



Statutory Public Consultation  
15<sup>th</sup> September 2023 to 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023

# Proposed Change of Age Range of Holywell School

## Introduction

This document helps to explain the background to the proposals and the steps of this process, including:

- background information;
- what is being proposed;
- why it is being proposed;
- who can propose and decide the changes;
- the impact of the proposals;
- how and when the proposals if agreed would be implemented;
- pre-statutory consultation;
- who is being consulted;
- how to submit a consultation response;
- what happens at the end of the consultation period; and
- relevant documents.

If you require any additional information not included in this document to enable you to make a response, please contact [SFFConsultation@holywellschool.co.uk](mailto:SFFConsultation@holywellschool.co.uk):

<b>Address</b>	Holywell School Red Lion Close Cranfield Bedfordshire MK43 0JA
<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:SFFConsultation@holywellschool.co.uk">SFFConsultation@holywellschool.co.uk</a>
<b>Phone number</b>	01234 750 381

## Have your say...

It is very important that all those involved or have an interest have a say, we welcome your views.

An online survey can be accessed from the school website. If you are unable to access the online response form, please email the school office.

Paper responses must be submitted to the school office.

The four-week consultation period commences on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September and closes at noon on Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023. It is very important that all those wishing to respond to these proposals do so within this timeframe.

We are holding some consultation events to allow our stakeholders to learn more about our proposals and give the opportunity to provide feedback. A summary of events can be found in the table below:

Date & Time	Location & address	Delivery
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> September 5.30pm – 6.30pm	Marston Moreteyne VC School (Church End Site) Church Walk Marston Moretaine Bedford MK43 0NE	Face-to-face
Wednesday 27 <sup>th</sup> September 4.00pm – 5.00pm	Holywell School Red Lion Close Cranfield Bedfordshire MK43 0JA	Face-to-face
Thursday 28 <sup>th</sup> September 2.15pm – 3.15pm	Schools for the Future virtual consultation Google Meet joining info Video call link: <a href="https://meet.google.com/zxr-dyie-whh">https://meet.google.com/zxr-dyie-whh</a>	Virtual (via Google meet)

Events will start promptly at the specified time with a brief presentation and then time to ask questions or points of clarification.

Yours sincerely,

Michael Simpson  
Headteacher

Pauline Kendall  
Chair of Governors

### **Responses required by noon on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

An online form is available [HERE](#)

A copy of the consultation form can be downloaded from:

A hard copy of the form can be requested from:

Statutory Consultation

Holywell School

Red Lion Close

Cranfield

Bedfordshire

MK43 0JA

## **School Details**

Name and Address:	Holywell School Red Lion Close Cranfield Bedfordshire MK43 0JA		
Status:	Academy		
Ofsted Rating / Date:	Good – July 2023		
Current age range:	9 to 13	Proposed age range:	11 to 16
Current point of entry:	Year 5	Proposed point of entry:	Year 7
Total student capacity as of 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2023:	720	Proposed total student capacity:	900
Published admission number (PAN) as of 1 <sup>st</sup> September 2023:	180	Proposed PAN:	180
Currently students' transition to:	Upper School at end of Year 8	Proposed for students to transition to:	Post-16 education or equivalent

## **Background information**

Holywell School is a 9-13 Middle School with 720 students in Cranfield, Bedfordshire in the Diocese of St Albans. We aim to continue the historic tradition of Church of England Schools by providing a Christian Values-inspired education of the highest quality within the context of Christian belief and practice.

Although situated in the Local Authority of Central Bedfordshire, we straddle the border and currently have half of our population from Bedford Borough schools. Students are largely drawn from the two village parishes of Cranfield and Wootton. We also have an increasing number of 'out-of-catchment' students – particularly from Marston Moreteyne Lower School. Cranfield Academy and Marston Moreteyne Lower School are both Church of England schools. Holywell has always worked collaboratively with both the Diocese of St Albans and the local cluster of schools including those in Bedford Borough (Broadmead Lower, Marston Vale Middle School and Wootton Upper School). As part of Central Bedfordshire's 'Schools for the Future' development programme and in response to the growing need for school places, we have been exploring a long-term plan to evolve into an 11-16 secondary school – hence this proposal and consultation.

The wider area in Central Bedfordshire which includes Cranfield, Marston Moreteyne, Houghton Conquest, Lidlington, Lower Shelton and Wixams is expected to grow, with over 7,000 new homes proposed to be built by 2030, which would mean an estimated 830 – 1,030 additional school places will be needed by 2030.

Central Bedfordshire Council, in collaboration with Academy schools in the cluster (including Holywell) ran an initial 'Have Your Say' consultation during Autumn 2022 (31 October 2022 to 12

December 2022). This consultation proposed a transition from three-tier (lower/middle/upper) to two-tier (primary/secondary) in the Cranfield area. 63% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal to move the schools in the Cranfield cluster to the two-tier model of education. The proposal for Holywell Middle School received 55% support. Respondents were most likely to discuss that experienced secondary teachers would be needed to be able to teach GCSEs. There were also concerns raised about traffic in the area around the school.

The Executive Committee meeting held on 1st August 2023 reviewed the formal analysis of the Statutory consultation feedback and approved the next stage in the process to change Council-maintained schools in the Cranfield and Marston area to the two-tier model of education, as part of the Schools for the Future programme. Councillors also agreed to support the ongoing, parallel significant change process for Academies in the area which, involves seeking approval for a change of age range from the Department for Education, Regional Director’s Office.

Holywell School supports this conclusion.

