

Option 2 Set up a working group to explore re-organisation options in the primary planning area of Reigate

Surrey County Council would bring together decision makers across all schools in the primary planning area of Reigate to consider whether school places in Reigate could be re-organised. The five schools in the primary planning area of Reigate are Reigate Priory Junior School, Dovers Green Infant School, Holmesdale Infant School, Sandcross Primary School and Reigate Parish Primary School. The working group would need to identify changes that could be made as Reigate Priory Junior School cannot stay in its current form. This could include expansions, schools amalgamating and/or changing age ranges to become primary schools, changes in admission arrangements and other reorganisation ideas. It could take six months to a year before agreed proposal(s) are formulated, and they would then be subject to further consultation. We currently estimate that if this option is adopted and the necessary permissions are obtained, the changes could be in place by September 2028.

If option 2 is pursued, this could be done in tandem with pursuing the planning application at Woodhatch under option 1. This is because of the uncertainties in making all the changes which may be necessary under option 2 and doing so within a reasonable time frame.

ADVANTAGES

DISADVANTAGES

Educational Impacts - Does this option provide school places that are fit for the future and accessible to pupils in the local area? Does the option support the vision that children and young people are safe and feel safe and confident and that everyone benefits from education, skills and employment opportunities that help them succeed in life?

- Opportunity for a working group, with representatives from each of the schools in the Reigate planning area, to explore options for the future.
- Opportunity to take forward any ideas shared during this consultation period.

- Potential disruption and change impacting all schools in the planning area. Potential impact on schools in neighbouring planning areas (Redhill, Earlswood) if places are reduced in Reigate.
- Any options proposed by the working group would be subject to further consultation and will take time to implement, increasing the risks posed for Reigate Priory Junior School in the current building.
- Uncertainty about the future of Reigate Priory Junior School is unsettling for pupils and their families and staff.
- Current forecasts project a need for at least 10 FE (forms of entry) in the planning area and 11 FE for the long-term future. Work would be needed to identify how to continue to provide the places.

Financial Impacts (Is this option affordable and value for money?)

- Capital Investment in the school estate across multiple schools and not just Reigate Priory Junior School.
- The working group would consider financial impacts and value for money, of any options identified.
- Possibility of an option that costs less than option 1, but only if acceptance of reducing school places in the area and relying on surplus school places in Redhill and Earlswood & Salfords planning areas.
- The financial maintenance burden of the existing Reigate Priory Junior School building will increase with each year the school remains on the current site.
- If a school move or expansions of existing schools are required, the project costs could be higher than relocating Reigate Priory Junior School to Woodhatch Place.
- The Priority Schools Building Programme (PSBP) 2 funding is allocated to a replacement building for Reigate Priory School.

Feasibility (Is it achievable and sustainable?)

- It is feasible to set up a working group to consider and work up different option appraisals.
- The working group will explore different ideas for re-organising and expanding existing schools in the Reigate Planning Area. They may also liaise with schools in neighbouring areas to consider changes to admission arrangements.
- Agreement would be needed to fund viability appraisals for any options proposed.
- It is not known if it is feasible to make sufficient changes (other than moving to a new site) that could ensure school places that are fit for the future across the planning area.
- Multiple decision makers and statutory decision-making process needed before changes could be made.
- A new site may be needed to amalgamate or expand existing schools.
- A new site would be needed for Reigate Priory Junior School if equivalent places cannot be provided elsewhere or places utilised in neighbouring planning areas.
- Other than the site identified in Option 1 another suitable site has not been identified if current schools needed to expand onto an additional site.

What decisions are needed after Surrey County Council Cabinet decision?

1. It is likely that all schools in the area, Multi Academy Trusts and the Department of Education would need to be partners with Surrey County Council in finding a solution.
2. Any option the working group identifies that includes changes to existing schools would be subject to further feasibility studies and formal decision making.
3. Surrey County Council would not recommend a closure of a school that provides quality education and continues to meet the needs of local pupils. However, school closure or school closure as part of an amalgamation may be considered by the working group, if an alternative cannot be found.
4. The [statutory process](#) for expanding or changing the age range of community, voluntary aided, voluntary controlled or foundation schools involves a consultation, followed by a 4

week statutory notice period and a decision by the Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Lifelong Learning.

5. The [statutory process](#) for expanding or changing the age range of academies involves a statutory consultation followed by an Academy Trust making a business case to the Department for Education for decision.
6. The [statutory process](#) for the closure of a maintained school involves a statutory consultation followed by Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Lifelong Learning decision, then a 4 week Statutory Notice period followed by Leader of the Council decision.
7. Any changes proposed to admission arrangements must be published and should be consulted on in line with the [School Admissions Code 2021](#).
8. Any expansions or new sites would be subject to relevant land acquisitions, planning permission or other permissions.

