

### 1. Summary of this proposal

The proposal is to amalgamate Wellfield Infant & Nursery School and Wellfield Junior School. It is proposed this will be achieved by closing Wellfield Junior School and simultaneously extending the age range at Wellfield Infant & Nursery School from the current to 3 to 7 years, to 3 to 11 years. Therefore it is proposed that the Headteacher of Wellfield Infant & Nursery School will become the Headteacher of Wellfield Primary School.

The reason this method of amalgamation is being proposed is because from September 2021 there is a vacancy in the headship of Wellfield Junior School. When a Headteacher position at either an infant or junior school becomes vacant, we consider if the site can be effectively managed as one school and if the buildings can be adapted to meet the needs of an amalgamated school at an acceptable cost, should this be required. If this is the case then we commence a period of informal consultation on a proposal to amalgamate.

It is proposed that following a period of transition, the two schools would form an amalgamated primary school from September 2022.

The Governing Bodies are working together to create interim leadership arrangements, pending the outcome of the consultation. These interim arrangements are outside the scope of this consultation.

### 2. Vision

Our vision is to create an outstanding primary school for our community - a school where all pupils and staff can be the best they can be, feel happy and cared for, included and celebrated. We aim to use this opportunity to develop an environment that provides the highest quality of care and education possible for the children of this generation and the generations that follow.

Our parents and carers are an important part of our school community and we will work hard to provide them with the best support and guidance and involve them in all aspects of school life.

Both the Infant and Junior school have already established some shared core values. These are Care, Respect, Learn and Succeed. We feel that the joining of the two schools will allow us to develop a deeper understanding of what these mean for us as a school community and help us to work more effectively together to achieve them.

By sharing the expertise that already exists within both teams and continuing to develop opportunities for the staff to network with other professionals, participate in research projects and have access to high quality ongoing professional development, we will ensure that teaching across all year groups is of a high quality and that the curriculum is exciting, well planned and effective.

We will pool together expertise and resources to create stronger teams to promote inclusion and support in areas such as Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, Mental Health and Wellbeing and pupils with English as an additional language. This will allow us to work in a more effective way to support our pupils and their families too.

We will use our extensive site to its fullest, creating more opportunities for the children in areas such as sport, the arts and environmental science.

We will encourage children to identify their areas of interests and offer them enrichment opportunities, such as workshops and clubs that allow them to pursue these further.

We will create more opportunities for pupils and staff to develop, make a positive contribution to the school and wider community by linking up with local groups and enterprise initiatives developing the work of our School Council and Eco Warrior teams and through citizenship and charity projects.

We will continue to develop the opportunities the children have with the local secondary schools, such as the Sports Partnership activities with Ashton on Mersey High School, and build on the partnership work already in place with these schools to help to prepare children for the next stage of their school journey and support effective transitions into Year 7.

We are committed to continuing our work in supporting the training and development of the profession beyond our own school. We will continue to develop our partnerships with other professional bodies such as the Bright Futures Teaching School Hub, Turing Maths Hub, and colleges and universities in the North West to support their NVQ and Initial Teacher Training programmes and professional development programmes for school staff.

We aim to use the transition period to involve all of our pupils, staff, governors and parents as well as community partners to enable this vision to evolve.

### **3. The advantages of amalgamation**

We have a long standing strategic aim to amalgamate separate infant and junior schools where this is possible.

The amalgamation of the two phases, infant and junior, will mean the school can develop a clear vision which is shared and understood by all. It will provide opportunities for the development of the curriculum and improve the way it is delivered. While both schools are already committed to working together and making transitional links, the amalgamation will provide a seamless curriculum which is broad, balanced and demonstrates clear continuity and progression in learning. It will increase opportunities for further curriculum enrichment and extra-curricular activities.

The amalgamation will enable the better use of educational resources including teaching and non-teaching staff. In terms of management and administration, it will avoid duplicating work.

Having one governing body to drive the school's strategic planning and monitor whole school development will ensure robust accountability.

The amalgamation will provide a single school at the heart of the local community, offering a consistent vision and ethos, bringing about benefits for children, staff, parents and carers.

#### **a) Benefits for children**

Amalgamation will improve continuity and progression for children's learning along with an increased ability to track long term attainment and progress. It will provide a consistent approach to their learning which will follow them all through their time at the school and help them to understand their place within the school family.

