



**Consultation on our Proposal to
Extend the Age Range of
Sandy Upper School
to a Single Phase Secondary Provision
for September 2018-2019**

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL TO EXTEND THE AGE RANGE OF SANDY UPPER SCHOOL, ENGAYNE AVENUE, SANDY, BEDFORDSHIRE, SG19 1BL, TO A SINGLE PHASE SECONDARY PROVISION FOR 2018/2019

The Purpose of the consultation document

The purpose of this document is:

- to provide information on a proposal to extend the age range of Sandy Upper School from 13-18 years to 11-19 years, to create full secondary provision.

1. Background

Sandy Upper School was put into Special Measures in February 2013 and was due to be converted to a sponsored Academy in the November of the same year. However, due to issues with the proposed sponsoring academy, this did not take place and the school remained a maintained school under the local authorities' control, since gaining a 'GOOD' judgement by OFSTED in July 2014. The perception amongst parents and guardians, members of the local community, students and staff, is that Sandy Upper School has 'turned around' and is on target to become an outstanding school within 2-3 years. It has been the best performing school at GCSE for the last three years and was identified as the most improved school in the country in January 2015 and has since been placed in the top 100 state schools in the country for the past two years.

Our vision is to extend the performance of Sandy Upper School to include a further two year groups, thus enabling us to build further on our identified strengths and ethos of "achieving excellence beyond belief" for the benefit of all our students and the wider community.

2. Contextual Position

There is much change within the area of Bedford Borough, Biggleswade and the surrounding areas, with a significant number of schools now being Academies and a general move in Bedford Borough towards a two-tier system of education. The following points demonstrate these particular trends:

- Alban Church of England Academy (middle school) is awaiting approval from the DFE following their consultation to change their age range from 9-13 years to 3-13 years for September 2017. The lower school next door to Alban Church of England Academy, Great Barford Lower, which caters for children from 4-9 years, is also in consultation to change its age range to become a full primary school from 4-11 years, which would have fed into Alban Church of England Academy at Year 5.
- Mark Rutherford, Bedford Academy and Bedford Free School have been granted permission by the Secretary of State to extend their age-range from 11-18 years, they already admit students into Year 7. These are the closest secondary schools to Sandy

Upper School, who take students from Year 6 from the middle schools in Central Bedfordshire, due to being right on the border between the schools. Cambridgeshire also operate a two tier system, which borders Central Bedfordshire and Sandy Upper School, some students from our feeder middle school in Potton are now choosing to transfer at the end of Year 6 to the Cambridge secondary system.

- Mark Rutherford School currently operates a dual admission policy into both Year 7 and 9 in order to accommodate students from the current feeder middle schools.
- Our bordering county of Cambridgeshire is already two tier and Bedford Borough Council issued documentation, in July 2015, inviting groups of schools to bid for the capital funding that would facilitate a move to a two tier system of education, in the area, by the end of the decade, which has a major impact on students and their choices.
- Within the context, it is highly unlikely that our traditional feeder middle school of 9 to 13 years, Alban Church of England Academy, will exist, as consultations and discussions are already occurring to ensure they best meet the needs of their students and this may result in them lowering their age range, in line with the key stages (see Alban Church of England Academy website for details of their consultation www.albanacademy.org).

3. Proposal

We believe that our students would benefit from a full secondary school provision that is designed to meet the desired learning needs of the Key Stage 3 learner (Years 7, 8 and 9).

The proposed change would provide stability and a continuity of learning and, more significantly, the changing face of schooling in Sandy and the surrounding rural areas and the immediate locality.

Whilst this is a consultation solely about Sandy Upper School's proposed change of age range, five other schools – Robert Peel Lower School, Moggerhanger Lower School, Everton Lower School, John Donne Church of England Lower and St Swithuns VC Lower School – will be running parallel consultations to Sandy Upper School about becoming a primary school from 3 to 11 years. Each will hold their own staff and parental consultation evenings, but since they serve the same broad geographic area, it was felt appropriate to hold combined meetings for community and other stakeholder groups, that might be affected by these changes. All the schools stated above are working in collaboration with each other and a representative from each school will attend all the consultation sessions.