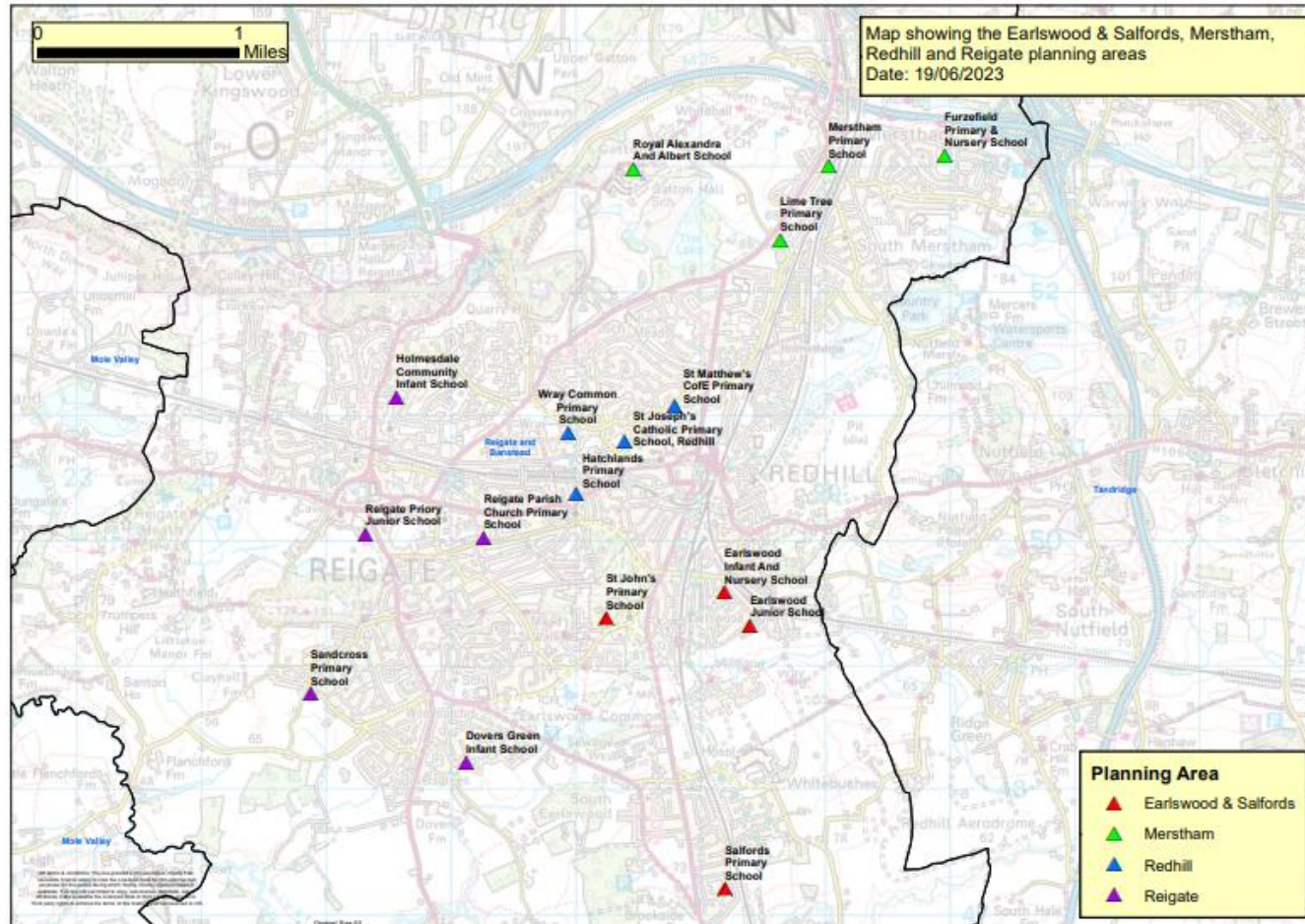
Timescales (When could this be achieved?)

Timescales would be dependent on a number of factors including further consultation, multiple decision makers, viability appraisal, and assurance of school places. With any proposal there would need to be a transition plan showing increase and decrease in places available across the schools year on year. It is unlikely a re-organisation would be complete before September 2028.

Risks and Issues

- Disruption across all schools in the planning area.
- Risk due to the status and condition of the building that there would be an urgent need to find school places for up to 600 pupils if conditions deteriorate on the current site.
- Risks in delaying decision making and missed opportunity for DfE funding to move the school.
- Without a sustainable option for the future the risks to the financial viability of the school will continue to increase.
- Potential loss of experienced staff.
- Potential loss of a school that serves the local community providing quality education to pupils.
- Potential displacement of pupils and potential need for temporary accommodation while changes are in progress. As there are two infant schools and two schools with a junior intake there is not a simple solution to move pupils to a different school when additional places are created.
- The working group may identify the best option is to relocate Reigate Priory Junior School which would mean proceeding with something similar to option 1 at a higher cost due to delays and loss of DfE funding.

Primary Planning Areas Map – Reigate, Redhill, Earlswood & Salfords and Merstham (Schools in the Reigate Planning Area are in purple triangles)*



*See Annex 4 for further information and a map showing the closest schools in Mole Valley, to the west of Reigate.