

Dear parent/carer

We would like to make you aware that the LA are proposing potential changes to the school provision in Almondbury and the surrounding area. The local authority has been developing proposals to strengthen the current education offer so that all children and young people can access the highest possible standards of care and education.

The proposals were published yesterday (Monday March 11th) and we wanted to draw your attention to them due to the links with your school. The report includes the following information:

The possible changes mainly affect Almondbury Community School, King James's School and Newsome High School. Almondbury Community School is an 'all-through' school for children aged from 3 to 16 years (including nursery), while King James's and Newsome are both secondary schools.

The number of pupils at Almondbury Community School (ACS) has been reducing over recent years and, further to this, an Ofsted report published last month stated that the school was 'inadequate' and required 'Special Measures'. Work is ongoing to make improvements at ACS. At the same time, decisions are needed on whether ACS is sustainable in the long term and whether it is in the community's best interests for the school to continue in its current form.

The report being published today proposes that a consultation should take place with parents/carers, and all other interested parties, about a future option for ACS. The possible change would see the age range reduced so that ACS caters only for children aged from 3 to 11 years. This would mean removing the secondary phase of the school over a period of time still to be determined. ACS would remain open as a primary school, serving local children and families.

At present, a total of approximately 300 pupils attend the secondary phase (which covers Year 7 to Year 11) and this means half of the available places are not taken. This number of pupils could be accommodated at other secondary schools in the area, mainly King James's and Newsome, if some adjustments were made and extra places were created at King James's.

In addition, the primary school places at ACS (up to and including Year 6) are also under-subscribed so we are proposing to gradually reduce the number of primary places available. There would be 30 places annually for new Reception pupils. Children who currently attend primary school at ACS would not be affected by this because they already have a place and could remain at the school to the end of Year 6.

In summary, the key proposals are:

- To remove the secondary phase of Almondbury Community School over a period of time still to be determined. The implementation plan would be decided after the consultation had taken place, but it would not be before summer 2020
- To explore the possibility of increasing the number of places at King James's School, and to make some adjustment to local catchment areas. In the future, children who currently attend
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secondary school at ACS would have priority for a place at a different school, mainly King James's or Newsome

- To gradually reduce the number of primary places (up to and including Year 6) at Almondbury Community School by admitting 30 Reception pupils annually from September 2020 onwards. Children who currently attend primary school at ACS would not be affected because they already have a place and could remain at the school to the end of Year 6
- To hold a consultation on the above proposals so that parents, carers and all interested parties can have their say and shape the way forward

Please also note that no decisions have been made. The report will go to a meeting of the Kirklees Cabinet (the council's main decision making body) on Tuesday March 19th when members will be asked to approve a consultation on the possible changes.

The report can read it by visiting www.kirklees.gov.uk/cabinet, by clicking on 'calendar of meetings' and by selecting the date March 19th.

Should the consultation be approved the LA will want to seek views so that everyone can have their say on the future of education in Almondbury and the surrounding area. Feedback will help to shape the proposals. Further details will follow when they are available. .

Yours sincerely



Jo-Anne Sanders
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