

Parents & Carers:

Berkley First School
Norton St Philip First School
Rode First School
St John's First School
Vallis First School

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Dear Parents & Carers

Frome Education Structures

I am writing to share an update on an important conversation that has been taking place regarding future education structures in Frome and the surrounding villages.

As you may already be aware, over the last 2 years, all key educational stakeholders have been exploring the possibility of moving to a two-tier education system in Frome. These discussions have been thoughtful, collaborative and rooted in our commitment to providing the very best opportunities for all children in Frome.

We want to communicate openly with you as this conversation continues to develop.

I would like to emphasise that at this point, no firm decisions have been made and any formal proposals that may come out of these discussions could only go ahead with the agreement of the Department for Education (DfE).

As part of these discussions, we have been looking closely at the potential benefits of a two-tier system, which may include:

- Improved continuity in learning, with fewer transitions between schools during key developmental stages.
- Stronger curriculum progression, enabling schools to plan more consistently from early years through to GCSEs and A levels.
- Enhanced pastoral support, as children spend longer within the same school community, allowing for deeper relationships and more personalised guidance.
- More efficient use of resources, helping schools to align staffing, facilities, and specialist provision more effectively.

- Fewer transitions, reducing disruption at ages where children are developing socially, emotionally, and academically.
- A more cohesive education system for the whole town, with clearer pathways and stronger collaboration between schools.
- An improved overall educational experience for pupils, with greater stability, access to broader opportunities, and more consistent support.
- A likely reduction in the number of pupils leaving Frome to be educated elsewhere, as a strengthened local system meets the needs of more families.
- Greater educational choice for pupils and families across the full age range.
- The possibility of additional special and AP provision – in current buildings, as capacity is unlocked.

I am pleased to let you know that an initial public consultation is planned for February 2026 which will be run by the Local Authority.

If the outcome of these discussions leads to a formal proposal, it is likely that any changes would be implemented from September 2028. This timeline allows for careful planning, meaningful engagement and a smooth transition for children, families, and staff.

I am aware that Avanti Park have recently written to their school community informing them of their intention to consult on a change to the school's age range from September 2027. As I have already mentioned, any such change could only happen if approved by the DfE.

Throughout this process, we want to emphasise that any changes would only take place if they are clearly in the best interests of the children and the wider Frome community. Ensuring the wellbeing, success and long-term opportunities of our children remains at the heart of our decision-making.

All of us involved in these discussions are proud to be part of such a caring and forward-thinking community and we look forward to working together as this process moves ahead.

Thank you for your continued support and commitment to the education of children in Frome and the surrounding areas.



Phil Curd
Head of Education Places
Somerset Council