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10 March 2020

Reference: Schools for the Future – Shefford, Stotfold and surrounding area

Dear Parent/Carer/Staff Member/Governor

We wrote to you on 29th October 2019, informing you of how to have your say in Central Bedfordshire Council's (CBCs) public consultation on the proposed changes to schools across the Shefford, Stotfold and surrounding area. The Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) schools concerned being: Samuel Whitbread Academy; Pix Brook Academy; Robert Bloomfield Academy; Etonbury Academy; Gravenhurst Academy; Langford Village Academy; and, Gothic Mede Academy.

CBC have now published the results. These may be found at:
www.schoolsforthefuture.co.uk/plans/shefford-stotfold/have-your-say.

For BEST schools, CBC are proposing:

School	Phase	Pupil Admission Number (PAN)	Date
Langford Village	Primary	30	September 2021
Gothic Mede	Primary	90	September 2023
Gravenhurst	Primary	15	September 2023
Etonbury	Secondary 11-16	150 rising to 240*	September 2023
Pix Brook	Secondary 11-16	150 rising to 240*	September 2023
Robert Bloomfield and Samuel Whitbread	0-18 All-Through	150 – Primary 210 -Secondary 11-16** Sixth Form***	September 2023

* Sixth Form provision will be made available to Etonbury Academy and Pix Brook Academy, as numbers demand it.

** This number will expand to accommodate pupils from Robert Bloomfield Academy's traditional feeder Lower schools.

*** Sixth Form provision will be expanded to accommodate student demand.

Initially, whilst supporting the primary-secondary model, BEST did not support the move as set out in CBC's consultation materials. Having seen the results of the consultation, we continued to have concerns. Following extensive discussions, we are very pleased to be able to share the news that we have secured the following commitments from CBC, protecting the interests of the BEST community:

1. Five form Primary provision, as part of the all-through 0-18 school

Dr Alan Lee
CEO & National Leader of Education.



BEST Schools: Samuel Whitbread Academy, Etonbury Academy, Pix Brook Academy, Robert Bloomfield Academy, St Christophers Academy, Gothic Mede Academy, Langford Village Academy, Gravenhurst Academy, Lawnside Academy and BEST Nurseries.

Company Registration Number: 07546141 VAT Registration Number: 120 7845 28 BEST has exempt charitable status by virtue of being an academy trust.

2. Provision for pupils from Robert Bloomfield Academy's traditional feeder schools to gain entry to the Secondary provision, of the all-through 0-18 school
3. Campton Lower¹ school - as a new member of BEST - becoming a new build 2 form entry Primary school, in line with CBC's draft plan
4. Additional 6th Form Provision on the Samuel Whitbread Academy and Etonbury Academy/Pix Brook Academy sites, providing an extensive and diverse range of courses for all those wanting them
5. Developing a joint solution to all PFI-related issues on the Samuel Whitbread site.

These were presented in a statement from BEST to CBC's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, on 10 March 2020.

What this means in practice, is that:

- all BEST Lower schools will become full Primary schools;
- BEST's two extended-Secondary schools, will become full Secondary schools, with Sixth Form provision; and
- BEST's Middle and Upper schools will come together to form a 0-18 provision.

Perhaps the most radical concept is bringing Robert Bloomfield and Samuel Whitbread Academies together to offer a seamless, all-through 0-18 school. For pupils and parents this would secure consistent high standards from reception through to advanced level study, in a caring happy community where everyone is prized and we are all focused on being the very best we can be.

Mr Farmer (Principal, Robert Bloomfield Academy), Mr Martin (Principal, Samuel Whitbread Academy) and I have visited an all-through school in Northampton and can see huge potential in such a school for our community. Local Governing Bodies and Trustees are supportive too.

Educationally, this is a really exciting opportunity and one which we are committed to making a huge success of. But we also recognise that there is much to do to turn this into reality, for 2023.

The next steps are for CBC to present the plans to the CBC Executive Committee. This is scheduled to meet on 7th April 2020 and will be followed by a public consultation. We will inform you of the details of this and we do encourage you to respond.

To hear your views as we move through the process, we have created a specific Schools for the Future email account: schoolsforthefuture@bestacademies.org.uk. Please let us know what you think, get involved and let's deliver this exciting plan together for our children.

Yours sincerely



Alan Lee
Chief Executive Officer



Ilona Bond
Chair of Trustees

¹ Campton Lower School have made a formal application to join BEST.

