

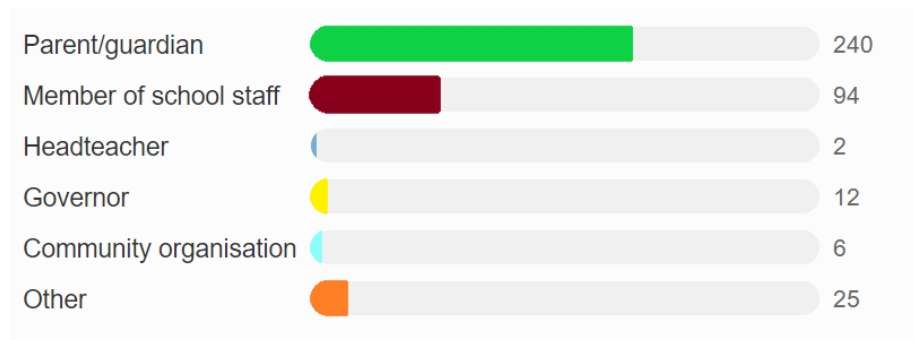
Crewkerne and Ilminster Schools Consultation

Outcomes Report

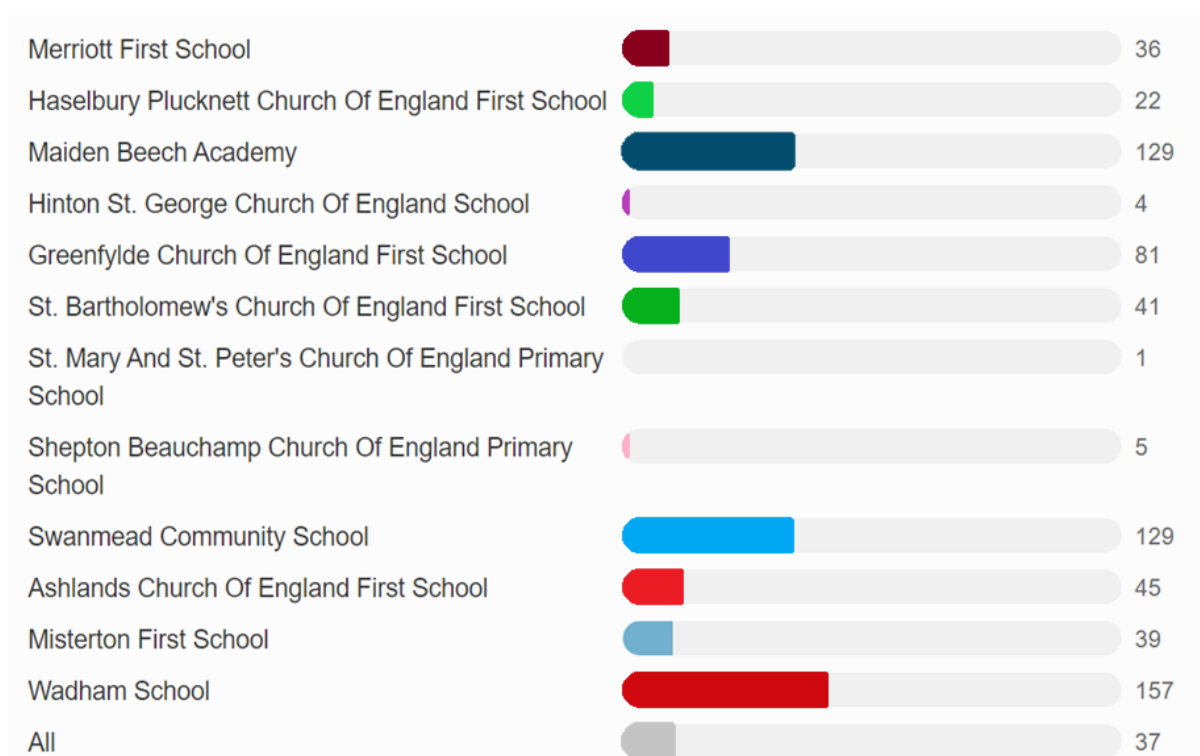
A public consultation was live from 12 November until 11 December 2020. During that time 379 responses to the questionnaire were submitted.

