

Canvey Island Infant School and Nursery & Canvey Junior School

**Consultation on a proposal to amalgamate the infant and
junior schools with effect 1 September 2026**

November/ December 2025



Essex County Council

Introduction

Essex County Council is committed to maximising the educational opportunities for your children. Our approach to developing diversity and improving standards in the school system includes considering the amalgamation of infant and junior schools to provide all-through primary schools where appropriate because of the benefits they offer.

These benefits include:

- greater consistency of approach to teaching and learning from ages 3 to 11;
- seamless monitoring of pupil progress from ages 3 to 11;
- increased potential for strong leadership and governance;
- continuity of experiences for young children;
- avoidance of transfer to another school at the end of Year 2 and the impact this can have on the child and their learning;
- greater sharing of curriculum and other resources.

We are therefore keen to support schools and governing bodies where they wish to pursue amalgamation to improve and enhance local educational provision.

However, not all circumstances are the same and it is important to hear the views of the local community. Please read this document and let us have your comments in order that we can provide the best possible opportunities for children in Canvey Island.



Clare Kershaw
Director, Education

Dear Parents/Carers, Staff and Members of the Local Community of the Canvey Island Infant and Nursery and Canvey Junior Schools

The governing bodies of Canvey Island Infant School and Nursery and Canvey Junior School are consulting on a proposal to build on the strengths and good progress in place at the schools by the creation of a single primary school, under the unified leadership of one headteacher and one governing body. The governing bodies, with the support of Essex County Council, are therefore proposing that the two schools amalgamate to form a primary school for children aged 3 to 11 with effect from 1 September 2026.

Why is amalgamation being proposed?

Both schools are rated as Good by Ofsted and have a history of working closely to serve the school community, including outcomes for children.

A decision has been taken by the governing bodies of both schools to consult on a proposal to amalgamate the two schools. Both sets of governors see significant advantages in combining the schools into a primary school to continue to drive up standards and performance. This would involve the formal closure of the infant school on 31 August 2026 and changing the age range of the junior school from 7 to 11 to 3 to 11 to become a primary school and nursery from 1 September 2026.

The new primary school would be under the leadership of Mrs Townsley, Headteacher at Canvey Junior School, as she is the only substantive Headteacher in post following the retirement of Mrs Dorrington as Headteacher of the infant school. Miss Maynard is currently the Acting Headteacher at the infant school whilst they explore the school's future.

What are some of the advantages of amalgamation?

The governing bodies and ECC believe that amalgamation would have the following benefits:

- consistency of approach to teaching and learning policies, curriculum planning, behaviour management, equal opportunities and special educational needs;
- monitoring pupil progress from 3 to 11 years of age would enable staff to build up a comprehensive profile of individual children and build consistently on their achievements;
- avoiding transfer at the end of Year 2 and any worries children may have about moving to a different school;
- children would be able to come together more easily for social and creative activities;
- planning and delivery of a continuous and coherent curriculum – Ofsted inspection reports show that planning for progression and continuity for Key Stage 2 is better in primary schools than junior schools;
- it would be easier to achieve continuity and progression in children's learning;
- it would be possible to share curriculum resources and avoid unnecessary duplication.

What can I expect to see?

The key features of previous successful amalgamations have been:

- strong leadership and governance;
- promotion of high educational standards;
- high quality, good teaching as a minimum;
- consistency of approach to learning policies, curriculum planning and behaviour management;
- stability of staffing and improved staffing structures and opportunities for staff development;
- improved use of facilities, for example, improved use of shared spaces.

Leading up to amalgamation the governing bodies would begin to provide opportunities, where appropriate, to further collaborate across the schools, including collaboration between governors. Opportunities for staff development would be further enhanced by amalgamation, enabling teaching and support staff to draw upon their current expertise, experience and specialist knowledge in order to share and develop best practice more effectively.

The proposal would enable the schools to merge and strengthen their performance so that there is greater consistency in policies and practice. It would streamline communication for parents and the wider community, ensuring one consistent approach for all.

Who would be the governors of the new primary school?

If the amalgamation proceeds, the existing governing body of the junior school would formally become the governing body of the primary school in September 2026. However, the new governing body will comprise of governors from both existing governing bodies. Both governing bodies are exploring ways of working more closely together prior to the proposed amalgamation.

Who would be the headteacher of the primary school?

The headteacher of the junior school at the time of the proposed amalgamation, Mrs Townsley, would be the headteacher of the primary school.

