

Alterations other than alterations proposed in foundation proposals which may be published by a Governing Body or Local Authority as specified in regulations 4 and 5 and published in accordance with Schedule 2 *The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 (updated 2018)*

1. Contact details

The name and contact address of the local authority or governing body publishing the proposals and the name, address and category of the school

Kirklees Council, Kirkgate Buildings, Byram Street, Huddersfield, HD1 1BY intends to make a Prescribed Alteration to Almondbury Community School, a community school, Fernside Avenue, Almondbury, Huddersfield, HD5 8PQ from 1st September 2020.

2. Description of alteration and evidence of demand

Kirklees Council intends to make prescribed alterations at Almondbury Community School by:

- Changing the age range of the school from age 3 –16 years to age 3 – 11 years (to be implemented from September 2020).

This would result in no new pupils to be admitted into year 7 from September 2020

Almondbury Community School is in the secondary planning area of 'Huddersfield South & East and Kirkheaton'. The adjacent secondary planning area of 'Huddersfield South West (Newsome only)' is particularly relevant in the assessment of sufficient secondary places. The schools and number of available places per year group are detailed in the table below;

Planning Area	School Name	Y7 PAN 2019/20 by school
Huddersfield South & East and Kirkheaton	Almondbury Community School	120
	King James's School	186
	Netherhall Learning Campus High School	131
	Total	437
Huddersfield South West	Newsome High School and Sports College	183
	Total (Newsome only)	183
Overall number of places available each year group across both planning areas		620

PAN – Planned Admission Number

The table below shows the child population resident in the 2 planning areas in each year group for Year 7 to Year 11 and future Year 7 cohorts from September 2019 to September 2026, based on NHS population data February 2018.

Pupils resident in	Future secondary school age pupils								Secondary school age				
	Y7 2026	Y7 2025	Y7 2024	Y7 2023	Y7 2022	Y7 2021	Y7 2020	Y7 2019	Y7 2018	Y8 2018	Y9 2018	Y10 2018	Y11 2018
Planning area													
Huddersfield South East and Kirkheaton	473	436	490	501	492	519	478	499	488	554	463	450	467
Huddersfield South West (Newsome only)	148	122	131	149	136	147	135	153	110	140	113	129	126
Total pupils resident across both planning areas	621	558	621	650	628	666	613	652	598	694	576	579	602

Across these secondary planning areas, a significant number of children are accessing school places outside the area where they live;

- On average around a quarter of secondary age pupils are attending schools outside the planning areas (i.e. on average 160 pupils per year group)

Therefore, this impacts upon the number of children who are on roll at the schools in the planning area, meaning some schools have unfilled places. Given the size of schools in surrounding areas, future child population cohorts and longstanding patterns of parental choice this position is not expected to change significantly.

At present, a total of approximately 300 pupils attend the secondary phase of Almondbury Community School (which covers Year 7 to Year 11) and this means half of the available places are not taken.

In summary, approval of this proposal would result in 500 secondary places being offered in these planning areas. With on average 160 pupils accessing school places outside the area there would be sufficient places to accommodate the expected future population cohorts which average 622 per year between 2020 and 2026 resulting in an average of 38 surplus places per year.

This proposal is not dependent upon the creation of additional places at other schools either within or beyond the planning area .The Local Authority is of the view that if the proposal is implemented it will remain able to meet its duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places for secondary education in the area without the need to create extra places..

The Local Authority is working with local secondary schools to explore the opportunity for a small increase in places to enable greater parental choice and meet any future demand resulting from new housing developments.

3. Objectives - (including how the proposals would increase educational standards and parental choice)

The proposals are intended to improve outcomes for children. By taking a strategic approach Kirklees council wants to ensure that sufficient secondary school places are available in Huddersfield South East and South West and maximise opportunities to;

- Offer high quality and inclusive education and diversity of provision to all
- Provide a breadth of curriculum offer
- Be financially viable and therefore have future security

The number of pupils on roll at Almondbury Community School have for a number of years, consistently lower than the number of available places, currently most year groups are undersubscribed by between 40 and 60%. The evidence presented in section 2 demonstrates that there is very limited opportunity for pupil numbers to increase in the future.

