

Proposed Change of Age Range of Holywell School

Outcome of the Statutory Public Consultation

(Monday 4th November 2024 to noon on Monday 2nd December 2024)

The Governing Board at Holywell School intends to submit an application to the Department for Education (DfE) to change the age range at Holywell. Prior to the application process, the DfE requires us to undertake a formal consultation with stakeholders.

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) conducted a 'Have Your Say' consultation which ran during Autumn 2022 (October 2022) and a Statutory Notice Consultation for maintained schools which ran from 12th May 2023 to 16th June 2023. These consultations proposed a transition from three-tier (lower/middle/upper) to two-tier (primary/secondary) in the Cranfield Cluster. This was approved at the Executive meeting on the 1st August 2023. Holywell School supported this conclusion and conducted a consultation to change the age range. This was conducted from 15th September 2023 to 16th October 2023. 55.2% of 105 respondents were supportive of the change.

Central Bedfordshire Council decided to delay the programme by 1 year with the first transition year proposed as being September 2026. In line with advice from the Regional Commissioner's Office, we were obliged to conduct a new consultation.

The new consultation focussed on the proposal to change the age range at Holywell thereby converting Holywell School to a secondary school (Years 7 to 11) on the current site from 1st September 2026. The four-week consultation period commenced on Monday 4th November 2024 and closed at noon on Monday 2nd December 2024. Background Information to the Statutory Consultation was provided and consultees were asked to respond to a series of questions. There were 70 responses out of a possible 800+ consultees.

Summary and Conclusion

There were 70 responses to the consultation. Of the 70 responses, 64% were either strongly against or against the proposal with 31.4% 'strongly for' or 'for' the proposal. Those against the proposal were clear supporters of the 3-tier system and did not want the system to change. There were concerns raised by some parents about the transport policies of the Local Authorities and some residents were concerned about an increase in traffic. Concerns were also raised about the financial efficacy of the change and whether this would be sufficiently funded by the LA to ensure a good secondary provision.

There was a concern raised about the site size. The current Point of Entry (POE) is Yr 5 with a PAN of 180. The plan is to change to a POE in Year 7 with students staying on until the end of Year 11 (5 year groups on site instead of 4). Feasibility studies commissioned by Central Bedfordshire are confident that this provision can be accommodated on the current site. Proposals are being developed in conjunction with the LA to accommodate the additional year group by adding new classrooms to the current site and replacing the current gym with a new assembly /studio space.

Whilst we are mindful that the overall opinion of the consultation was against the change, if this change to age range application were not advanced, Holywell would not align with the local area and, therefore, would, not only be at a disadvantage, but would also be unviable as a school: we would be a Middle School in an area with Primary and Secondary School provision. The low response (70 individuals/families out of 800+ potential responders) means that we cannot assume that this is reflective of the wider school community, given that the consultation response rate was just ... although it may be. Neither can we assume that this not reflective of

the wider school community, however, the previous consultation gave a more supportive response (55% in favour of the change). The recent parallel consultation run by Cranfield Academy was also very positive (77% in favour of the change).

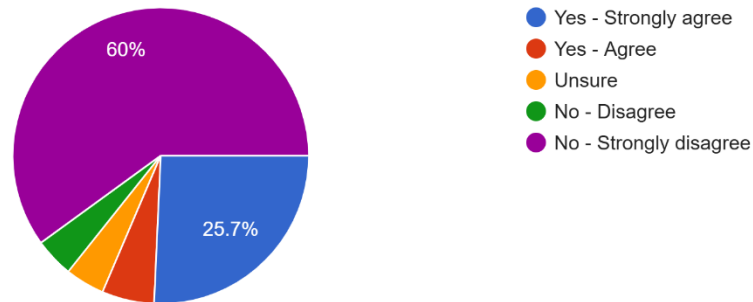
The age range change proposed is also part of a coordinated plan being implemented by Central Bedfordshire Council following extensive formal local consultation, which will see most schools in the local authority area transition from three tier to two tier education.

