Kent County Council would like to hear your views on the proposal to amalgamate Madginford Park Infant School and Madginford Park Junior School to become a single, 3 form of entry community primary school.

**Dates of Public Meetings:**
7pm, 23 January 2014 at Madginford Park Junior School, Egremont Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME15 8LH

7pm, 5 February 2014 at Madginford Park Infant School, Merton Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME15 8LJ

www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations
1. Summary

Kent County Council (KCC), together with the support of the Governing Bodies of Madginford Park Infant School and Madginford Park Junior School, is consulting on a proposal to address the underperformance at Madginford Park Junior School by amalgamating Madginford Park Infant School and Madginford Park Junior School to become a 630 place all-through community primary school.

We are currently undertaking a public consultation to seek the views of the wider community on the educational merits of this proposal. The public consultation will run from 13 January 2014 until 28 February 2014. There will be public meetings on 23 January 2014 and 5 February 2014 which will give you an opportunity to make your views known and to ask any questions you have.

This document gives you details of the proposal and information on the background and current position. There is a form at the end of this document which we ask you to complete and return to us by 28 February 2014.

2. Background to the Proposal

Madginford Park Infant School and Madginford Park Junior School are two separate schools serving the Bearsted Ward of Maidstone. Both schools are community schools. Madginford Park Infant School is currently judged by Ofsted as Outstanding.

The Junior School was inspected by Ofsted on 11 October 2013 and was found to require Special Measures*.

Madginford Park Junior School held an extra-ordinary Full Governing Body Meeting on 22 October 2013 and a new Chair of Governors was elected.

The Governing Body of both the Infant and Junior Schools have independently supported the decision to appoint the Headteacher of Madginford Park Infant School as Interim Executive Headteacher of Madginford Park Junior School which took effect from 4 November 2013.

Both Governing Bodies of Madginford Park Infant School and Madginford Park Junior School have also independently recommended to the Local Authority that the most appropriate solution to securing and sustaining outstanding education provision for both infant and junior age ranges at Madginford is to have a single all-through primary school.

This proposal is in line with KCC’s policy as set out in the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18, which states “when the opportunity arises, the Local Authority will consider the possibility of either amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools into a single primary school; or federation of the schools.”

* Special Measures: For details of Ofsted's inspection judgements, please refer to Ofsted publication “The Framework for School Inspection” available from the following link: http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/resources/framework-for-school-inspection.
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 – specialist teaching spaces, reception areas, outdoor area.

3. The Proposal

It is proposed to amalgamate Madginford Park Infant School and Madginford Park Junior School. The Infant School is rated outstanding by Ofsted and has strong leadership and governance. It is therefore proposed that the most effective way to secure and sustain outstanding education provision for both infant and juniors at Madginford is to have a single primary school.

To achieve this proposal would involve the expansion of Madginford Park Infant School by increasing the upper age range from 7 to 11 and the discontinuation of Madginford Park Junior School. The Infant School would also be renamed Madginford Park Primary School.

The new primary school will be able to use the existing buildings more effectively as a single school. The primary school would admit up to 90 pupils into the reception year each September, as the infant school does now, and the school would have a total of 630 places.

Kent County Council will be the admission authority for the primary school and will set the admission arrangements, as it does for the existing schools. This proposal does not include any changes to the number of pupils admitted across the 4-11 age range or the current class structure of the school. The amalgamation would not result in changes to the admission arrangements at reception and year 2 children would automatically move into year 3 in the primary school.

A new Instrument of Government** would be established to secure effective governance arrangements for the new school. A separate consultation will be held with staff about the proposal.

It is proposed that the existing Junior School would close on 31 August 2014 and the Infant School become a renamed primary school on the existing sites on 1 September 2014.

** The Instrument of Government (IoG) is the document that records the name of the school and the constitution of its governing body.
4. What happens next?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 2014</td>
<td>Following the consultation, all views received, either by post, e-mail or at the Public Meeting, will be reported to the Education Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March 2014</td>
<td>The Cabinet Member decides whether to continue with the proposal. If so, KCC will publish a Public Notice in a local newspaper, at the school and in public places such as the library. During this time comments and objections can be made about the proposal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2014</td>
<td>The Public Notice will run for 6 weeks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>May/June 2014</td>
<td>The Cabinet Member considers all responses made and decides whether to go ahead.</td>
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<tr>
<td>June/July 2014</td>
<td>The proposal is referred to the Schools Adjudicator for a decision.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 2014</td>
<td>Implementation, subject to agreement</td>
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</tbody>
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5. How to give your views

There are a number of ways you can let us have your views:

**Complete and return the response form below to:**

Jared Nehra, Area Education Officer - West Kent, Commercial Services Buildings, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, Kent ME19 4QG  Fax: (01732) 525223

**Come to one of the Public Meetings:**

At 7pm, 23 January 2014 at Madginford Park Junior School, Egremont Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME15 8LH

At 7pm, 5 February 2014 at Madginford Park Infant School, Merton Road, Bearsted, Maidstone, ME15 8LJ

**Email your comments to:** school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

We will note all you say, but will not be able to respond individually to response forms, letters or emails.

You can also view the consultation information online at: [www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

Please provide your comments overleaf
6. Public Consultation Response Form

Proposed Amalgamation of Madginford Park Infant School and Madginford Park Junior School

Please return no later than 11am on Friday, 28 February 2014
You can also email your views to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

Do you agree with the proposal:  Yes  No  (delete as applicable)

I am:  *A Parent/Carer of a primary aged child, Member of Staff, Governor,

Other interested party (please state)  ...........................................................
("delete as applicable)

Name:

Address:

Your comments ...

Please continue overleaf if necessary

We have completed an Equality Impact Assessment to see if the proposal could affect anyone unfairly. We welcome your views on the assumptions we have made and the conclusions we have drawn. To view the document, go to www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations or contact school.consultations@kent.gov.uk
Your comments ...