As the funding for schools is predominantly driven by the numbers of pupils on roll, this has resulted in lower rates of income which has contributed to some significant challenges in balancing a budget. Almondbury Community School is currently operating with a deficit budget. At the end of the financial year (18/19) the school was in deficit by half a million pounds. This deficit is likely to increase to just under £1million pounds over the course of the next financial year if no action is taken.

To offer breadth of curriculum at Key Stage 4 a school needs a combination of enough pupils (number of classes and income), and a range of teachers able to teach the specialisms. Most small schools will be able to offer the Ebacc (English, mathematics, science, MFL and history/geography) because these subjects are taught at Key Stage 3 and therefore there it is possible for the subjects to be taught by specialist staff.

Other subjects such as art, music, dance, design technology are not large subjects at KS3 and can also be niche and therefore less likely to feature in the KS4 offer.

The subjects that are just at KS4 are for the same reason unlikely to be offered (no teaching hours at KS3), such as, business, health and social care, sociology, graphics, psychology, law and BTECs in a range of subjects etc.

It is widely accepted that to be able to run a reasonable KS4 offer there would need to be 120 pupils in a year group at KS4.

At Almondbury Community School there are 50 pupils in Y11. This results in Almondbury Community School offering just the Ebacc and one or two set options at KS4 where larger schools are in a position to offer more options from a much larger pool of subjects to pupils.

As the budget position illustrates, the current Almondbury Community School model is unaffordable and therefore unfair to the children. It negatively affects their performance and their pathways and future opportunities.

On the 11 February 2019, following an inspection in December 2018, Almondbury Community School was judged by Ofsted as requiring Special Measures. The Secretary of State for Education has a duty under Section 4(A1) of the Academies Act 2010, to intervene where a school is eligible for intervention and make an Academy order to allow it to become a sponsored academy as part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT). The Secretary of State's powers in this area are exercised by Regional School Commissioners (RSC).

However, finding a Multi Academy Trust sponsor for Almondbury Community School in its current form would be very difficult when due diligence processes are undertaken due to low pupil numbers and the associated budget challenges.

In issuing an Academy order the Regional Schools Commissioner noted that this was in the context of proposals by the Local Authority to remove the secondary phase of the school by changing the age range:

I am aware that Kirklees Local Authority has recently consulted on the future options for Almondbury Community School and the basic need for school places across Huddersfield South & East and South West...The Local Authority has been keeping my team informed of the proposal for a 1FE primary School at Almondbury. I will take this into consideration as part of the selection of a suitable academy sponsor for the school once the consultation process has concluded...The Secretary of State has the power to revoke this Academy Order. This would usually only happen in exceptional circumstances, predominantly where following due diligence a school is judged to be financially unviable. Where this is the case, the expectation is that the local authority will take steps to close the school.

In this context, the proposal would:

- Retain a viable high quality, inclusive primary school to serve the local community
- Increase educational standards with a broad curriculum offer at other secondary schools within a reasonable distance
- Enable the long term opportunity to use public investment efficiently to support the best possible educational outcomes.

