
PART 1: CLOSURE OF SPRINGHEAD INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL AND CLOSURE OF KNOWLSEY JUNIOR SCHOOL

PART 2: ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL TO REPLACE SPRINGHEAD INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL AND KNOWLSEY JUNIOR SCHOOL,

Contact details of the proposer
Oldham Council.
Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1XJ

These proposals are being submitted independently. There are no other proposers.

Category
Oldham Council (The Council) is proposing to amalgamate Springhead Infant and Nursery School and Knowsley Junior School. Part 1 of the proposal is the closure of Springhead Infant and Nursery School and Knowsley Junior School. Part 2 of the proposal is the establishment of a Community Primary School to replace the closing schools. Section 11 of the Education and Inspections Act, as amended by the Education Act 2011, makes provision for maintained school proposals to be brought forward without first seeking consent from the Secretary of State in certain circumstances, including proposals for a new community primary school that is to replace a maintained infant and a maintained junior school.

Consultation
The statutory requirements to consult in relation to this proposal, as set out in the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 have been fully complied with.

Evidence of consultation before the proposals were published.

The following persons and/or parties were consulted:

i. The Governing Body of Springhead Infant and Nursery School and Knowsley Junior School
ii. The members of staff from both schools and their Trades Union representatives
iii. The pupils at both schools
iv. All parents with children at either school
v. Members of the local community
vi. The general public
vii. Locally elected members
viii. Local Member of Parliament
ix. Neighbouring authorities
x. Nearby schools

Minutes of all consultation meetings.

There was no Public Meeting held. Members of the local Community were invited to a drop-in session at which they would have the opportunity to speak to a LA Officer. Records of each individual conversation were made.

The following minutes are a record of the meetings held with the Governors and Staff of the two schools.

Proposed Amalgamation of Springhead Infant & Nursery and Knowsley Junior Schools
Statutory Consultation Meeting with Governors of Springhead Infant & Nursery and Knowsley Junior School
Tuesday 2 July 2013
Civic Centre, Lees Suite
6.00 – 7.00 pm

Present: 9 Local Authority officers. 21 Governors
Apologies: None

1. Welcome and Introductions
GH welcomed everyone to the meeting, ran through the agenda and asked DB, KH, LC, AC and KM to briefly introduce themselves.

2. Purpose of the meeting and explanation of the statutory process
GH explained the proposal to amalgamate Springhead Infant and Knowsley Junior Schools and checked everybody in attendance had a copy of the consultation document. The opening date for the potential new school would be September 2014. The closing date for consultation is Friday 26th July 2013.

As part of the consultation period, Oldham Council will offer the chance to respond to proposals from the following stakeholders/services; parents/carers, school staff, trade unions/teacher associations, governors, other nearby schools, neighbouring authorities, local councillors and MPs, and Preventative Services.

All views expressed will be taken into consideration prior to finalising the proposal for publication.

3. School performance implications
DB explained that when a headteacher retires in an Infant or Junior school in close proximity, it is the Council’s duty to consider amalgamation. Benefits include a consistent approach to teaching and learning, improvement in tracking the progress of pupils, an enhancement of the learning experience for children, allowing them to benefit from the input of a wider range of professionals across two sites and more consistent policies and procedures across the age range.

4. Governance implications
KH explained the governance implications that would see the formation of an interim governing body to drive the staffing structure, decide on a new governing body and constitution. Both separate governing bodies will still run until a new permanent governing body is formed.

5. Financial implications
LC explained that the finance implications could only be foreseen until 2015, when the Government is introducing a new funding formula for schools. In the first year after the proposed amalgamation, the new school budget could potentially be less.

6. HR implications
AC explained the process for recruiting a new Head, and that it would include ringfencing arrangements for people currently in post.
There will be increased opportunities for professional development and career progression for staff, as well as opportunities for them to widen their experience.
Wherever possible the staff that work at Springhead Infant and Nursery or Knowsley Junior Schools will be offered posts in the new school. If any member of staff could not be offered a post in the new school they would be helped to find another position elsewhere. The structure of the school and posts available will be decided by the new Head and the temporary governing body.

