



Havering
LONDON BOROUGH

**Consultation on the
proposal to amalgamate
Parklands Infant & Parklands Junior Schools
into a single Primary School
from September 2021**

Parklands Infants School



"Children are our Future"



**Parklands
Junior School**

Introduction

The London Borough of Havering's view is that 'all-through primary schools (infant and junior school aged children in one primary school), deliver better continuity of learning as the model for primary phase education in Havering. Therefore, we will aim to move towards this model of a single primary either through amalgamation or federation instead of separate Infant and Junior Schools where it is practical to do so if an opportunity arises.

An opportunity has arisen for the council to consult on a proposal to amalgamate Parklands Infant and Junior Schools into one Primary School (age 2-11) from September 2021.

The council is aware of concerns regarding school reorganisation; as local communities see a school as being at the heart of the community and sometimes any proposed change may often be contentious. Taking this into account, the council will have regard to existing local arrangements and seek to avoid leaving existing schools without links on which they have previously depended, whilst ensuring that its vision for every child to reach their potential by having a good start and reaches the highest possible standard in their education.

This document explains the amalgamation proposal, attempts to answer some questions and seeks the views or comments interested parties may have on what is being proposed.

What does "amalgamation" mean?

Amalgamation is the merging of both Parklands infant school and Parklands Junior School to create one single primary school. The process would mean that Parklands Infant School would close and a primary school would be established by altering the lower age range of Parklands Junior School.

Parklands infant school presently caters for pupils aged between 2 and 7 and has a capacity of 360, excluding the nursery provision. Parklands junior school on the other hand, caters for pupils aged between 7 and 11 and has a capacity of 480 pupils.

The amalgamation of both schools would mean that the primary school would cater for children aged 2 to 11 with a capacity of 840 pupils

Why is the Council proposing to amalgamate Parklands Infant and Parklands Junior Schools?

The proposal is in line with our strategic objective of bringing separate Infant and Junior schools together where appropriate and over time, to form a primary school so children can benefit from primary education in one school rather than changing schools at age 7.

The retirement of the Headteacher of Parklands Infant School in December 2020 provides a natural opportunity to review the organisation of the school and consider the needs of current and future pupils.

The two schools currently have different ethos. An amalgamation will enable a new collaborative ethos to be formed which would aid the development and running of education provision from nursery to Year 6 provided in a continuous and logically progressed curriculum which is proven to be educationally beneficial.

Whatever the decision regarding the future of the schools, the certainty is that there will be

change in the school, which is inevitable when there is a change in leadership.

If the proposal to amalgamate the schools is approved, the council would work closely with staff and Governors of the schools to provide support with governance, finance, personnel and curriculum issues.

1. What is the proposal?

The proposal is to amalgamate Parklands Infant and Junior Schools to form a 4 form entry single primary school on the existing site by closing the Infant School and expanding the age range of the Junior School (from age 7-11 to age 2-11). The proposed implementation date would be September 2021 if agreed.

2. What are the benefits of a single primary school?

There are a number of benefits that Primary Schools have which are set out below:

Benefits for Children

- There is strong evidence that continuity of learning has a significant impact on pupils' progress. The fewer moves children have during their school education, the better they perform.
- With a single ethos, shared expectations, assessed across the whole primary range; continuity of learning and accurate measure of each child's progress would be easier as staff would know exactly where they left off at the end of the previous year rather than cover learning which has already taken place – this would enable children make more progress in their learning.
- Unified leadership and management of the curriculum, teaching, learning and social development; would mean a consistent approach to the way children are taught including vulnerable pupils and those with special educational needs and disabilities.
- Assessment of pupils will be consistent and transition from KS1 to KS2 will be much smoother and cause less anxiety for pupils.
- Bringing the schools together would help all staff to safeguard the needs of all pupils, facilitate better and more reliable pupil tracking that provides early interventions.
- Phase specific expertise and resources can be shared across phases so that pupils working outside their own phase can benefit.

