

**Proposed changes to schools
within the Sandy school area of
Central Bedfordshire**



- 1) These schools are to consult/consulting on a proposed change of age range from a three-tier lower, middle and upper school system to a two-tier primary and secondary school system:

School	Proposal
Everton Lower	Proposed primary school
Moggerhanger Lower*	Proposed primary school
Robert Peel Lower*	Proposed primary school
St Swithun's VC Lower*	Proposed primary school
John Donne C of E Lower*	Proposed primary school
Sandy Upper*	Proposed secondary school

*These schools are either 'Voluntary Aided', 'Voluntary Controlled' or 'Foundation' and can propose and determine a change of age range of up to two years, via a single-stage consultation process, without the Council's consent. The Council is a consultee in this process. They are required to follow the guidance and expectations of the Department for Education for both the consultation process and the subsequent final decision.

Everton Lower is a community school and it is up to the Council to propose and determine a change of age range of up to two years, via a two-stage consultation process. Approval is needed from the Council's Executive for both stages of the consultation and the final decision.

The following schools in the Sandy area are NOT consulting on age range changes:

Sutton Lower School	Maple Tree Lower School*
Wrestlingworth Lower School	Sandye Place Middle School*
Potton Lower School	Potton Middle School (formerly Burgoyne Middle)
Laburnum Lower School*	

* These schools are consulting on forming a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). Please see Section 2 of this document for more information.

Understanding a two-tier and three-tier school organisation system

Two-tier system

In a two tier system, pupils attend primary school between the ages of 4 and 11 and secondary school between the ages of 11 and 16 -18. This means that pupils complete Key Stages 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum at a primary school before moving on to secondary school for Key Stages 3 and 4.

Three-tier system

In a three-tier system, pupils attend lower school between the ages of 4 and 9, middle school between the ages of 9 and 13 and upper school between the ages of 13 and 16 -18. As a result, responsibility for Key Stage 2 falls across lower and middle schools, and Key Stage 3 across middle and upper schools.

The following table charts the relationship between key stages of the curriculum and year groups in the different school types within two and three tier models of education:-

Key Stage	Foundation Stage		Key Stage 1		Key Stage 2				Key Stage 3			Key Stage 4		Post 16	
Year Group	Nursery	Reception	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Two-tier	Nursery	Primary School							Secondary						
Three-tier	Nursery	Lower School				Middle School			Upper School						

Consultation documents for Voluntary Aided, Voluntary Controlled or Foundation schools

These consultations are owned and proposed by the schools governing bodies and not the Council.

All of the consultation documents have been produced by the individual schools' governing bodies. We have suggested minor alterations to make certain points clearer but the consultations are proposed by the individual schools' governing bodies.

The Council will be a consultee to the schools' proposals, in the same way as parents, neighbouring schools, local councillors and interested parties. The Council will be robust in responding to the consultations, ensuring that the proposals do not jeopardise the number of school places required and the high quality of education expected.

Any assumptions in the proposals will need to be evidence-based and clearly demonstrate educational benefits to the local community that the schools serve. The Council may not agree with all the schools' points and will seek their assurance that plans for transition and school places are not adversely affected.

Consultation document for Everton Lower School

The preliminary consultation document for Everton Lower has been produced by the Council in response to a request from the school's governing body to consider a change of age range, from 3 - 9 years to 3 - 11 years.

Everton's governing body is working with the governing bodies of the other schools listed above in an effort to coordinate a proposed change from three-tier to two-tier. This preliminary consultation document is for the Council to gather the views of parents and other stakeholders for the proposed change of age range which will then help to compile the full proposal which will be considered by the Council's Executive in December 2016. The Council's Executive will consider the responses to the preliminary consultation, and if it is happy that there is evidence to support proceeding to the next stage, will publish the proposal in January 2017 (which is the statutory part of the process, as required by the Department for Education).

The Council's Executive will then make a final decision on the proposal in April 2017 (or if the Executive agrees in December that there is sufficient support for the proposal, they could agree an earlier delegated decision by the Executive Member for Education and Skills).

Understanding the various proposals

The proposals for a change of age range from the schools will create a pattern of lower and middle schools and primary and secondary school in the Sandy area. This table shows the current and proposed size of all the schools:

Schools	Size (Current admission number)	Type	Size (Planned admission number)	Type
	Current		Proposed	
Everton Lower	10	Lower	10	Primary
Moggerhanger Lower	15	Lower	15	Primary
Robert Peel Lower	60	Lower	60	Primary
St Swithuns Lower	30	Lower	30	Primary
John Donne Lower	24	Lower	24	Primary
Sandy Upper	269	Upper	269	Secondary
Sutton Lower	15	Lower	No change	
Wrestlingworth Lower	13	Lower		
Potton Lower	60	Lower		
Laburnum Lower	30	Lower		
Maple Tree Lower	45	Lower		
Sandye Place Middle	150	Middle		
Potton Middle (formerly Burgoyne Middle)	90	Middle		

Admission arrangements

Where a school is proposing to:-

1. reduce their published admission number (the number of places available in each year group), or
2. add an additional point of entry to the school or
3. changing the normal year children join the school,

The admission authority for the school must publicly consult on these changes for a minimum of 6 weeks between 1 October and 31 January 2 years prior to the proposed change comes into effect. The earliest these changes could be implemented is for September 2018 providing the admission authority of the school consults for 6 weeks by 31 January 2017.