7. Property and asset implications
KM explained that there is no funding available for new school building or for an extension to existing sites at present.
There will be ICT costs to improve communications and networking between the two sites. Major conditioning works and roof and boiler improvements are needed at Springhead Infant, the roof improvement is classed as a ‘priority 1’ job.

8. Questions from the floor
Q. With the £31k deficit in funding, does a staff member need to be made redundant?
A. LC – No, it will be down to the school’s Head and the governing body to decide where the money is taken from.

Q. Could the deficit change?
A. LC – Yes, it will depend on the national funding formula for 2015 onwards.

Q. What other efficiencies could there be?
A. LC – As a result of amalgamation, the school will save on traded services as there will be one cost instead of two.

Q. When will the interim governing body be decided?
A. GH - When and if approval of the amalgamation is given from the OSA; the LA will support this.

Q. What are associate members?
A. KH - They can offer advice and expertise to the Governing Body, they have no voting rights.

Q. Why have we got such a small timescale for consultation?
A. GH – The Council has to work within statutory timescales.

Q. Do governing bodies have access to consultation statistics?
A. GH - Yes, amounts for and against can be made available if requested.

Q. What happens if everyone says no?
A. GH - It would be highly unusual, some are already back and we have returns that are both in favour and against the amalgamation.

Q. Why did it go ahead to consultation if one governing body were unanimously against it?
A. GH – One governing body said yes, one said no. The LA made the choice to seek their view and took it on board; it’s not a statutory part of the process. It is now the formal phase. Elected members will decide if it should go ahead. LA feel through school will achieve better outcomes for the children.

Q. Why close an outstanding school?
A. GH – the only mechanism that exists in law to established a maintained school is to amalgamate, we aim to take good practice and the best approaches from both schools.

Q. Are there statistics to prove that amalgamations benefit schools?
A. DB – in my own experience of leading 2 x Key Stages across split sites it improves the tracking of pupil progress because of consistent methods of learning, marking and providing feedback and also staff development benefits.

Q. Can representatives from previous amalgamations tell us the pros and cons?
A. GH – Good idea, we can put you in touch but can’t enforce a meeting.

Q. Have the logistics been taken into account? Teachers moving sites will cost money etc
A. GH – The governing body will decide where teachers are based. One of the advantages of a through school is the opportunity it affords to teachers to work in either infants or juniors.

Q. Who will be at the parental drop-in sessions?
A. GH - LA reps from the Access service.

9. Closing summary by GH, dates of other consultation meetings provided.

Proposed Amalgamation of Springhead Infant & Nursery and Knowsley Junior Schools
Statutory Consultation Meeting with Staff and Union Reps of Knowsley Junior School
Tuesday 2 July 2013
Knowsley Junior School
4.00 – 5.00 pm
Present: Four LA Officers. 4 Trades union representatives. 26 staff members.
Apologies: None

1. Welcome and Introductions
GH welcomed everyone to the meeting, ran through the agenda and asked DB, AS and AC to briefly introduce themselves.

2. Purpose of the meeting and explanation of the statutory process
GH explained the proposal to amalgamate Springhead Infant and Knowsley Junior Schools and checked everybody in attendance had a copy of the consultation document. The opening date for the potential new school would be September 2014. The closing date for consultation is Friday 26 July 2013. As part of the consultation period, Oldham Council will offer the chance to respond to proposals from the following stakeholders/services; parents/carers, school staff, trade unions/teacher associations, governors, other nearby schools, neighbouring authorities, local councillors and MPs, and Preventative Services. All views expressed will be taken into consideration prior to finalising the proposal for publication.

3. School performance implications
DB explained that when a headteacher retires in an Infant or Junior school in close proximity, it is the Council’s duty to consider amalgamation. Benefits include a consistent approach to teaching and learning, improvement in tracking the progress of pupils, an enhancement of the learning experience for children, allowing them to benefit from the input of a wider range of professionals across two sites and more consistent policies and procedures across the age range.

4. HR implications
AC explained the process for recruiting a new Head, and that it would include ringfencing arrangements for existing permanent Headteachers. There will be increased opportunities for professional development and career progression for staff, as well as opportunities for them to widen their experience. Wherever possible the staff that work at Springhead Infant and Nursery or Knowsley Junior Schools will be offered posts in the new school. If any member of staff could not be offered a post in the new school they would be helped to find another position elsewhere. The structure of the school and posts available will be decided by the new Head and the temporary governing body.

