

Alresford Primary School

**Consultation on a proposal to enlarge the premises of
the school and increase its capacity from 140 to 210
places from 2019**

February/ March 2018



Essex County Council

Introduction

The County Council must ensure that there is a school place every year for each child in Essex. In doing so we want to take every opportunity to allow more parents to send their child to their preferred school and support schools to increase the educational achievement and life chances of all young people.

As is the case across many parts of Essex there is predicted to be continued pressure on school places in the area of Tendring District covering Brightlingsea, Alresford and Great Bentley and additional primary school places will be required from 2019 onwards. We have been working with the schools to find solutions to meet the additional need. Whilst meeting the increased demand for places has been made harder by the restraints on public expenditure, providing sufficient school places remains a high priority for the County Council.

In response to this growth in the demand for primary school places we are seeking your views on a proposal to expand Alresford Primary School from 140 places to 210 places, making it a one form of entry primary school. We show in this document why we consider it essential to provide new school places in Alresford from 2019 onwards and I invite you to let me have your views on this proposal. I shall take these views into account when I take a final decision.



Councillor Ray Gooding
Cabinet Member for Education

BACKGROUND

The Brightlingsea, Alresford and Great Bentley area has experienced a rise in the demand for primary school places in the last few years as a result of families moving in and new housing. Latest forecasts indicate continued growth in pupil numbers and additional provision is required to balance future supply and demand for local reception year places.

Pupil Forecasts and Deficit of Primary Places

Essex County Council (ECC) has a duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places for children living in the county. In order to do this we monitor birth rates, new housing developments and patterns of parental preference across groups of schools. This information is used to forecast pupil numbers and to ensure there are sufficient school places across the county.

The following table shows the potential surplus or deficit of reception places over the next five years across what we term Tendring Primary Schools Planning Group 3, as shown in ECC's "10 Year Plan – Meeting the demand for school places in Essex - 2018 to 2027". The group includes Alresford Primary School, the Brightlingsea schools, Elmstead Primary School, Great Bentley Primary School and St George's Primary School at Great Bromley:

Year to be admitted to reception	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23
Total number of reception places	187	187	187	187	187
Predicted requirement for reception places	187	203	165	186	187
Predicted requirement for reception places including potential pupils from new housing	190	210	180	209	215
Predicted surplus or deficit including potential pupils from new housing	-3	-23	7	-22	-28

Longer term forecasts indicate that there will be further growth in the area with the need for additional primary school places. The number of children registered with a GP will continue to be monitored, as will the actual numbers of pupils in schools.

The following table shows the potential surplus or deficit of places across all year groups at Alresford Primary School over the next five years.

Academic Year	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
Capacity of School	140	140	140	140	140
Pupil Number Forecast	136	143	145	143	150
Potential New Pupils from Housing	0	0	10	18	18
Forecast Total Including Housing	136	143	155	171	196
Potential Surplus/ Deficit of Places	4	-3	-15	-31	-56

To prepare for the predicted future growth in demand for places at the school, which is largely a result of the new housing in the area, ECC has been exploring options with the headteacher and governing body to increase the size of the buildings, to allow the school to admit up to 210 children. Viability work has shown that this is possible on the existing site.

ECC has been working with other schools in the planning group to assess options to provide additional places to cater for the need as predicted in the 10 Year Plan. ECC is also engaging with Tendring District Council to ensure that where significant additional housing is being planned sites for new school are secured where required.

THE WAY FORWARD

School Expansion Proposal

It is proposed to expand Alresford Primary School from 140 places to 210 places by building additional accommodation at the school, making it a one form of entry primary school. This would enable the school to admit 10 additional reception children each year. It would also enable the school to organise with classes of a single age group, rather than mixing year groups as is the case at present. We intend the permanent accommodation to be completed in time for reception admissions in 2019.