The admission authority for Voluntary Controlled and Community schools is the Council, for Voluntary Aided or Foundation schools the admission authority is the school's governing body.

Of the six schools proposing changes, the Council is the admission authority for Everton Lower (Community school) and St. Swithun's VC Lower. It is the governing bodies of Robert Peel Lower, Moggerhanger Lower, John Donne

VA Lower and Sandy Upper School that are the admission authorities for their schools.

Where a lower school is proposing to convert to a primary school, without a reduction in the number of places available in each year group, they do not need to consult on changing their admission arrangements as there is no change to the normal point of entry to the school (this remains Reception Year). As the lower schools are not proposing a reduction in their published admission numbers there is no requirement for a consultation on their admission arrangements.

An upper school which is proposing to convert to a secondary school would need to consult on their admission arrangements as their point of entry to the school would change. Sandy Upper's proposal to have 2 points of entry for 2018 (Year 7 and Year 9) means that they need to conduct a 6 week consultation reflecting their changing admission arrangements. This needs to take place between 1 October 2016 and 31 January 2017. The schools proposal states that from September 2020 the school would have one single point of entry (Year 7); to facilitate this the Governing Body would need to consult between 1 October 2018 and 31 January 2019 (for a minimum of 6 weeks).

Calendar of key dates

Date	Action
12/ 13 October 2016	All 6 consultations begin
October/November	Schools hold meetings for their staff and parents/carers
20 October 2016 at 7pm	Meeting for stakeholders for all 6 schools at Sandy Upper
By 23 November 2016	All consultations will have ended
Following close of the consultations	<p>All governing bodies, except Everton Lower School, meet and determine their respective proposals. Decisions will be published on the school's websites</p> <p>The timetable for the consultation process to be followed for Everton Lower School's proposal is explained on page 3.</p>
September 2017	<p>If approved: current Year 4 pupils are able to remain at their current school forming the first Year 5 group, or parents can decide to take up their middle school place</p> <p>Sandy Upper School admits Year 9 students from the existing middle schools</p>
September 2018	<p>If approved: First Year 6 group established at each new primary school</p> <p>Children in Year 5 in middle school are able to move into Year 6</p>

	<p>Parents of Year 6 pupils, within primary schools, make application for Transfer to Secondary 2019</p> <p>Children have the opportunity to join Sandy Upper school in Year 7</p> <p>Sandy Upper admits Y9 students from the existing middle schools.</p>
September 2019	First transition of pupils from the (now) primary schools to secondary school

School Places

Children applying to start school are unlikely to notice any difference in the number of school places available in the Sandy school planning area.

Middle school places will remain at Potton Middle and Sandye Place Middle. Alban CofE Academy (in Bedford Borough) is consulting on extending its age range to cater for pupils between the age of 3 and 13. The proposal will be implemented in September 2017. The planned admission number for Year 5 will reduce to 60 from 140.

The planned admission number at Sandy Upper School will remain at 269.

2) These schools are consulting on joining together to form a multi-academy trust (MAT)

School	Proposal
Laburnum Lower	<p>Join together to form Sandy Multi Academy Regional Trust – SMaRT</p> <p>(No age range change proposed)</p>
Maple Tree Lower	
Sandye Place Academy - Middle	

Multi-academy trusts are groups of academies that come together to form a charitable company, with a single group of ‘members’ (who have an overview of the governance arrangements) and a single board of trustees or directors, whilst allowing each school to retain its own identity.

Sandye Place Middle School became Sandy Place Academy after converting to an academy in April 2011. In order for a MAT to be established between the three schools both Laburnum and Maple Tree Lower will be required to convert to academies.

The schools are required by the DfE to consult on their proposal and to then present the results of the consultation, along with their proposal, to the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) for determination.

The schools do not need the Council's permission to convert to an academy, propose a MAT, consult on the proposal or apply to the RSC. They do however have to follow the DfE's guidance and include the Council as a consultee for the proposals.

The reasons given by the schools for the proposed multi-academy trust are listed within the consultation documents

The consultation regarding the proposed multi-academy trust was launched by each school on 9 September 2016.

3) We need your views to help the schools and the Council make an informed decision

Please respond to the consultations.

For each consultation you are invited to state whether or not you agree with the proposed change and add any comments regarding the proposal.

The consultation documents, which contain the meeting dates for each school and how to respond to each consultation, can be found on the schools' websites.

School	Website
Everton Lower	www.evertonlowerschool.org.uk
Moggerhanger Lower	www.moggerhangerlower.co.uk
Robert Peel Lower	www.robertpeellower.co.uk
St Swithuns VC Lower	www.stswithunssandy.co.uk
John Donne C of E Lower	www.johndonne.org.uk
Sandy Upper	http://sandyupper.net/
Laburnum Lower	www.laburnumlower.co.uk
Maple Tree Lower	www.mapletreelowerschool.com
Sandy Place Academy – Middle	www.sandyplaceacademy.org.uk