Would the teachers and support staff stay the same?

Should the amalgamation proceed, both governing bodies are committed to putting in place a staffing structure that best suits the needs of the children in the primary school, with all staff at the infant and junior schools being treated fairly and transparently. Pupil number forecasts indicate that the primary school would need at least as many classes as there are currently across both the infant and junior schools. It is therefore planned and expected that all staff employed in the current schools (at the time of the proposed amalgamation) will be able to be recruited to the primary school staffing structure.

There is no intention to make any changes to existing contract conditions as a result of the amalgamation.

Would there be any changes to the size of the school and the accommodation?

The primary school would be able to use both the existing buildings more effectively as a single school. The existing schools have the capacity to admit 60 pupils into Reception, and 60 pupils into Year 3. The total capacity of the primary school would be 420 places.

What would the admission arrangements be for the primary school?

Essex County Council would be the admission authority for the primary school and would set the admission arrangements, as it does for the existing schools. The amalgamation would mean that children at the school would automatically move from Year 2 to Year 3 without need for the current registration process. This will come into effect for those starting Year 3 in September 2027.

How can I make my views known?

Meetings have been arranged to provide an opportunity for parents and carers, the children at the school, staff and members of the local community to ask questions and express their views on the proposal outlined here. At this stage no decision has been made and all the views received, either at the meetings or separately in writing, will be considered prior to a decision being taken as to whether to go ahead with the proposal.

There will be meetings for parents and members of the local community on **Thursday 27 November 2025**. One will take place at **2:30pm** in the infant school hall and there will be another at **6:00pm** in the junior school hall. These meetings will give an opportunity for as many people as possible to find out about the proposed primary school and to give us their views.

In addition to the meetings for parents and carers and the local community ECC, together with governing bodies of the infant and junior schools, will also be seeking the views of other interested parties, particularly members of staff and children at the school.

Your Comments

You are invited to respond to this consultation using the following electronic survey form:

<https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/school-organisation/canvey-amalgamation>

Alternatively, you may wish to write to or email us with your comments to the address given below by 5pm on Thursday 18 December 2025. All comments received through these mechanisms or made directly to the governors will be collected to be included in the analysis of feedback received.

All written comments should be received by ECC by 5pm on Thursday 18 December 2025. ECC handles information in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Data Protection Act 1998 and is the data controller for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998. Your answers to this consultation will only be used to assess the community's view of the proposed amalgamation and not for any other purpose. We will not give information about you to anyone outside the County Council.

If you have any questions about the consultation process or the proposal you can email Rhona Long, School Organisation Officer, at school.organisation@essex.gov.uk.

The information contained in this leaflet can be made available in alternative formats: large print, Braille, audio tape or disk. Please call 03330 131071.

What happens next?

At the end of this consultation period the Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Life Long Learning and Employability will consider the feedback and views expressed by all interested parties during the consultation and decide whether to proceed with the proposal. If it is decided to proceed with the process, a statutory notice will then be published in the local press and will be displayed at the schools for a four-week period. This four-week representation period provides the final opportunity for people and organisations to comment on or submit objections to the proposal.

At the end of the four-week period any objections to, or comments on, the proposal will be considered by the governing bodies of the schools, and a final decision will be taken on the proposal by Essex County Council.

Timescale

This consultation period will run from Thursday 6 November 2025 until 5pm on Thursday 18 December 2025. Meetings will be held with staff, governors, school councils, parents and other interested parties during this period.

Date	Activity
Thursday 6 November 2025	Consultation commences – consultation document can be viewed on the schools' websites.
Thursday 27 November 2025	Meetings for parents of both schools and the local community to be held at 2:30pm in the infant school hall and 6pm in the junior school hall.
Thursday 27 November 2025	Meeting for staff to be held at 4pm in the junior school hall
Thursday 18 December 2025	End of consultation period
March/ April 2026	Publication of statutory notice
May 2026	End of period for representations
June 2026	Final decision on proposal
31 August 2026	Canvey Island Infant School closes*
1 st September 2026	Age range of Canvey Junior School is extended to become a primary school*

*These stages only apply if the proposal is approved by Essex County Council.

You can contact us in the following ways:

By email: school.organisation@essex.gov.uk

By post: Essex County Council, School Organisation and Planning, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1QH

Visit our website: essex.gov.uk

The information contained in this document can be translated, and/ or made available in alternative formats, on request.