### **What is being proposed**

The Governing Board at Holywell School intends to submit an application to the Department for Education (DfE) to change the age range at Holywell. It is proposed to alter the age range of Holywell School from 9-13 to 11-16. This would change the school from a middle school to a secondary school. We intend to request approval to convert Holywell School to a secondary school (Years 7 to 11) on the current site from 1st September 2025 in line with the local area transition plan.

<b>School</b>	<b>Current PAN</b>	<b>Proposed PAN</b>	<b>Proposed age range</b>
Holywell School	6FE 180 PAN Middle (720 places)	6FE 180 PAN Secondary (900 places)	Y7 to Y11 Secondary (Age 11 to 16)

The school is currently built to support 720 students, with 730 students currently on roll. The secondary school will need to accommodate a total of 900 students.

It is proposed to change the age range of Holywell School from 9-13 to 11-16 years. In order to do so the age range of the school must be extended by three years.

Changing the age range of the school and operating full secondary provision will have a number of benefits:

- a faith-based provision which, in collaboration with the Lower / Primary schools will ensure continuity of values, worship and ethos.
- local secondary schooling for local students
- a community-focussed secondary school providing a Christian, Values-based education
- a traditional curriculum delivered by secondary subject specialists where every student is unique, known, safe and supported to be the best they can be

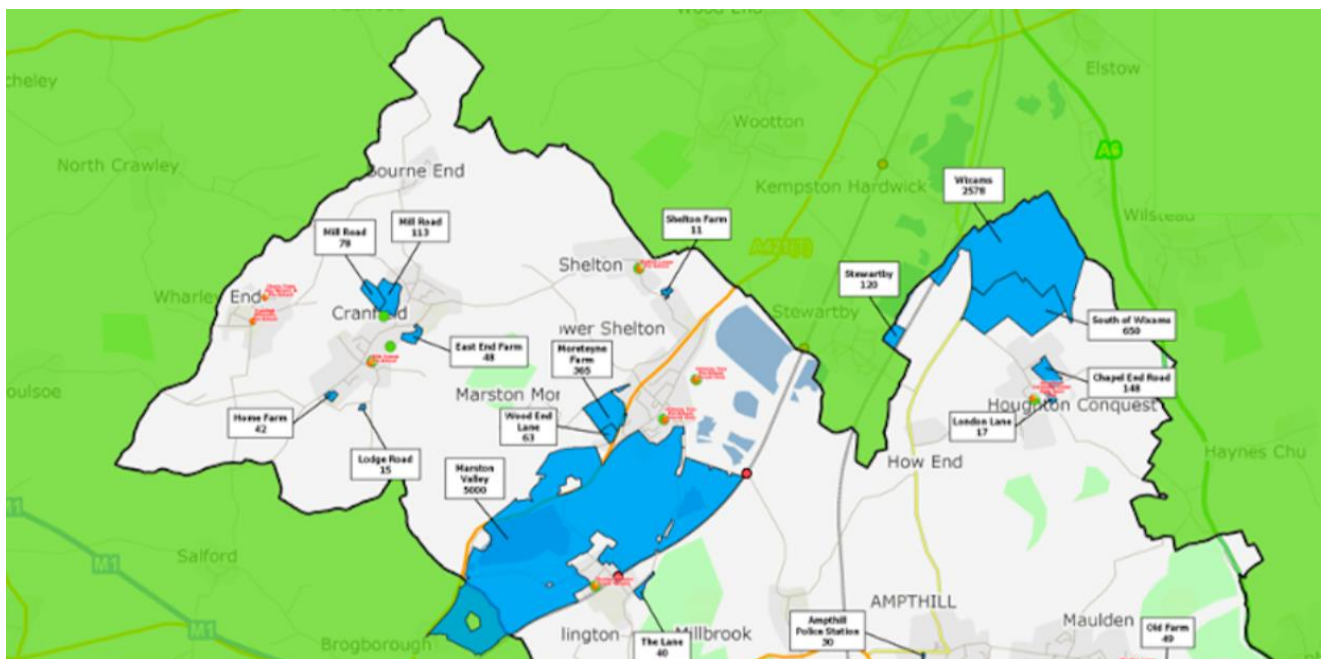
### **Why is it being proposed?**

Historically, Central Bedfordshire has offered a three-tier system. This is where children move between lower, middle and upper schools. However, over the last 30 years, most schools in the country have moved to the two-tier system of primary and secondary schools; now there are just over 100 middle schools left, 13 of them in Central Bedfordshire.

Whilst we are strong supporters of the Middle School, three-tier model of education, we believe that moving to a two-tier Primary / Secondary structure will provide a clearer pathway for students, it will reduce the number of transitions between schools and it will enable the provision of a Church of England, values-based Primary / Secondary provision for students in the local area.

### **Demand for more school places**

The area in Central Bedfordshire which includes Cranfield, Marston Moreteyne, Houghton Conquest, Lidlington, Lower Shelton and Wixams is expected to grow by 2030. Most of this growth is near Marston Moreteyne, though there is also significant development already committed to at Wixams, plus a site to the south of this, which is allocated in Central Bedfordshire's [Local Plan](#). Wixams straddles the border between Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough. The following map indicates where the housing growth (shown in blue) is expected and being built.



Because of this growth, local schools have been working together, with Central Bedfordshire Council, on a long-term plan to make sure we have:

- The right schools
- In the right places
- Delivering the best education

The changes proposed would move the schools in the area to a two-tier model of education and increase capacity to provide the new school places required to meet the local demand.