5. Questions from the floor
Q. Are there any stats that prove previous amalgamations have worked?
A. GH – I’m not aware of any statistical analysis, however many in the Borough have been successful.

Q. Please could I have clarification on what the last two bullet points in number 3 (in the consultation booklet) mean?
A. GH – They will be moving to the upper site of the same school, many things will now remain the same that wouldn’t have previously.
A. DB – Children will already be familiar with staff through extra curricular activities, there will be the same uniform and the same Headteacher.

Q. Is Angela Leach the new Headteacher?
A. AC - The new governing body will be tasked with appointing a Headteacher, existing permanent Headteachers will be ringfenced for the role and assessed for their ability to perform in the role.

Q. How is the new governing body created?
A. GH – Both governing bodies will put people forward.

Q. Have previous amalgamations in the Borough been scrapped?
A. GH – No, but we have changed proposals as a consequence of the consultation feedback.

Q. Will the Head role have to be applied for?
A. AC - There will be a process where people need to apply, yes. If people who are ringfenced to the role are not appointed, the post will be advertised.

Q. What are the budget implications?
A. GH - There are relatively small budget implications as the same amount of children will attend the proposed new school.

Q. What will happen to teaching assistants?
A. AC – The staffing structure of the new school will be decided by the new Headteacher when appointed and the temporary governing body.

Q. Is it a money making idea?
A. DB – In the first year after the proposed amalgamation, the new school would potentially lose money in the combined budget of Springhead and Knowsley schools. In 2015 that would depend on the revised National Funding arrangements for schools.

1. Closing summary by GH.

Minutes
Proposed Amalgamation of Springhead infant & Nursery and Knowsley Junior Schools
Statutory Consultation Meeting with Staff and Union Reps of Springhead infant & Nursery
Wednesday 10 July 2013
Springhead Infant and Nursery School
4.00 – 6.50 pm

Present: 3 LA Officers, 4 Trades Union representatives, 33 members of staff
Apologies: GH – LA Officer

1. Welcome and Introductions
DB welcomed everyone to the meeting, ran through the agenda and asked AS and AC to introduce themselves.

2. Purpose of the meeting and explanation of the statutory process
DB, speaking on behalf of GH explained the proposal to amalgamate Springhead and Knowsley schools and checked everybody in attendance had a copy of the consultation document. The opening date for the potential new school would be September 2014. The closing date for consultation is Friday 26 July 2013. As part of the consultation period, Oldham Council will offer the chance to respond to proposals to the following stakeholders and services; parents/carers, school staff, trade unions/teacher associations, governors, other nearby schools, neighbouring authorities, local councillors and MPs, and Preventative Services. All the views expressed will be taken into consideration prior to finalising the proposal for publication.

3. HR implications
AC explained the process for recruiting a new Head, and that it would include ringfencing arrangements for people currently in post. There will be increased opportunities for professional development and career progression for staff, as well as opportunities for them to widen their experience. Wherever possible the staff that work at Springhead Infant and Nursery or Knowsley Junior Schools will be offered posts in the new school. If any member of staff could not be offered a post in the new school they would be helped to find another position elsewhere. The structure of the school and posts available will be decided by the new Head and the temporary governing body.

4. School performance implications
DB explained that when a headteacher retires in an Infant or Junior school in close proximity, it is the Council’s duty to consider amalgamation. Benefits include a consistent approach to teaching and learning, improvement in tracking the progress of pupils, an enhancement of the learning experience for children, allowing them to benefit from the input of a wider range of professionals across two sites and more consistent policies and procedures across the age range.

5. Questions from the floor;

How did the Council discover it could amalgamate? Is this allowed by national law?
In the interests of reducing bureaucracy the consent of the Secretary of State is no longer required to
publish maintained school proposals in certain circumstances. One of those is when issuing proposals for
a new community or foundation primary school that is to replace a maintained infant and a maintained
junior school;

The Local Authority made the decision to apply Section 11 during the pre-consultation phase when it
became clear that the most effective way to achieve a unified through primary school for the local
community would be to develop a new school, albeit using the existing school buildings for the time being.

