

Stebbing Primary School

Consultation on proposals to increase the capacity of the school to 210 places from September 2020, in permanent accommodation

January 2020



Introduction

The County Council must ensure that there is a school place for every child wanting one within its administrative area. In doing so it seeks opportunities to allow more parents to send their children to preferred schools, and support schools to increase the educational achievement and life chances of all young people.

In common with many other areas in the county and country, there is predicted to be continued pressure on primary school places across Uttlesford, and our forecasts suggest a need for a permanent expansion to capacity within the Felsted Planning Group, to help provide places across a number of year groups until a new primary school is built at Dunmow.

Having explored options within that area, we are now seeking your views through this consultation on a proposal to add 70 additional places at Stebbing Primary School, so that it becomes a 210-place (one form of entry) primary school. The school's senior leaders welcome the enhancement such an expansion would make to its offer for local parents, and I invite you to let me have your views regarding what we propose, so that I may take them into account when considering my decision on the best way forward.



Councillor Ray Gooding
Cabinet Member for Education

BACKGROUND

Essex County Council's *10 Year Plan – Meeting the demand for school places in Essex - 2019 to 2028* indicates a need for permanent expansion of primary school capacity within the Felsted Planning Group. Growth in the area has come about through both inward migration and new housing, and expansion at Stebbing Primary School presents a good option to meet this local demand.

As well as the growth seen coming in Reception, other schools in the surrounding planning group of Dunmow are full and over capacity across a number of year groups. Therefore, additional capacity at Stebbing Primary will help mitigate pressure within those groups by providing places, until a new primary school is delivered for Dunmow.

Pupil Forecasts and Deficit of Primary Places

In order to fulfil its statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places available within its administrative borders, Essex County Council (ECC) monitors 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 for Essex children.

The following table shows the potential deficit of Reception places over the next 5 years across these areas.

Year to be admitted to Reception	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Total number of Reception places	90	90	90	90	90
Predicted local requirement for Reception places	88	89	91	93	94
Predicted local requirement for places with potential pupils from new housing	95	97	100	103	104
Predicted deficit with potential pupils from new housing	-5	-7	-10	-13	-14

Longer term forecasts indicate that there will be further sustained growth in Uttlesford 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, and further solutions developed as necessary.

THE WAY FORWARD

School Expansion Proposal

It is proposed to expand Stebbing Primary School from 140 to 210 places (one form of entry), by delivering appropriate extra accommodation on its site. The building project will provide the school with an improved and modern learning environment for the pupils to learn and develop within comfortable, purpose-built surroundings.

Stebbing Primary is a popular, high performing school rated Good by Ofsted. Its expansion will improve the educational offer for local parents by allowing a greater number of children to attend it. Expansion of this school to a PAN of 30 will also remove the need to teach in mixed-age classes, and enable additional capacity to be provided across a number of year groups.

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 communities involved 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 primary school expansions. 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 Stebbing Primary School. Community engagement sessions have 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.

These engagement sessions will take place as follows:

Tuesday 21st January at 2.30pm and 6.00pm, at Stebbing 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 Uttlesford.

Your Comments

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

<https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/school-organisation/stebbing>

You may also send feedback and comments to:

Monica Bird – School Organisation Officer

school.organisation@essex.gov.uk

School Organisation Team

County Hall – C418

Market Road

Chelmsford CM1 1GS

Alternatively, you may wish to write to or email us with your comments to the address given above by 5 February 2020. All comments received through these mechanisms or made directly to council officers or members will be collected to be included in the analysis of feedback received.

All written comments should be received by ECC by 5 February 2020. 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.

If you have any questions about the consultation process or the proposal you can call Monica Bird, School Organisation Officer, on 07584 262962, or alternatively contact the chair of governors of school, via the school.

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 and Lifelong Learning 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 January 2020 to 5 February 2020. Below is the estimated timeline for the decision process.

Date	Activity
8 January 2020	Consultation commences – consultation document can be viewed: http://essex.gov.uk/schoolconsultations
21 January 2020	Engagement sessions for parents, staff and the local community to be held at 2.30pm and 6.00pm, at Stebbing Primary School.
5 February 2020	End of consultation period.
Mid-February 2020	Decision by County Council on whether to proceed with the publication of a statutory notice.
Late-February 2020	Publication of Statutory Notice (if decision above is to proceed to next stage).
Late-March 2020	End of period for representations.
April 2020	Decision taken by Essex County Council on expansion proposals.
* 1 September 2020	Stebbing Primary School expands from 140 places to 210 places.

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