### **Schools in the Cranfield cluster now**

The Cranfield cluster of schools shares a local authority border with Bedford Borough Council. This sees some children from Central Bedfordshire attend schools in what is known locally as the Wootton Pyramid within Bedford Borough, and vice versa. The area also shares a border with Milton Keynes to the west but the distance is too great to have an impact on the schools.

Holywell School, as part of this cluster of schools, has been working closely with Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council to coordinate our plans with the changes required to meet the student population demand. To achieve the educational benefits outlined

above and to ensure there is minimal disruption to children and young people in education, Central Bedfordshire Council and Bedford Borough Council are seeking to change schools to a two-tier model of education at the same time.

Within the three-tier model of education, the following year groups are currently accommodated at the following types of schools:

- Lower schools - Reception to Year 4
- Middle schools - Years 5-8
- Upper schools Years 9-11 (*please note there are no upper schools in the Cranfield cluster, within Central Bedfordshire*)

Within the Cranfield cluster of schools, there are currently five lower schools (including two schools, which are each split over two sites) and one middle school, as part of a three-tier model of education. Students then typically travel to Bedford Borough for an upper school place.

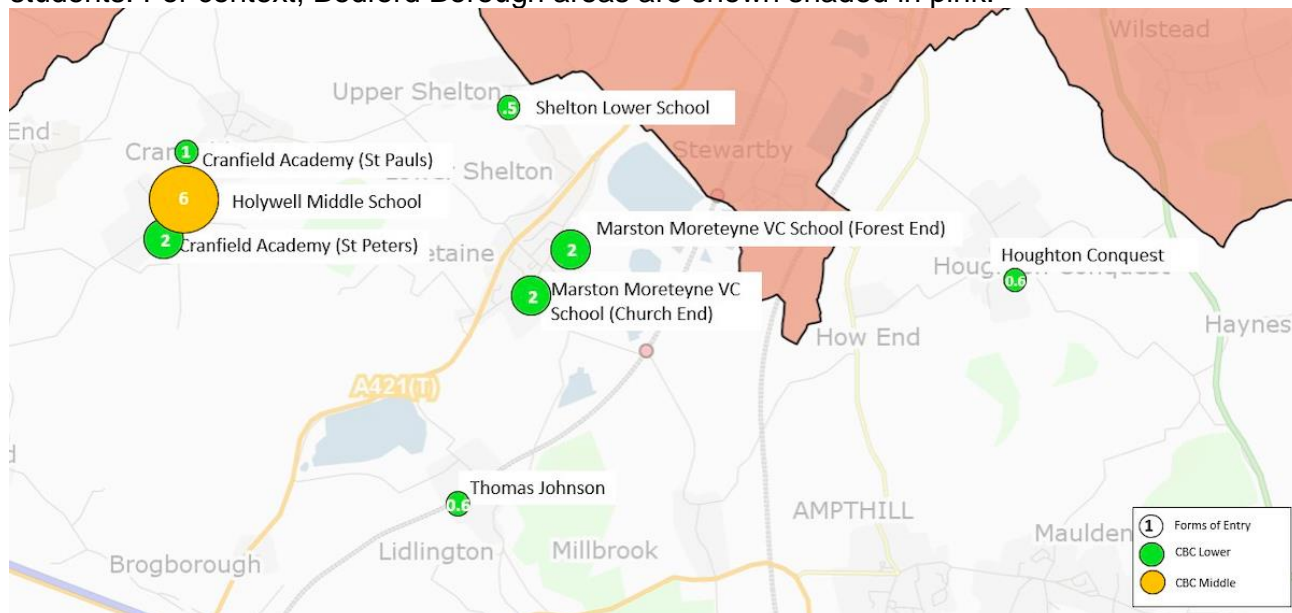
### School governance

Holywell School is an academy, which means we are funded directly by the Department for Education (central government) and run as a stand-alone, independent academy. The full Governance structure of the academy is available on the school website:

<https://holywellschool.co.uk/governors/>.

