

Parents, Carers, and Governors

**Your ref:**

**Our ref:** MEC/bmh

**Date:** 9<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Dear Parents, Carers, and Governors

### **Schools for the Future – Principles and Policies**

I am writing to inform you that Central Bedfordshire Council's Executive has approved changes to the Principles and Policies of the Schools for the Future programme.

The aim of this ambitious and long-term programme remains to raise education standards in Central Bedfordshire by ensuring the area has the right schools in the right places, delivering the best education. Part of this is the move to the two-tier model of education and is key to improving our education offer and in attracting and retaining the best teachers.

Our Executive approved a number of changes, which include:

- Support for a target to improve learning outcomes to above the national average at Key Stage 2, Key Stage S4, and Post-16.
- Consistent, clear, and honest communications via a single, agreed message to stakeholders.
- The Council no longer making initial proposals for changes to academies, as we are not the key decision-maker. We will now welcome two-tier proposals from Academy Trusts which are supported by the Department for Education.
- Proposals for primary/secondary conversion will be matched against Central Bedfordshire Council-validated pupil place requirements.
- Setting out clear value-for-money principles in investing any capital funds into small schools.
- Schools for the Future capital investment will not support Early Years or Post-16 proposals.
- Proposals to improve and create SEND places will continue but SEND investment will be a parallel programme led by Children's Services and not directly managed by the Schools for the Future programme.

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- Schools for the Future funds will not be available to improve existing school accommodation. Additional accommodation will be provided as standalone new-build blocks unless site constraints dictate extensions/alterations are required.
- A new Design Principles Policy that sets out what can fairly and equitably be funded across the schools still in the three-tier system.
- All building improvement works will be funded by Central Bedfordshire Council and managed by Central Bedfordshire Council and its contractors.
- A new six-point criteria against which the Council will consider all conversion proposals.
- Comprehensive feasibility studies will inform public consultations on proposed changes.

These revised principles and policies will now underpin the Schools for the Future programme going forward, with the aim of providing more transparency and clarity about the parameters of the programme, while also supporting a fair and equitable approach across the whole of Central Bedfordshire.

We are now very well placed to move forward at a quicker pace with the support of your school and all our Schools for the Future partners.

With the new revised principles and policies that will underpin the programme, we can begin to work towards publishing an outline phasing plan for the new primary/secondary system in each area.

The aim of this is to give you the confidence that the programme will benefit all pupils now looking forward to the new primary/secondary system.

I know the outcome of this new plan is important to you and as soon as we are able to, we will issue an update which will provide a better indication for the timing of the transition to two-tier, but at the moment we are unable to confirm a date for this.

In the meantime, we have updated the Schools for the Future website so that it provides the most up-to-date information, making it easier to [find out the current status of the plans for change for each school in the programme](#). Under new, clearer headings you can see the latest news, the current status of the programme, and what is happening next.

Through the Schools for the Future website other ways can also be found to [keep up to date with the programme](#), plus other information that you may find useful, such as answers to more general [frequently asked questions](#) and [how changes are decided](#).

We will also work with your school to ensure that, when available, new information is provided to you through their regular communications channels.

Yours faithfully



Marcel Coiffait  
Chief Executive

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