

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL: PROPOSED AMALGAMATION OF MERROW C OF E CONTROLLED INFANT SCHOOL AND MERROW JUNIOR SCHOOL

Response from Humanists UK, July 2026



ABOUT HUMANISTS UK

At Humanists UK, we want a tolerant world where rational thinking and kindness prevail. We work to support lasting change for a better society, championing ideas for the one life we have. Our work helps people be happier and more fulfilled, and by bringing non-religious people together we help them develop their own views and an understanding of the world around them. Founded in 1896, we are trusted to promote humanism by 150,000 members and supporters and around 120 members of the All-Party Parliamentary Humanist Group. Through our ceremonies, pastoral support, education services, and campaigning work, we advance free thinking and freedom of choice so everyone can live in a fair and equal society.

What is your preferred option for the future of Merrow C of E Controlled Infant School and Merrow Junior School?

Option 2 - Amalgamate the two schools to form a Foundation Primary School

Please use this space to provide any comments if you wish

We support the proposal to amalgamate Merrow C of E Controlled Infant School and Merrow Junior School to form a Foundation Primary School.

Serving the whole community. 36.6% of Surrey residents identify as having no religion, and many others identify as being part of a religion that isn't Christianity. A school of no religious character would therefore be best placed to serve the whole local community. From an admissions perspective it would welcome children and families equally, regardless of their religion or belief, and avoid giving any one tradition a privileged status within the identity of the school. This is particularly important in a diverse community, where families may be Christian, belong to another religion, or have no religion. A merged school should be open to all local children, not one that some families feel is less clearly intended for them. A Foundation Primary School with no religious character would provide the most inclusive and unifying model for Merrow.

Supported by the community. The original consultation showed that the religious designation of the proposed amalgamated school was the main barrier to community support. The [consultation analysis](#) found that the Church of England designation was the most contentious issue, appearing in 67% of all comments. Respondents expressed concern that making the new school a Church of England school would not reflect Merrow's diverse local community, could deter some families from applying, and would remove the existing school of no religious character option for Key Stage 2 pupils. A Foundation Primary School would address those concerns while preserving the practical case for amalgamation. It would avoid one school's religious character being imposed across the whole merged school, and would provide a more inclusive settlement for children and families of all religions and beliefs, including the non-religious. It would also better reflect the fact that Merrow Junior School is currently a successful school of no religious character, and that many respondents



were not objecting to amalgamation in principle, but to the proposal that the merged school should become a faith school.

For these reasons, we believe that amalgamating the two schools as a Foundation Primary School is the best option. It supports the long-term sustainability of local education, preserves the benefits of an all-through primary school, and provides a fairer and more inclusive outcome for the whole Merrow community.

To help with our analysis of responses, please tell us whether you are:

Other relationship - we have been approached by parents concerned about the proposals.

For more details, information, and evidence, contact Humanists UK:

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