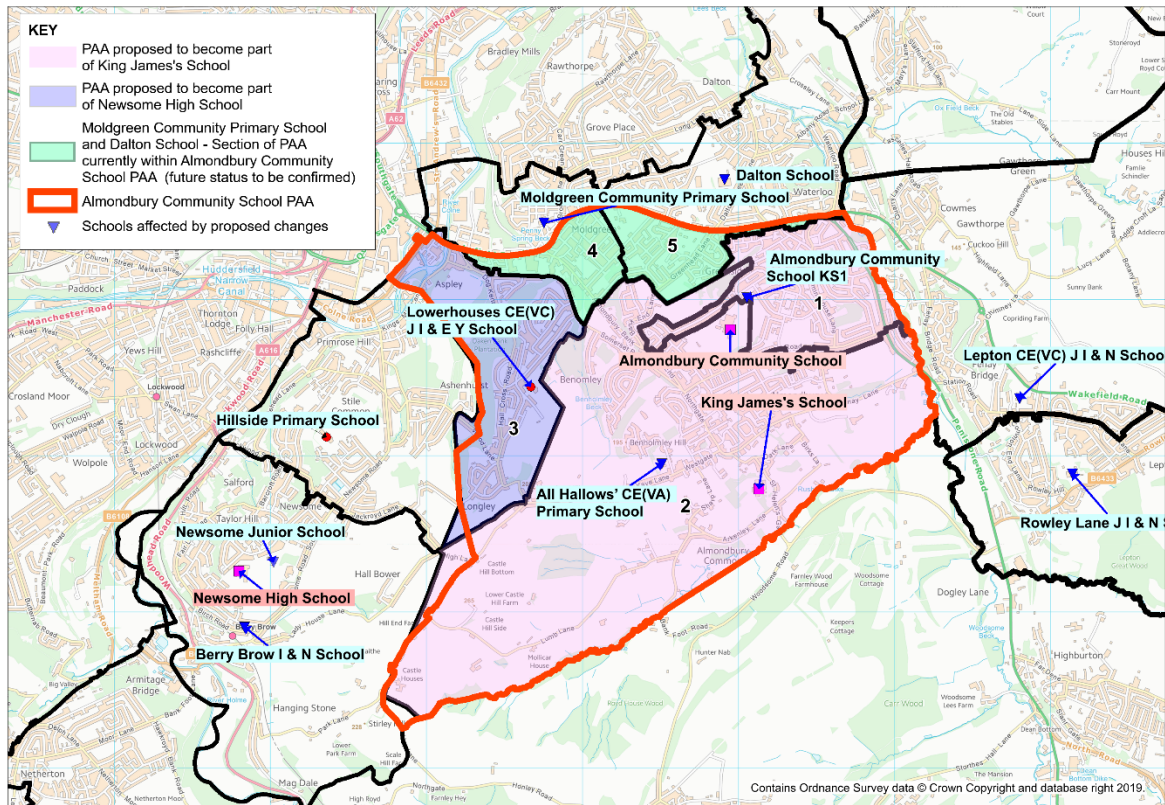
4. The effect on other educational institutions within the area. The effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions in the area

This proposal has taken into account the basic need for school places across Huddersfield South & East and South West. The Local Authority has is working with and will continue to work with neighbouring schools (King James's School, Netherhall Learning Campus High School and Newsome High School) to realign the existing Almondbury Community School secondary Priority Admission Area (PAA) so that future children have priority for their secondary education in one of the neighbouring secondary schools by;

A new arrangement of Priority Admission Areas (PAAs) would be in place for the three Schools in the Huddersfield South & East and South West:

- King James's School changing their catchment area (PAA) to include the primary admission areas of Almondbury Community School and All Hallows' CE(VA) Primary School (areas marked 1 and 2 on the map below)
- Newsome High School changing their catchment area (PAA) to include the primary admission area of Lowerhouses CE(VC) J, I and EY School (area marked 3 on the map below)
- Netherhall Learning Campus High School changing their catchment area to include parts of Moldgreen Community Primary School and Dalton School primary catchment areas (south of A642) which form part of the current Almondbury Community School secondary catchment area (areas marked 4 and 5 on the map below)

The following map illustrates the admission areas referred to above:



As an academy King James School is its own admission authority and therefore subject to a decision making process outside the control of the Local Authority. If the above change of catchment area was not possible, the Local Authority as the decision maker would ensure that pupils living in the primary admission areas of Almondbury Community School and All Hallows' CE(VA) Primary School were given a priority at a local maintained school within a reasonable distance. The proposal is therefore not dependent upon a decision outside the control of the Local Authority.

The opportunity to increase pupil numbers in other local secondary schools which already have viable budgets is likely to strengthen their financial resilience and support them to offer a broad curriculum offer which is not available at Almondbury Community School.

5. **Project costs** Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved.

Almondbury Community School is not viable in its current form. The school is running a significant recurring deficit budget which is not providing best value for public finances (potentially impacting on the available funds in the dedicated schools grant for the wider schools system). The financial position of the school is unlikely to improve given the projected pupil numbers, the current patterns of parental preference and availability of places at alternative schools.

The Local Authority is committed to ensuring that the existing curriculum is adequately resourced and that pupils and their families are supported with transition. This will be supported with none reoccurring revenue for dedicated schools grant contingencies and council budgets.

