

Cabinet

18 March 2015



Proposal to Change the Age Range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015.

Key Decision CAS/06/14

Report of Corporate Management Team

Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services

Councillor Ossie Johnson, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Cabinet approval to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015 taking account of the Local Authority's duties as prescribed in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to secure sufficient places, and to secure good outcomes for all children and young people in their local area.

Background

2. In April 2013 the Government introduced reforms to the way school funding should be allocated. The aim of these reforms was to focus the allocation of resources predominantly based on pupil numbers and pupil need. The outcome of these reforms is that there is now an increased pressure on small schools. The effect of these reforms is that the larger the school, the greater the funding it receives. The amalgamation of infant and junior schools results in increased opportunities for efficiency and provides a larger single cohort of pupils that in turn provides greater financial stability.
3. In addition attending an "all through" Primary School reduces breaks in children's learning and eliminates the need for additional transitions in a child's schooling. Primary Schools support continuity of education provision in a way that separate Infant and Junior Schools do not, simply because of the separate organisational and educational ethos. There are also advantages for parents/carers, including only having to apply for a school place once for their children in Primary School age, only having to buy one school uniform. Further benefits of "all through" Primary Schools are included in the consultation document in Appendix 2.
4. Discussions with Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior schools about a possible amalgamation began in November 2014.

5. Following these initial discussions, using delegated powers, the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services approved the commencement of consultation on the proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015. The delegated decision report is included in Appendix 2.
6. Consultation was undertaken between 20 November and 23 December 2014. Consultation documents (included in Appendix 2) were distributed widely across the local area on 24 November 2014. A series of meetings were held between 26 November and 4 December 2014 so that Governors, staff, Parish Councils, parents, pupils and the local community could share their views with the Local Authority.
7. A full summary of the consultation responses is included in the delegated decision report attached as Appendix 2.
8. When considering responses to the consultation the Council has referred to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance "School Organisation - Maintained Schools - Guidance for Proposers and Decision-Makers" which states that the decision-maker (in this case the Local Authority) should consider the views of those affected by a proposal or who have an interest in it, including cross-LA border interests. The decision-maker should not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view. Instead, they should give the greatest weight to responses from those stakeholders likely to be most affected by a proposal - especially the parents of children at the affected school(s).
9. The responses to the consultation were received and considered by officers in the County Council. The large majority (19) were in support of the proposal and only 1 was not in support of it. The responses received provided no evidence that not implementing the proposal would address the concerns over the future sustainability of small schools. Furthermore the responses did not suggest that leaving the two schools as separate schools would have the benefits that "all through" Primary Schools have including continuity and progress of learning between 4 and 11, a single application of assessment criteria and pupil teaching and access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full primary range. A summary of the responses is provided in paragraphs 17-19.

Decision to Issue a Statutory Notice

10. After full consideration of all the responses to the consultation, the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services used delegated powers to agree to publish proposals to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015. A statutory notice was therefore published on 8 January 2015 (attached as Appendix 3).
11. Once the proposal is published there follows a statutory 4 week representation period during which comments on the proposal can be made. These must be sent to the Local Authority. Any person can submit

representations, which can be objections as well as expressions of support for the proposal. The representation period is the final opportunity for people and organisations to express their views about the proposal and ensure that they will be taken into account by the Decision Maker (in this case the County Council's Cabinet). Once the representation period has closed a decision on the proposal must be made within 2 months i.e. by 5 April 2015.

Responses to the Proposal Published on 8 January 2015 for 4 weeks (the Statutory Notice Period)

12. 3 responses were received by the end of the 4 week statutory notice period, 2 in support of the proposal and 1 objecting to the proposal. Those respondents supporting the proposal stated that a Primary School would benefit the children of the Infant and Junior Schools and provide continuity of leadership. The respondent objecting to the proposal did so on the grounds that it will lead to increased traffic and pedestrian congestion. These matters have been referred to the Council's Highways Department.

Decision Making Process

Factors to be considered by Cabinet

(a) Related Proposals

13. Any proposal that is 'related' to another proposal must be considered together. A proposal should be regarded as 'related' if its implementation (or non implementation) would prevent or undermine the effective implementation of another proposal. Where proposals are 'related' the decisions should be compatible.
14. The proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and the proposal to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015 are 'related' therefore they must be considered together.

(b) Consideration of Consultation and Representation Period

15. Cabinet needs to be satisfied that the appropriate consultation and representation period have been carried out and that the proposer (in this case the Local Authority) has had regard to the responses received. If the Local Authority has failed to meet the statutory requirements, this proposal may be deemed invalid and therefore should be rejected.
16. Cabinet must consider all the views submitted, including all objections and comments on the proposal. Details of the consultation are included in paragraph 6. The Statutory Notice published on 8 January 2015 and which expired on 5 February 2015 (the representation period) is attached as Appendix 3. Officers prepared the notice as set out in the regulations and complied with statutory requirements.
17. The report attached as Appendix 2 provides full details of the responses received during the consultation period from 20 November - 23 December 2014. In summary:

- 17 written responses were sent to the County Council from
 - 16 parents
 - 1 Governor
 - Of the 17, 16 are in support of the proposal, and 1 is not in support of the proposal
- 3 parents responded using the online response form (DCC website) all supported of the proposal

Summary of Responses from those in support of the Proposal

18. The following information provides a summary of the issues raised by those in support of the proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015:
- Stakeholders believe that primary education is very beneficial to both children and staff;
 - Stakeholders believe that the proposal will enable children and staff from both buildings to get more used to each other;
 - Stakeholders raised concerns that the cost of school uniform could be a financial burden initially if the uniforms had to be replaced as soon as the Primary School opened, but they still supported the proposal to have a single school for Shotley Bridge.