Benefits for Parents/Carers

The requirement for parents to apply for a place in the Junior School would be removed, enabling children progress automatically from Year 2 to Year 3

A single primary school, parents and carers are able to develop a longer term relationship with all of those involved in the school, including the Head Teacher and support staff. School policies & procedures are the same throughout the primary years. For example:

- How children with special needs are supported.

- Arrangements for open evenings and school events.
- School uniform.
- School closure days, etc.

This means parents and carers know what to expect.

Over time the staff build up a good knowledge of children and their families as they progress through the school, creating a sense of the school as a 'family', which in turn helps develop trust and confidence.

Benefits for Staff

Primary schools offer greater career opportunities across the key stages and it is often easier to recruit and retain staff in schools with more than one key stage. This is also true of leadership appointments, so the recruitment to an Infant school could prove to be difficult.

In a single primary school, there are greater opportunities for staff to build upon their professional knowledge and skills across a wider age range.

- Provide opportunities to increase the range of expertise and experience of teaching staff.
- Provide opportunities for improvement in the deployment and development of all staff.
- Provide opportunities for sharing good practice across the whole school.

General Benefits

- A more efficient school leadership and management system enabling leaders to have the required overview to make the best decision for a school as a whole with finances and resources being shared more easily.
- A single Head Teacher, as part of a restructured Senior Leadership Team, would be able to make changes and take a whole school approach.
- School inspectors and school leaders would be able to make judgements more accurately about the education children receive when they can see 'the whole picture' rather than in separate schools.
- Greater financial security for the school, providing stability for pupils, staff and the local community.

3. What will the admission criteria be for the proposed Primary School?

If the proposed primary school is agreed, the planned admission number (PAN) at Reception age for the school will be 120. The oversubscription criteria for admission to the school will be the same as it is for the current infant and junior schools.

4. How will this proposal affect Pupils?

All pupils attending Parklands Infant and Parklands Junior School would automatically transfer to the proposed primary school. This should have a positive impact for pupils as discussed above.

5. How will the proposal affect Parents?

If the proposal is agreed, parents would only have to apply for a place in Reception and will not need to apply for a Year 3 place. This will enable consistent engagement with parents across the primary phase, with no need to

transfer information at the end of Key Stage 1.

6. How will this proposal affect Governors?

The Governing Body of Parklands Infant School would cease to exist with effect from 31 August 2021. The existing Governing Body of Parklands Junior School would become the Governing Body of the primary school.

The Local authority would encourage Parklands Junior School Governing Body to consider all opportunities whereby Governors of the infant school could join the primary school Governing Body. This could be through reconstitution, not filling current vacancies, or appointment of Associate Members. This would help ensure a good balance and complementary skills set.

7. What will be the impact of the proposed amalgamation on staff?

There is no reason for concern amongst staff generally as this should not immediately affect their day to day work and they need to be assured of this. It is expected that the leadership team in both schools would support the staff through the process ensuring that timely and accurate information is provided.

8. Will the standard of education that the two schools currently provide be affected if they become one school?

Parklands Infant School was inspected and judged to be 'Good' by Ofsted in February 2018. The inspection acknowledged that since the previous inspection in 2013, the leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school and have identified the appropriate priorities to continue to improve the school. One of the strengths identified is the pupils' attitudes to learning and the majority of parents and carers are very supportive of the school.

Parklands Junior School was inspected and judged to be 'Good' by Ofsted in November 2016. Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Teachers are clear about what they want the pupils to learn. Consequently, pupils' personal development, behaviour and welfare are outstanding.

The judgement also recognised that the leaders at all levels, including governors, have a good understanding of what works well and what remains to be done to make the school outstanding.

The Council believes that learning and progress will be improved if the two schools are amalgamated to become a single 'all through' primary school. The amalgamation will build on the positives already identified and would provide a base for a more collaborative approach towards delivering an outstanding standard of education for all children.

