for the infant and nursery school and in May 2014 for the junior school.

- 2.2. Both schools share a desire to significantly raise pupil outcomes by the time children leave their primary years. Having carefully considered all options both governing bodies believe that amalgamation of the two schools offers the best structure for realising that ambition.
- 2.3. The governing bodies of Weyford Infant School and Nursery and Junior School requested that Hampshire County Council consult with the schools' community and other interested parties on the closure of the infant school and converting the junior school to become a primary school (2-11) within the existing schools' buildings.
- 2.4. The nursery provision would continue unchanged within the primary school.

3. Representations received to the Public Notice

- 3.1. There were no representations.

4. Statutory guidance for decision makers regarding school closure and the alteration of a school's upper age limit

- 4.1. The Department for Education has issued statutory guidance for decision makers on factors that need to be considered when deciding on proposals to amalgamate schools. There are four key questions that must be answered before considering the relevant factors and merits of statutory proposals:
- do the published notices comply with statutory requirements?
 - has the statutory consultation been carried out prior to the publication of the notice?
 - are the proposals related to other published proposals?
 - is the decision maker satisfied that they have all the information needed to make a decision?
- 4.2. Before publication, the Public Notice was checked against the Department for Education guidance to confirm that it did comply with statutory guidance.
- 4.3. A full consultation exercise was undertaken in line with statutory guidance.
- 4.4. The proposal to amalgamate Weyford Infant School and Nursery and Weyford Junior School is not related to any other published proposals.
- 4.5. The relevant factors as identified in the statutory guidance to be considered in this case are:
- Any proposal relating to a school closure should be based upon the fact that the closure will contribute to raising local standards of education provision and will lead to improved attainment for pupils
 - The establishment of a primary school across the Weyford schools' sites will enhance the diversity of education provision in the local area which is predominantly served by separate infant and junior schools.

5. Conclusion

- 5.1. The Local Authority has met the statutory guidance to enable a decision to be made regarding the amalgamation of Weyford Infant School and Nursery and Weyford Junior School.
- 5.2. The Public Notice has resulted in no representations.
- 5.3. Both schools' governing bodies want the schools to amalgamate to form an all through primary school.
- 5.4. There is overwhelming support from the schools' community for the amalgamation.
- 5.5. Both schools' staff teams are in support of the amalgamation proposal.
- 5.6. The amalgamation of Weyford Infant School and Nursery and Weyford Junior School and the establishment of an all through primary school is the option most likely to be successful in effectively bringing about rapid improvement in the quality of provision for Key Stage 2 pupils.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1. It is recommended that approval be given to the proposal published by the Local Authority, in accordance with sections 15 and 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to:
 - a) Discontinue Weyford Infant School and Nursery with effect from 31 August 2017
 - b) Establish a community primary school for up to 630 pupils (YR to Y6), together with the existing nursery numbers, by enlarging Weyford Junior School, through the utilisation of Weyford Infant School and Nursery site and buildings and extension of Weyford Junior School's age range to form a primary school for ages 2-11, with effect from 1 September 2017.

7. Other options considered and rejected:

- 7.1. Not to approve the proposal would mean that the option to bring about the most rapid improvement in the quality of provision for the pupils will be lost.

8. Conflicts of interest

- 8.1. Conflict of interest declared by an Executive Member who is consulted by the officer which relates to the decision:

None.

9. Dispensation granted by the Head of Paid Service:

None.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	no
Maximising well-being:	yes
Enhancing our quality of place:	no
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u> Weyford Infant and Nursery and Weyford Junior School Amalgamation Consultation	<u>Reference</u> 7691	<u>Date</u> 21 July 2016
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u> Education and Inspections Act 2006	<u>Date</u> 8/11/2006	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
School Organisation-Maintained Schools Guidance for proposers and decision makers	Department for Education website

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- a) The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- b) Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- c) Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

1.2.1 There will be impact on the pupils as they will receive a primary education, albeit in two buildings.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1. The proposals have no impact on crime and disorder.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint /energy consumption?

The proposals have no impact on our carbon footprint/energy consumption.

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No specific measures have been identified.



Amalgamation of Weyford Infant School & Nursery and Weyford Junior Schools, Bordon

Notice is given in accordance with section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Hampshire County Council, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG intends to discontinue Weyford Infant School & Nursery, Mill Chase Road, Bordon, Hampshire GU35 0EP on 31 August 2017.

Places will be available for pupils affected by the closure of this school (including those with special educational needs) at the community primary school proposed to be established in September 2017 in accordance with the related proposal set out below. There will be no alteration to transport arrangements for pupils currently attending the schools.

Notice is also given that Hampshire County Council intends to establish a community primary school by enlarging Weyford Junior School, Washford Lane, Bordon, GU35 0ET under section 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 through the utilisation of Weyford Infant School & Nursery site and buildings and extension of Weyford Junior School's age range to form a primary school for ages 2-11 across the two sites. It is proposed that the primary school will open on 1 September 2017. Nursery provision will be unaffected by these proposals.

The primary school will cater for pupils between the ages of 2 and 11 and ultimately provide places for 630 boys and girls. The school will admit up to 90 pupils at the age of 4+ for the 2017/18 school year. Pupils will be admitted to the school in accordance with the local authority's admissions policy, published each year before the date on which applications must be submitted; this includes details of the criteria to be applied in the event of over-subscription. Transport will be provided for any pupils who qualify under the local authority's published policy.

All applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to these proposals have been complied with.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposals. Copies of the complete proposals can be obtained from Martin Shefferd, Strategic Development Office, Children's Services Department, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG (email: strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk).

Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object to or make comments on the proposals by sending them to Martin Shefferd, Strategic Development Office, Children's Services Department, The Castle, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG (email: strategicplanningunit@hants.gov.uk).

John Coughlan, Chief Executive, Hampshire County Council

Publication date: 7 October 2016