

Statutory Proposal to Amalgamate Dorridge Infant and Dorridge Junior School

SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

Proposals to Amalgamate Dorridge Infant and Dorridge Junior School

Notice is given that Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council intends to close Dorridge Junior School, Station Road, Dorridge, Solihull B93 8EU on 31 August 2014 and expand and alter the age range of Dorridge Infant School, Station Road, Dorridge, Solihull, B93 8EU from 1 September 2014.

It is proposed that the children on roll at Dorridge Junior School at the time the school closes will be guaranteed a place at an expanded Dorridge Infant School. Admission may be sought to other schools which have places available.

Any child who is eligible to receive assistance under the Council's transport policy will not be affected by these proposals.

The proposal to close Dorridge Junior School is related to the proposal to expand as well as alter the age range of Dorridge Infant School to a 3 form entry primary school catering for ages 3 to 11. The expanded Dorridge School will require the use of the Dorridge Junior School site.

The current capacity of Dorridge Infant School is 270 and the proposed capacity will be 630. The current admission number for the school is 90 and the proposed admission number will be 90.

All statutory consultation requirements relating 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: School Place Planning Team, Children's Services, The Metropolitan Borough of Solihull, Council House, Manor Square, Solihull B91 3QB or viewed on the website www.solihull.gov.uk/consultation.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object to, support or make comments on the proposals by sending them to School Place Planning Team, Children's Services, The Metropolitan Borough of Solihull, Council House, Manor Square, Solihull B91 3QB or emailing researchandpolicy@solihull.gov.uk.

Signed:
Sally Hodges
Director of Children's Services

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Statutory Proposal to Amalgamate Dorridge Infant and Dorridge Junior School

Solihull Council is proposing to amalgamate Dorridge Infant and Dorridge Junior School through the closure of Dorridge Junior School and the expansion and alteration to the age range of Dorridge Infant School.

1. Contact Details

The Council publishing these proposals is:
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
Council House
Manor Square
Solihull
B91 3QB

These proposals are for Dorridge Infant and Dorridge Junior School which are both community Schools.

2. Implementation

The proposed implementation date for the closure of Dorridge Junior School is 31 August 2014 and the expansion of Dorridge Infant School is 1 September 2014.

3. Objectives and reason for the proposals

These proposals are linked and therefore must be considered together.

Solihull Council is pursuing this proposal at the request of the Governing Body of the Dorridge Schools, following a resolution of the Governing Body on 9th January 2014.

Dorridge Infant and Dorridge Junior School already operate with a single Headteacher and a federated Governing Body across both schools. They are linked for admission purposes at infant to junior school transfer and both serve the same catchment area.

These proposals seek to formalise the school organisation which effectively operates as a primary school.

The Governing Body of the Dorridge Schools and Solihull Council believe that this proposal will have a positive impact on standards at both schools by supporting transition for pupils between key stages, providing more consistent approach to assessment for pupils and supporting staff development.

The all-through primary school will provide benefits to ensure better rates of progression in learning and achievement throughout the school. It will also allow for greater movement of teachers across the school and establish a coherent ethos across all key stages.

Dorridge Infant School is currently rated as 'outstanding' by Ofsted, and this proposal fits within the National Agenda of expanding places in good and popular schools.

4. Pupil Numbers and Admissions

At October 2013 pupil count Dorridge Junior School had 379 pupils on roll. It caters for children from 7 to 11 years old. The School caters for boys and girls and for children with special educational needs within the mainstream setting.

At October 2013 pupil count Dorridge Infant School had 269 pupils on roll. It caters for children from 4 to 7 years old. In addition the school has a nursery unit for up to 80 part time pupils. The School caters for boys and girls and for children with special educational needs within the mainstream setting.

The current published admission number for Dorridge Infant School is 90. No change is proposed to the admission number at Reception or to the catchment area serving the school. Dorridge Infant School is popular with parents and is normally full at Reception intake.

Under current arrangements pupils admitted to Dorridge Infant School are guaranteed a place at Dorridge Junior School at Year 3. Under this proposal the children will automatically continue through the school and the infant to junior admission process will cease.

There is no plan to increase the numbers of pupils entering the school at reception intake so it is not anticipated that there will be any impact on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area. All of whom have been consulted on the proposal.

5. Displaced Pupils

All displaced pupils from Dorridge Junior School will be guaranteed a place at the expanded Dorridge Infant School. Parents may also express a preference for any school with a vacancy and places will be allocated in accordance with published admission criteria.

6. Project Costs

Revenue Implications: when the two schools amalgamate the Council has traditionally taken the approach that any restructuring costs are funded by the saving from the lump sum component of the funding formula over a three year period. Given the nature of the current structure of the two schools, significant restructuring costs are not expected.

The current school funding regulations permit the lump sum to be maintained for a year after amalgamation, and locally we will wish to extend that to two years until 31 March 2017, to ensure the Governing Body have sufficient time to fully realise the financial savings from the amalgamation.

There are no capital costs for the project as the expanded Dorridge Infant School will use the existing school buildings on both school sites to accommodate the pupils.

7. Impact on the Community

The Council will work in partnership with the school to support parents and children within the community through the change, ensuring where necessary that appropriate transitional arrangements will be put in place.

The expanded Dorridge Infant School will operate across the two school sites which should limit the impact on residents of parent parking and traffic.

In addition any identified community activities carried out at Dorridge Junior School will continue or be replicated at the expanded Dorridge Infant School.

8. Travel

The closure of Dorridge Junior School should not have an impact on the length of journeys for displaced pupils. All children on roll at Dorridge Junior School when it closes will be guaranteed a place at the expanded Dorridge Infant School which will be located across the two Dorridge School sites.

Any child who is eligible to receive assistance under the Council's transport policy will not be affected by these proposals.

9. Consultation

The Council held a period of consultation which started on 7 February 2014 with a closing date of 14 March. Information was sent to parents, pre-school parents, staff and other interested parties, in addition it was published on the Council website and the school website.

Three responses were received to the consultation process, all of which have been considered by the Cabinet Member for Education, Children and Young People before a decision was made to move to publishing formal proposals.

10. Procedure for Responses

Within four weeks from the date of publication, by no later than Friday 6 June 2014, any person may object to, support or make comments on the proposals by sending them to School Place Planning Team, Children's Services, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Council House, Manor Square, Solihull, B91 3QB or emailing researchandpolicy@solihull.gov.uk .