Within a single primary school, all children – younger and older – will have the opportunity to share the outcomes of their learning. The primary school will provide a nurturing environment where children from a wider age range can work and play together over a longer period of time developing a greater understanding and appreciation of one another's diverse strengths, skills and personalities. This experience has been shown to have a positive impact on social skills, problem solving and relationship development.

The transition from Year 2 to 3, from infants to juniors, will be smoother for pupils and their families. This will promote an increase in feelings of stability, security and confidence because the children are all in the same school.

The amalgamated school will provide greater continuity for all children, including the most vulnerable children such as those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), and allow children to continue to pursue their chosen areas of interest over time.

The introduction of consistent approaches to inclusion, well-being and behaviour management strategies across all ages would result in clear expectations and a shared ethos which is understood by children, parents and carers throughout the primary and early years stages.

#### **b) Benefits for parents and carers**

The amalgamation will lead to the establishment of more consistent engagement with parents and carers as it gives the ability to foster longer-term family relationships within one school, thereby helping to better understand the needs of each child. A close working partnership between school and home has been shown to have a strong, positive impact on children's learning.

An amalgamated school will simplify communication between school and parents, especially for parents currently with children in both schools. It will remove duplication and ensure a more cohesive approach for planning events.

Parents will only need to familiarise themselves with one set of policies and procedures.

The amalgamated school will enable even stronger partnerships between school and parents with a shared understanding of aspirations and expectations for teaching and learning.

### **c) Benefits for staff**

A single primary school will offer increased opportunities for existing staff to develop their professional interests and skills. It will also assist in the recruitment and retention of staff by providing greater professional opportunities.

The amalgamation will provide opportunities to increase the range of expertise and experience of teaching staff. It will also allow for staff to join together and share their expertise with one another on specific areas and projects, which will strengthen staff knowledge of the full primary age range and increase the effectiveness of what we deliver.

The staff will have more resources and space at their disposal to support curriculum planning and delivery and enrichment activities. This will also allow greater flexibility for the use of the site facilities for our Wishing Well Out of School Club.

## **4. Human resources**

The proposal is to discontinue Wellfield Junior School and to expand the age range of Wellfield Infant & Nursery School to enable it to accommodate the displaced pupils and become Wellfield Primary School. The Infant School would retain its original school number as it is not a new school, even if its name has changed. Therefore it is proposed the Headteacher of Wellfield Infant & Nursery School will become the Headteacher of Wellfield Primary School.

Both schools are community schools, which means that Trafford Council are the employer of all staff. There are no proposed changes to this; Trafford Council will remain the employer of all staff, and there are therefore no TUPE implications. Staff terms and conditions will remain the same. Other than the removal of one Headteacher position, there are no proposed changes to the staffing structure within this amalgamation proposal.

Support is available to staff throughout this process from their Line Manager and also the Trade Unions. Counselling support is available through the school's Employee Assistance Programme (EAP).

## **5. Financial implications**

### **a) Revenue**

The proposed amalgamation will reduce the overall cost to the Dedicated Schools Grant which will result in an adjustment through the funding formula meaning there is no impact to Council's revenue budgets.

Each school currently receives a lump sum allocation as part of the delegated Schools' budget.

This illustration is based on the 2021/22 schools operational guidance and using the 2021/22 lump sum amount of £118,442 per school.

For the 2022/23 financial year, the schools will receive £236,884 (2x lump sums) between them. This will be broken down as follows:

Infant School	£49,351	(£118,442 x 5/12 April to August)
Junior School	£49,351	(£118,442 x 5/12 April to August)
Primary School	<u>£138,182</u>	(£236,884 x 7/12 September to March)
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£236,884</u></b>	

For the 2023/24 financial year, the primary school will receive £201,351. This is the equivalent of 85% of the predecessor schools' lump sums, calculated as follows:

Primary School	£118,442	
Additional Payment	<u>£82,909</u>	Calculated as ((£118,442 x 2) x 85%) – £118,442
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£201,351</u></b>	

The local authority can also apply to provide a second year of protection. The most recent application to ESFA recommended by the Schools Funding Forum on 16 October 2018 sought 60% lump sum protection in the second year. The ESFA consider applications on a case-by-case basis.

