



## School Merger Consultation 5<sup>th</sup> September to 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016 Earls Barton Infant school and Earls Barton Junior School

Proposal to merge Earls Barton Infant School and Earls Barton Junior School to create a single Primary School.

### **The Proposal**

Northamptonshire County Council in partnership with the governors of Earls Barton Infant School and Earls Barton Junior School, are proposing to merge the two schools to form a through primary school. This will create a single primary school from the start of the January Term in 2017.

### **Why are we proposing the change?**

Recognising the fundamental need for schools to create secure and long-term working partnerships with other local schools, to develop sustainable high quality provision for all children in the community, governors from both schools have reviewed the current educational arrangements of the children who attend Earls Barton schools to consider whether an alternative option may now be more suitable.

Consistent, quality teaching and learning through the early years of their education (EYFS, KS1 and 2) are critical to building a strong platform for each individual child, to maximise their development and life opportunities. Governors have decided that now is the right time to become a through primary school. This would mean that a single head teacher and a single governing body would collectively oversee the running of the school. Children would start in the reception year and continue through to year 6 without having to apply to move up to the junior school. A through primary school would bring both schools together to become a single community, which we believe will be the best for the children.

### **What are the benefits of becoming a through primary school?**

- Creation of a seamless transition from key-stage 1 (infants) to key-stage 2 (juniors).
- Children will benefit from the potential of a wider range of resources and improved staff development.
- Greater opportunity for relationships between pupils, parents and the school to build over a longer period of time, allowing the school to understand better the needs of each pupil.
- Greater scope to create a single and continuous approach to the curriculum, with single policies for handwriting, reading, maths and behaviour etc.
- Greater capacity to track pupil progress across and between key stages.
- Continued access for pupils and the families to extended services and facilities. The opportunity for both educational key stages to keep improving and moving forward.
- More development opportunities for the staff, such as shared training and the chance to work more closely across the curriculum and gain experience and understanding of all key stages.

***What will it mean for the children?*** The whole purpose of the merger is to create an environment that will have a positive impact on the quality of education that children receive. On a day-to-day basis there will be no change in routine or provision through the key stages.

***What will it mean for parents/carers?*** A merger will mean that the schools will operate with consistency as one organisation. Parents/carers will as a result, not have to apply for a place for





their child for Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6) once their child is on roll the Infant part of the school. In the future there would be the same policies and procedures, the same dates for staff training days, etc.

**What will it mean for the staff?** Again, very little on a day-to-day basis. Apart from a change of school name to a primary school, staff conditions of service will not be affected. Staff employed at both schools (at the time of the proposed amalgamation) would become employees of the new primary school. Pupil forecasts remain high indicating that the primary school would need as many classes as there are currently in the infant and junior schools. The new single Governing Body for the primary school, would work to maximise the application of resources to teaching and learning for all the school's students.

### **Would there be any changes to the school building?**

In the event of merger, the school would remain largely the same with all the existing premises being used in the most appropriate and effective way. The primary school would continue to admit 75 pupils into the reception class each year, as the Infant school does now.

However, Northamptonshire County Council will conduct feasibility studies into how the school could be extended to accommodate the pupil yield from new housing development in the village. Any extension would be subject to a separate consultation process.

### **Procedure to achieve the merger**

It is proposed that Earls Barton Primary School will open on 1 January 2017 catering for pupils from age 4 to 11. The process to achieve this involves the 'technical closure' of Earls Barton Junior School and the expansion of the age range at the infant school on 31 December 2016. However, it should be noted there will be no actual closure of school buildings. Therefore, once this process has been completed, both buildings will continue to be used in much the same way as they are at present – children will continue to be educated in the 'infant building' and 'junior building', but it will be collectively known as a primary school.

### **Admissions**

If the proposal is agreed, a primary school would be created on 1 January 2017 and the following would apply:

- First admissions: Up to 75 children who apply for places at Earls Barton Infant School for September 2017, will be offered places through the standard admissions process.
- Infant to Junior transfers: The current year 2 children at Earls Barton Infants will need to apply for a place in the junior school in the normal manner. In subsequent years this will not be necessary, if the merger is agreed.

If you have any queries regarding admissions, please contact the admissions team on 0300 126 1000 or email via [admissions@northamptonshire.gov.uk](mailto:admissions@northamptonshire.gov.uk)

### **Why are we consulting you?**

We want to consult you to gather your views because you are part of the school community. The governing body of the schools and Northamptonshire County Council cannot simply decide to make changes to schools without first seeking the views of parents and others. There is a legal process which must be followed before changes can be made, and it is important that the governing body and the council hear your views before deciding whether to proceed.





### What happens next?

The consultation period starts on 5<sup>th</sup> September and ends on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016 – the last page of this document explains how we are consulting. Following the consultation process, the governing body will review your feedback and make a recommendation to the council whether or not to proceed with the school merger proposal. This recommendation, along with consultation feedback will then be considered by the Children’s Services cabinet member. If the cabinet member wishes to proceed with the amalgamation, he will grant permission to publish a public notice. The public notice will specify details of the final proposal and will run for a further four weeks. This is the final opportunity to make any comments on the process. It is then anticipated that a final decision will then be made by the council during the Winter Term on whether to merge the schools.

We will hold two public meetings for parents and any other interested parties to discuss the proposals and to hear the views that people have. The dates and times of the meetings are as follows – you are welcome to attend either session:

#### Drop-In Sessions

Both schools will be holding drop in sessions for parents/guardians as follows:

<b>8<sup>th</sup> September</b>	Infants School	19:00 to 19:45 in Infants School
	Junior School	20:00 to 20:45 in Junior School
<b>9<sup>th</sup> September</b>	Joint Infants & Juniors Session	14:30 to 15:30 in Infants School

### How can I get more information on the proposal?

We will publish the feedback from the consultation on the council’s website during the Autumn Term. If permission is granted to publish a public notice, further details of this proposal will be also be available on the council’s website. Please check either of the link below for updates and the latest information on the proposed amalgamation:

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Council/consultations/Pages/Schools-Public-Notices-and-Consultations.aspx>

Or

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Council/consultations/Pages/register.aspx>





### Proposal to Create Earls Barton Primary School

Our proposal is to bring Earls Barton Infant School and Earls Barton Junior School together as one all-through primary school from 1 January 2017. We welcome your views on this proposal. Please fill in this response form and return it to the address below no later than 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016. This questionnaire is also available online at:

<http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/Council/consultations/Pages/Schools-Public-Notices-and-Consultations.aspx>

**Don't forget the drop-in sessions:**

<b>8<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>19:00 to 19:45</b>	<b>In Infants School</b>
	<b>20:00 to 20:45</b>	<b>In Junior School</b>
<b>9<sup>th</sup> September</b>	<b>14:30 to 15:30</b>	<b>Both Schools (In Infants)</b>

1) Do you like or dislike the idea to amalgamate?

I like the proposal to merge the schools	I dislike the proposal to merge the schools
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2) Which category/categories best describe you (tick as many boxes as required)

	Earls Barton Infant School	Earls Barton Junior School
I have child/ren attending	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am a staff member at	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am a governor	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Other (please describe)		

3) If you dislike the proposal, it would be helpful if you let us know your concerns

Your name (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

**Please return this form to the relevant school by 17<sup>th</sup> October 2016.**

Feedback from questions and two will be summarised numerically. Comments will be typed-up and anonymised. This information will be made available to the public, but all respondents comments or information will be anonymised.

