



Come to a public meeting to hear about the

Proposed Amalgamation of

Victoria Park Infant and Junior Schools

on

Wednesday 9th July at 9.15am at Victoria Park Infant School,
Raymend Road, Bedminster

or

Thursday 10th July at 7pm at Victoria Park Junior School,
Atlas Road, Bedminster

Both meetings are open to all parents and the public.

Commitment to Consultation

Bristol City Council is committed to listening and responding to citizens' views. When the Council consults it will provide clear and balanced background information to help you reach a view. The Council will allow time for you to consider information and will make it clear how you can submit your views. After the consultation has closed the Council will publish feedback on the range of views expressed and on how these have been used to inform decisions that are made. In return, the Council asks that you keep your response short and to the point; that you make it clear whether you are responding individually or on behalf of an organisation or group; and that you respect other people's views, even when they are different from your own.

This document aims to:

- Explain why there is a proposal to amalgamate Victoria Park Infant and Junior Schools to form a primary school;
- Tell parents, staff, governors and the local community what is proposed and how it would influence the education of children currently attending both schools.
- Provide an opportunity for parents, pupils, governors, staff, the community and others to comment on the proposal before a decision is taken.

The information contained in this document is available in other languages and formats by contacting the School Organisation Team on 0117 9222571.

Please send your views on the proposal using the response form at the end of this document. You can also respond by letter or e-mail. Please reply by 25 July 2008 to:

School Organisation Team (CF/CH/221)
P.O. Box 57
FREEPOST SWB 203
BRISTOL
BS99 7BR

By fax to: - 0117 9224405

By email to:- catherine.filmer@bristol.gov.uk

Consultation meetings

Meetings for parents and the public have been arranged to help you fully understand the proposal.

9th July at 9.15am at Victoria Park Infant School, Raymend Road, Bedminster

10th July at 7pm at Victoria Park Junior School, Atlas Road, Bedminster

Both meetings are open to all parents and the public.

This consultation document and the response form are also available at www.bristol-cyps.org.uk.

PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF VICTORIA PARK INFANT AND JUNIOR SCHOOLS

Background

The City Council has a policy of moving towards a pattern of all through primary schools across the city, rather than separate infant and junior schools. When opportunities arise, we consider the possibility of amalgamating the two schools to form a primary school. This will provide the opportunity for children to remain in one school from age 4 until 11 with the benefits of being able to attend the same school as brothers and sisters and allowing the school to plan for progression in learning from Foundation Stage to Key Stage 2.

Currently neither school has a substantive headteacher and therefore this is a good opportunity to consider the future of the schools. The governing bodies of both schools have discussed the situation and decided that they want to consult on amalgamation to create a new primary school. They have requested that the Council begins consultation on this proposal.

Proposal

Bristol City Council is proposing that Victoria Park Infant and Junior Schools should be brought together in September 2009 to form a 525 place primary school to serve children aged 4-11. This proposal would require the closure of the current infant and junior schools in order to open a new primary school. The infant and junior schools would close on 31 August 2009 and the new primary school would open the following day.

The new primary school would provide 525 places, with an admission number of 75 for the reception year and would be planned to provide two and a half forms of entry in each year group. The admission number of the infant school is currently 74 and the junior school is 69. This proposal would change the admission number for the primary school to 75. The planned size of the school is in line with the projected pupil numbers for the area.

Pupils

Children currently in Years 5 and 6 would not be affected by the proposal. Pupils in other year groups would transfer into the new primary school without the need to apply and the schools will be supported to manage the process.

Special Needs

Both schools support children with a variety of special educational needs. There is no specialist unit in either of the schools currently and there is no intention to include one in the amalgamated primary school.

Nursery

There is no nursery class at the infant school. It is not proposed to make any changes to nursery provision in the area at this stage.

Finance

Most of the income of the two schools is generated by pupil numbers, and the new school's budget will be based on those same pupil numbers. A single school would have one headteacher and management structure. This will enable the school to operate with the number of pupils projected in the medium term.

Buildings

The primary school will be based in both current school buildings. The buildings will be looked at to determine what building work needs to be carried out to make the buildings more suitable for a primary school, however this work will not be completed by the time that the new school opens.

Staffing

If two or more schools are amalgamated, the existing schools are closed and a new school is opened. A temporary governing body is set up in advance of the opening date in order to prepare for the new school. This temporary governing body would include members of the governing bodies of each of the existing schools. It would be responsible for deciding the staffing structure and making appointments. Wherever possible the strengths of the existing staff would be utilised in order to provide maximum continuity for pupils.

Benefits of the Proposal

The Local Authority believes that the benefits of this proposal are:

- Provision from age 4 to 11 at one school;
- Improved transition between key stages;
- The opportunity to plan for progression in learning from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2;
- The opportunity for children to attend the same school as older or younger brothers and sisters;
- Children having access to a wider range of staff expertise, with curriculum co-ordinators overseeing the teaching of individual subjects to the whole primary age range, providing greater continuity in learning;
- A greater number of subject specialists able to provide support to colleagues, and therefore a broader curriculum for children;
- Increased opportunities for staff to work with a larger team, thus supporting professional development and providing further opportunities to take on new responsibilities;
- Reduced duplication and economies of scale in the management of budgets.

What happens next?

Your comments will be taken into account by the City Council when deciding whether to take the proposal forward to the next 'statutory' stage. At the end of the consultation period a report will be prepared summarising the views expressed. If the Council decides to adopt the proposals, the legal process is that the Local Authority will publish notices proposing to close both schools and establish a primary school. There will then be a six week period (in September/October 2008) for people to make representations, with a final decision before Christmas 2008.

Please complete the attached response form and return it to the school or the School Organisation Team by 25 July 2008.