



Draft Proposal Document

Wilkes Green Infant School & Wilkes Green Junior School

Proposal to:

- ***Discontinue Wilkes Green Infant School***
- ***Alter the Age Range of Wilkes Green Junior School from 7 – 11 years to 3 - 11 years***
- ***Enlarge the Premises of Wilkes Green Junior School (to include the Infant School buildings).***

These proposals will result in a single all-through primary school.

Introduction

Birmingham City Council as the Local Authority for Birmingham is consulting on proposals to make the following changes to Wilkes Green Infant and Wilkes Green Junior Schools:

- Discontinue Wilkes Green Infant School
- Alter the age range from 7 – 11 years to 3 - 11 years and enlarge the premises of Wilkes Green Junior School (to include the Infant School buildings).

These proposals will result in a single all-through primary school, through the joining or amalgamation of both schools. The term “amalgamation” will be referred to throughout this document.

School Information

Type:	Community		
Name:	Wilkes Green Infant School	DFE:	3302276
Address:	Antrobus Road, Handsworth, Birmingham B21 9NT.		
Ward:	Wilkes Green	District:	Perry Barr
Age Range:	3 – 7 years	Net Capacity:	270
Last Ofsted:	7.12.2016	Ofsted Judgement	Inadequate

Type:	Community		
Name:	Wilkes Green Junior School	DFE:	3302293
Address:	Antrobus Road, Handsworth, Birmingham B21 9NT.		
Ward:	Wilkes Green	District:	Perry Barr
Age Range:	7 – 11 years	Net Capacity:	360
Last Ofsted:	29.4.2015	Ofsted Judgement	Good

Why do we want to do this?

In order for the schools to amalgamate the criteria must meet The Local Authority’s current policy on amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools (amalgamation policy approved October 2004) which states that the only triggers for amalgamation are:

- (i) Falling pupil numbers on the school roll
- (ii) A request from the governing bodies of a pair of schools

Following discussions between the Interim Executive Board (IEB) of Wilkes Green Infant School and the Governing Body of Wilkes Green Junior School, both schools agreed to consult on a proposal to amalgamate the two schools. Both the IEB and the Governing Body believe that the proposal is in the best long-term interests of the children and their families and have written to The Local Authority to request that the necessary changes are made to amalgamate the two schools. The Local Authority is in full support of the amalgamation.

The Infant School received an OFSTED judgement of “Inadequate” in their last full OFSTED inspection on 7th December 2016.

The Junior School was rated Good at its last OFSTED inspection on 29th April 2015. If the proposal to amalgamate is approved, the Department for Education (DfE) number and OFSTED judgement of the Junior School will carry forward to the amalgamated primary school.

The IEB and Governing Body agree that an amalgamation of the two schools is currently the preferred option in order to support the Infant School on its improvement journey.

The Head Teacher post at the Infant School has been vacant since the end of May 2018. The IEB of the Infant School and the Governing Body of the Junior School have already agreed that the Head Teacher of the Junior School should carry out the role of Executive Head Teacher across both schools until a decision on the amalgamation is reached.

The two schools would become one single school of primary phase for pupils aged 3 to 11 years. All pupils and staff from the Infant School would transfer to the primary school. If parents want to seek other arrangements at this stage they would need to apply for other schools through the normal in-year admissions route.

There would no longer be a year 3 admission round at the school with the pupils on roll in year 2 having automatic right of entry into year 3. Pupils would continue naturally through the school from reception to year 6.

The nursery provision at the Infant School would become the nursery provision of the primary school. No other changes are being proposed for the nursery provision.

Wilkes Green Junior School would propose to change its name if the amalgamation is approved to reflect that it will now be a primary school.

What are the benefits of an all through primary school?

Below are some further examples of potential benefits that schools may experience by amalgamating, these have been evidenced in previous successful amalgamations.

- 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.
- Continuity and consistency for pupil’s 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 of time, 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 is no need for parents to apply for a junior school place. There are also benefits in terms of the children's personal and social development, which can be supported throughout the primary school years without a change of school at age seven.
- 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.

How will this affect pupils at the school?

All current Infant School pupils would automatically transfer to the newly amalgamated school. The potential benefits for pupils on their journey through an all-through school are listed under the previous section of this proposal.

There would 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 come into contact with are likely to be the same as before.

How will this affect parents at the school?

Parents would apply for a primary school place before Reception and would not need to apply for a year 3 place. This enables consistent engagement with parents across the primary phase; with no need to transfer information at the end of Key

Stage 1. It would also mean more consistent policies and procedures providing more continuity for parents.