We also received 25 written responses via other means. These includes responses from the following organisations: National Association of Small Schools, Merriott Parish Council, Misterton Parish Council, Haselbury Plucknett and Merriott Schools Governing Body, Ashlands and Misterton Schools Governing Body, Greenfylde School Governing Body and Maiden Beech Academy Governing Body. A summary of representations received by the office Mr. Marcus Fysh MP was also provided.

Of those 379 responses people, were asked which of the following groups best describes them:



And the number interested in each of the schools in the review area was as follows. (NB many responses indicated interest in more than one school)



Summary of qualitative responses

The most commonly cited issues that arose from the comments made by respondents are below. This list is not exhaustive and other individual issues, concerns and ideas were put forward. However, this captures those which were most forcefully or commonly expressed.

Areas where differences of views were expressed:

- There was support for both a two-tier and a three-tier education system. Some emphasised the advantages of specialist teaching in years 5 and 6, others felt that a secondary education in years 7 and 8 would be an advantage.
- Respondents disagreed over the timeline that was proposed. Some respondents preferred change to be as soon as possible and others preferred it to be later.
- Respondents had differences of views about the intake numbers proposed for the primary schools in Crewkerne.

Areas of concern:

- The quality of education and facilities at Wadham School. Among those who identified this as an issue there was disagreement about the appropriate response, with some thinking the proposed change to be essential for the school and others querying whether the changes would make a difference.
- Two additional years of children travelling from Ilminster to Wadham School.

- The loss of specialist subject teaching for years 5 and 6.
- Mixed age and mixed phase classes. Respondents expressed concern that this can result in lower quality of education and/or higher workload for teachers.
- The ability of schools within the proposed model to provide high quality provision for pupils with SEND.
- The method and timing of the review and consultation period. Some respondents felt that discussing change was creating additional stresses at an already stressful time. Others felt that online consultation was unsatisfactory and might disadvantage some affected parties. Some respondents felt the consultation period was too short.
- The extent of training needed for teachers to operate within a different phase of education.

Areas where respondents sought an alternative proposal:

- Creating a secondary school in Ilminster.
- Maiden Beech to become the secondary school in Crewkerne.
- Retaining Misterton First School.
- Adopting a model of primary education that would retain specialist / discrete subject teaching.
- Academisation and bringing middle and upper school into the same multi-academy trust.
- Greenfylde First School to become the single primary school in Ilminster.
- A phased approach to implementation.

Areas where more information was requested:

- The costs of change
- The timing and process that would be used in establishing the leadership of an Ilminster primary.
- Why parents choose to send their children out of area.
- How a transitional period would be managed with a significantly larger group of pupils.
- Whether new primary schools would be able to accommodate siblings.
- Whether the road from Misterton to Crewkerne is deemed unsafe.

Data analysis

The headline figures for responses to each question are below. Respondents were not asked to give a rating. Whether responses were broadly positive, negative or mixed has been determined by reading the qualitative responses. However, the wording of the majority of responses was strongly positive or negative and therefore interpretation was relatively straightforward.

Question	Broadly positive	Mixed	Broadly negative
What are your views on the proposal to	100	32	217

change Wadham school Crewkerne from upper to secondary School?	29%	9%	62%
What are your views on the proposal to amalgamate Swanmead Community School and Greenfylde CofE First School in Ilminster into a split site primary school?	71 28%	22 9%	163 63%
What are your views on the proposal to convert Merriott First School and Haselbury Plucknett CofE First School into primary schools?	86 39%	26 12%	109 49%
What are your views on the proposal to convert Ashlands CofE First School, St Bartholomews CofE First School and Maiden Beech Academy into 3 primary schools in Crewkerne and reduce the total number of schools from 4 to 3 by closing Misterton CofE First School?	53 19%	21 7%	208 74%

Timing of Proposed Implementation

We also asked for views on the proposal to make September 2022 the date for implementation of these proposals

88 people thought that date was right or not soon enough

76 people did not have a view on the implementation date.

215 people thought that date was too soon.

Staff, Parents and Carers

Children and young people would be the people most affected by proposals, however, staff and parents are also significant stakeholders and made up the large majority of responses. For every aspect of the proposal, parents were significantly more opposed to proposals than staff.