Why didn’t the first option go to consultation?
DB - The Council decided during the informal stage that this proposal provides more opportunity to create
an ‘outstanding’ through Primary school.

The Form to parents is very misleading and very cleverly worded, why?
DB – The form is there to provide feedback on. If stakeholders or services do not agree with the proposals
or anything on the consultation document, they can give their reasons by post or on the Council’s website.

How is the new governing body selected?
Each governing body will put forward 4 people each to form an interim governing body.

No rationale on why the first proposal was scrapped?
DB - The Council decided during the informal stage that this proposal provides more opportunity to create
an ‘outstanding’ through Primary school.
Action – staff unhappy with answer, question will be put to GH and e-mailed to the school Head for
circulation to staff.

Can we have an explanation of what the term ringfencing means?
AC – Existing post holders will be ringfenced into positions where a percentage of their current job
description matches another in the new structure.

DB – This will be decided once the new structure is set, after the appointment of a Headteacher.

Will the Head be ringfenced for the new Headteacher role?
AC - Yes, she will be interviewed and assessed against the Person Specification. A decision will then be
taken if she will be appointed, or not appointed.

How does redeployment work if there isn’t a role available for anybody?
AC – All schools are signed up to the redeployment list, any staff displaced would be assisted when trying
to find a position in another school. Any roles that come up similar to their current job, they would have a
priority interview and be considered first.

There is an excellent transition anyway; governors and ethos’ changing will just unsettle that. Why are we
changing?
DB – We do not want everything to change, we want staff and governors to merge. We don’t want ethos
and approaches to change.

I’m worried about change, starting from scratch and the fact the Headteacher will not be ringfenced.
AC – The head will be ringfenced should the amalgamation go ahead.

Shouldn’t the existing Head be slotted in?
AC – In this situation the Head can only be ringfenced. Employment law cannot be changed.

Transition has worked fine for over 70 years, why now?
DB – Every time a Headteacher retires, there is a duty to consider amalgamation.

Who would draw up a person spec for a new Headteacher?
AC - The Temporary governing body, advised by the LA.

Can we put anything on the consultation responses?
DB – Yes, all members of staff have a right to do that.
How was the initial proposal different?
See response to above and below action.
Action – staff unhappy with answer, question will be put to GH and e-mailed to the school Head for circulation to staff.

Are there statistics to prove that amalgamations benefit schools?
DB – in my own experience of leading 2 x Key Stages across split sites it improves the tracking of pupil progress because of consistent methods of learning, marking and providing feedback and also staff development benefits.

Is it a money making idea?
DB – In the first year after the proposed amalgamation, the new school would potentially lose money in the combined budget of Springhead and Knowsley schools. In 2015 that would depend on the revised National Funding arrangements for schools.

Why wasn’t an amalgamation considered when the last Head retired in 2006?
DB – As I was not directly involved at that time I suggest we ask GH to provide comments on that.
Action - staff unhappy with answer, question will be put to GH and e-mailed to the school Head for circulation to staff.

How long till we are Ofsted inspected?
DB – I don’t have the details with me currently I can e-mail this to the Head.

How will the Head be recruited?
DB – The new governing body will create a person specification and first consider any existing permanent head teachers who wish to apply. If they do not fill the post by these means they will then go to national advert.

How will 50:50 governing body decisions be decided?
DB – The Chair would have the casting vote with LA advice.

Will questions on the consultation document be answered?
DB – The consultation response document is for views on the proposal only, not questions.

Do elected members have to declare conflicts of interest?
DB – Yes.

Could original plan be revived if people disagree?
DB – Council members will decide the best way forward at the end of consultation.

Is 2014 realistic?
DB – There is another amalgamation due to be considered with that same deadline where the consultation process does not start till September; my understanding is that our experience indicates that even this is a realistic timescale.

6. Follow up questions from the meeting

1. The last Headteacher at Springhead retired in 2006, why wasn't amalgamation considered then?
A project was established in 2006 to investigate primary provision across the Saddleworth and Lees District, specifically regarding a number of schools which included Knowsley/Springhead. The LA would not consult on a statutory proposal when the school/s are under consideration as part of a wider school organisation review.