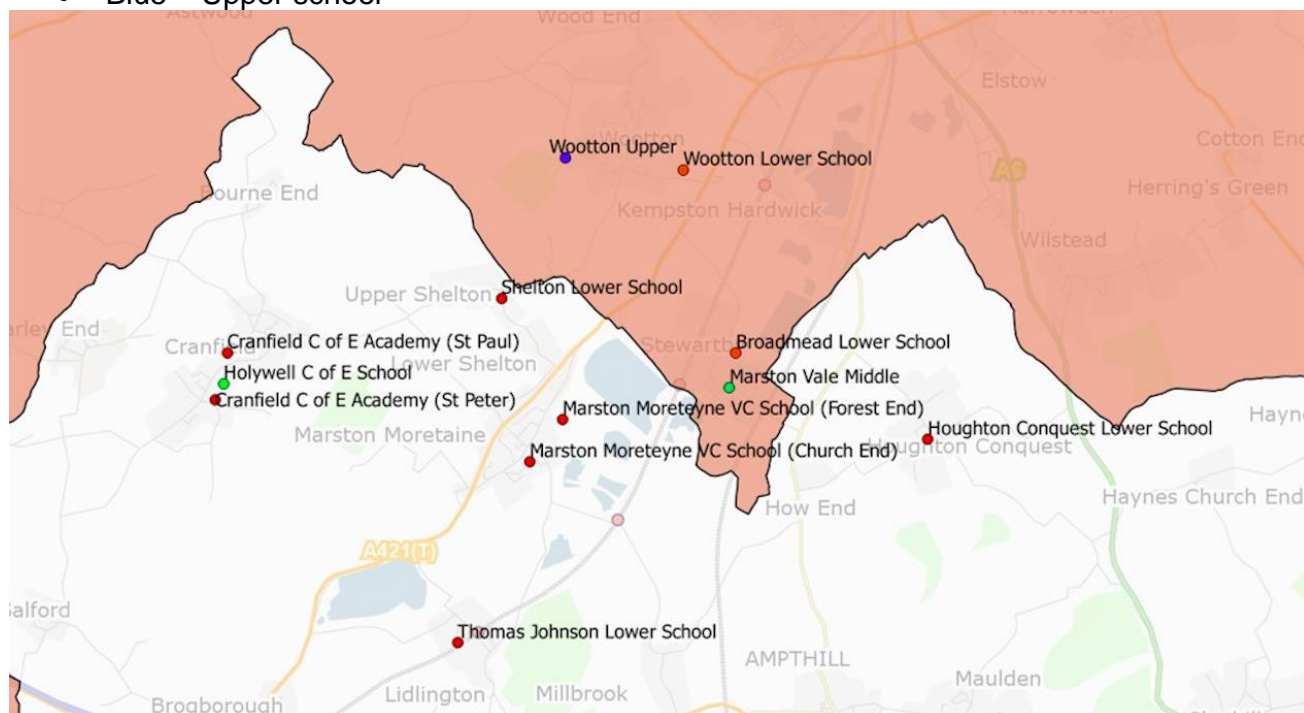
Cranfield Academy and Marston Moreteyne VC Controlled School are both split across two sites. There are also four neighbouring schools in Bedford Borough attended by some children from Central Bedfordshire.

The following map indicates where all of these schools are located in Central Bedfordshire (shaded in white) and their forms of entry. One form of entry is defined as one class with 30 students. For context, Bedford Borough areas are shown shaded in pink:



The following map also shows the Central Bedfordshire schools (shaded white) in relation to the schools in Bedford Borough (shaded pink). The coloured dots indicate the following types of schools:

- Red – Lower school
- Green – Middle school
- Blue – Upper school



The below table shows the schools in Central Bedfordshire and their current school type, capacity and students currently on roll at each school.

To note: the student numbers in the table below are based on all year groups within the school and, although there may be an indication of surplus places, these will be limited to individual year groups and therefore not available to all students.

School name	Current school type	Current school capacity	Current numbers on roll
Cranfield Academy (St Paul's)	Lower	150 students	444 students (across both Cranfield Academy sites)
Cranfield Academy (St Peter's)	Lower	300 students	444 students (across both Cranfield Academy sites)
Houghton Conquest Lower School	Lower	100 students	108 students
Marston Moreteyne Voluntary Controlled School (Church End)	Lower	300 students	558 (across both Marston Moreteyne sites)
Marston Moreteyne Voluntary Controlled School (Forest End)	Lower	300 students	558 (across both Marston Moreteyne sites)
Shelton Lower School	Lower	75 students	0 students
Thomas Johnson Lower School	Lower	90 students	87 students
Holywell School	Middle	720 students	720 students

The table below shows the schools included in Bedford Borough for reference only. These were consulted on separately by Bedford Borough Council in the autumn of 2022.  
Schools in Bedford Borough

School name	Current school type	Current capacity & numbers on roll
Broadmead Lower School	Lower	Figures for this school were consulted on separately by Bedford Borough Council
Wootton Lower School	Lower	Figures for this school were consulted on separately by Bedford Borough Council
Marston Vale Middle School	Middle	Figures for this school were consulted on separately by Bedford Borough Council
Wootton Upper School	Upper	Figures for this school were consulted on separately by Bedford Borough Council

### Proposed changes

In consultation with Central Bedfordshire and the local group of schools, we have developed a draft plan which we propose could deliver the following changes by September 2025:

- Lower schools to become primary schools on their existing sites
- Holywell School to become a secondary school on its existing site
- For Shelton Lower School, Central Bedfordshire Council is seeking views on the options for the future use of the school.

As a middle school, we will need additional facilities to support a secondary curriculum.

### Age ranges

These proposals would move the area to a two-tier model of education. Within that, the following year groups are accommodated at the following types of schools:

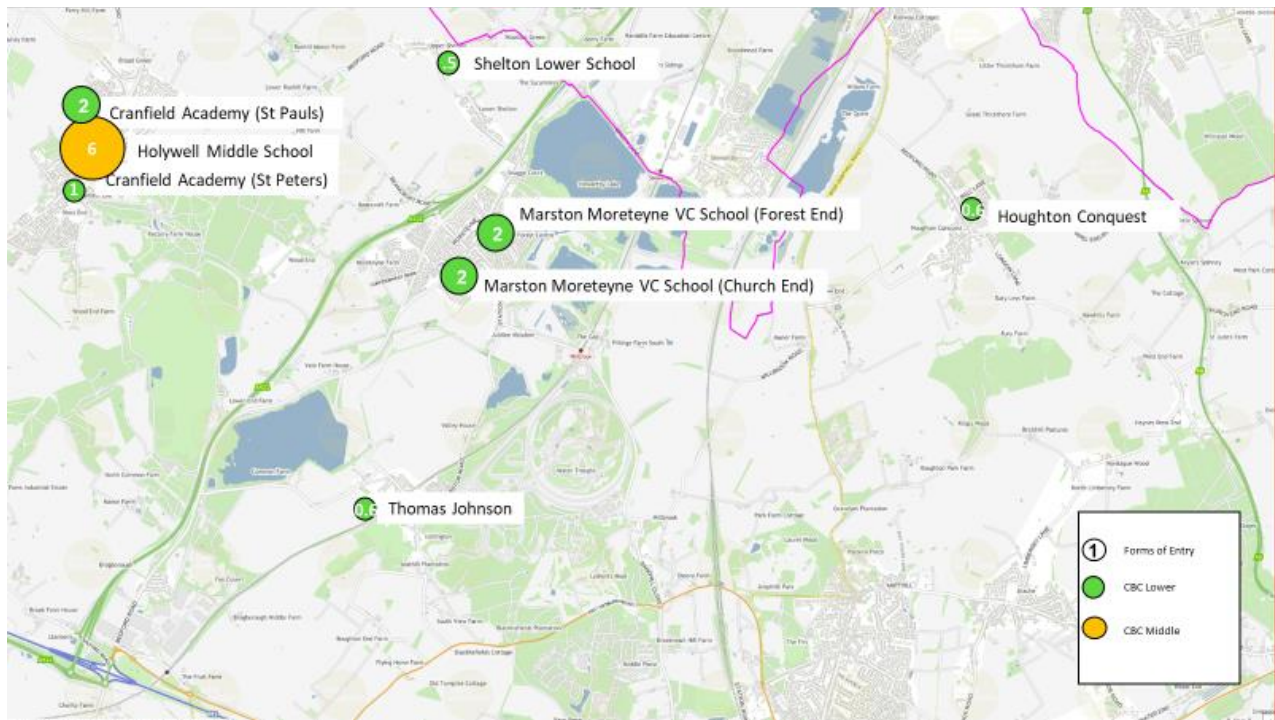
- Primary schools - Reception to Year 6
- Secondary schools - Years 7 to 11

If children already attend a lower school, it means they can remain in that school for two extra school years once it changes to a primary school, rather than moving at Year 5 into Holywell School, which is currently the most typical pathway.

While this is a significant change, it is aimed at improving the quality of education. The proposals will also increase the capacity of the schools, allowing them to grow and accommodate additional school places, which also follows the pattern of parental preference and allows more children to attend a local school closer to where they live.

Most existing lower schools in the area will transition to become primary schools on their existing sites, with some proposed changes to the number of students in each year group. This will allow for a better school organisation model and reduce the need for mixed-age classes where they occur. These changes will enable Central Bedfordshire Council to cater for local demand and allow the opportunity for more children to attend a local school. The following map shows the schools if they were to become primary and secondary schools as proposed, and their forms of entry (i.e. the number of classes in each year group). Classes are considered to be made up of 30 students (e.g. one form of entry is equal to 30 students and 0.5 form of entry is equal to 15 children).





Specific changes for each school

School name	Current school type	Proposed school type	Current school capacity	Current number of students	Future school capacity	Difference to current capacity
Cranfield Academy (St Peter's)	Lower	Primary	150 pupils	444 pupils (across both Cranfield Academy sites)	210 pupils	- 90 pupils
Cranfield Academy (St Paul's)	Lower	Primary	300 pupils	444 pupils (across both Cranfield Academy sites)	420 pupils	+270 pupils
Houghton Conquest Lower School	Lower	Primary	100 students	108 students	210 students	+110 students
Marston Moreteyne Voluntary Controlled School (Church End)	Lower	Primary	300 students	558 students (across both Marston Moreteyne sites)	420 students	+120 students
Marston Moreteyne Voluntary Controlled School (Forest End)	Lower	Primary	300 students	558 students (across both Marston Moreteyne sites)	420 students	+120 students
Shelton Lower School	Lower	Primary	75 students	0 students	To be informed through consultation	To be informed through consultation
Thomas Johnson Lower School	Lower	Primary	90 students	87 students	210 students, growing to 420 students in line with housing growth	+120 to 320 students
Holywell School	Middle	Secondary	720 students	725 students	900 students	+180 students

NB. For the maintained schools ([Houghton Conquest](#), [Marston Moreteyne](#), [Thomas Johnson](#)) these changes were approved by Central Bedfordshire Council at their Executive Meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2023. For Cranfield Academy and Holywell School, these changes are the proposed changes being addressed by each Academy's consultation process.

Bedford Borough schools are shown in the table below for reference. The proposals for each site will be developed by, consulted on and implemented by Bedford Borough.

Bedford Borough schools

School name	Current school type	Proposed school type	Future capacity
Broadmead Lower School	Lower	Under consultation	Figures for this school were consulted on separately by Bedford Borough Council
Wootton Lower School	Lower	Primary	Figures for this school were consulted on separately by Bedford Borough Council
Marston Vale Middle School	Middle	Under consultation	Figures for this school were consulted on separately by Bedford Borough Council
Wootton Upper School	Upper	Secondary	Figures for this school were consulted on separately by Bedford Borough Council

### **Holywell School**

Holywell School is the only Central Bedfordshire middle school in the Cranfield cluster of schools, serving the local community. The school has approximately 720 students on roll from Year 5 to Year 8, with the Pupil Admission Number (PAN) for each year group set at 180 students.