To summarise, our objectives are:

- To provide for continuation of the curriculum, whereby each phase of education (Infant, Junior and Secondary) teaches at least one, if not two, full key stages and are mutually able to support progress by reducing the number of transition points.
- To improve students attainment and progress across all phases.

- To engage in greater collaborative working between and among phases, with a view to enhancing the sharing of specialist provision.
- To sustain high standards of education and maintain the nurturing and wellbeing of children, by offering them only minimum change of schools, thereby ensuring sustained progress in all areas.
- To ensure that all of the schools involved in the proposal work positively as partners, to ensure a high quality and localised educational provision, with full agreement of each school's Governing Body.
- To ensure that all of the schools involved in the proposal offer children and young people a broad, balanced and cohesive curriculum that meets the needs of all.
- To offer all children and young people an exciting and innovative curriculum provision that meets their needs and supports them to achieve their full potential.
- To prepare students for the changing demands of GCSEs earlier, given the need to have studied at least two modern foreign languages, before deciding on which to pursue to GCSE.
- To design personalised curriculums for students given their interests and needs prior to Year 9, to support their development and progression.
- To offer children in Years 7 and 8 a personalised curriculum which builds on the primary curriculum in Year 6, and ensures that all students make a smooth transition to secondary school and maximises progress across Key Stage 3 and 4.
- To improve parental choice with regard to the variety of options and opportunities that is being offered.
- To support disadvantage students meet their potential and enhance their outcomes.

You are invited to meetings as part of this consultation – please see the schedule on page 11.

4. Details of the Proposed Arrangements for 2018-2019

As Sandy Upper School is a maintained foundation school, the Governing Body is able to propose and determine a change of age range of up to 2 years, by following a non-statutory process (except where adding a Sixth Form provision is proposed) but is required by the DFE, to follow the published guidance and meet the expectations that are listed within it.

The DFE also provides 'Guidance for Decision Makers' which the Governing Body is required to follow when considering the results of the consultation and determining the proposal.

If, following consultation, the Governing Body decide to go ahead with the proposal for Sandy Upper School to become a secondary school for students from Years 7-13, all relevant parties will be notified of this change and the school will inform the Secretary of State by updating the Register of Education Establishments (Edubase). The changes would then come into effect from September 2018.

Implementing Age Phase Changes 2018-19 Onwards

We are seeking to offer continuity of learning throughout the secondary stage of schooling and in particular, to maintain high quality provision through the entire National Curriculum phase known as Key Stage 3 (encompassing Years 7, 8 and 9), Key Stage 4 (Years 10 and 11) and through to our Sixth Form Key Stage 5 provision (Years 12 and 13).

Currently students in this locality have to change school mid-way through the vital Key Stage 3. Our proposal, to admit students into the school at age 11, would bring us in line with the national norm and reflect what many of the local schools are proposing in terms of their conversion to more specialist phase educational provision, to enhance and improve progression of students academically and socially across the phases.

Our existing buildings and site facilities already have sufficient capacity to accommodate the proposed new Year 7 and 8 students.

We intend to work closely with the five lower schools, that are also consulting regarding a change in age range, to improve transition at the end of Year 6. We will also facilitate the use of specialist resources/staffing by the lower schools to access and enhance their curriculum further, plus share training and facilities, where appropriate.

Parental choice will shape the future of all schools across Sandy and surrounding area and these proposed changes will not prevent parents and guardians from selecting an Upper or Secondary School of their choice.

ADMISSION OF STUDENTS

Sandy Upper School is currently a 13-18 years co-educational comprehensive school, and is proposing to become an 11 to 18 years co-educational comprehensive school, with two admission points of Year 7 and Year 9 for the year 2018. Admission to Sandy Upper School is the responsibility of the Governors of the school in their capacity as an admissions authority.

Students will be admitted at age 11 (Year 7) and age 13 (Year 9) without reference to ability or aptitude. The Governors will admit 269 students per academic year to Year 7 and Year 9.

Students choosing to go to middle school will still be able to transfer to Sandy Upper School at the end of Year 8.

Priority will be given to students living within the Sandy Upper School catchment area.

In the event of there being more applications to Year 7 and Year 9 than there are places available (the admission number), the Governors will allocate places using the criteria and order of priority set out below. Only applications received by the closing date set will be considered.

