

INITIAL PUBLIC CONSULTATION 8 MAY 2024 to 12 JUNE 2024
<https://yourvoice.westsussex.gov.uk/millais>

Dear parent/carers, staff member and other interested persons:

Consultation on the proposal to change Millais School from a single sex girls' school to a co-educational (both boys' and girls') school

Following due consideration of the options regarding future admissions to the school, West Sussex County Council have agreed to consult on the proposal to change the status of the school from a single sex girls' school to a co-educational boys' and girls' school. The consultation proposes that Millais school receives the first co-educational cohort, which will be for Year 7 admissions only, from September 2026 subject to approval from the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Learning and Skills. Should this be agreed, then all subsequent Year 7 admissions would similarly be for boys and girls.

Background - opportunity for change

The opportunity for change and a re-organisation of the school arises from:

- Recognition of the pressure for additional secondary places in Horsham locality and a desire to ensure secondary places for these pupils. Under s14 of the Education Act 1996 the County Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient places to provide education for all children and young people in their area.
- The school has not filled all its places for the last three years which impacts on budgets and resources.
- The school would receive some capital investment in appropriate facilities by moving to become a co-educational school.
- An opportunity to build on the current good practice of the school and to drive up educational standards across the town by offering boys as well as girls access to the high-quality education offer.

Current Capacity of Millais School

Net Capacity of Millais School – 1593 places
 Published Admission Number (PAN) – 300 places per year
 Current number on roll (NOR) – 1201 (Autumn Census 2023 data)

Allocation for Y7 in Sept 2024	Current Yr7	Yr8	Yr9	Yr10	Y11
166	164	191	252	295	299

Pressure for additional secondary school places

Horsham currently has three co-educational secondary schools (Tanbridge House, The Forest School and Bohunt, Horsham) and one single sex school for girls (Millais School). The Forest School was formerly a boys' school but the County Council together with the Board of Governors of the Forest School consulted on a change to the designation to become co-educational which was supported and put into effect on 1 September 2021.

Academic impact of a co-educational option:

There is some debate around the advantages and disadvantages of single sex education as opposed to co-educational education. What is clear is there is no definitive "correct" universally accepted answer. Supporters of single sex education often highlight the apparent success of single sex schools, especially in the UK where highly selective independent schools tend to dominate league tables of student outcomes. However, the case that girls and boys learn and achieve better when taught separately is far from conclusive. "Single-sex education does not educate girls and boys any better than co-ed schools" according to research published by the American Psychological Association analysing 184 studies of more than 1.6 million students from around the world (2014, APA journal Psychological Bulletin).

Both co-educational schools and single sex schools perform well in national league tables. A decision to move to co-education would, therefore, not negatively impact students' outcomes.

The following 2023 data compares the outcomes of girls in Millais to girls in the other co-educational schools in the Horsham District. (Two schools in the Horsham District do not have girls' data for 2023 because Bohunt, Horsham did not have a year 11 cohort and Forest School only had boys in the cohort.)

GCSE Outcome Data for Girls				
School and National and West Sussex figures	Attainment 8 ¹	Progress 8 ²	5+ in English and mathematics	4+ in English and mathematics
National State funded	48.6	+0.12	47.5%	67.6%
West Sussex	48.6	+0.19	47.5%	69.1%

¹ **Attainment 8** is a way of measuring how well pupils do in key stage 4, which they usually finish when they are 16 years old. The 8 subjects which make up Attainment 8 are: English, mathematics, three subjects from qualifications that count towards the English Baccalaureate (EBacc), like sciences, language and history, three more GCSE qualifications (including EBacc subjects) or technical awards from a list approved by the Department for Education. Each grade a pupil gets is assigned a point score from 9 (the highest) to 1 (the lowest). Each pupil's Attainment 8 score is calculated by adding up the points for their 8 subjects, with English and maths counted twice.