2. Who made the decision to scrap the original proposal and why? What clause was discovered?
The relevant piece of legislation is contained in Section 11 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, as amended by the Education Act 2011. Guidance issued in October 2012 and reissued in July 2013 states that in the interests of reducing bureaucracy the consent of the Secretary of State is no longer required to publish maintained school proposals in certain circumstances. One of those is when issuing proposals for
a new community or foundation primary school that is to replace a maintained infant and a maintained junior school;

The Local Authority made the decision to apply Section 11 during the pre-consultation phase when it became clear that the most effective way to achieve a unified through primary school for the local community would be to develop a new school, albeit using the existing school buildings for the time being.

3. How long will the new school, after the amalgamation (if the proposal goes ahead) be protected from an Ofsted inspection for?

Legislation allows Ofsted to inspect a school for a number of purposes in different ways, both general inspections and subject inspections. A ‘Section 117a’ inspection, for example, takes place with no notice. Thus no school is every ‘protected’ – any school may be inspected at any time. The two-day ‘Section 5’ inspection takes place to a strictly defined schedule as outlined in the Handbook and Framework documents for Section Five Inspections (Ofsted websites). These do not give a period before inspection takes place for a new school, but do say that for an academy the inspection would take place in the second year of their operation. Interpretation of this has been requested from Ofsted to confirm if this is the same for other new schools.

4. How long will it take for the Council to read responses and make the decision if to go ahead with amalgamation?

Consideration of the consultation responses normally takes place within 2 weeks of the end of the consultation process. This is to allow time for the responses to be collated and analysed, emerging themes to be identified and issues given due consideration. At that point, a decision will be made by the Director for Commissioning and Director of Children's Services on whether or not to publish a formal notice.

The decision on whether to go ahead with the amalgamation is not made by Oldham Council. Proposals brought forward under Section 11 are determined by the Office of the Schools’ Adjudicator.

5. Why the decision to close an outstanding school?

The decision under consideration is to establish a through primary school for the local area. As there are already 2 existing schools offering education to infant and junior age children those children will form the cohorts for the new school. As there is currently no capital funding available to create a single school site the 2 existing school buildings will continue to be used.

**Views of the persons consulted**

The views expressed by those who were not in favour of the proposal fell into the following categories:

i. Concerns that it was a decision based solely on financial reasons; just a cost cutting exercise.

ii. Some felt there is no point in amalgamating the schools if there is no money for a new building to house the school on one site.

iii. Concerns about job security and who would be the head teacher.

iv. Some felt it would be disruptive for the children and that the new school would not be judged as ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted.

v. Concerns about the consultation process

vi. Some felt there would be no advantage to the children’s education.

The views expressed by those who were in favour of the proposal fell into the following categories:

i. It would improve the transition process for the children

ii. There would be more consistent teaching and learning styles

iii. Improved tracking of pupil progress

iv. A wider pool of professionals to teach across all year groups

v. Some were in favour, but wanted the process to be completed as quickly as possible, to minimise disruption.

Individual records of conversations with parents and members of the local community who attended the drop-in sessions were made. The views expressed are mirrored by the written response received, as
Consultation documentation was provided individually to all members of staff and their trades union representatives, all Governors and all parents from both schools. The consultation was made available on the Oldham Council website, with the opportunity for consultees to respond by email or in writing. A notice was placed in the local newspaper advertising the consultation and notifying the dates, times and venues for the drop-in sessions and giving the web-site address.

A copy of the consultation documentation follows:

**Statutory Consultation**

**PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE SPRINGHEAD COMMUNITY INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL AND KNOWSLEY COMMUNITY JUNIOR SCHOOL**

**QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

1. **Why does Oldham Local Authority (LA) want to make the separate infant and junior schools into one primary school?**
   
   It is acknowledged that children benefit from a continuous educational experience from the age of 4 – 11 in one school. For this reason, the LA always considers bringing separate infant and junior schools together whenever the opportunity arises.

2. **How will the amalgamation happen?**

   There would be three “linked” proposals. Two of the proposals would close the existing separate schools and the third would establish a new school in their place. When proposals are linked in this way, they cannot be decided separately.