- 1) All 'looked after' children or children who were previously 'looked after'
- 2) Students living in the catchment area with siblings at the school
- 3) Other students living in the catchment area
- 4) 'Very exceptional' medical grounds
- 5) Other siblings
- 6) Any other children

If applying these criteria results in there being more children with an equal right to admission to the school than the number of available places, the tie break will be the distance the student lives from the school, measured in a straight line, using the Local Authority's computerised measuring system, with those living closer to the school receiving the higher priority. The distance will be measured from the address point of the student's home to a central marked point on the school site. Priority will not be given within each criterion to children who meet other criteria. In the event of (a) two or more children living at the same address point (e.g. children resident in a block of flats) or (b) two addresses measuring the same distance from the school, the ultimate tie-breaker will be random selection, using the School Admissions Team database to allocate the place.

Students who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs are required to be admitted to the school which is named on the statement, even if the school is full. Students identified for admission through the Fair Access Protocol will also be admitted even if the school is full. Such students will be fully supported with Education, Health and Care (EHC) plans.

Parents/guardians who want their child to transfer to the next phase of school outside of their normal age group must make the request in sufficient time for it to be considered before the application deadline.

Parents/guardians need to make their request in writing to the Principal and Governing Body, who will then consider the request, making their decision on what they determine is in the best interests of the child. The request should include the parents'/guardians' reasons for the request, information regarding the child's academic, social and emotional development, including any supporting evidence the parents/guardians deems relevant and whether the child has previously been educated outside their normal age group. Once determined the decision will be communicated by the Governing Body to the parents/guardians in writing and will include reasons for the decision.

The school allocates places on an equal preference basis, as explained in the Local Authority Academy/School transfer booklet and is a part of the Local Authority coordinated admissions process.

Parents/guardians whose applications for a place are unsuccessful have the right to appeal to an independent panel against the decision and should do so, in the first instance, in writing to the Clerk to the Appeals Panel, Committee Services, Central Bedfordshire Council, Priory House, Chicksands, Shefford, SG17 5TQ, by the given date. One appeal per student will be granted.

Parents/guardians not offered a place are kept on a waiting list in criteria order, to be re-allocated if places become available. The waiting list will be maintained until the Christmas holiday. Parents/guardians wishing to remain on the waiting list beyond this point need to notify the school in writing during the December of the Autumn Term of Year 7 and 9.

Definitions

*** “Looked after” children**

A ‘looked after’ child is a child who is (a) in the care of the local authority, or (b) being provided with accommodation by a local authority in the exercise of their social services functions (see Section 22(1) of the Children Act 1989).

Previously “looked after” children

A previously ‘looked after’ child is one who immediately after being ‘looked after’ became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order. An ‘adoption order’ is an order under Section 46 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002. A ‘residence order’ is an order settling the arrangements to be made as to the person with whom the child is to live under Section 8 of the Children Act 1989. Section 14A of the Children Act 1989 defines a ‘special guardianship order’ as an order appointing one or more individuals to be a child’s special guardian (or special guardians).

**** Home Address**

A student’s home address will be regarded as the address of the parents or guardian with parental responsibility with whom the child normally lives. This will not usually include grandparents, aunts or uncles. Where a child spends time with parents/guardians at more than one address, the address used to allocate an academy place will be the one at which the student is ordinarily resident and where the child spends the majority of the school week (Mondays to Fridays) including nights. If there is any query on the home address this will be checked against original official documentation e.g. council tax bill, a recent utility bill (gas, electricity or water), a rental agreement, child benefit annual statement or family tax credit information.

***** Sibling**

A sibling refers to a brother or sister, half brother or sister, step brother or sister, adopted brother or sister or fostered brother or sister, where foster care has been arranged by a Local Authority, or the child of the parent/guardian’s partner, and in every case, the child should be living at the same address. The sibling must be in the school at the time of application and be likely to remain in the school at the proposed date of admission.

