

Frequently Asked Questions - increasing places at Micklefield Church of England (C of E) Primary School

We have included below some of the questions we think are most likely to be asked. Please come along to one of the community drop-in sessions where we will try to answer any other questions you may have.

What is being proposed?

Leeds City Council wants to make Micklefield C of E Primary School bigger (permanent expansion) so that it can admit an additional 10 children into its reception class, increasing the number of places on offer each year from 20 to 30 from September 2021 onwards. This would mean that eventually an additional 70 places would be available right across the school.

What is the reason for holding a consultation?

Consultations help us to understand what people think about our plans. It's important that you share your views with us as this will help the council decide whether or not we should take our plans to the next stage.

Why are additional places needed at the school?

There are two housing developments that have planning permission for around 340 additional homes in the village and further housing may be built in the future. It is likely to take several years for the housing to be built and we believe that the numbers of families moving into developments like these will mean that up to 10 additional primary school places will be needed in each year group. This is based on what we know about similar housing developments both in Leeds and other areas of the country.

Will an additional 10 places in each year group be enough?

We believe that growing the school over a number of years so that it can admit up to 30 additional places in each year group will be sufficient. This is based on the number of children currently attending the school, families moving into any new housing and numbers of children that would be expected to apply for places at the school.

Will all classes start to take up to 30 pupils from September 2021?

No, the increase would start in Reception class from September 2021 and then each year onwards Reception would admit up to 30 pupils until the whole school had up to 30 pupils in each class. If there were more children requesting places than expected in the first few years whilst the house building was taking place, we would work with the school to help them provide additional space.

Will classes be mixed-age as they are now?

At first, some classes would have to remain mixed-age but it is anticipated that the school would be able to move to single-age classes starting with its reception class in September 2021.

Would there be a change to the school's admissions policy?

Micklefield C of E PS is a Voluntary Controlled school, so it gets its funding via the Local Authority (LA) and the LA has responsibility for the school's admissions arrangements. The proposal will not affect the school's admissions policy, apart from increasing places.

Why aren't additional places being considered in other schools?

Right now, the numbers of children approaching school age in the Garforth and other areas nearby are relatively stable. In the past, some children living in Micklefield have attended Micklefield C of E Primary and schools in Garforth. Although some families may continue to apply for Garforth schools, we want to increase places at Micklefield C of E Primary so that we can offer families more places within the village itself.

Would any building work be required?

We believe that it is possible to make the school bigger on its existing site and if the plans did progress, there would need to be some building work. We would look at when the building work took place to minimise

disruption. The building site would be a secure area to ensure the health and safety of the children, staff, parents and visitors.

Are there any design plans that we can see at this stage?

At this stage, there are no formal design plans because we need to find out first whether people agree that it's a good idea to make the school bigger. If we went ahead with the proposal, we would work very closely with the school to agree a design for the additional space that would be needed. If planning permission was required, this would have its own separate consultation so that people could look at the plans and share their views about them formally.

Would traffic increase if the school was made bigger and how would this be managed?

Because the school is within a village, the majority of children walk to school so it is anticipated that there would be a minimal increase in traffic. However the council's Highways Team would carry out a full transport assessment to identify any measures that may need to be considered, such as road calming, as well as on-site parking for staff.

Who would pay for additional staff in a larger school?

Schools receive funding on a per pupil basis, so where there are more children attending, the school has money available to pay for staff costs. Where we make schools bigger there is additional funding available to pay for resources such as furniture, books, computers etc.

The school is currently rated 'Requires Improvement' by Ofsted. Why are you making it bigger at this stage?

If we do nothing, it is likely that there will be insufficient school places to meet future demand. This may mean that children have to travel much further to access schools with places, and it is unlikely that they would walk. The school is working with the LA which is supporting the school with its improvement plans and because the school would admit additional children gradually, this would allow the school to grow whilst also focusing on its improvement journey. The organisation of classes into single age would have a positive impact on learning.

How can I find out more?

We are holding community drop-in sessions at the school so that anyone with an interest can find out more, ask questions and share views with us. As these are drop-ins, please come along at any time during the session times below.

Monday 11 February	8.40am - 9.20am
Wednesday 13 February	5.30pm - 7.30pm

What will happen next?

When this informal consultation ends a report will be taken to the council's Executive Board and if they decide that we can go ahead to the next stage, a Statutory Notice would be published at the start of a four week formal consultation period. At that point anyone would have an opportunity to comment formally and dependant on what people tell us, we may then ask Executive Board for its final approval to go ahead. After that, the proposal would move into a 'design and planning' period during which time anyone would be able to view the plans for the school build and formally comment on any planning applications.