3. **How will the proposed change affect the children?**

   The proposed change would:
   
   • ensure a consistent approach to teaching and learning
   • improve the tracking of how well children make progress from year to year
   • improve the planning of the curriculum across all classes
   • further enhance the learning experience as children will be able to benefit from the input of a wider range of professionals across the school
   • ensure that there are consistent policies and procedures across the age range
   • reduce the number of times that children have to change school
   • allow children from the same family to be in the same school

4. **When might the schools become one primary?**

   The proposed Primary School should open in September 2014. Between now and then the LA will be working hard with the Governors and Staff of both schools to make sure that everything will be in place for the children when the time comes.

5. **Will there be enough places for all the children at the new school?**
At the moment there are places for up to 90 children for each year group at both schools. This is called the Published Admission Number or PAN. The PAN for the new school would be 90; therefore all the children who are at either of the schools at the moment will be able to carry on attending.

6. Will the application process change for reception places for admission to the new primary school next September 2014?

No. You will apply in exactly the same way as you would at the moment. Details of the on-line application process are available on the Oldham Council website by following the link to the school admissions pages.

7. Will there be a Nursery at the new school?

There are no plans to make any changes to the existing maintained nursery provision, currently based at Springhead Infant and Nursery School.

8. Who is being consulted about the proposal and what happens next?

Parents/carers, school staff and their trade unions/teacher associations, governors, other nearby schools, neighbouring authorities, local councillors and MPs and the Oldham Early Years Sector, Preventative Services are being consulted. All their views expressed will be taken into consideration prior to finalising the proposal for publication.

Once the final proposal is developed, formal ‘notices’ will be published and everyone will have 6 weeks to respond if they wish.

The proposal would then be sent to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator (OSA), who will make the final decision about whether or not the two schools should be amalgamated. The OSA is a government function responsible for ensuring fair access to school places; it will take into account the nature of the proposals and any objections to, or support for, them.

9. What will the new school be called?

It has not been decided what the new school would be called. If the proposal goes ahead, the LA, in consultation with the governors, will make a decision about a name for the new school further on in the process.

10. How will the proposed change affect the staff?

There will be increased opportunities for professional development and career progression for staff, as well as opportunities for them to widen their experience.

The Local Authority has very clear processes in place and will work closely with the staff and governing bodies of both schools if the proposal goes ahead.

Wherever possible the staff who work at Springhead Infant and Nursery or Knowsley Junior Schools would be offered posts in the new school. If any member of staff could not be offered a post in the new school they would be helped to find another position elsewhere.

11. Who will be the Head Teacher of the new primary school?

If the proposal goes ahead, a ‘temporary’ governing body will be established to oversee the establishment of the amalgamated school. This includes the appointment of a Head Teacher.

12. Will there be a new school building?
13. How can I make my views on this proposal known?

The LA will arrange to meet with the governors and staff of both schools. Trades unions representatives will be invited to the staff meetings. There will be ‘drop-in’ events, for current and prospective parents, together with anyone else from the local community who is interested in the proposal:

Springhead Infant and Nursery School.  
Wednesday 3 July 2013 from 2.30 until 6.00 pm

Knowsley Junior School  
Thursday 4 July 2013 from 2.30 until 6.00 pm

Please come along to either event. LA officers will be on hand to explain the proposal further and to answer any questions you have.

Or you can send your views in writing to:

Access Service,  
Civic Centre, Level 12,  
PO Box 40  
West Street  
Oldham OL1 1XJ

Or by e-mail to: -ecs.pupils@oldham.gov.uk

You can use the pro-forma attached to these questions, or you can write a letter if you prefer.

The closing date for comments is Friday 26th July 2013.

PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF SPRINGHEAD INFANT & NURSERY AND KNOWSLEY JUNIOR SCHOOLS

Oldham Local Authority is proposing to amalgamate Springhead Infant & Nursery School and Knowsley Junior School. We are interested in your views on this proposal.

If you would like your views to be considered, please complete this pro-forma and return it to school before the end of term, or send it no later than Friday 24 July 2013 to :

Access Service  
Civic Centre, Level 12  
PO Box 40  
West Street  
Oldham  
OL1 1JX

Email: ecs.pupils@oldham.gov.uk

I agree with the proposal to amalgamate Springhead Nursery & Infant School and Knowsley Junior School  
Yes / No *

*Please delete as appropriate

If you would like to comment on the proposal please use the box below. You can continue on a separate sheet if you wish.
Please indicate which group you belong to by circling the appropriate title:

Parent  Staff member  Governor  Other – please specify

The objectives of the proposal.