² **Progress 8** tells you about the progress that pupils in a school make from the end of primary school to the end of year 11.

School	Attainment 8	Progress 8	5+ in English and mathematics	4+ in English and mathematics
Millais	54.6	+0.31	56.4%	79.9%
School A	49.3	+0.23	43.7%	68.3%
School B	56.2	+0.93	60.7%	84.4%
School C	51.5	+0.51	55.1%	70.3%

Schools A, B and C are other local secondary schools. See previous page for West Sussex and National figures for comparison.

Non-academic impact of moving to co-education:

Research over the last 50 years has shown there are non-academic benefits to the co-education of children. These are summarised by Sullivan, Joshi & Leonard (2011):

“There appears to be a general consensus that male and female students in co-educational settings are more positive about their schools and about the developmental aspects of their schooling. (Feather 1974; Schneider and Coutts 1982; Schneider, Coutts, and Starr 1988; Stables 1990). For example, Dale (1969, 1971, 1974) found that both boys and girls were more satisfied with co-education, seeing it as a more “natural” environment and feeling it helped their relationships with the opposite sex. Similarly, Hannan and Shortall (1991) found that male and female ex-students of co-educational schools in Ireland were more positive about the personal and social development aspects of their schooling.” Smyth (2010)

Some other advantages of co-educational settings include:

- The world’s environment is both male and female. Men and women have to cooperate at work, therefore co-education prepares them for the work environment as they become used to working along peers from both genders.
- Co-education can improve socialisation skills as both genders are more likely to take risks and challenge accepted views. They have more confidence in social situations. It gives the higher levels of self-esteem as they have more opportunity to express their views in front of members of the opposite sex.
- It can help them to appreciate and respect potentially different views of other genders and to have mutual respect and understanding.
- Children can develop a broader range of friends and see that it is normal to have friendships with other genders.

The requirement for building adaptations

When considering moving from a single sex educational environment thought needs to be given to how the gender being introduced to the school is not at a

disadvantage. Millais School has good and extensive facilities. The requirement for building adaptation for boys is relatively minor with the need for toilets and changing rooms being a priority.

The proposal

The proposal is to change the status of the school from a single sex girls' school to a co-educational school. At this stage, it is not intended to change the age range of the school which is currently 11-16. The earliest the first co-educational cohort could enter Year 7 would be from September 2026. Existing year groups of girls would continue to receive their education at the school until they leave at the age of 16.

FAQs:

Q. Why are you suggesting the school moves from being a single sex girls' school to a co-ed girls' and boys' school?

Students:

- Achieve academically as well in co-educational settings as they do in single sex schools.
- Indicate that co-educational settings are often a preferred choice.
- Consider that co-education better prepares them for their life as adults.

Parents / Carers:

- Have the choice of choosing a local school with increased maintained co-educational places.
- Consider co-educational schools as a popular choice.
- Will be able to choose the same secondary school for their sons and daughters.

Local Authority:

- Will have additional co-educational secondary school places within Horsham to meet a rising demand for secondary school places over the coming years.

Local Schools:

- Numbers will be more evenly distributed across the schools to give financial stability for all schools.

Q. How will you meet the needs of boys?

Facilities:

- Will be converted to ensure that boys have equality of opportunity to that which they would receive in other co-educational schools.
- Will be enhanced to ensure sufficient new boys' toilets/changing facilities etc.

Curriculum:

- Will be reviewed and redeveloped to ensure an appropriate curriculum to provide equality of opportunity to that which is offered to boys in other co-educational schools, including within physical education.

Pastoral Care:

- Leaders would need to source training and support in meeting the pastoral needs of all children including boys.
- Emotional and social support would be provided for boys as well as girls, including those with SEND.

Q. Will boys only be allowed into Year 7 in 2026?

- We believe it to be important in meeting the needs of male students that the change is phased in rather than boys joining existing year groups.
- There are no plans to offer places to boys in any of the existing year groups that will continue as girls only until they leave the school.