The school is a popular, oversubscribed school rated “Good” by Ofsted. Expansion of the school will provide more places to meet the growing demand in Alresford, and will enable more parents to gain a place for their child at a popular, high performing school.

Admissions

The admissions criteria and priority admission area for the school would not change as a result of the proposed expansion.

Transport Arrangements

Transport arrangements would remain in line with the home to school transport policies of Essex County Council and the existing Travel Plan would be reviewed by the school.

Building Work

Expansion plans are subject to planning permission. There will be pre-planning application consultation with the community on the detailed design for expansion of the school. Initial work has been undertaken to explore options for expansion and remodelling which include additional classrooms and ancillary accommodation to deliver the curriculum. A full feasibility study including highways and access considerations will be subject to consultation with the community during the detailed planning stage of the building scheme, should the proposal to expand the school be approved.

Funding

The County Council has made provision in its Capital Programme for the proposed school expansion. The Council publishes its capital programme at www.essex.gov.uk.

How Can You Make Your Views Known?

The County Council is seeking the views of all interested persons about the proposal to expand Alresford Primary School. A drop in session has been arranged at the school to provide an opportunity for parents and members of the local community to ask questions and comment on the expansion proposal.

The drop in session will take place as follows:

Between 3:30 pm and 7:30pm, on Tuesday 20 February 2018 at Alresford Primary School.

At this stage no decision has been made on the expansion proposal and all the views received will be considered prior to a decision being taken as to whether to go ahead with the proposal. A final decision will need to be taken in the context of the growing need for more primary school places in Alresford.

If you have any questions or would like further information about the consultation process or the expansion proposal you can call or email Kevin Wilby, School Organisation Officer, on 03330 131147 / kevin.wilby@essex.gov.uk or alternatively contact the chair of governors of the school, via the school office.

Your Comments

You are invited to respond to this consultation using the following electronic survey form:

<http://surveys.essexinsight.org.uk/alresford-expansion>

You may also send feedback and comments to:

School Organisation Team

school.organisation@essex.gov.uk

County Hall – E3 Zone 1

Market Road

Chelmsford CM1 1GS

All comments received through these mechanisms or made directly to council officers or members will be collected and included in the analysis of feedback received.

All written comments should be received by ECC by 14 March 2018. ECC handles information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998 and is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998. Your responses to this consultation will only be used to assess the community's view of the proposed amalgamation and not for any other purpose. We will not give information about you to anyone outside the County Council.

The information contained in this leaflet can be made available in alternative formats: large print, Braille, audio tape or disk. Please call 03330 131071.

What happens next?

At the end of this consultation period the Cabinet Member for Education will consider the feedback and views expressed by all interested parties during the consultation and will make a decision on the next stage of the school expansion proposal. The governing body of the school will also make a decision following feedback from this consultation. If a decision is made to proceed to the next stage of the school expansion, a Statutory Notice will be published in the local press and will be displayed at the main entrance to the school and at other conspicuous places in the area served by the school for a four week period. This four week representation period provides the final opportunity for people and organisations to comment on, or submit an objection to, the proposal. At the end of the four week period any comments on or objections to the proposal will be considered by the Cabinet Member and a final decision will be made.

Timeline

The consultation period will run from 8 February 2018 to 16 March 2018. Below is the estimated timeline for the decision process.

Date	Activity
8 February 2018	Consultation commences – consultation document can be viewed: http://tinyurl.com/EssexCC-Consultations
20 February 2018	Drop in session for parents, staff and the local community to be held at the school between 3:30pm and 7:30pm
16 March 2018	End of consultation period
April 2018	Decision by County Council on whether to proceed with the publication of a Statutory Notice.
May 2018	Publication of Statutory Notice (if decision above is to proceed to next stage).
June 2018	End of period for representations.
July/August 2018	Decision taken by Essex County Council on expansion proposals
* 1 September 2019	Alresford Primary School expands to become a 210 place primary school.

* This stage will apply only if the proposal is approved by the County Council.