The key objective is to remove the transition point from between the current separate infant and junior schools by creating a single through primary school. The Local Authority also aims to maximise opportunities through the creation of a single leadership and management structure and greater flexibility created by a single budget.

Extended services

There is a Children’s Centre located in the grounds of the school. It is occupied by Action for Children under a commissioning arrangement with the council. The Centre provides a core offer of services to children under 5 years and their families. A District Advisory Board provides governance and stewardship of the children’s centre function which is a statutory duty.

A before and after school club and holiday club operates on the school site run by Squirrels Childcare Ltd servicing both Springhead Infant and Nursery School and Knowsley Junior School. The before and after school club is registered for 78 places and operates from 7.30am-9.00am and 3.00pm – 6.00pm during term time. The holiday club is registered for 78 places and operates 9.00am - 3.00pm, 8.30am - 12.30pm and 12.00pm - 6.00pm during school holidays.

Pupil numbers and admissions

The school will have a Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 90. In total the school will provide accommodation for up to 630 pupils. The places will be for children aged 4 to 11 years. The maintained nursery provision will offer 39 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) places. The proposal will be implemented in full from 1 September 2014. 90 pupils will be admitted to the Reception class from the date of implementation and each year thereafter. The school will admit both boys and girls.
Ethos/Religious Character

The new school will draw upon the very best of practice in the two predecessor schools to create an outstanding primary school for the local community. The school will seek to provide an inclusive and rounded education enabling all children to achieve their very best both whilst at the school and in applying their primary learning in later phases of education and life.

The school will not have a religious character

Area or community that the school serves

The two proposed sites for the new school are located in the Springhead area of Oldham and are expected to serve families living in the Saddleworth West & Lees and Saddleworth North wards.

Admission Arrangements

All applicants will be offered a place providing there are enough places in the school for everyone who applies. If the number of applications exceeds the admission number it will be necessary to determine which pupils can be offered a place by applying the following oversubscription criteria in priority order.

All schools are required by section 324 of the Education Act 1996 to admit to the school a child with a statement of special educational need that names the school. This is not an oversubscription criterion and all children with statements naming a school will be admitted before other children are offered a place.

For all other applications the following criteria will be applied to prioritise children for admission to community and voluntary controlled primary schools:

Criterion 1.
Children in care or children who have previously been looked after but immediately after being looked after became subject to an adoption, residence, or special guardianship order will be given the highest priority for admission.

Criterion 2
Those children who are considered to have exceptional medical or social reasons as to why they should attend a particular school. Parents will be required to submit evidence to support their application under this criterion (see note (a) below).

Criterion 3
Those children who already have a sibling at the school and who will still be attending when their brother/sister starts in reception. (see note (b) below).

Criterion 4
Geographical proximity to school, with those families living next nearest to the school having higher priority. Distance is measured in a straight line between the home postcode (see note (c) below) and the schools postcode, measured electronically by GIS software within the admission database using Post Office data and Ordnance Survey data.

Notes
(a) Exceptional reasons for priority over other applicants - Decisions must be consistent and based on objective evidence, which must be provided in writing by an appropriate professional i.e. a doctor or a social worker.

(b) Siblings - The LA accepts that in some family units (1 or 2 parents/carers and children), the children may not be natural brothers and/or sisters. Other children from the same family unit can be considered as a sibling link under this criterion provided that proof is available to demonstrate that the children are permanently resident at the same address and part of the same family unit.

(c) Tie breaker - Should it be necessary to distinguish between applicants with equal priority within any of the above criteria, the distance is measured as a straight line from the child’s home address to the school property measured between the two central data points of the home postcode and school post code. Measurements are calculated using Geographical information System mapping software based on Ordnance Survey and Postcode data.
**Early Years Provision for pupils between 2 and 5.**

There will be 39 full-time equivalent places offering provision for 78 part time placements for children aged 3 years. (Ofsted registered capacity within the provision is FTE 78 places for 156 part time placements). The current model of delivery is five sessions of 3 hours each weekday morning and afternoon. No full days are offered and no lunch is provided. It is anticipated that the new school will operate the same delivery model.

