

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Amalgamation of Fort Hill Community School and Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College, Basingstoke including the Fort Hill Special Educational Needs resourced provision.

At the request of the governing body of Fort Hill Community School and Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College (CBEC), Hampshire County Council is undertaking a consultation on a proposal to amalgamate the two schools and re-provision the Fort Hill Special Educational Needs (SEN) resourced provision.

This would be achieved through the closure of Fort Hill Community School and setting up of the amalgamated school on the CBEC site. The schools are currently federated under the leadership of one governing body.

Why are the governors and County Council considering closing the school?

Pupil numbers

In recent years Fort Hill Community School has seen a substantial decline in pupil numbers. This decline has had a significant impact on the school's budget which is directly linked to the number of pupils it has on roll. Low numbers, when combined with a reduced budget, limits a school's ability to provide an appropriately broad curriculum and extra curricular offer. For 2017, only 39 current year 6 pupils have identified the school as their first preference, this is against a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 145.

The current and forecast pupil numbers are shown in the Table 1 below:

Forecast Model based on 1st Preference Applications for Sept 2017

School Name	Number on Roll			1st Prefs	Forecast								
	1415	1516	1617	1718	1819	1920	2021	2122	2223	2324	2425	2526	2627
Bishop Challoner Catholic VA Secondary School	165	160	179	218	240	241	247	266	271	288	262	250	254
Fort Hill Community School	89	94	70	39	40	40	41	44	45	47	43	41	42
Brighton Hill Community School	76	119	102	99	109	109	112	121	123	131	119	113	115
The Vyne Community School	96	107	150	182	200	201	206	222	226	240	219	209	212
Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College	156	125	142	46	51	51	52	56	57	61	55	53	54
Aldworth School	199	186	205	226	249	250	256	275	281	298	272	259	263
Everest Community Academy	111	86	96	65	72	72	74	79	81	86	78	74	76
The Costello School	211	225	224	196	216	217	222	239	244	259	236	225	228
TOTAL	1103	1102	1168	1071	1176	1180	1209	1302	1327	1409	1284	1224	1243

Educational standards

Using the Department for Education's preferred school performance measures it can be demonstrated that pupil achievement at Fort Hill needs improvement. The school is due to be inspected later this academic year and it is the view of Hampshire County Council's School Improvement Team that it is unlikely to secure a good judgement.

The governing body of the federated schools has met to discuss the situation with County Council officers. They feel that to ensure pupils in the area can attend a strong and stable educational provision, amalgamating Fort Hill with Cranbourne, on the Cranbourne site, is the best way forward for both schools.

What are the problems with surplus places/declining pupil numbers?

School's funding is directly related to the number of pupils it has on roll and is allocated based on a funding formula to ensure all schools receive an appropriate allocation. Funding for schools is allocated by the Government.

A decline in pupil numbers, and a subsequent reduction in funding, presents difficulties for a school in appointing staff and delivering the full range of curriculum opportunities to pupils. Present and forecast pupil numbers at Fort Hill Community School give reason to call into question the educational and financial viability of the school.

What would happen to the pupils currently at the school?

Any changes will be managed in such a way as to minimise disruption to pupils' education as much as possible.

The intention is that pupils in current years 9 and 10 would continue to be educated on the Fort Hill site, whereas it is proposed that pupils in current years 7 and 8 would transfer to the Cranbourne site from September 2017.

Every effort will be made to ensure that pupils will continue to follow the curriculum they are currently studying and support will be provided to all pupils affected by any proposed changes to minimise disruption to their learning.

What if I do not wish to my child to attend Cranbourne?

You do not have to send your child to Cranbourne. However, you will need to make alternative arrangements for your child's schooling. You can apply for other schools by completing an in-year application, available from any Hampshire school or online at www.hants.gov.uk/ad-applyonline.htm

I have applied for a place at Fort Hill for my child to start Year 7 in September 2017. What will happen to my application?

As no final decision has been made yet about the future of Fort Hill, your application will still be processed and places will be allocated in accordance

with the school's published admission arrangements. You will be sent the outcome of your application on 1 March 2017.

In the event that a decision is taken to amalgamate the schools, an offer at Fort Hill Community School will become an offer for Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College in September 2017.

Can I change my application for a place in Year 7 in September 2017?