Staff views	Broadly positive	Mixed	Broadly negative
What are your views on the proposal to change Wadham school Crewkerne from upper to secondary School?	37 41%	5 6%	48 53%
What are your views on the proposal to amalgamate Swanmead Community School and Greenfylde CofE First School in Ilminster into a split site primary school?	32 44%	5 7%	36 49%
What are your views on the proposal to convert Merriott First School and Haselbury Plucknett CofE First School into primary	29 48%	7 11%	25 41%

schools?			
What are your views on the proposal to convert Ashlands CofE First School, St Bartholomews CofE First School and Maiden Beech Academy into 3 primary schools in Crewkerne and reduce the total number of schools from 4 to 3 by closing Misterton CofE First School?	21 29%	6 8%	46 63%

Parents/Carers	Broadly positive	Mixed	Broadly negative
What are your views on the proposal to change Wadham school Crewkerne from upper to secondary School?	45 20%	27 12%	150 68%
What are your views on the proposal to amalgamate Swanmead Community School and Greenfylde CofE First School in Ilminster into a split site primary school?	24 16%	17 11%	111 73%
What are your views on the proposal to convert Merriott First School and Haselbury Plucknett CofE First School into primary schools?	44 33%	17 13%	71 56%
What are your views on the proposal to convert Ashlands CofE First School, St Bartholomews CofE First School and Maiden Beech Academy into 3 primary schools in Crewkerne and reduce the total number of schools from 4 to 3 by closing Misterton CofE First School?	25 14%	11 6%	137 80%

How direct involvement influenced respondents

All respondents were asked to indicate if there was a school that they had a particular interest in. The overall degree to which respondents were positive or negative varied depending on their school of interest. Those interested in schools which would be more disrupted by the proposals were more negative generally about proposals relating to other schools.

The responses to each proposal, based solely on those who considered themselves to have an interest in the school, are as follows:

The proposal to change Wadham school Crewkerne from upper to secondary School?

Interested School	Broadly positive	Mixed	Broadly negative	No view given
Wadham 157 responses	56 36%	19 12%	78 50%	4 3%

The proposal to amalgamate Swanmead Community School and Greenfylde CofE First School in Ilminster into a split site primary school?

Interested School	Broadly positive	Mixed	Broadly negative	No view given
Greenfylde 81 responses	12 15%	9 11%	58 72%	2 2%
Swanmead 129 responses	10 8%	10 8%	102 80%	7 5%

The proposal to convert Merriott First School and Haselbury Plucknett CofE First School into primary schools?

Interested School	Broadly positive	Mixed	Broadly negative	No view given
Merriott 36 responses	18 50%	8 22%	6 17%	4 11%
Haselbury Plucknett 22 responses	13 59%	3 14%	5 23%	1 5%

The proposal to convert Ashlands CofE First School, St Bartholomews CofE First School and Maiden Beech Academy into 3 primary schools in Crewkerne and reduce the total number of schools from 4 to 3 by closing Misterton CofE First School?

Interested School	Broadly positive	Mixed	Broadly negative	No view given
Ashlands 45 responses	4 9%	2 4%	38 84%	1 2%
St Bartholomew's 41 responses	2 5%	6 15%	32 78%	1 2%
Maiden Beech 129 responses	7 5%	6 5%	108 84%	8 6%
Misterton 39 responses	2 5%	0	37 95%	0

Other Consultation Activities

Petitions

A number of petitions against the proposals were received. Links to the petitions are as follows:

- Crewkerne/Ilminster demand a better and less disruptive solution than SCC's school plans <http://chng.it/sPVLN2Cy>
- Give Ilminster the QUALITY two-tiered LOCAL school system it deserves. <http://chng.it/Df5zSgbC>
- Protect and retain our current three-tier school system in the Ilminster/Crewkerne area (this petition was closed some weeks ago and was superseded) <http://chng.it/78NQWQwV>

Children and Family Scrutiny Committee

A discussion was held with Children and Families Scrutiny Committee on 2nd December. The agenda, papers and draft minutes are available online here: [Somerset County Council](#)

Consultation Events

During the consultation period a number of online events were held, which were open to anyone wishing to attend. Summary attendance is as follows:

	Public event 1 General	Public event 2 Misterton	Public event 3 Crewkerne	Public event 4 Ilminster	Total
Eventbrite registration number	92	39	107	77	315
Microsoft Teams Live attendees*	94	33	93	66	286
Questions/ comments from attendees	137	113	152	93	495
Questions answered by panel	41	42	41	40	164
Announcements/ replies from moderator	67	66	37	36	206