It is, therefore, the opinion of the Governing Board that, in spite of the outcome of the consultation, we will, in order to accommodate the overall plan for the area (supported by other partner schools and the LA), submit an application to the Regional Office to approve the change going ahead from September 2026. We will certainly take account of the concerns expressed by people responding to the consultation and we will think about how these concerns can be mitigated.

Appendix A: Survey responses

1. Are you supportive of the proposal for Holywell School to change its age-range and status, transitioning into an 11-16 Secondary School?

70 responses



Yes – Strongly agree – $18/70 = 25.7\%$

Yes – Agree – $4/70 = 5.7\%$

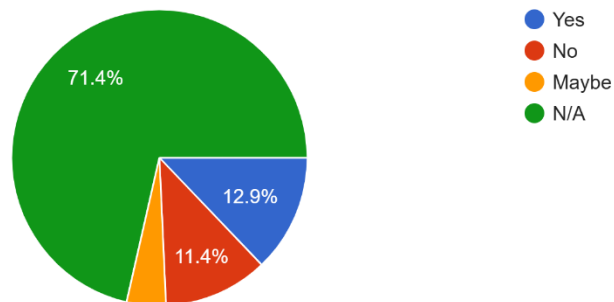
Unsure – $3/70 = 4.3\%$

No – Disagree – $3/70 = 4.3\%$

No – Strongly Disagree – $40/70 = 60\%$

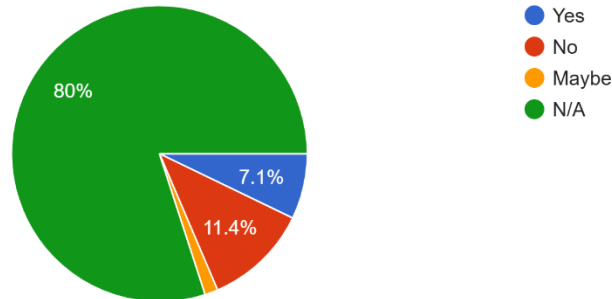
2. If you are a parent/carer of a student currently in Year 7, will your child stay at Holywell for Years 9-11?

70 responses



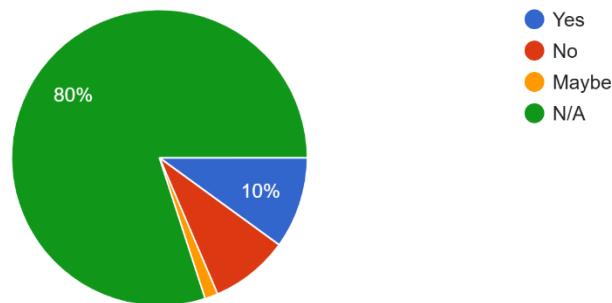
3. If you are a parent/carer of a student currently in Year 6, will your child stay at Holywell for Years 9-11?

70 responses



4. If you are a parent/carer of a student currently in Year 5, will your child stay at Holywell for Years 9-11?

70 responses



5. If you have any comments, questions, issues, further information required on the proposed plan, please provide them below.

26 responses

- middle school better
- Don't change from middle
- Please, please do not delay this change another year.
- Where will parents park?
- Will there be traffic calming?
- Will the roads be amended to facilitate more buses travelling through the village?
- The high street is currently grid locked at morning drop off how will this help the people living in Cranfield?
- If the site size is not sufficient as outline in the documents then why proceed to a 900 place secondary? Serve the local community with a smaller 150pan 750 place secondary school.
- Cbc have delayed this project for financial reasons in the past. Will there be sufficient funding in place for Holywell to be a truly attractive proposition for local children? Will the facilities match other local, newly built secondary schools?