Q. How would this change impact on the ethos of the school?

- The Local Authority does not envisage the school changing its ethos and mission. The school provides an outstanding education, with high-quality teaching and a nurturing school ethos that empowers each student to achieve their personal best.

Q. Why are you proposing this now?

- The school needs to be ready to meet the local needs of an expanding school population. By offering places to boys it will reduce the need for some boys in the Horsham area to be sent to schools in other District and Boroughs away from their friendship groups and involving long daily journeys.

Q. How will this affect students currently in the school, what about the cultural as well as educational argument for single sex girls' education?

- Many co-educational schools do have single sex teaching within their organisation for certain lessons. For four more years the make-up of the school will be predominantly female.

Q. Will the name of the school change?

- We do not envisage a change of the name of the school due to this proposal.

Q. How will this affect Sport and Extra-Curricular opportunities?

- As part of the curriculum review the school will assess the sporting opportunities for boys.
- The school has many community groups that use the site for after school and weekend provision. The school may consider looking at introducing clubs specifically for boys as well as ensuring access for both genders.

Q. Will there be a change in logo/uniform?

- The school will carry out a review of the school uniform policy and will consult about the changes.

Q. Will there be a need to change the schools catchment area?

- The consultation will seek views on the option of changing the catchment area.

Q. What will the over-subscription criteria be for the school?

- Where the school is over-subscribed, places will be allocated according to the County Council's published admissions policy available at: <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/school-places/>

Q. What will the balance be between boys and girls in a year group?

- The school cannot select by gender to artificially determine the proportion of boys to girls. The school anticipates that the balance between boys and girls will evolve. Initially there is expected to be a higher proportion of girls to boys in a year group, however, over time it is anticipated that the proportion of boys and girls will become more even.

What happens next?

We are consulting widely during May 2024 and early June in order to hear and collect your views informally. The school and County Council will then assess these views and it is expected that the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Education & Learning will make a decision on the proposals during the Autumn term 2024. The County Council's Children and Young People's Services Scrutiny Committee is likely to review the consultation in June 2024. Subject to any comments or recommendations, this may lead to statutory proposals being published which would run for a period of four weeks outside the school holiday period which constitutes a formal consultation on the proposals.

Other single sex girls' schools?

West Sussex has only one other single sex girls' secondary school, namely Davison Church of England High School for Girls in Worthing. The Local Authority have discussed with representatives from the Diocese of Chichester, and they have confirmed that they do not wish to see the school consult on becoming co-educational in the foreseeable future. There is not the same need to move to co-educational as Davison Church of England High School for Girls attracts enough students to fill their published admission number.

How can you have your say?

Please refer to the County Council 'Your Voice' website where there is an online survey to complete.

<https://yourvoice.westsussex.gov.uk/millais>

How to find out more please contact:

schoolconsultations@westsussex.gov.uk

or via mail to:

The School Planning Team
Ground Floor, Northleigh
West Sussex County Council Campus
Tower Street
Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1RE

Tel: 0330 222 3046

If you do not have access to a computer you can obtain a paper copy of this survey by contacting the address or number above.

Please ensure all paper copies are returned to the above address before the closing date of the **12 June 2024**.

RESPONSE FORM

The proposal is to change the status of the Millais School from a single sex girls' school to a co-educational girls' and boys' school from September 2026. Existing year groups of girls would continue to receive their education at the school until they leave at the age of 16. It is not intended to change the age range of the school which is currently 11-16.

The consultation will run for five weeks from 8 May 2024 to 12 June 2024

Return the attached form to:

The School Planning Team
Ground Floor Northleigh
West Sussex County Council Campus
Tower Street
Chichester, West Sussex PO19 1RE

Privacy/Data Protection Notice:

The School Planning Team at West Sussex County Council will use this survey to collect some personal data (eg. age, sex) in fulfilment of a legal obligation to consult on change of status proposals. You do not have to answer these survey question but the information you do supply will be processed in accordance with the 2018 Data Protection Act and the General Data Protection Regulations, and any subsequent relevant legislation. West Sussex County Council will not share any personal information collected as part of this survey. The information will be held electronically for a period of three years before being appropriately destroyed.

