



PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOLS FAQS

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PREPARED BY

*The Ministry of
Education*



GOVERNMENT OF BERMUDA

Ministry of Education

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P1 REGISTRATION



My daughter is at preschool and is supposed to be going to one of the primary schools sites that will eventually be discontinued to be used. What should I do?



- Primary school registration will continue as normal. Students will continue to have a regular school year.
- School discontinuations will not affect primary schools for the **2021/2022** or the **2022/2023** school year. These changes will be phased in between **2023** and **2027**.
- We have made a commitment to our students, staff, families and broader community to provide appropriate notice, transition planning and support for any changes that may occur.

For more information on education reform, visit www.moed.bm.

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P1 REGISTRATION



As a parent, I am sceptical of registering my P1 age child for a school that will eventually be discontinued. What reassurance can you provide at this time?



- We understand that some will find the decision to discontinue some school sites difficult.
- All primary schools will open in **September 2021** as usual.
- Primary School discontinuations will not begin until the **2023/24** academic school year and will be phased in its approach until **2027**.
- A detailed plan will be shared well in advance of the implementation of any changes.

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TIMING OF IMPLEMENTATION



When will primary school sites be discontinued?

- Primary school sites will be discontinued in a phased roll-out plan between **2023** and **2027**.
- A **detailed project plan** will be shared with students, parents, staff and the broader community well in advance of any implemented changes.



RATIONALE FOR FEWER PRIMARY SCHOOLS



Why do we need fewer primary schools? How will fewer schools give better results for our children?



- We have fewer students and the birth rate continues to fall. In **2013**, there were **2,616** students enrolled in primary schools. That number dropped to **2,074** in **2020**; and the numbers are projected to continue to drop.
- Fewer schools will provide us with the greatest opportunity of achieving **equitable, high-quality education** for **each and every child**.
- Fewer schools will allow us to concentrate our investment in the areas that matter the most, how teachers teach, what students learn, in addition to ensuring our buildings are safe, healthy and fit for the 21st Century.
- Additionally, our school buildings are old and in various states of disrepair.

05

PRIMARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM

Q

Will the primary school curriculum change?

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- To complement the shift to Parish Primary Schools, our **curriculum framework is being redesigned**.
- This will ensure we have a **future-focused curriculum that prepares our children to be engaged, adaptive, self-aware, creative, connected and entrepreneurial**.

LEARNING FACILITIES

Q

What will a new parish primary school look like?

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- The vision for the BPSS is to have updated school buildings that are safe, healthy and fit for 21st-Century education.
- These will facilitate a maximum school capacity of **300 students with a maximum of 15 students per class**. A preschool with a capacity of **30 students** located on the same campus.
- There will also be plenty of green space to house playfields for preschool and primary school-aged children.

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PRIMARY SCHOOL SIZE



With one primary school per parish, how will you prevent overcrowding in classrooms?



- Parish Primary Schools will be the right size for our community and the number of young people we have in the Public School System.
- Class size for all primary year levels will be a maximum of **15 students**.

IMPACT OF LARGER SCHOOLS ON STUDENTS



Will my child's individual educational needs be met with the implementation of larger schools?



- Absolutely as learning will be designed around each and every child's unique talents, passions, starting point and progress.
- Class sizes will continue to be small – not more than **15 students**.
- Learning will be **personalized, flexible, future-focused, authentic, high-quality** and at the **appropriate level of challenge**.

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EQUITY ACROSS SCHOOLS



What does it mean on page 17 of the consultation document that “Equity will ensure that resources are provided based on the demographics of each school rather than providing funding which assumes that all schools have the same needs”?



- Currently, we have resources spread across 18 primary schools of different enrolments, physical capacities and facility conditions.
- The way that the system is organized makes it difficult to provide all of the resources that a school may need.
- For example, school counsellors are provided based on school size, rather than individual school needs.
- Equity means that we have to tailor the support that we provide to each school based on the individual school and students' needs, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.
- Fewer schools will provide us with the greatest opportunity of achieving equitable, high-quality education for each and every child.

