

Bellfield Infant and Bellfield Junior School (Statutory Publication)

Proposal to:

**Amalgamate two schools
(by discontinuance and
enlargement)**

January 2025

Introduction

Birmingham City Council (the Council), as the Local Authority for Birmingham is consulting on proposed changes to two community schools, Bellfield Infant School and Bellfield Junior School. This document describes what is being proposed and why.

School Information:

Bellfield Infant School

Type:	Community School		
Name:	Bellfield Infant School	DFE:	330 / 2239
Address:	Vineyard Road, Northfield, Birmingham B31 1PT		
Ward:	Allens Cross	District:	Northfield
Age Range:	3 – 7 years	Net Capacity:	180
Last Ofsted:	November 2024	Ofsted Judgement	Good

Bellfield Junior School

Type:	Community School		
Name:	Bellfield Junior School	DFE:	330 / 2241
Address:	Vineyard Road, Northfield, Birmingham B31 1PT		
Ward:	Allens Cross	District:	Northfield
Age Range:	7-11 years	Net Capacity:	240
Last Ofsted:	June 2022	Ofsted Judgement	Good

What changes are proposed?

The Council is proposing to carry out the following changes to amalgamate two schools:

- Discontinue Bellfield Junior School;
- Alter the age range of Bellfield Infant School to 3 – 11-year-olds
- Enlarge Bellfield Infant School (to add the Bellfield Junior School site and buildings)
- Implementation 1st September 2026

If approved, this proposal will result in Bellfield Infant School becoming a single primary school with a pupil age range of 3 – 11 years.

Why do we want to do this?

Background:

In order for community schools to amalgamate in Birmingham, the criteria of the Council's amalgamation policy (October 2004) must be satisfied. The policy states that the only triggers for amalgamation are:

- I. Falling rolls (unfilled pupil places)
- II. A request from the Governing Body(s) of a pair of schools.

The Governing Bodies of Bellfield Infant School and Bellfield Junior School wrote to Birmingham City Council with their request to amalgamate. Following close collaboration with the schools, the Council has agreed to make the proposal.

The key reasons for the amalgamation are:

- Falling roll (a number of pupil places which are unfilled)
- The financial challenges at the schools
- A decision from both Governing Bodies request to amalgamate

The falling roll is described in more detail in the section: evidence of demand.

Both schools are currently graded as 'Good' by Ofsted and are proud of their reputations for providing a caring and purposeful environment in which the individual needs of each child are recognised, and their achievements and abilities are celebrated. Each school has strengths within their relative key stages, and the proposed amalgamation will allow these strengths to be maintained and shared across all year groups. The Governing Bodies feel that this is an exciting opportunity to construct a new identity for the schools together. The amalgamation also provides the opportunity to continue to improve the educational standards as one school.

Why has this school been chosen / identified?

The proposal has been developed for these two schools as they already operate on one site but as two separate schools. The regulations governing school amalgamation and enlargement, state that the school with the lower Ofsted rating at the time of the proposed changes will close. As both schools are rated as 'Good' this is not the same. It is proposed that Bellfield Junior School is to discontinue and Bellfield Infant School will remain and become a Primary School.

Benefits of the amalgamation:

The following are a range of benefits and opportunities that the Governing Bodies believe will be achieved / experienced through amalgamation:

- An all-through primary school enables a consistent ethos, vision and approach, driven by a holistic and ambitious single leadership team.
- Simplified communication between school and parents, especially for parents with children in both schools and ensures a joined-up approach for events, training, pastoral care and other areas of school life.
- Transition from year 2 to year 3 will better reflect transition arrangements between other year groups, resulting in parents not having to apply for a place in year 3.
- Continuity and consistency for pupils' learning and progress and strengthened tracking procedures.
- The National Curriculum seeks to structure the seamless development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding across all subjects during a child's time at primary school. A combined primary school is in a better position to provide continuity because of the structure and management it can put in place and greater consistency for pupils with one set of policies and procedures.
- Strengthened pastoral systems, supporting children and families through their entire primary education.
- Further opportunities for pupils to work together across the age ranges, building on the school's existing good work in this area.
- The relationship between families and the school can build over a longer period, allowing the school to better understand the needs of each pupil.
- There is strong evidence that continuity of learning culture has a significant impact on a pupil's progress. Research shows that the fewer moves' children have during their school career, the better they perform.
- Greater flexibility in deploying teachers and support staff, and using curriculum resources, including buildings, more effectively.
- Having a greater continuity across Key Stage 1 and 2 could also benefit the members of staff at each school. Staff would have greater opportunities for professional development and shared training and the chance to work more closely across the curriculum. Staff could have the opportunity to work in or gain greater understanding of the full range of the primary school year groups.
- There are also benefits in terms of the children's personal and social development, which can be supported throughout the primary school years.
- A more efficient school leadership and management system enabling leaders to have the required overview to make the best decision for the school as a whole with finances and resources being shared more easily.
- A single Senior Leadership Team would be able to drive through change and improvement and take a truly whole school approach.
- The school will be better able to achieve economies of scale, putting the school in a much stronger position financially, and more able to withstand the buffeting by central funding decisions and changes.

Evidence of Demand:

Birmingham has experienced falling demand for primary school places in recent years because of falling birth rates. This proposal does not reduce the number of pupil places that would be offered because of the amalgamation. The school would offer a combined total of 60 places in reception. The admission number would continue to be monitored to ensure the school remains viable, which is the same for any school where there has been falling

demand for pupil places. The amalgamation would offer more flexibility in managing admission numbers in the future, if required.

When will these changes happen?

Following full consultation, if the proposal is approved by the decision maker the changes will be implemented from **1st September 2026**.