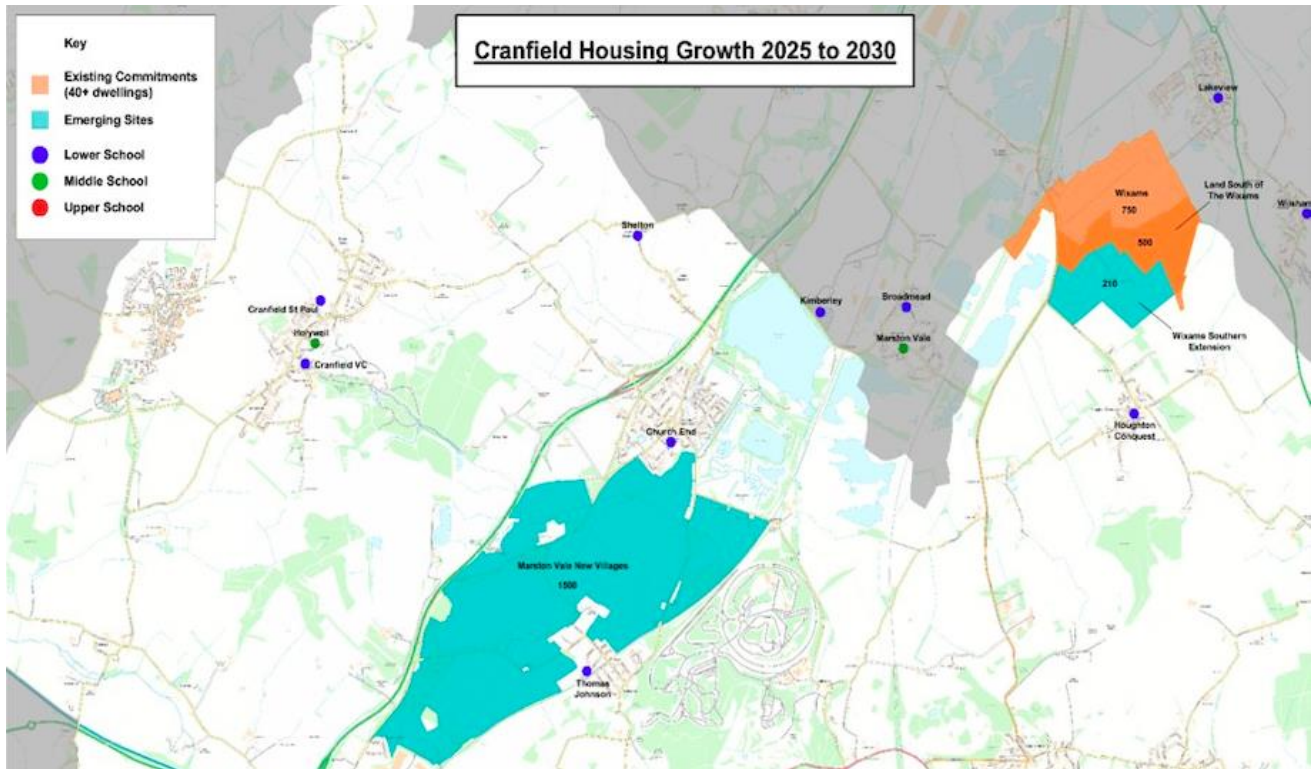
The school is the traditional pathway into Wootton Upper School, which is in Bedford Borough. There is a small amount of house building (approximately 240 homes) planned for the area, which is currently being built.

The current school provision includes some small classrooms and stepped access.

The school site is 42,876 sqm, and the minimum site area requirement for this expansion is 49,500 sqm. However, following initial feasibility studies commissioned by Central Bedfordshire Council, it has been confirmed that the site could be expanded to deliver a six-forms-of-entry secondary school, which would have 180 students in each year group and a total capacity of 900 students.

Central Bedfordshire has a statutory duty to ensure the availability of school places, which needs to be balanced against the available site size.

Holywell School is the biggest school site in the Cranfield cluster of schools, so is the most suitable to provide the cluster with a six-forms-of-entry secondary school. As a secondary, it could become the main pathway for Central Bedfordshire children in existing Central Bedfordshire lower schools if, as proposed, they change to become primary schools.



### **Who can propose and decide the changes?**

As an Academy, we at Holywell School must consult on the proposal for transition to becoming a secondary school in a cluster-wide two-tier system of education. Holywell must then make a formal proposal through a business case to the Regional Directors Office for the East of England (RDO). Central Bedfordshire Council has already run its own statutory consultation for maintained schools in the area. Cranfield Academy will run a parallel consultation about becoming a Primary School.

### **Expansion & Change of Age Range**

As an Academy proposing to change the age range of our school by three years, we must submit a full business case.

The RDO is the sole decision maker for proposals for Academy schools. The RDO will consider a range of factors and make a balanced judgement when deciding whether to approve or reject a proposal. The RDO may also defer the approval pending further evidence. Where proposed changes are particularly controversial and could attract adverse public or press attention; the RDO may choose to escalate such proposed changes to the Secretary of State for a decision.

### **Changes to Admissions Policies and Admissions criteria**

We are not proposing an alteration to the Published Admissions Number (PAN) for Holywell, as we have been informed by Central Bedfordshire that, looking at the school placement needs in the future, there is a need for a 180 PAN-sized secondary school.

There will be changes to the admissions criteria and these have been discussed with the Governing Board, the Diocese and with cluster schools.