Unfortunately it is not possible to change your application at this stage of the admission process. You will be notified of the outcome of your application on 1 March 2017. If you are unhappy with the school you are allocated and wish to apply to other schools, you can make a late application. Late applications are available from the County Council's website at www.hants.gov.uk/ad-year7-stop-press.htm

How would I get my child to Cranbourne ?

The local authority is keen to hear parents' views on travel to and from school for their child should the amalgamation go ahead. Please provide your responses via the consultation response form or at any of the public drop-in meetings.

The County Council will review and consider transport needs, as appropriate, when it has a comprehensive picture of the level of genuine demand.

Will my child need a new uniform?

Should the amalgamation proceed, the governing body of Cranbourne will need to consider how to best take forward requirements relating to pupil uniform.

How can you be sure that the number of pupils expected in the future is accurate?

Predicting school place demand is a complex task. Where children go to school involves a range of different factors such as housing growth, inward and outward migration as well as parental preference. As a result, planning for school places is based on probabilities and not certainties and, while pupil forecasts are derived from sound methodology, external influences mean they come without a guarantee.

Looking at Basingstoke numbers we can already see an increase in the number of children in the primary phase schools of Basingstoke. The current pupil numbers of fewer than 40 forms of entry (FE) at secondary is expected to grow.

Fort Hill provides five FE of the current 50 forms of available places. The forecast number of Year 7 children, even with the above caveat, does not exceed the available places until 2023 (based on current admission numbers and the 2017 demand for Fort Hill).

There is available capacity in other Basingstoke secondary schools, notably Cranbourne, which could be used if numbers increase more quickly due to factors outside the standard forecast model.

What would happen to the Resourced Provision for children with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)

The importance of this provision is recognised and pupils will continue to receive access to a suitably qualified teacher and other support as required within a mainstream setting to meet their individual needs. Support will continue to be provided to reflect the provision as specified within the pupils' Education, Health and Care Plans, and/or their individual education plans. The County Council is keen to hear your views in respect of the future of this provision.

What would happen to staff?

The retention of high quality staff is a crucial element in the County Council's drive for improving education standards and raising pupil achievement.

The senior leadership team and governing body of Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College, with advice from the County Council, would determine the required staffing structure should the two schools amalgamate.

This would take account of the extra pupils on the Cranbourne site and those who might potentially remain on the Fort Hill site.

Consultations will take place with all staff who may be affected by the proposals, and with the professional associations and trade unions.

What will happen to the Fort Hill Community School site after the school is formally closed?

Currently it is intended that the Fort Hill site would remain open until the current Year 9 and Year 10 pupils have completed their secondary education (Key Stage 4), in July 2019. This would mean CBEC operating across two sites for a period of time.

No decision has been made on the longer term future of the Fort Hill site.

Will I have the opportunity to discuss the proposal and ask questions?

There will be opportunities for parents, pupils and other interested members of the community to meet with Hampshire County Council officers at a number of drop-in events. People will be able to ask questions and comment on the proposals. Comments made, and issues raised, will be reported back to the Executive Member for Education and will be fully considered before any decision is made.

Public drop-in sessions are being held at:

- **Wednesday 8 February 2017 at Fort Hill Community School 4.30pm – 6.30pm**

- **Thursday 9 February 2017 at Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College 4.30pm – 6.30pm**
- **Wednesday 15 February 2017 at Westside Community Centre 5.30pm – 7.30pm**

How to take part in the consultation

Please tell us your views at any of the drop-in sessions and/or by using our online consultation response form here

<https://www.snapsurveys.com/wh/s.asp?k=148473119811>

The Consultation

The consultation runs from 19 January until 2 March 2017.

Officers will collate the responses and take a report on the outcomes of the consultation to the Executive Member for Education. If it is concluded that the amalgamation of Fort Hill Community School and Cranbourne Business and Enterprise College should proceed, a statutory notice setting out this intention will be published. A notice will also be published relating to the closure and re-provision of the Special Educational Needs provision.

Should notices be published there will be a four week period during which representations can be made. Any representations will then be taken into consideration before the County Council finally decides whether or not to proceed with the amalgamation of Fort Hill and Cranbourne schools. If it is agreed, the anticipated implementation date would be 1 September 2017.