Will there be any effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area?

There are no anticipated or identified impacts on other schools and education providers. The overall number of pupil places for primary age pupils would not change because of the amalgamation.

How will the proposal increase educational standards and parental choice?

The anticipated benefits of amalgamation that are listed earlier in this document would provide the school with both flexibility and stability to focus on the outcomes for pupils and continuous improvement to the quality of the education provided.

How will this affect pupils at the school?

All current junior school pupils will have automatically transfer to the newly amalgamated school. There will be a positive impact for pupils on their journey through a primary school as discussed above.

There will no longer be a requirement for parents to apply for a junior school place for their child. The school will remain in the existing buildings and the members of staff they usually interact with are most likely to remain the same as before.

Admission Arrangements:

If the proposals are approved the school will become a primary school and there will no longer be any need for pupils to transfer from the Infant School to the Junior School at Year 3.

There will be no changes to the admission criteria for entry into Reception however, the children already attending year 2 will automatically move up to Year 3. More information on admissions can be found at:

[Determined admission arrangements 2026 | Determined admissions arrangements | Birmingham City Council](#)

How will this affect staff?

The Governing Body and Birmingham City Council recognise that change can be unsettling and that there may be challenges along the way. Birmingham City Council is committed to support the Governing Bodies to achieve and maintain the best outcomes for the children.

The proposed changes will consider duplication of shared roles. Any staff reductions because of the amalgamation will be with full consultation with the individual employees and relevant trade unions and teaching associations.

A school offering both Infant (key stage 1) and Junior (key stage 2) provision may offer staff the opportunity for career development with potential opportunities for staff who wish to teach across Key Stages, and this will be for the school to decide upon.

Travel and Transport:

As there is no increase in pupil numbers, we do not expect there to be any adverse impact on travel and transport arrangements. However, as we expect places to be available to local families, pupils will have the option to walk to school hence reducing some of the congestion at the start and end of the school day.

Will there be changes to the school building?

There are no changes to the buildings proposed currently the only changes will likely relate to signage and branding. The classrooms will remain the same. Any future changes to the building will be discussed and agreed with the schools if the proposal is agreed.

What are the project costs for this proposal and how will it be funded?

Any costs relating to signage and branding will be met from the school's revenue budget.

What are the financial impacts of this proposal?

As noted previously in this proposal, there would be some costs required to implement this proposal. The Governing Bodies believe that, as a single school, there would be benefits to flexibility and stability of the finances as a single primary school.

Will this definitely happen?

There is a statutory process we must follow to make these sorts of changes to schools. It is only after a decision that we will be able to say with certainty whether the proposal will be implemented.

What will happen if this proposal is rejected?

Bellfield Infant School and Bellfield Junior School would continue to operate as two separate schools under the two Governing Bodies. The schools may not achieve the benefits of being one primary school. The Governing Bodies would need to consider other options to optimise funding and quality of education within the two schools.

What happens next?

Part-1: The “pre-publication” consultation: this is the current part of the process. Part-1 lasted for four weeks and allowed stakeholders to submit comments which can be reviewed by the Governing body to make a decision whether to proceed. which are the Council in collaboration with the Governing Bodies.

To note comments at this stage are not shared with the final Decision Maker.

21 responses were received as part of the ‘pre-publication’ process. 19 were in favour, 1 against and 1 stated neither / don’t know of which 1 was a pupil at the school, 13 from parents / carer of pupils at the school, 3 from Governors, 3 from staff members at the school and 1 other.

On the 6th January the Governing Body of both schools reviewed the feedback received and made a decision to proceed onto the statutory consultation process.

Part-2: The “representation period” consultation: The statutory publication and consultation, known as the “representation period”: This will be the next part of the process which lasts four weeks and allows stakeholders to submit comments (again) however, the comments at this stage will be reviewed by the decision maker.

Part-3 The decision period: The comments from part-2 will be anonymised and presented with a report to the decision maker. The decision maker for this type of proposal is the Council’s Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families.

The dates set out below meet the government requirements for us to consult fully with the people affected by the proposal.

Key dates

Action	Date
Part-2 Representation period starts	15 th January 2026*
Part-2 Representation period ends	12 th February 2026
Part-3 Final decision deadline	12 th April 2026
Changes implemented	1 st September 2026

(*may be subject to change, with notice)

How do I comment on this proposal?

We invite all interested parties to give us their comment on this proposal.

Any comments for part-1 must be received no later than 12th February 2026

You can comment online via:

https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/bcc/bellfield_school_amalgamatestatpub

You can write to us at:
Birmingham City Council,
School Organisation Team,
PO Box 15843,
Birmingham, B2 2RT.

Or by email: ediproperty@birmingham.gov.uk

Groups consulted:

- Parents and Bellfield Infant School and Bellfield Junior School
- Staff and Governors of Bellfield Infant School and Bellfield Junior School
- Birmingham City Councillors
- Member of Parliament for the constituency
- NHS partners
- Birmingham Diocese and Archdiocesan
- Birmingham Schools
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Trade unions / professional associations
- Birmingham City Council Officers and departments
- The Department for Education – School Organisation
- Office of the Schools Adjudicator
- Public notice in Birmingham Post Newspaper

Amalgamation to become a Primary school.

Consultation Response Form

Your name (optional): _____

Are you in favour of the proposal (please select one answer)?

Yes	No	Neither / Don't know
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Pupil of the Schools	
Parent / Carer of pupil at the schools	
Governor of the Schools	
Staff of the Schools	
Local Resident	
Birmingham Councillor	
Member of Parliament	
Other (please describe)	

Date	Time	Location	Observations

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