6. Implementation plan and any proposed stages for implementation. The date on which the proposals are planned to be implemented, and if they are to be implemented in stages.

The proposal is planned to be implemented on 1st September 2020. On this date the secondary phase would no longer exist at Almondbury Community School. Therefore from 31st August 2020 all pupils (Y7 to Y10) would transfer from the roll of Almondbury Community School to another local secondary school (Y8-11).

To support the proposed implementation the following transitional arrangements from September 2019 would be;

- Parents and Carers of Year 6 pupils would complete an online application for secondary school in 2020, Almondbury Community School would not be available to preference. New Priority Admission Areas (PAAs) would be in place and (subject to the agreement of King James's School as the Admission Authority)
- There would be an admission of **11 year old (Year 7)** pupils to Almondbury Community School –. Pupils would be able to remain on the Fernside Avenue site for the academic year to July 2020, during which transition would be carefully planned for them to consolidate their Year 7 learning and finish their Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 studies at another local school.
- **Year 8** pupils (current Year 7) would be given the opportunity to express a preference for transfer to another school with places. Pupils would be able to remain on the Fernside Avenue site for the academic year to July 2020, during which transition would be carefully planned for them to finish their Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 studies at another local school.
- **Year 9** pupils (current Year 8) would be given the opportunity to express a preference for transfer to another school with places. Pupils would be able to remain on the Fernside Avenue site for the academic year to July 2020, during which transition would be carefully planned for them to finish their Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 studies at another local school.
- **Year 10** pupils (current Year 9) would be given the opportunity to express a preference for transfer to another school with places. Pupils would be able to remain on the Fernside Avenue site for the academic year to July 2020, during which transition would be carefully planned for them to finish their GCSE courses at another local school.
- **Year 11** pupils (current Year 10) would remain on the Fernside Avenue site to finish their GCSE courses with their GCSE course staff wherever possible.

Parents and carers who wish to express a preference for place at an alternative school, would be able to do so in line with published admissions arrangements.

The following table represents an indication of future cohort sizes and overall pupils numbers based on existing pupil numbers (as at May 2019) if the proposal to remove the secondary phase from 2020/21 is agreed, and no pupil movement occurs:

Academic year	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Total
2018/19	40	69	54	64	51	278
2019/20	60 *	40	69	54	64	287
2020/21		60 *	40	69	54	223

* Year 7 2019/20 is an indication based on typical intakes

A planned approach to transition would be imperative to ensure that pupils are able to access the best educational opportunities and are able to have a wider experience in order to achieve their potential. In this context, the following would be possible to support implementation;

- Secure the existing strong Leadership arrangements for Academic Year 2019-2020 by continuing to work with executive support from Carr Manor Community School and via the Interim Executive Board whilst carefully planning transition arrangements for Secondary age pupils in September 2020.
- Existing secondary phase pupils including year 7 starters in September 2019 would be supported to remain on the existing site for the full academic year. This would require sufficient resources to ensure the highest possible educational opportunities and quality is available to pupils.
- Other places could be made available for some year groups at one or more local secondary schools for groups of children (to sustain friendship groups and wider support networks) in a planned and managed way, subject to parental/carer agreement. This would require wider support with transition, particularly for families in challenging circumstances such as where children have Special Educational Needs or Disabilities and for other important matters, such as considerations for siblings and working families.
- Working with the school leaders, parents and pupils, ensure appropriate support is available focused upon the emotional wellbeing of pupils
- Opportunities would be explored for staff, which could, for example include securing a job at another local school but remaining with pupils on the existing site for a period of time.

7. The procedure for responses: Support, objections and comments

Any person may send expressions of support, objections or comments in relation to the proposals to the local authority within four weeks from the date of publication. Expressions of support, objections and comments must be received by 4th July 2019. Copies of the proposals can be obtained from: Directorate for Children & Young People, c/o School Organisation & Planning Team, Kirkgate Buildings, Byram Street, Huddersfield, HD1 1BY

The address of the authority to which objections or comments should be sent:-

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, 4th July 2019 any person may support, object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Director for Children & Young People, FREEPOST Kirklees Council, School Organisation & Planning (Postage is free; you do not need a stamp). or via Council email at:- school.organisation@kirklees.gov.uk