### **PE and sport premium**

PE and sport premium is calculated and allocated annually by the DfE. It is currently calculated so that schools with 17 or more eligible pupils receive £16,000 plus an additional payment of £10 per pupil.

As a result of this proposal, Wellfield Primary School would be allocated one £16,000 lump sum and a £10 per pupil allocation based on the number on roll. This represents an overall reduction of £16,000 as previously both the Infant and Junior Schools received a lump sum amount.

### **Revenue savings**

An amalgamated primary school will achieve savings in the following areas:

- reduction in Headteacher salary costs
- one purchase of certain services rather than two, such as governor support and human resources

## **b) Capital**

### **Devolved formula capital (DFC) allocation**

DFC is allocated to schools annually by the DfE using a formula. Each school is allocated a lump sum of £4,000 and an amount per pupil based on the phase of education.

As a result of this proposal, Wellfield Primary School would be allocated one £4,000 lump sum and a per pupil allocation based on the number on roll. This represents an overall reduction of £4,000 as previously both the Infant and Junior Schools received a lump sum amount.

### **Schools condition allocation (SCA)**

SCA is allocated to the local authority annually by the DfE. Our School Asset Management Plan information combined with Area Surveyor knowledge is used to prioritise and allocate this funding on an annual basis. The funding process for allocating SCA for condition improvements for school buildings will remain unchanged as a result of this proposal. There is no SCA funding linked with this proposal.

### **Basic need funding**

Basic Need funding is calculated and allocated to the local authority annually by the DfE. This funding is for the creation of additional of school places. This amalgamation proposal does not include an expansion of pupil number and therefore is not eligible for basic need funding.

## **6. The consultation process**

The first stage in the process is consultation with interested parties. These are:

- the governing bodies of both schools
- families of pupils at both schools
- teachers and other staff at both schools
- any other LA likely to be affected by the proposals, in particular neighbouring authorities where there may be significant cross-border movement of pupils
- the governing bodies, teachers and other staff of any other school that may be affected
- families of any pupils at any other school who may be affected by the proposals
- any trade unions who represent staff at the school; and representatives of any trade union of any other staff at schools who may be affected by the proposals
- MPs whose constituencies include the schools that are the subject of the proposals or whose constituents are likely to be affected by the proposals
- any other interested organisation or person that the proposer think are appropriate

We want the consultation period to provide enough time for everyone to express their views and for these views to be properly considered. Good practice is a period of 6 weeks within term time from the date of the publication of the proposal.

The period of consultation will commence on 12 May 2021 until 7 July 2021. We will consider and respond to all comments and questions and post those comments and responses on our website.

At the end of the period of consultation, all the feedback will be included in a report to the Executive Member for consideration. If they take the decision to proceed to the

next stage, we will publish a statutory notice of our intention to discontinue Wellfield Junior School and simultaneously extend the age range at Wellfield Infant & Nursery School.

The publication of the notice would mark the start of a four-week representation period. Within one week of the publication of the statutory notice there is a requirement for us to publish a full proposal and provide a copy upon request to any interested party.

A copy of the full proposal will also be sent to the Department for Education (DfE) and to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA). This representation stage allows people to make comments.

At the end of the representation period, all the feedback will be included in a report to the Trafford Council Executive for a final decision.

This is the proposed timetable highlighting the key stages in the process:

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>1</b>	Informal consultation begins including publication of the proposal.	Consultation begins 12 May 2021 and runs until 7 July 2021 (8 weeks in total with 6 weeks during term time)
	Full report including consultation comments and local authority responses published online.  Decision by Executive Member to proceed or not to proceed to Stage 2.	w/c 12 July 2021
<b>2</b>	Publication of statutory notices and the final full proposal commences the statutory 4 week representation period (formal consultation).	2 September 2021 to 30 September 2021
<b>3</b>	Final Decision by Trafford Council Executive (must be made within 2 months of end of representation period).	w/c 25 October 2021
	Period of transition to fully amalgamated primary school in September 2022.	September 2022

## 7. Have your say

You can ask any questions and help shape the proposal by giving your ideas and comments in one of the following ways:

Consultation hub: <https://trafford.citizenspace.com/>

Email: [school.admissions@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:school.admissions@trafford.gov.uk)

Write to: School Admissions Team, Trafford Council, Waterside, Sale, M33 7ZF