

Structural changes to schools – Frequently Asked Questions for Parents

On Friday, the Mayor of Bedford Borough, Dave Hodgson, and Cabinet Member for Education Henry Vann announced that they would support schools as they move towards a two tier structure of education.

Two tier education would mean that schools would either be Primary or Secondary rather than Lower, Middle and Upper.

This means children would be in a Primary school up to Year 6 and would then move to a Secondary school from Year 7 onwards.

Some parts of the Borough are already 'two-tier' whilst other parts of the Borough are a mix of two-tier and three-tier education.

Will my child's school close

No. It is highly unlikely that final proposals would include the closure of school sites. There may however be some opportunity for schools to merge or work more closely together.

How early could changes happen?

The earliest change can legally happen is from September 2017.

Will all schools have to change at the same time?

No. Some areas or clusters of schools will change later, from September 2018 or even September 2019.

Do age range changes have to be consulted on?

Yes, schools would have to consult on any proposals for 8 term time weeks between 1 November and 1 March each academic year. The earliest a consultation could start is from 1 November 2015.

Would all changes happen straight away?

No, for example, if a Lower School converted to a Primary School then in the first year of change Year 5 might stay in the school and in the second year, Year 6 might stay in the school and so on.

Will my school get help?

All schools will get full support from the Council's school improvement team where requested, and from other experts in the Council to help them plan and understand the process.

How is this going to be paid for?

The chief construction adviser for the Government visited a few weeks ago and confirmed that Bedford Borough are considered a national leader in school capital projects; we will be using existing funding for schools and will work with all schools of all types, as well as local MPs, to draw in additional funding from other sources, including the Government.