How will this affect the staff at the school?

The Governors of each school and The Local Authority recognise that change can be unsettling and that there may be challenges along the way. The Local Authority is committed to supporting the school to achieve and maintain the best outcomes for children.

The Local Authority would still be the employer and would manage the transition of staff to the primary school. The change to become one primary school would not constitute a break in service or affect staff terms and conditions in any way.

The proposed changes would consider duplication of shared roles. Any staff reductions will be with full consultation with the 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.

When will these changes happen?

If the proposal is approved by the decision makers, who for these types of proposal are The Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture and the Acting Corporate Director for Children and Young People (following full consultation), it is intended that the proposal will be implemented from **1st May 2019**.

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

There should be no effect on other schools, academies or educational institutions within the area. The admission number and capacity of the school will not change. The proposed amalgamation would not affect the supply of places in the local area.

Will there be any changes to the Admission Criteria of the School?

If the proposals are approved the school would become an all-through school and there would no longer be any need for pupils to transfer from the Infant School to the Junior School at year 3.

The admission number is set for the intake year group. Reception would be the intake point at the newly amalgamated school and the admission number would be 90 (which is the same as the admission number into Reception year in the current Infant School).

The primary school would continue to adopt the Local Authority admission criteria for community and voluntary controlled schools for entry into Reception, as follows;

1. Looked after or previously looked after children.
2. Siblings (brother or sister who will still be in attendance in September 2019).

3. Denominational claims (in the case of voluntary controlled Church of England schools).
4. Distance (children who live nearest the school measured in a straight line).

Will there be changes to the school building?

There will be no building work resulting from the amalgamation. It would be the responsibility of the amalgamated primary school to maintain the combined buildings and land of the previous two schools.

Will this definitely happen?

No.

There is a statutory process we must follow to make these sorts of changes to schools. At the moment we are entering the six week consultation stage during which we want to hear your views on the proposal. If, after considering your views, the schools and the Local Authority still think it is a good idea, we will publish a full proposal and allow four weeks for people to formally comment on them.

Within two months of the end of the representation period a report will be produced with all of the comments received and this will be passed to the decision makers (Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Culture jointly with the Corporate Director for Children and Young People) for a decision to be made. Should the decision makers not come to a unanimous decision the proposal will be passed to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator for a final decision. It is only at that point that we will be able to say with certainty that the two schools will be amalgamated. All comments received will be considered by both the Local Authority and the Governing Bodies and used to inform the decision making at the next stage of the consultation process.

What will happen if this proposal is rejected?

If a decision is taken that the two schools should **not** be amalgamated, then the existing Infant and Junior Schools will continue to be separate schools. A course of action will need to take place to address the improvements needed at the Infant School.

How can I make my views known?

We invite all interested parties to give us their views and comment on this proposal. Any comments must be received no later than **14th December 2018**

You can comment online via BeHeard:

<https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/wilkesgreenijdraft>

You can write to the Local Authority:

- By email: eds.enquiries@birmingham.gov.uk
- By letter, or by completing the attached comments form to:
The Local Authority,
School Organisation Team,
PO Box 15843,
Birmingham, B2 2RT.

What happens next?

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
Start of 6 week Pre – Statutory Consultation	Week commencing 5 th November – Week ending 14 th December 2018*
Public Notice Published	11 th January 2019
Start of 4 week Statutory Consultation	11 th January 2019
End of 4 week Statutory Consultation	8 th February 2019*
Final decision to be made no later than	8 th April 2019
Changes implemented	1 st May 2019
* date for comments to be received by	

Proposal to Amalgamate Wilkes Green Infant School and Wilkes Green Junior School

We are consulting on the proposal for six weeks from 05/11/2018 to 14/12/2018

You can make your views known by visiting:

<https://www.birminghambeheard.org.uk/people-1/wilkesgreendraft>

Or alternatively complete and return the form below to the following address:

School Organisation Team, Education and Skills Infrastructure, PO Box 15843, Birmingham, B2 2RT.

Thank you for taking the time to send us your thoughts on these proposals.

Consultation Response Form

Please help us to analyse your response by completing the following:

Your name (optional): _____

Your contact details (optional, if you would like a reply)

Your interest in the proposal (please indicate one of the below):

Pupil	
Parent	
School Governor	
School Staff	
Local resident	
Local Councillor	
Member of Parliament	
Other (please specify)	

Please provide your comments to the proposal.