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RESOURCES



What do you mean by “considerable human and financial resources spread inequitably across 18 primary schools”? How can this be when the government is in control of the budgets and hiring?



- The Government does determine the budget for public education.
- As important as education is, however, there are multiple spending responsibilities across Government.
- Up to 90% of school budgets are salaries, which means that most of our resources are teaching and non-teaching staff.
- Every school, regardless of enrolment, requires a certain level of resources in order to run.
- Resources are spread inequitably because, although schools have different enrolments and physical capacities, we currently need to spread them across 18 primary schools regardless of enrolment or need.



21ST CENTURY EDUCATION



What do you mean by “21st Century education”?



- Our aim is to prepare and equip children to be **lead personally and professionally, compete locally and contribute globally.**
- This means learning must be **personalized, flexible, future-focused, authentic high-quality and high-challenge.**
- Therefore, learning will change to help students develop determination, knowledge and agency.
- This includes skills fit for the 21st Century such as **critical thinking and problem-solving; communication and collaboration; and digital fluency and ICT literacy** to name a few.

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ENROLMENT



What if I don't want my child to go to the school in my parish?



- As per the **current enrolment process**, enrolment will continue to be **by zone** so parents will continue to have a choice of schools within their zone.

SCHOOL SELECTION



Why were these school sites selected to eventually be discontinued to be used as Primary Schools?



- The school sites selected are the best and most appropriate sites for parish primary schools, the alternative signature school and the exceptionalities signature schools.
- The goal is to build new schools on current sites that can best support an equitable and sustainable school system for our current students and future generations.
- We must give young people the opportunities to be prepared for today and the future Bermudian society and economy.

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IMPROVING EDUCATION FOR ALL



Why are the changes so focused on buildings? What do buildings have to do with improving education?



- Learning First, a program established to redesign teaching and learning on the Island, has begun work on developing a curriculum that is fit for 21st century education. Our school buildings need to complement this work.
- Improving school buildings will ensure that all children receive a high-quality education.
- We need fewer, but more modern facilities that are safe, healthy and fit for 21st century learning to support the vision we have for learning.

TIMELINES



I heard that the changes are going into effect in September 2021. Is that right?



- No. That is not correct.
- The changes will be phased in over time – between **2023** to **2027**.
- Parents and staff will have advance notice of any changes before they are implemented.

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STAFFING



When will staff from discontinued schools sites have to move?



- A fair process for staffing changes will be developed and consulted with teaching and non-teaching staff and their unions.
- Advance notice will be given before any staffing changes are made.

JOB SECURITY



Will there be job losses?



- It is anticipated that the restructuring will result in the creation of new job responsibilities and potentially new positions.
- As the phased discontinuation of some primary schools will not start until after 2023, it is anticipated that current staff numbers will have changed by then due to retirements, teachers leaving the system, etc.
- It is not possible to speak to specific job losses or potential job gains until the phased implementation plan is developed in conjunction with the work that Learning First is doing.

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IMPORTANCE OF HISTORY & LEGACY

How can you close schools with long and rich histories, especially since they mean so much to our community?

- We recognize that history and legacy are important to every school and the broader community.
- The strength of views on the importance of history and legacy of some school-communities was balanced with the deep need to bring about positive educational changes for all young people.
- We firmly believe that history and legacy should not be a barrier to improving education, considering the challenges schools face, including inequities.
- We invite members of all school-communities to work with us to preserve the history and legacy of primary schools; this will be a critical part of the transition and implementation to the new model of parish primary schools.



'HIGH PERFORMING' SCHOOLS



Why are schools with great results being discontinued?



- There are a number of assumptions being made about what 'high performing' means and which schools are 'high performing'.
- What is sometimes cited as "school performance" are the results of the Cambridge Checkpoint assessments taken by most public school students in their final year of primary school.
- P6 Checkpoint assessment results do not represent school performance.
- Cambridge have expressly stated that Checkpoint results are not an indicator of 'school performance' and should not be used to rank schools.