**** **Very Exceptional Medical Grounds**

'Very exceptional' medical grounds refers to cases where there are **exceptional** medical reasons which make it **essential** that a child should attend a particular school and where the preferred school is the **only** school locally that could meet the child's needs. A medical report from the child's doctor or consultant must be submitted with the application form, setting out valid medical reasons why it is essential for the child to be admitted to the school in question and the difficulties that would be caused if the child had to attend another school. The Governors reserve the right to seek further information in order to determine whether it is essential for a child to be admitted to the preferred school on medical grounds. Admission on medical grounds cannot be considered where the medical condition relates to that of a parent/guardian, brother or sister, or other relative/child minder.

Applications for admission into Year 7 and Year 9 must be made to the home Local Authority in accordance with procedures explained in their admission literature and website.

Requests for admission into other year groups should be made to the Local Authority on the In-Year application form. The form is available from the school or Local Authority and can also be downloaded from the Local Authority website.

Parents/guardians can apply using the online application system (see details on Central Bedfordshire website) or by contacting Central Bedfordshire for a Transfer to Secondary School/Academy application form. When completed, this form must be returned to Central Bedfordshire Council by the deadline on the form. Parents/guardians **must** apply to the Local Authority in which they live.

The allocation of places will take place after this deadline and parents/guardians will be notified on the national offer day on 1 March 2018, by the School/Academy's Admissions Service, whether their applications have been successful. Parents/guardians who make applications after the official deadline, even if they live in, or move into the Sandy catchment area, will **not** be entitled to automatic places, if this would mean exceeding the published Admission Number of 269.

Parents/guardians not offered a place are kept on a waiting list to be reallocated, if places become available. The waiting list for places in Year 7 and Year 9 will be maintained until the end of the autumn term following the normal admission date of Year 7 and 9 students;

Parents/guardians wishing to remain on the waiting list beyond this point need to notify the school in writing not later than 31st December. Parents/guardians applying for places in other year groups will have their applications kept on file until the end of the term in which the place has been requested. *Parents/guardians who wish their children to remain on the waiting list beyond that time, will have to notify the school in writing.*

Proposal for admissions from 2018

From	Action
September 2018	269 Year 7 students and 269 Year 9 students admitted to Sandy Upper School
September 2019	269 Year 7 students and 269 Year 9 students admitted to Sandy Upper School
September 2020	269 Year 7 students admitted to Sandy Upper School as now all year groups full

Numbers on Roll

	September 2016	September 2017	September 2018	September 2019	September 2020
Year 7	0	0	269	269	269
Year 8	0	0	0	269	269
Year 9	143	160	269	269	269
Year 10	136	143	160	269	269
Year 11	121	136	143	160	269
Year 12/13	150	150	150	150	150
Totals Max number	550	589	991	1386	1495

What are the Arrangements for the Consultation Process?

The purpose of the consultation is to seek the views of students, parents/guardians and the wider community about the proposals being put forward. This will allow the School Governors to make a fully informed decision as to whether to convert Sandy Upper School to a full secondary school. It also provides a time where you can ask questions about the proposals or make alternative suggestions.

You can take part and have your say in the following ways:

- By completing the attached response form
- By email - office @sandyupper.net
- By letter - The Principal, Sandy Upper School, Engayne Avenue, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 1BL
- Meetings at the school with the Principal and Governors booked for 17th October at 6.30pm (parents) or 20th October at 7.00 pm (community).

The consultation will run from 12th October 2016 until 12 noon on 23rd November 2016. We are specifically discussing our proposals with the following groups, and would encourage anyone interested to read through this proposal document and give us your views:

- Central Bedfordshire Council
- Bedford Borough Council
- Cambridgeshire Council
- Parents/guardians of every registered student at the school
- Parents/guardians of potential students in our catchment area and in Early Years provision
- Staff who work at the school
- Our local communities and our current site users
- All other schools within Central Bedfordshire
- The Church of England and Roman Catholic Dioceses
- Anyone else who has an interest in the proposal

Once the consultation process is completed, the Governing Body of the school will meet in early December to consider the responses and to answer queries that have been raised about particular issues. It will then publish a Consultation Report on the school's website.

The Governing Body will then decide, with the aid of the DFE's publication 'Guidance for Decision Makers' (published 2016), whether or not it proceeds with the proposal of changing the age range of the school from 13-18 years to 11-18 years, thus creating an all-through secondary provision. This will mean that the school will take children from age 11 (Year 7) to age 18 (Year 13).

