

Consultation on the proposal to enlarge Merton Infant and Merton Junior Schools, Basingstoke

Hampshire County Council would like to hear your views about the proposal to enlarge Merton Infant and Merton Junior Schools..

We are running a consultation from the 22nd October to 10th December 2012.

Why do you need to enlarge the school?

Throughout Hampshire the number of births has risen in recent years which, together with significant levels of new housing, has created a pressure on pupil places. The housing development at Merton Rise lies within the catchment area of the schools which will create further pressure on pupil places. In view of this Hampshire County Council is proposing to enlarge Merton Infant and Merton Junior Schools to meet the need for additional school places.

Due to the pressure locally for school places additional modular classrooms have been provided at Merton Infant School to allow the school to offer 90 places in Year R from 2012 and in future years. The provision of the additional accommodation and increase in pupil admissions requires the statutory procedures on enlarging the school to be followed as the enlargement will occur in September 2013.

The enlargement of Merton Junior School will occur later as the increase in pupil numbers will be gradual and the additional accommodation is not required until 2015.

It is intended that permanent accommodation will be provided by September 2015 at both schools. The proposed enlargement will allow Merton Infant and Merton Junior Schools to offer 90 places in Year R (age 4+) and 90 places in Year 3 (age 7+) respectively. This will provide a total capacity in the Infant School of 270 places and in the Junior School of 360 places

The formal change to both schools Published Admission Number (PAN) is expected to take place for admissions to the schools from 2015.

What building works will be taking place?

The proposed building works will consist of both an extension to the current school buildings, as well as internal alterations. These works will provide the additional classrooms needed to meet the increase in pupil numbers.

Work is progressing with the headteacher and governors on the building plans so at this stage they are indicative of what's likely to be provided. To view the current proposed plans for the building works please go to the school websites at;

www.mertoninfants.com

www.mertonjuniorschool.co.uk

When will the building works start and how will you ensure the health and safety of pupils attending the school whilst the works are taking place?

It is planned that the building works will commence in the summer of 2014 and complete ready for September 2015. We will provide the school with further details as the design work for the project progresses so the school can keep you informed of progress and inform you of key dates.

Health and safety of children, staff and visitors is paramount. The County Council works with our construction partners who have significant experience of working on school sites. A detailed health and safety plan will be drawn up with the school to include items such as restricting delivery times for materials to avoid the beginning and end of the school day, maintaining safe access routes for pupils, staff and visitors etc.

What will be the impact on pupils within the school?

The schools will continue to operate as normal during the building works. Everything will be done to minimise the impact on pupils teaching and learning but we do acknowledge there may be some disruption. The County Council is liaising fully with the headteacher and governors on the project to ensure that the planning for the building works runs as smoothly as possible.

What about the impact on traffic due to the school taking more pupils?

The County Council appreciates that local residents will be concerned about potential traffic implications around the expansion of the school. By planning to create school places as close as possible to where children live we create the best chance that those children will make their way to school other than by car.

A School Travel Plan is a document produced by the whole school community and any other interested parties. It looks at how children, staff and visitors travel to and from school, and sets out measures to;

1. Encourage and enable pupils, parents, guardians and staff to walk and cycle to school.
2. Encourage and provide educational programmes relating to child travel and how this links to the environment, safety and health.
3. Improve safety.

The School Travel Plan will be reviewed as part of the process associated with the enlargement of the school.

Will the school receive additional funding due to the numbers increasing?

The funding of schools is based around the number of pupils on roll, so as numbers increase so will the funding.

What happens after this consultation?

This consultation will run until 10th December 2012. Officers will then take into consideration all the consultation responses received before deciding whether the proposal should continue to the formal publication stage.

If so, statutory Public Notices will be published, setting out Hampshire County Council's intent to enlarge the school. It is anticipated that these will be published in January 2013.

After the date of publication there will be a four week period in which any representations can be made. After the conclusion of this period the County Council will decide whether or not to proceed with the proposal. It is anticipated that a decision will be made in March 2013 at the latest.

Will I have the opportunity to discuss the proposal and ask questions?

Yes. A drop-in session where you will be able to view the plans and discuss the proposal with County Council officers, headteacher and governors is planned for 8 November 2012 from 3 p.m. until 6 p.m. This will be held in Merton Infant School hall.

If you are unable to attend this session and wish to make a comment then please write to Glenn Parkinson at Children's Services Department, Elizabeth II Court East, Winchester, Hampshire SO23 8UG or e-mail

glenn.parkinson@hants.gov.uk by 10th December 2012.

How can my views be heard?

We will listen to views at the drop-in session.

We will also consider all responses received via e-mail or letter.

The closing date for responses is 10th December 2012.