9. Where will the proposed primary school located?

The proposed primary school would be located on the existing site of the Infant and Junior Schools. The primary school would need as many classes as there are currently in the Infant and Junior schools. The established primary school will have greater flexibility to use the facilities at its site more effectively.

10. What about the nursery at Parklands Infant School?

The nursery at Parklands Infant school is a school-based nursery maintained by the Local authority. As part of the proposed amalgamation, the junior school will extend

its age range to become an all-through primary school catering for pupils aged 2-11. This would mean that the nursery would become part of the primary school managed by the same early years lead and practitioners in post now. Having a nursery is an asset as children can move seamlessly through their education.

11. What other options have been considered?

- (a) The two schools could remain as they are now. Whilst this option would result in no change to existing education provision. The Infant Governing Body would seek to recruit a new headteacher followed by the recruitment of a new deputy headteacher. The benefits of primary education which are set out in this document would not materialise. This option is contrary to Council's policy and therefore has been rejected.
- (b) A Federation of the Infant and Junior schools could be considered. Under this, the schools remain separate institutions but will have an executive headteacher across the schools within the federation. The Infant and Junior Governing Bodies would be disbanded, with no automatic right to be appointed to the Federation Governing Body. The new governing body will be the driving force to realise the benefits of the federation. The planning and leading of this process can be time consuming with no guarantee that some of the benefits outlined in this document would be realised. This was discussed but the two governing bodies could not agree on the way forward. Federation was the preferred option of the Infant Governing Body.
- (c) Closing both the infant and junior schools and the LA to publish a proposal to open a new school under section 11 of the EIA 2006. This will result in a new school number being issued. However, both the infant and junior are good schools therefore does not meet the criteria required for a closure.

The preferred option of the council is for a single primary school and would be achieved by closing Parklands Infant School as a registered school and expanding the age range of Parklands Junior School from 7-11 to 2-11.

12. What is the timescale for the process?

The following timescale will be adopted for the process of amalgamating the two schools and implementing the new primary school.

Stage Description	Timeline
Pre- publication Consultation Feedback and views expressed by all interested parties during this consultation will be considered and included in a report for the council to consider and decide whether to take the proposal forward to the statutory stage of the process.	Monday 30 November 2020- Monday 18 January 2021
Publication (Statutory Proposal/ Notice) If the council decides to proceed with the statutory stage of the process, then a statutory notice will be published. This notice	Friday 26 February 2021

would provide an opportunity for comments or objections to be made.	
Representation (Formal consultation) These notice would provide an opportunity for comments or objections to be made.	4 weeks following the date of the statutory notice publication
Decision Making Havering Council would consider responses to the statutory notice and make the final decision whether to agree the proposal or not.	April 2021
Implementation Single Primary school opens if the proposal is agreed.	September 2021

13. How do I respond to this consultation?

You can state whether you support this proposed amalgamation or not by completing the consultation response form online by clicking on the link below;

<https://consultation.havering.gov.uk/education/parklands-amalgamation>

A virtual staff consultation meeting will be held via zoom on **Wednesday 9th December 2020 at 4:30pm.**

A virtual parents' consultation meeting on the proposal will also be held via zoom on **Wednesday 9th December 2020 at 6:30 pm**

This will be an opportunity to seek any further clarifications on the proposal.

The zoom meeting invites for each session will be sent out nearer the time.

In the meantime, if you have any other questions regarding this proposal, please call Pooneeta Mahadeo; School Organisation Manager on 01708 431092 or email; schoolsorganisation@havering.gov.uk

This e-consultation document is being sent electronically to all parents/carers, governors, teachers and support staff of Parklands Infant School and Parklands Junior School.

Electronic copies will also be sent to all the borough schools/academies including special schools, teaching and staff trade unions representing teachers and other staff at the school, ward members, MPs, Church Dioceses, all primary schools governing boards/academy trusts, all early years' providers, community groups, other local authorities, trade unions and professional associations.