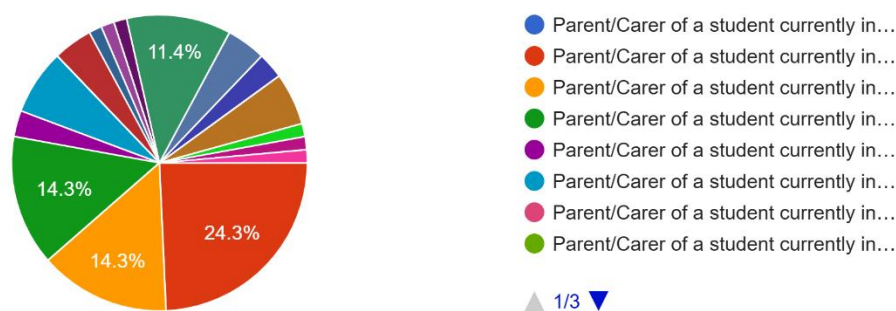
- Lack of facilities
- I'm a domestic resident of Red Lion close and have lived here for 5 years, and lived in Cranfield for 15 years. I am a father of my daughter in year 7. I have noticed the increase in traffic. The proposed "no-stopping single yellow line" for parents dropping off and collecting their children from Red Lion Close 2 years ago has not been enforced by the council or the police. High street traffic is increasing during school run hours. Whilst in support of the secondary school proposal, 720 to 900 places will exacerbate the periodic traffic movements in Red Lion Close, Cranfield.
- Middle school has worked for other children - there will be lots of change that won't help.
- We are parents of a student in year 4 at Marston Moretaine. We would like our child to attend Holywell. While we understand in the future the less transitions of schools will help support children, we feel this year our child has been left with very little choices. We would like our child to attend Holywell, unless a school bus is laid on or partially funded we have no means to get our child to Holywell, until it becomes our catchment high school in two years time. For our child this means more transitions with having to go to Marston Vale for two years to then transfer to Holywell when a school bus will be an option.
- We have looked at other options public transport - we feel is a safeguarding issue.
- Car sharing with other parents - their children may not get a place or if they are unable to take the children that day, absence /lateness can then become disruptive to all children involved.
- Whilst Holywell is our preferred choice of school we feel the year my child transitions in has fallen short of having a choice to attend the school they would like unless there is transport laid on like Marston Vale.
- Middle school system works well for adults and children.
- Why waste so much money that could be put to better use if the schools already work?
- Struggle to see justification for change.
- Our child currently attends Marston School Year 4, we have been to visit Holywell School recently. Our biggest concern is transport, currently there is no transport in place from Marston Moretaine to Cranfield. For parents who work full time this leaves us in a tricky place.
- It would be great to know what will happen for children who also have additional needs how we will support them with the proposed changes. We either have to send our child to Marston Vale which is our catchment school then move her again in two years time, we would like our child to start and remain schooling at Holywell as we feel she will not manage the two potential transitions.
- Don't see reason for change - use council money elsewhere.
- We understand the consultation arises in connection with the school's long-term to evolve into a Church of England secondary school (years 7-11), as part of Central Bedfordshire's '3-2 tier' development programme. We note this coincides with a similar evolution within Bedford Borough, in which Wootton Lower School is becoming a primary school and Wootton Upper a secondary school, and as a result of which pupils from Wootton Lower/Primary will normally progress to Wootton Upper/Secondary and no longer access education from Holywell. We welcome the school's transition to be a Church of England secondary school and are grateful that this will enable young people, including in Wootton, to receive a CofE education at 11-16. We regret however that the transition to two-tier across both local authorities will mean that the majority of children growing up in Wootton will no longer experience education in a church setting. We intend to continue to offer support to Holywell School both pastorally and in its governance, noting that our capacity to do so will be determined to some extent by how many families in Wootton elect to send children to Holywell under its new admission arrangements, and also by the priorities of mission and ministry within the parish of

Wootton. We expect Holywell will be adopting revised governance arrangements in which the PCCs of Cranfield and Marston (the school's new catchment communities) will nominate most of the school's Foundation governors, but where there will be provision for PCCs from neighbouring parishes such as Wootton to support the school in offering a church education to young people residing outside the catchment.

