



Full Proposal

Proposal to change the age range of Bowburn Junior School from 7-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2019 in an enlarged new build, to create a Primary School and to close Bowburn Infant and Nursery School as a registered school on 31 August 2019

1. What is the Proposal?

This information is the Full Proposal of Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5UJ as the Local Authority to amalgamate Bowburn Junior School and Bowburn Infant and Nursery Schools **into a single Primary School in a new build from 1 September 2019**. This will be achieved by changing the age range of Bowburn Junior School from 7-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2019 in an enlarged new build and by closing Bowburn Infant and Nursery School as a registered school on 31 August 2019.

2. The Objectives of the Proposal

The objectives of the proposal are to preserve and enhance education provision and to respond to the significant growth due to housing developments that is putting pressure on school places in the community of Bowburn. Amalgamating the two schools into one new build Primary School on the site of Bowburn Junior School would lead to a more sustainable school as well as ensuring sufficient primary school places will be available for the long term. Where possible the Council aims to move towards a model of all through Primary Schools instead of separate Nursery, Infant and Junior Schools. This will lead to establishments able to deliver an effective education to benefit pupils, their families and communities for the long term. A new build would also address the condition issues of the current Bowburn Junior School which is in need of investment to address various maintenance issues. Primary Schools have a number of wider benefits for pupils, parents and staff that separate Nursery, Infant and Junior Schools do not. Some of these benefits include:

- Attending an 'all through' Primary School reduces breaks in a child's education and removes the need for additional transitions in a child's learning;
- Access to education planned across the whole primary age range; this would enable staff to help children make progress from exactly where they left off at the end of the previous year rather than covering learning which has already taken place;
- Access to the full range of facilities for all children aged between 3 and 11 is provided;
- Parents can have closer contact with the school over a larger period of time to help build positive relationships for the benefit of their children;

- Increased opportunities for more professional development of staff which should lead to improved outcomes for children; staff would know all the children better and the school would be able to train all staff to meet their needs more effectively;
- School Inspectors and school leaders will be able to make judgements more accurately about the education children receive when they can see 'the whole picture' within a single Primary School rather than two separate schools.

At present Bowburn Junior School and Bowburn Infant and Nursery School are judged as 'Good' by Ofsted. The Local Authority believes that amalgamating the two schools will not have any negative impact on the standard of education provided to children in these schools.

The intention is that the proposed Primary School would be a new build on the current site of Bowburn Junior School. This proposal will bring about long term value for money by educating pupils in a larger viable, sustainable new build Primary School for the long term rather than having a separate Infant and Junior School as is currently the case.

Parental choice will be enhanced as most children transfer from Bowburn Infant and Nursery School to Bowburn Junior School. This proposal removes the need for parents to apply again for a Junior School place. It will also lead to a larger, more sustainable Primary School and Nursery Unit to enhance education provision and serve the community of Bowburn for the long term. The progress of children from nursery school age to age 11 could be tracked and monitored in a single school instead of three separate settings.

3. Pupil Numbers and Admissions

The current capacity of Bowburn Infant and Nursery School is for 168 pupils. The current capacity for Bowburn Junior School is for 224 pupils. The capacity for the proposed new build Primary School will be for 540 pupils. The current number of pupils admitted to Bowburn Infant and Nursery School at Reception is 56 and the current number of pupils admitted to Bowburn Junior School is 56. The proposed number of pupils to be admitted to Reception of the proposed Primary School in September 2019 will be 75. There are currently 139 pupils on roll at Bowburn Infant and Nursery School and 173 pupils on roll at Bowburn Junior School. No pupils will be displaced by the proposal, therefore there will be no cost to the Local Authority in respect of transport to other schools.

These figures do not include pupils attending the Nursery Unit attached to Bowburn Infant and Nursery School. The Nursery Unit will remain and be expanded so that it can provide early years and pre-school education for up to 70 full-time equivalent places.

4. The Impact of the Proposal on Other Schools in the Area

The proposed Primary School would be located on the existing site of Bowburn Junior School. The capacity would be for 540 pupils. It is therefore not expected that the proposal would impact on other schools in the area.

5. The Impact of the Proposal on the Community

All services run from the existing schools for the local communities will continue to be provided if the two separate schools become one Primary School in a new build on the site of Bowburn Junior School. The closure of Bowburn Infant and Nursery School as a registered school will therefore not have a negative impact on the local community.

6. Consultation

- (i) A 6 week public consultation ran from 20 October 2017 to 10 November 2017. A consultation document was issued to Governors and staff of Bowburn Infant and Nursery School and Bowburn Junior School. It was also issued to parents, C of E and RC Dioceses, Bowburn Parish Council, other schools in the area and providers of Early Years Education. Copies of the document were also placed in Bowburn Library, Bowburn Community Centre, Doctors' Surgeries and on the Durham County Council website.
- (ii) A significant majority of respondents supported the proposal as they felt that it would provide continuity and consistency of provision as well as bringing about smoother transition as staff would be more familiar with children from a young age. Respondents also felt that a new build will provide better facilities than the current schools and that it would respond to growth in Bowburn. Concerns were expressed regarding access to the school site.
- (iii) The reasons provided by the small number of respondents not in support of the proposal was the uncertainty regarding the impact on staff.

7. How to Respond to the Proposal

Responses to the proposal should be made by **21 December 2017**. Any person may object to or make comments by sending them to Mr Adam Williams, School Places and Admissions Team, Children and Young People's Services, Business Reply Service, Licence No DU63 (FREEPOST), Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5BR. Objections and comments can also be sent via the County Council's website at www.durham.gov.uk/consultations or emailed to schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk

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