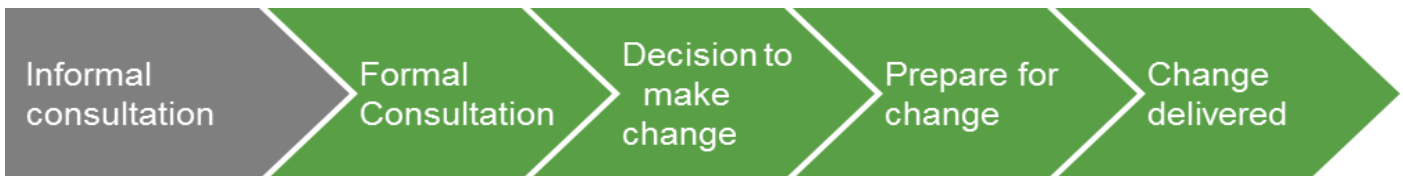


Informal Consultation

Proposal to expand St Mary and St Giles CofE School by 1 Form of Entry at Year 3



This **eight week** informal consultation from 9 January 2017 to 10 March 2017 is to gather opinions on a proposal for **St Mary and St Giles CofE School** to expand the number of pupil places available in Year 3 by 1 form of entry. The school would eventually cater for an additional 120 pupils, 30 in each Year 3 to Year 6. Additional pupils would be admitted into Year 3 only, to grow the school gradually.

What is the current position?

In September 2015 Russell Street School, also in Stony Stratford, was expanded by 30 infant places due to projected increased demand in the local area. As anticipated, the number of pupils on roll at Russell Street School has increased and this means that up to 90 pupils will leave Russell Street School at the end of Year 2 in 2018. The typical transition route for these pupils is to move up to St Mary and St Giles CofE School; however the school currently has an intake at Year 3 of only 60 places. There are also a number of children that apply for a place at the school that live in the catchment area but attend other schools in Milton Keynes or attend schools just across the border in Northamptonshire. In 2016, the school received 115 applications for the 60 places available.

What is the opportunity?

St Mary and St Giles is a Church of England School which is judged 'Outstanding' by Ofsted. Following the recent merger with Queen Eleanor Primary School, it currently caters for 30 pupils in Year R to Year 2 and 90 pupils in Year 3 to Year 6. The South site caters for 30 children per year group from Year R to Year 6, whereas the North site caters for 60 children per year group from Year 3 to Year 6. Children transitioning to the school at Year 3 would therefore usually attend the North site. The school is a popular choice for local parents and is regularly over-subscribed. Both Russell Street School and St Mary and St Giles CofE School work closely together to ensure a smooth transition for children.

Because St Mary and St Giles CofE School is a long-established and successful school situated in the area of demand, the council approached the Governing Body and Trustees to consider expansion so that the number of places in the junior provision would match the number of places available at Russell Street School. This is in line with the council's advisory document "A good local school for every child" September 2015 which states "We are proud of our successful maintained schools. Where there is a strong maintained school with the desire to expand that meets the qualification criteria for expansion, the council will consult on expanding the school."

It is envisaged that the additional children will be accommodated at the North site, which would reflect the current arrangements for children joining the school at this time. This would help to provide continuity of friendship groups and enable the schools to support the transition process.

If the additional children are accommodated at the North site, the accommodation would need to be expanded. It is intended for the additional places to become available in September 2018 with a project to expand the school building to take place in time for September 2019. The building extension would be subject to planning permission from the council, for which there would be a separate consultation with local residents at that stage.

What are the benefits of expanding St Mary and St Giles School?

- ✓ By opening additional school places at a popular, outstanding school we are addressing parental preference and providing the opportunity for more children to have a high standard of education.
- ✓ Russell Street School was expanded in September 2015 – local children will be able to attend their local school continuing their sense of community belonging and ensure a greater consistency of education for the children of the local area.
- ✓ Partnership between the school and the community will continue to be embedded, leading to greater cohesion in later years.
- ✓ The school's larger size would make it possible for the organisation to be even more efficient and effective.
- ✓ There would be greater opportunities for staff, making it more likely the existing high quality staff would be retained and high quality staff would be attracted to work at the school as it grows.
- ✓ Additional resources and staffing enabling greater opportunities to further develop the school as a learning community. Staff will be able to share expertise and learn from each other

How can I find out more and contribute to this consultation?

The school and the council have arranged three drop in sessions for parents and the community so that they can find out more and give their views. These will take place on:

Monday 16 January 2017 between 2.30pm and 6.00pm at North site, King George Crescent

Friday 20 January 2017 between 8.00am and 9.15am at North site, King George Crescent

Wednesday 25 January 2017 between 8.00am and 9.15am at South site, Galley Hill

This consultation seeks views from parents and staff directly involved with St Mary and St Giles CofE School, from other local schools and any other interested parties. We are keen to hear as many views as possible about this proposal. Please go online and complete the web form at:

<http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/consultations>

If you are unable to access the online form you may respond by email to:

sufficiencyandaccess@milton-keynes.gov.uk

or in writing to Education Sufficiency, Milton Keynes Council, Saxon Court, 502 Avebury Boulevard, Central Milton Keynes, MK9 3HS or by telephone to 01908 253338

This informal consultation will end on 10 March 2017

Who has this consultation been sent to?

All parents, staff and governors of St Mary and St Giles CofE School, as they are directly affected by this proposal; all schools in Milton Keynes; all Academy Trusts who have schools in Milton Keynes; local MPs, Ward Councillors and Parish/Town Councils; neighbouring councils with schools adjoining our catchment areas.

This informal consultation is the first stage in a five stage process which will include:

1. This informal consultation for 8 weeks
2. Consideration in April 2017 by the Cabinet Member for Children and Families of the outcome of this consultation and whether to proceed with a statutory consultation
3. Statutory consultation lasting 4 weeks in May 2017. (If you respond to this consultation please do so again for the statutory consultation.)
4. Consideration in July 2017 by the Cabinet Member of the outcome of the statutory consultation and a decision whether to proceed with the expansion of the school
5. If the proposal is agreed a building project will commence with an intended completion date of September 2019. This work will be subject to planning permission and will include another consultation with local residents who may be affected by the building works.