

Public consultation
22nd March 2023 to 3rd May 2023

**Proposal to close the
Kidderminster Base of The Beacon
Primary Pupil Referral Unit**

Dear Parents / Governors / Colleagues

This is an informal consultation on the proposal to close the Kidderminster Base of The Beacon Primary Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) in the event that the services for primary aged children who require a pupil referral unit transferring to the new Unity Free School, Hurcott Road, Kidderminster. The Beacon has been operated on a split site basis and will continue to operate from the Redditch site.

This document explains:

- Why we feel it is appropriate to consider the proposal to close the Kidderminster Base of The Beacon Primary Pupil Referral Unit
- The timescale for the informal consultation
- Who is being consulted
- What happens at the end of the consultation period

Have your say

It is important that all those involved have a say. We welcome your views.

An online survey can be accessed on the school website [The Beacon Pupil Referral Unit - Home \(thebeaconpru.org.uk\)](http://thebeaconpru.org.uk) or on the Worcestershire County Council website at: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schoolconsultations. This will be submitted directly to the Sufficiency and Place Planning Team.

If you are unable to access the online response form, please contact us below to request a paper copy. Paper responses can then be returned to the school office or sent to the address below.

The consultation period commences on Wednesday 22nd March and closes at noon on Wednesday 3rd May 2023. It is important that all those wishing to respond to these proposals do so within this timeframe.

Responses must be received by noon on 3rd May 2023.

Our contact details are:

The Education Sufficiency and Place Planning Team
Worcestershire Children First
County Hall
Spetchley Road
Worcester
WR5 2NP

Or e-mail to SPP@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk

Yours sincerely,

Sarah Wilkins
Director for Education WCF

Background information

Although prescribed alterations within the [Statutory Guidance Making Significant changes to maintained schools Oct 2018](#) include closing a satellite site at a LA Maintained school, prescribed alterations do not apply to maintained PRUs, meaning that changes to these schools can be made outside the statutory process. The Local Authority are minded to follow a transparent proposal process as this provides clarity of rationale and informal consultation opportunities for interested parties.

The Local Authority may make such a proposal for a community school. The LA would like to informally consult with parents and the local community on the proposal to permanently close the additional base of the Beacon School in Kidderminster whilst retaining the Beacon School at the Redditch Base, Longdon Close, Redditch, B98 7UZ. As a community school, an informal consultation on this matter requires approval from the DCS. The approval was received on 16th March 2023.

The Beacon Primary Pupil Referral Unit (URN 130987) is registered with Ofsted at Longdon Close, Redditch, B98 7UZ and opened in 2000. The school expanded and opened an additional base in Kidderminster in 2013/14 under the same registration.

The Local Authority currently commissions pupil places at The Beacon across the Redditch and Kidderminster bases for pupils who are permanently excluded from school and provide preventative placements to support children who are at risk of exclusion.

The Proposal

The Local Authority are proposing to close the Beacon Pupil Referral Unit in Kidderminster. The Beacon School Redditch will remain open and continue to be commissioned to provide education for children who are permanently excluded from Bromsgrove and Redditch areas and work with schools to provide support, capacity and skills development to prevent children from being excluded.

The children currently accessing their education from the Kidderminster base will either transition to secondary school into Year 7 as normal phase transfer or according to the assessment of need - reintegrate to mainstream according to the child level plan for appropriate education (not dependent on any changes) or transition to a new school with a transition plan involving the child, the new school and Beacon school.

Staff

- It is proposed that the current staff working directly with the children at the Beacon, Kidderminster site will transfer to The Rivers C of E Academy Trust, the provider of Unity Academy Free School in accordance with TUPE legislation. TUPE is the transfer of undertakings protection of employment legislation which seeks to protect employee's terms and conditions of employment.
- Staff at the Beacon, Kidderminster have been formally consulted with in connection with the transfer
- It is proposed that following the TUPE consultation staff will transfer to The Rivers C of E Academy Trust on 1st September 2023 when the new Unity Academy Free school opens.

The proposal is expected to provide the following benefits:

- The Beacon will be supported to deliver good education outcomes from one school base with no additional base accommodations.
- The Beacon will be able to deliver a full curriculum and remain sustainable and financially viable.
- The Beacon School will develop prevention and inclusion provision for children in the Redditch and Bromsgrove area
- Children and schools in the Kidderminster area will have access to ongoing and increased support to prevention and facilities that promote inclusion and are able to support a multi-agency approach and include families.

How the decision will be made

The Director for Children's Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education 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 at the Beacon School
- The ability of the school to manage the proposed change to support Redditch and Bromsgrove inclusion.
- Demand for inclusion support at the school and in the local area and how this will be met
- The impact of the new free school and provision for the Kidderminster area.

Who is being consulted?

This document will be made available to:

- Parents and carers of pupils attending the School
- Staff and Governors of the school and other local schools
- Local District and County Councillors
- Immediate residents
- Local Member of Parliament
- Cabinet Member Responsible for Education
- Any other local stakeholder

What happens next?

Consultation Phase – Wednesday 22nd March and closes at noon on Wednesday 3rd May 2023

During the consultation phase anyone with an interest can express their views on the proposal expressed in this document. 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 website or the [Worcestershire County Council website](#).

The consultation period commences on Wednesday 22nd March and closes at noon on Wednesday 3rd May 2023. It is very important that all those wishing to respond to these proposals do so within this timeframe.

Decision

If the Director for Children's Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education decide to support the proposal the County Council will publish formal Public Notice of the proposed scheme. You will then have a final opportunity to comment or object within a four-week timescale laid down in law. Notices are published in the local press and displayed outside the school. At the end of the four weeks any objections will be reported to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education for a final decision.

It is very important that all those involved have a say. Please submit your comments by noon on **Wednesday 3rd May 2023** by completing the online response form available on the school and WCC website at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/schoolconsultations. If you are unable to access the online response form you can obtain a paper copy from the school office or by emailing SPP@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk .