

Maiden Beech Academy

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Thursday 21st January 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

IMPORTANT: Crewkerne and Ilminster School Reorganisation

I hope you are safe and well.

You will be no doubt aware that on 21st October the County Council's cabinet voted to proceed with a formal consultation about the structure of schools in the Crewkerne and Ilminster area and an initial four-week consultation took place from Thursday 12th November until Thursday 10th December 2020.

Earlier this week, Head teachers and Chairs of Governors of schools in the area were informed that following the receipt of legal advice, decision-makers at the Local Authority resolved to take the decision to progress to statutory notices on a proposed two-tier model of education, which, if implemented, **will have a significant impact on Maiden Beech Academy**. This decision has been taken despite **significant opposition to the proposals, with roughly two-thirds of respondents expressing negative viewpoints**, which also reflects the outcomes of the previous consultation in 2019.

The link to the decision and supporting documentation is here: [Somerset County Council](#)

The decision makers at the Local Authority have produced a revised timeline, which culminates in a Cabinet decision on 17 March, as to whether the school structure in Crewkerne and Ilminster will be reorganised.

A meeting of local Heads and Chairs of Governors has been scheduled for next Monday (25th January) to discuss the initial consultation outcome and next steps in more detail. I will, of course, write to you again next week with a further update when I know more.

Consultation by Bridgwater and Taunton College Academy Trust (BTCT) re: Significant change to Maiden Beech Academy and potential change to admissions.

As stated above, under the Local Authority's plans, Maiden Beech Academy will significantly change, transitioning from a 9 to 13 Middle school (400+ children on roll) to a 4 -11 primary school (maximum: 210 children on roll). As such, the BTCT, which is responsible for the school, is seeking your views as parents and members of the community in regards to this change and a potential revision to the admissions arrangements for the school.

This consultation is separate to the formal process instigated by the Local Authority, which we urge you to engage with as well.

You will see from the statistics in the *Crewkerne and Ilminster Schools Consultation Outcomes Report* that **80%** of parents and carers were against Maiden Beech Academy, St Bartholomew's First School, and Ashlands First School becoming primary schools serving the town, and the closure of Misterton First School to facilitate this change. The decision by the Local Authority to progress to statutory notices fails to take into account the strength of opposition in the community to the proposed changes to school organisation; therefore, **I would urge all parents to engage in the following survey**



and, once again, make their views known:

BTCT Survey: www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/55JM5BL

Thank you for your ongoing support, especially at this difficult and challenging time. As always, I would be happy to answer any questions you might have about these proposals and will write again very soon.

Take care and stay safe

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of the initials 'C.M.' followed by a long, horizontal, slightly wavy line.

Carl Winch
Head teacher