## 1. Long-term arrangements and proposals:

- a. The PAN for Holywell Secondary will be 180. (NB. Wootton Academy would have a PAN of 270 (NB. Change for WUS from 300 to 270).
- b. Holywell will cease to be a feeder school for Wootton Academy.
- c. There will be no named feeder primary schools for either secondary school because children in primary schools will be resident in their respective village.
- d. Holywell will have admissions criteria which will provide a secure pathway for Church of England / Christian families living within the parishes of Cranfield, Marston Moretaine and Lidlington.
- e. Both Holywell School and Wootton Academy will then have standard admissions criteria along the lines of Looked After Children, children of staff, children with siblings at the school, children in the catchment area, other children etc.
- f. Both Holywell School and Wootton Academy will have agreed catchment areas, amended from existing catchment areas
  - i. Holywell catchment villages to be Cranfield, parts of Marston Moretaine [southern part of the village - to be worked out with CBC], Lidlington
  - ii. Wootton catchment villages to be Wootton, parts of Marston Moretaine [northern part of the village - to be worked out with CBC]. Houghton Conquest and Stewartby
- g. Both secondary schools will then have a criterion for 'Marston others' enabling children from beyond the designated part of the village to have priority above children outside the cluster area.
- h. Others

### **The Impact of the Proposal**

Holywell School is committed to this proposal and, as such, this proposal is expected to provide the following benefits to Holywell families and other local families:

- every child has a clear and transparent education journey;
- children will be supported to deliver good education outcomes in a stable and known education system; and
- Holywell School will build on its secondary-based, middle-school curriculum, relishing the opportunity to offer a full secondary curriculum and remaining sustainable and financially viable.

### **Quality of provision and breadth of curriculum**

Many current teachers at Holywell School (including the Headteacher) have a secondary background, have previous experience of working in schools offering full secondary provision and have taught up to both GCSE and A-Level standard. Recent staff appointments have

been made with secondary status in mind. We look forward to having the opportunity to teach across the whole secondary age range.

The proposed changes will have no detrimental impact on the quality of education for Holywell students.

### **Accommodation Required**

Additional accommodation is required to support this change.

Over the past six years, the villages of Cranfield and Wootton have continued to expand; so too has Holywell School expanded. The first stage of expansion took place in the Summer of 2014 with the creation of a new library and school dining room, together with a meeting room for parent visits. A new three-classroom block was also created and, at the same time, a series of internal walls were taken down to create a new music facility – doubling the size of the main music teaching area and creating two new music practice rooms.

The second phase of expansion was completed in 2019 with the opening of a 6-classroom teaching block, a Sports Hall, an expanded reception and administration facilities and a multi-use Science/Technology room.

To accommodate secondary-age students and an additional year group, there will need to be significant development and expansion of the school site. Classrooms will need to be adapted for secondary-age students; additional classrooms and specialist areas will need to be built (eg. Science, technology, school hall / worship space, office space, recreational space and car park expansion).

The Schools for the Future (SFF) programme will fund and manage all capital works, as part of the wider Cranfield SFF plans. Capital costs are to be met by CBC which was approved at the Executive Committee on 1 Aug 2023. The CBC Executive signed off the capital costs in August 2023; work will then be tendered via the CBC framework and capital works are expected to start in summer 2024, ready for 2025 implementation.

### **School Transport**

In the long-term, there will be an increase in the number of school buses travelling to and from Holywell School, due to the increase in the number of students across the whole site. Central Bedfordshire's Travel policy will apply. NB. Free Home-school transport would only be provided by Central Bedfordshire Council to Holywell or Wootton if children lived in the 'catchment' area or if the school was the nearest school – if living in the other catchment area and not the nearest school, transport would be available but not free.

During the transition years, there is a need to discuss transport provision with both CBC and Bedford Borough as transport is typically run from the home Local Authority. Although the intention long term is for Cranfield families to go to Holywell and Wootton families to go to Wootton Secondary, there is a possibility that children already attending Holywell will have their transport continued and that should be into Y9 to Y11 as well.

### **School staff**

As the school is expanding, no redundancies for existing staff and the costs associated with this are planned.

## **Vulnerable students**

It is envisaged that the change to a two-tier system will make education transitions clearer and more straightforward and support, in particular, students from vulnerable backgrounds.

## **Financial – Capital**

These proposals will have capital and revenue implications. Detailed feasibilities have begun to understand the full capital and revenue costs and the accommodation implications.

The expectation will be that Central Bedfordshire Council will provide funding for Holywell School in either revenue or capital funding requirements.

## **Financial – Revenue**

Revenue implications for Holywell are yet to be fully determined – Holywell will have an increase in numbers and student-led funding; however, it is likely to take time before revenue costs are directly aligned with students in the classroom. The revenue implications will need to be reviewed and carefully managed.

## **Funding considerations for decision makers**

Before confirming these proposals, all relevant local parties (e.g., trustees of the school, diocese, Central Bedfordshire Council) must give their consent. Holywell School will only proceed with this proposal if the necessary funding is made available.

## **Other education establishments**

Some schools in the Cranfield education planning area attract students from outside of the Cranfield area, for example Wootton Academy attracts students from Milton Keynes, Bedford and Ampthill. These proposals could impact the number of students able to transition into Holywell because of the proposed feeder school changes and the proposed changes of age range will alter the intake points.

## How and when if approved would the proposals be implemented?

If approved, the proposal would be implemented from September 2025. At this time, Holywell would not have a new Year 5 intake, but would retain some of its Year 8 students as they transition into Year 9 (see table on the next page).

2023-2024	Year 5 Cranfield and Wootton 180	Year 6 Cranfield and Wootton 180	Year 7 Cranfield and Wootton 181	Year 8 Cranfield and Wootton 179			
2024-2025	Year 5 Cranfield and Wootton 180	Year 6 Cranfield and Wootton 180	Year 7 Cranfield and Wootton 181	Year 8 Cranfield and Wootton 179			
2025-2026		Year 6 Cranfield and Wootton 180	Year 7 Cranfield and Wootton 180	Year 8 Cranfield and Wootton 180	Year 9 Cranfield, Wootton, Marston and other local schools		
2026-2027			Year 7 New admissions criteria	Year 8 Cranfield and Wootton	Year 9 Cranfield, Wootton, Marston and other local schools	Year 10 Cranfield, Wootton, Marston and other local schools	
2027-2028			Year 7 New admissions criteria	Year 8 New admissions criteria	Year 9 Cranfield, Wootton, Marston and other local schools	Year 10 Cranfield, Wootton, Marston and other local schools	Year 11 Cranfield, Wootton, Marston and other local schools
2028-2029			Year 7 New admissions criteria	Year 8 New admissions criteria	Year 9 New admissions criteria	Year 10 Cranfield, Wootton, Marston and other local schools	Year 11 Cranfield, Wootton, Marston and other local schools
2029-2030			Year 7 New admissions criteria	Year 8 New admissions criteria	Year 9 New admissions criteria	Year 10 New admissions criteria	Year 11 Cranfield, Wootton, Marston and other local schools
2030-2031			Year 7 New admissions criteria	Year 8 New admissions criteria	Year 9 New admissions criteria	Year 10 New admissions criteria	Year 11 New admissions criteria

- September 2025
  - Change of age range will start.
  - All Lower Schools retain their Year 4 students into Year 5.
  - Holywell does not have a Year 5 intake, but students could stay at Holywell School in Year 9. Students from Marston and other local schools could also join Holywell in Year 9.

## **Short-term Impact**

The transition years and student numbers in those year groups present a time-limited, but nevertheless, significant risk to Holywell. In 2025-2026, Holywell would no longer have Year 5 students as they would stay at their current Lower School (as all Lower Schools transition to becoming Primaries). In these first years of transition to Secondary, Holywell may not retain a full cohort into Year 9 as that cohort will be made up of Wootton and Cranfield students – whilst we hope to retain the majority of Cranfield students into Year 9, students resident in Wootton would transfer to Wootton Upper. The number of students in this Year 9 cohort across the area do not enable both Holywell and Wootton Upper to maintain their current PAN. We are in discussion with Wootton Upper in terms of managing numbers across the two schools in these interim years. We are also in discussion with Central Bedfordshire Council re: Growth funding to support the creation of new long-term secondary places.

## **Pre-Statutory Consultation**

Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough conducted a pre-statutory consultation from October to December 2022 on the schools that are located within their local authority area.

## **Statutory Consultation and how to respond**

**Consultation Phase – Friday 15th September 2023 and closes at noon on Monday 16th October 2023.**

During the consultation phase anyone with an interest can express their views on the options expressed in this document and the individual school consultation.

It is very important that all those involved or have an interest have a say, we welcome your views.

All of the information available is accessible from the school's website:

[www.holywellschool.co.uk](http://www.holywellschool.co.uk)

The four-week consultation period commences on Friday 15th September 2023 and closes at noon on Monday 16th October 2023. It is very important that all those wishing to respond to these proposals do so within this timeframe.

We are holding consultation event(s) to allow our stakeholders to learn more about our proposals and give the opportunity to provide feedback. A summary of events can be found in on page 2 of this document.



## **Who is being consulted?**

The consultation will be made available to:

- Parents/Carers of children who attend the school
- Parents/Carers in the area
- Primary, secondary, AP and special schools and sixth form and FE colleges in the area
- The Admissions Forum for the academy's area
- Affected admission authorities, including those in neighbouring LA areas
- Staff, Governors, Board Members of school
- The appropriate religious authority (The Diocese of St Albans, Local Parish, District and County Councillors)
- Director of Children's Services (CBC and BBC)
- Local Member of Parliament
- Cabinet Member Responsible for Children and Families
- Cabinet Member Responsible for Education
- Unions
- Any other local stakeholder

## **What happens next?**

### **How the decision will be made**

At the end of the consultation period the Academy will consider any issues that have been raised before deciding whether to publish or submit statutory proposals to make changes.

The Academy Trust will consider evidence from various sources in order to reach a considered view on the merits of the proposal. In particular the following factors:

- the response to the public consultation;
- the quality of education provision;
- the ability of the school to manage the proposed change to support the continued improvements at the school;
- demand for places at the school and in the local area; and
- funding to cover the capital costs of the proposed change has been secured, and that there are no issues with the school's current budget and/or finances. In the case of expansions, academies must show they have sufficient funding for additional students, until lagged funding is received.

### **Submission of formal proposals**

Holywell School will take note of issues raised during the consultation. At the conclusion of the consultation period, a decision will be made whether to submit a formal proposal and business case to the RDO.

### **Regional Director's Office Decisions**

Holywell School will then submit a significant change request to the Regional Director's Office for the East of England alongside a request to vary school admission arrangements.

The RDO will consider a range of factors and make a balanced judgement when deciding whether to approve or reject a proposal. The RDO may also defer the approval pending further evidence. Where proposed changes are particularly controversial and could attract

adverse public or press attention; the RDO may choose to escalate such proposed changes to the Secretary of State for a decision.

**Related proposals**

This proposal is being made in line with other proposals related to the Cranfield cluster; namely from Central Bedfordshire Council, Bedford Borough Council, Cranfield Academy, Wootton Academy Trust and other associated schools/academies.

**Relevant documents:**

Central Bedfordshire's Statutory Consultation and Outcome

[You can find the paper here](#) and Appendix C – [the findings of the consultation here](#).

Central Bedfordshire's 'Have Your Say Consultation

[Full Meeting Pack](#)