- Why change - worry teachers won't know how to do GCSE
- Why change? Use taxpayers money to support in other areas of the council
- why change?
- Site won't be as equipped as specilaist secondaries.
- It will cost us lots and no benefit - look at Northampton - spent the money no improvements in results (actually fallen back).
- As the school expands will there be more bus routes i.e from Marston Moretaine?
- no need for change it works as is
- Don't trust plan to change - children will perform worse.
- Can not see why such upheavle

6. What is your connection to Holywell School?

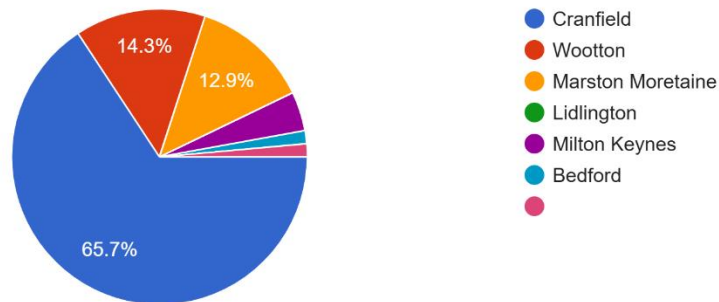
70 responses



- Parent/Carer of a student currently in Year 7 at Holywell (17)
- Parent/Carer of a student currently in Year 6 at Holywell (10)
- Parent/Carer of a student currently in Year 5 at Holywell (10)
- Member of staff or governor at Holywell School (8)
- Parent/Carer of a student currently in Reception - Year 3 at Cranfield Academy
- Resident of Cranfield (4)
- Parent/Carer of a student currently in Year 4 at Marston Moreteyne VC Lower School (Church End) (3)
- Member of staff or governor at Cranfield Academy, Wootton Lower School, Marston Moreteyne or Thomas Johnson Lower School (3)
- Parent/Carer of a student currently in Year 4 at Cranfield Academy (2)
- Member of staff or governor at a Bedfordshire School not listed (2)
- Parent/Carer of a student currently in Reception - Year 3 at Marston Moreteyne VC Lower School (Church End) (1)
- Parent/Carer of a student currently in Year 4 at Marston Moreteyne VC Lower School (Forest End) (1)
- Parent/Carer of a student in a Bedfordshire School not listed (1)
- I'm a resident with children at Cranfield lower, Holywell and Wootton upper school (1)
- Corporate Member (Wootton PCC) (1)
- Chiltern Learning Trust (1)

7. Place of residence

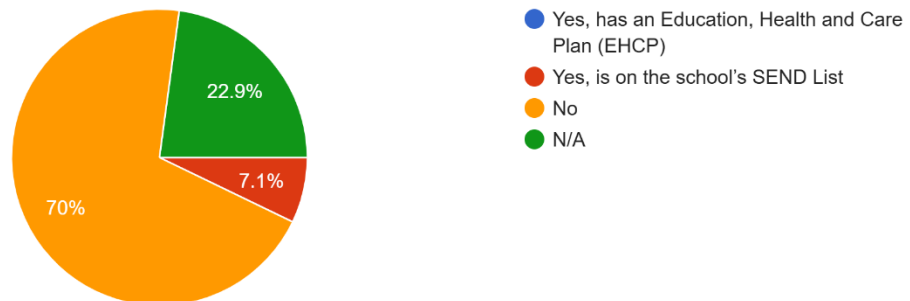
70 responses



Cranfield (46)
Wootton (10)
Marston Moretaine (9)
Lidlington (0)
Milton Keynes (3)
Bedford (1)
Other (1)

8. If you are a parent, does your child have any special educational needs? (please select one)

70 responses



9. If you would like to receive alerts or updates on this consultation, please provide your email address below to be added to our database. NB. This will not be used or shared for any other reason.

12 email addresses shared

MG Simpson
January 2025