The information you provide will be used for statistical analysis, management, planning and the provision of services by the County Council and its partners. It will not be used for any other purpose without your prior consent. WSCC is registered as Data Controller (Reg. No. Z6413427). For further details and information about our Data Controller, please see our Data Privacy Policy <http://www.westsussex.gov.uk/privacy-policy>.

Survey

*Questions marked with an asterisk are required fields

1* Please provide your postcode

2* Please indicate whether you are (please select all that apply)

Parent/carer -----
Staff -----
Governor -----
Student -----
Local Resident -----
Other (please specify) -----

3 If you are a parent/carer, is your child?

Male -----
Female -----
Prefer not to say -----

4* Do you support the proposals to change the status of Millais School from a single sex girls' school to a co-educational girls' and boys' school. from September 2026?

Support the proposal -----
Object to the proposal -----
Neither support nor object -----

5. Please state your views on the proposals. We would be grateful for comments on any aspects of them including diversity, choice, and the possibility of catchment area changes etc. Please continue on a separate page if required.

About You

The County Council asks social demographic questions to help monitor the effectiveness of its surveys and to undertake an equalities analysis in fulfilment of its Public Sector Equalities Duties under the 2010 Equalities Act.

The information you provide will be separated from both the respondent details and the response comments and will not be used for any other purpose other than that already stated.

You do not have to provide this information if you don't want to, but it will greatly help us if you do. Should you prefer not to provide the answer to any questions, please choose the 'Prefer not to say' option within each set of questions

6. Which of the following age groups best describes you? (Please select one option only)

- 12 and under-----
- 13-19 -----
- 20-24 -----
- 25-34 -----
- 35-44 -----
- 45-54 -----
- 55-64 -----
- 65-74 -----
- 75-84 -----
- 85+ -----
- Prefer not to say -----

7. What is your sex? (Please select one option only)

- Male -----
- Female -----
- Prefer not to say -----

8. Are you currently pregnant or have you been pregnant in the last 26 weeks?
Please select one option only)

- Yes -----
- No -----
- Prefer not to say -----

9. What is your ethnic origin? (Please select one option only)

- White British (English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish) -----
- White Other -----
- Mixed -----
- Black -----
- Asian -----
- Chinese -----
- Gypsy/Irish Traveller -----
- Prefer not to say -----
- Other (please specify) -----

10. Please specify your religion or belief: (Please select one option only)

- No religion -----
- Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations) -----
- Buddhist -----
- Hindu -----
- Jewish -----
- Muslim -----
- Sikh -----
- Any other religion -----
- Prefer not to say -----
- Other (please specify) -----

11. Do you consider yourself to have a disability or long-term illness? (Please select one option only)

- Yes -----
- No -----
- Prefer not to say -----

12. Please indicate what your disability is: (Please tick all that apply)

- Physical impairment -----
- Sensory impairment -----
- Mental health condition -----
- Learning Disability -----
- Long term illness -----
- Prefer not to say -----
- Other (please specify) -----

13. Is the gender you identify the same as your sex registered at birth? Please select one option only

- Yes -----
- No -----
- Prefer not to say -----

14. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

- Straight/Heterosexual -----
- Gay or Lesbian -----
- Bisexual -----
- Prefer not to say -----
- Other (please specify) -----

15. Are you

- Single -----
- Cohabiting -----
- Married -----
- Civil Partnership -----

Separated -----
Divorced/partnership dissolved -----
Widowed -----
Other -----
Prefer not to say -----

Thank you for taking part in our survey. Consultation closes on **12 June 2024.**