The nursery provision is accessible for disabled children

Integration with early years delivery and strategy at both local and district level will be assured through the presence of the Saddleworth West and Lees Children’s Centre Hub located at the Springhead site.

Data shows that over the last three terms, occupancy within the maintained nursery has remained stable between 60-80 on roll. The provision currently has 80 children on roll (school census May 2013). The census data shows there is demand to fill a 39 full time equivalent place maintained nursery based on previous and current occupancy. This nursery has historically operated at this capacity, therefore will not destabilise the market by continuing with their existing model of delivery.

Data available to us indicated there is capacity of 1,106 vacancies within a 3 mile radius and 404 in a 1.5 mile radius. These vacancies exist in schools and other private provision who deliver the EYFS for 3-5 years olds (Source: FTE calculator May 2013).

Of the providers within a 3 mile radius, 73% are Ofsted rated good or above (Source: Tribal September 2013).

None of the providers within a 3 mile radius have reported sustainability issues

Any available capacity in other settings is required for two year old children to access 15 hours of free early education as required under new statutory guidance from September 2013. If schools can take more three year olds, this leaves availability within the private sector for two year olds.

The parents accessing the maintained nursery do so for many reasons. Convenience and location were perceived as being important during the childcare sufficiency consultation with parents. For many parents who have children accessing the school, a sibling accessing the maintained nursery is the most convenient. In some cases it may prove impossible to drop off their children at the same time to different settings. Others prefer the continuity of care provided from accessing the school nursery to ensure a smooth transition into full time education. Consultation and evidence also tells us that many parents access the early education entitlement within walking distance from their home (generally considered to be around half a mile).

**Effects on Standards and Contributions to School Improvement**

The school will provide a coherent learning experience for children across the primary age range without a disjuncture at the Key Stage One to Key Stage Two transition. Improved opportunities for governance, tracking, intervention, curriculum planning and staff development from EYFS to KS2 will enable the highest quality provision for children.

As a high quality primary school the new school will be a full part of the Oldham family of schools and academies, and in local collaborations and initiatives within the Saddleworth and Lees District. It is envisaged that the new school would have a role within locally brokered school-to-school support.

The new school will have the same expectations for all its pupils. This will result in pupils being more confident & settled in a positive learning environment.
All pupils including those with SEND and those who are Gifted & Talented will have consistency of support throughout the 3 key stages. Transition will be less of an issue with systems, procedures and personnel remaining the same.

Both existing schools cater well for the ECM agenda. Existing expertise will be shared. Pupils and parents at KS1 & KS2 will have same access to shared outside agencies and services. There will be continuity of practice, maximising opportunity to access same sharing of information to protect children and help families in most need.

Greater flexibility with one budget will enable improved access to out of school experiences or bought in days.

### Community Cohesion

The new school will bring together existing community cohesion projects and build upon and expand them, enhancing the diversity of educational opportunities. Schools within the extended collaborative of schools in Lees and Saddleworth work together to ensure equality of opportunity for a diverse range of groups and individuals.

### Location

The school will be situated at Springhead Infant and Nursery School, Cooper Street, Springhead, Oldham, Greater Manchester, OL4 4QT and Knowsley Junior School, Stoneleigh Road, Springhead, Oldham, Greater Manchester, OL4 4BH. The school will serve the wards of Saddleworth West and Lees and Saddleworth North.

The school will occupy a split site at the date of implementation.

Accessibility of the two sites and the accommodation at each site will remain unchanged.

Use of the buildings on the two sites will continue in its current form.

The existing school sites will be used for the purpose if the proposed new school.

There are no capital costs associated with the provision of the site for the new school.

### Implementation

The planned implementation date is 1 September 2014.

### Project costs

There are no capital costs associated with this proposal as the existing school buildings of the two predecessor schools will be used.

### Travel

The Oldham Council Home to School transport policy will apply. The Travel Plans at the two predecessor schools will continue to apply at the two separate sites of the new school.

### Curriculum

The school will meet the general requirements in relation to curriculum contained in sections 78 and 80 of the Education Act 2002. Additional provision will be determined by the new Governing Body.