Process of Consultation

In order to engage in meaningful and informed consultation, we will be holding a number of consultation events to engage with all stakeholders, as well as providing the opportunity for individuals and institutions to make written submissions about the proposals. All of this evidence will be collated into a Consultation Report that the governors will consider prior to their decision. What follows is the full timetable, but processes after November 2016 will only be actioned if the governors decide to proceed.

Date	Action
12 th October 2016	Consultation begins
17 th October 2016	Meeting with Sandy Upper School Staff
17 th October 2016 - 6.30 pm	Meeting with Sandy Upper School Parents/Guardians
20 th October 2016 - 7.00 pm	Meeting with Community (at Sandy Upper School)
23 rd November 2016	Consultation ends
14 th December 2016	If the Governing Body decides to proceed, it will publish its decision on the age range consultation and determine its admission arrangements. The Governing Body will then notify the Secretary of State by updating Edubase.
Final Implementation of Proposal, with children having the opportunity to join the school in Year 7.	1 st September 2018

12th October 2016 – Letter to accompany consultation.

Dear Parent/Guardian/Staff/Member of the Local Community

Consultation to become a Secondary School from September 2018 (Year 7 to 13).

The Governing Body of Sandy Upper School has decided that it should further investigate and consult on the proposal to extend the age range to include Years 7 and 8 in a Secondary provision for 2018-19. You are invited to attend a meeting as detailed on page 11.

Whilst this is a consultation solely about Sandy Upper School, five other schools – Robert Peel Lower School, Moggerhanger Lower School, Everton Lower School, John Donne Church of England Lower School and St Swithuns VC Lower School – will be running parallel consultations to us about becoming a primary school from 3 to 11 years. Each will hold their own staff and parental consultation evenings, but since they serve the same broad geographic area, it was felt appropriate to hold combined meetings for community and other stakeholder groups, that might be affected by these changes. All the schools stated above are working in collaboration with each other and a representative from each school will attend all the consultation sessions.

We will be considering and inviting comments on the proposed changes for Sandy Upper School 2018-19. If you have any questions or would like to express your views, I would be grateful if you could submit these in writing or by email to consultation@sandyupper.net by 12 pm on 17th October 2016 so that they can be addressed at the meeting. The final decision on any proposed changes are made by the Governing Body.

Sandy Upper School – Meetings for parents/guardians, staff, members of the community and neighboring schools.

17 th October 2016	3.00 pm	Staff
17 th October 2016	6.30 pm	Parents/Guardians at Sandy Upper School
20 th October 2016	7.00 pm	Community groups and stakeholder (held at Sandy Upper School)

We look forward to seeing you.

Yours sincerely

Tracey Stock
Chair of the Governing Body
Sandy Upper School

CONSULTATION ON PROPOSAL

PROPOSAL TO EXTEND THE AGE RANGE TO A SINGLE PHASE SECONDARY PROVISION 2018-2019

Please take the time to read our Consultation document and complete this questionnaire. Your feedback is important to us. Please email completed questionnaires to office@sandyupper.net, hand in at the school office or send by post to:

Mrs Tracey Stock, Chair of Governors, Sandy Upper School, Engayne Avenue, Sandy, Bedfordshire, SG19 1BL.

All responses must be received by noon on 23rd November 2016.

The Proposal

From September 2018 – Year 7 will be admitted to Sandy Upper School, as well as Year 9.

Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Comment (Please give any comments or suggestions you may have including any alternative proposals you wish to put forward here):

Please tell us who you are:

We intend to analyse responses according to stakeholder group.

Please tick all the boxes that apply in the list below.

- Parent/guardian of a student(s) currently attending the school
- Member of the Governing Body at the school
- Member of staff who works at the school
- Parent/guardian of a child in local Early Years provision
- Governor/ Head Teacher at a neighbouring school
- Member of the local community
- Representative of the Local Authority Representative of a Diocese
- Other (please specify)

We will respect any desire to remain anonymous (no one will be publicly identified in the report on the consultation), but if you are content for us to know your name (or names if this is a joint response), please enter it/them here:

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