

Scott Lower School

Statutory proposal for Prescribed Alterations – Alteration of Upper Age Limit and Enlargement

Full Proposal Document

Name and contact details of the Local Authority or governing body publishing the proposal:

Bedford Borough Council, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford MK42 9AP.

Name, address and category of the school

Scott Lower School, Hawk Drive, Bedford MK41 7JA. The school is a Community school.

Proposed implementation date

Proposed date of implementation is 1 September 2017.

Description of alteration and Evidence of Demand

The proposal is for Scott Lower School to alter its upper age limit from 9 to 11 with effect from 1 September 2017 and to expand the school. The enlarged school would have approximately 630 pupils on roll when the proposal is fully implemented. It is anticipated that this will be achieved by September 2023 as shown in the table below

The school is increasing by one form of entry (30 places per year group) because a neighbouring school, Brickhill Lower School, in order to become a primary school, is reducing by one form of entry (30 places per year group). The increase in capacity will ensure that there are sufficient places to serve the local community. The primary school will use the sites of Scott Lower School and Beauchamp Middle School to accommodate the additional pupils.

Related proposal.

This proposal is linked to a proposal to close Beauchamp Middle School.

Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice);

In July 2015 the Council wrote to all schools regarding the school system in Bedford Borough moving to a primary and secondary system with a single transfer at age 11. This would bring schools in Bedford in line with the vast majority of schools elsewhere in the country. Primary schools and a secondary school already exist in some parts of the Borough and several Upper Schools in the area already admit some pupils at age 11. The Borough consulted on the principle of a two - tier education system in November 2015. The principle received widespread support across the Borough; in January 2016, the Council's Executive agreed that the structure of education in Bedford Borough should change largely to two - tier from September 2017.

Representatives from Bedford Borough Council have discussed how best to provide education in the area, (within the context of an emerging two-tier education system in the Local Authority), with the Governing Bodies of both Scott Lower and Beauchamp Middle Schools.

It has been proposed by the Borough Council that a single primary school is formed across the two sites of the existing Scott Lower and Beauchamp Middle Schools. This means that all the facilities at both schools will merge for the benefit of the pupils and the wider community. This will also mean

the primary school can accommodate a larger number of pupils, maximising existing facilities. This is preferable to one school building closing and potentially being sold.

To achieve this outcome, one of the existing schools must be deemed to be the continuing school. This will be Scott Lower school. The age range for this school will be extended and the school will expand onto the site and accommodation currently used by Beauchamp Middle School thereby retaining the land and buildings to accommodate the new primary school. Beauchamp Middle School will close with effect from 31 August 2017.

Both Scott Lower and Beauchamp Middle Schools were judged to be 'Good' in their last Ofsted inspections, both of which took place in 2013. The Council believes that in bringing these two schools together their knowledge and expertise combined will provide even better education.

Particular benefits of this proposal will be:

- the continuation of the curriculum, whereby there is continuity within Key Stage 2 fully without having to consider the transition at Year 4
- a single school will be accountable for attainment at Key stage 1 and 2
- within the national curriculum a single school can ensure that there are no gaps in what the children are taught
- whole-school planning, which can map the progress of curriculum subjects all the way to Year 6 ensuring the foundations built lower down the school, is carried through allowing all children to continue working in an environment that completes the entire primary education in a single setting
- sustaining high standards of education and maintain the nurturing and well-being of children by providing a focused learning environment until the end of Year 6
- nurturing children and helping them work together towards their aspirations in the same organisation
- offering children in Years R - 6 an exciting and innovative curriculum provision that meets their needs and supports them to achieve their full potential
- increasing parental choice with regard to the variety of primary options and opportunities that are being offered
- avoiding transitions at the end of both Year 4 and Year 8; ensuring that the provision at the school links with other local providers
- to continue to drive up standards in Bedford Borough to meet the local area vision for development, including the progress of vulnerable groups
- aiding teacher recruitment and retention as, with fewer and fewer local authorities having a three tier system, the teacher education institutions no longer deliver middle years education training.
- with transfer at 11, the same school will be able to deliver the whole of KS2 and be accountable for progress from KS1 to KS2
- transition points will match the end of national curriculum key stages and be in line with 95% of the country

Problems with different arrangements across the borough for schools are that:

- the system is confusing for parents
- low numbers of middle schools nationally mean difficulties in recruitment
- teachers are no longer trained for the middle years

Related proposal

This proposal is related to the proposal for closure of Beauchamp Middle School from

31 August 2017. Pupils currently in year 5 at Beauchamp Middle School will transfer automatically into Year 6 of Scott Lower School in September 2017.

The effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area

The proposal is not believed to have any adverse effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions.

Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved;

Reconfiguration works will take place to provide suitable toilets along with a link path between buildings. The estimated cost for this is £180,000.

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

The school will grow incrementally as shown in the table

| Date | Year R | Year 1 | Year 2 | Year 3 | Year 4 | Year 5 | Year 6 | TOTAL |
|----------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-------|
| Sep 2017 | 90 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 30 | 91 | 451 |
| Sep 2018 | 90 | 90 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 30 | 450 |
| Sep 2019 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 510 |
| Sep 2020 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 60 | 60 | 60 | 540 |
| Sep 2021 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 60 | 60 | 570 |
| Sep 2022 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 60 | 600 |
| Sep 2023 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 90 | 630 |

Statement on procedure for obtaining copies of this proposal.

Any person wanting a copy of this proposal can do so by contacting Colin Foster, Assistant Director – Chief Education Officer, Children’s and Adults’ Services, Bedford Borough Council, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford MK42 9AP or by emailing education@bedford.gov.uk or by visiting the Council’s website at www.bedford.gov.uk or by visiting the school’s website at <http://scottlower.co.uk/>

Statement on procedure for commenting on the proposal, either to object or support

Any person or organisation may object or make comments on the proposal can do by sending them to: Colin Foster, Assistant Director – Chief Education Officer, Children’s and Adults’ Services, Bedford Borough Council, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, Bedford MK42 9AP or by emailing education@bedford.gov.uk .

All comments must be received by 5pm on 16 November 2016.