Summary of the Response not in support of the Proposal

19. The following information provides a summary of the issues raised at the consultation meetings and in the response not in favour of the proposal:
- The proposal is a cost cutting exercise which has not been developed with the interests of children in mind;
 - Questions were asked about how teaching would operate across both sides because the road between the schools is dangerous for the younger children. (The Head Teacher, is working closely with parents to explain how the two sites will be used. There is unlikely to be much pupil movement during the day between the two sites.)
20. If satisfied that the procedural obligations have been discharged, Cabinet must then consider whether it wishes to agree the proposal having regard to the following:

(c) Education Standards and Diversity of Provision

21. Officers believe that educationally the proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school is in the best interests of pupils and their families. Evidence gathered over a number of years shows that Primary Schools (instead of separate Infant and Junior Schools) have many benefits for children including:
- continuity and progress of learning between ages 4-11;
 - a single application of assessment criteria and pupil teaching;
 - opportunities for increased social development, older pupils having some appropriate pastoral responsibility for young children;

22. The most recent Ofsted reports judged Shotley Bridge Infant School as "good" and Shotley Bridge Junior School as "requires improvement". At Shotley Bridge Junior School Ofsted stated that "since the last inspection, pupils' overall achievement had fallen. However the Acting Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher have an ambition and determination to make rapid improvements so that all pupils achieve their best. As a result of this work since June 2014, aspects of teaching where there were concerns are improving well".
23. The proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School so that it becomes a Primary school and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school will enable the rapid improvements identified by Ofsted to continue so that achievement continues to improve.
24. Pupils at Shotley Bridge Infant School have high attainment and outstanding achievement and standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are well above average in all subjects. The proposal for one Primary School will build on this and allow for pupils' progress to be consistently monitored across Key Stage 1 and 2 as a single school.
25. The proposal is for a Primary School which will be more sustainable in the long term and enable children in Shotley Bridge to attend a local Primary School.

(d) School Size and Demand for Places

26. The proposed Primary School will be on the sites of the current Shotley Bridge Junior School and Shotley Bridge Infant School with a capacity for 420 pupils. A school of this size would be large enough to accommodate the current and future pupils we expect will attend the proposed Primary School. The maximum number of pupils anticipated to be at the school up to 2020 is 353 therefore no pupils will be displaced by the proposal.

(e) Proposed Admission Arrangements

27. The proposed number of pupils to be admitted to Reception of the proposed Primary School in September 2015 will be 60.

(f) National Curriculum

28. All maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum unless they have secured an exemption for groups of pupils or the school community. The proposed Primary School will follow the National Curriculum.

(g) Equal Opportunity Issues and Community Cohesion

29. Cabinet must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of LAs/Governing Bodies, which requires them to have 'due regard' to the need to:
 - eliminate discrimination;
 - advance equality of opportunity; and
 - foster good relations.

30. An equality impact assessment (attached as Appendix 4) has been carried out on this proposal. There are no potential impacts in relation to age, gender, disability and race/ethnicity for pupils and parents/carers. The current schools provide education for boys and girls aged between 4 and 11 years and the proposed Primary School will continue to provide education for boys and girls across the same age range. The location of the buildings remains unchanged; both buildings are accessible and will continue to provide facilities for pupils with sight impairment.

(h) Travel and Accessibility

31. The proposed Primary School will be on the sites of the current Shotley Bridge Junior School and Shotley Bridge Infant School. Consequently there will be no increases to travel or journey time and no changes to the current accessibility of both schools.

(i) Capital

32. Capital funding in the region of £50,000 will be required to upgrade the ICT provision and provide appropriate signage. An additional classroom and work to improve safeguarding of pupils at the junior building will also be carried out at a cost of approximately £450,000. The School Capital Maintenance Grant allocated to the LA from the DfE will provide this funding.

(j) School Premises and Playing Fields

33. Under the School Premises Regulations all schools are required to provide suitable outdoor space in order to enable physical education to be provided to pupils in accordance with the school curriculum; and for pupils to play outside safely.

The sites of Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools do have suitable outdoor space.

Recommendations and Reasons

34. Officers believe that proceeding with the proposal will preserve and enhance education provision in Shotley Bridge. Amalgamating Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools into one Primary School will provide a more viable educational establishment.
35. In the view of officers in the Education Service, amalgamating Infant and Junior schools is in the best interests of children and their families. Primary Schools have more opportunity, through daily contact, for those working within the school to work together in the best interests of the pupils. They benefit from the consistency that working under the leadership of one Head Teacher and one Governing Body brings. A single Primary School can reduce the potential for disruption, which some children experience, when they transfer from Infant to Junior School.

36. Cabinet is recommended to agree:

- (i) that the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School should be changed from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School; and
- (ii) that Shotley Bridge Junior School should close as a separate school on 31 August 2015.

Background Papers

Appendix 2 - Delegated Decision Reports

Appendix 3 - Statutory Notice

Appendix 4 - Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Capital funding from the DfE Capital Maintenance Grant will be utilised to provide the additional classroom, improve safeguarding, change signage and upgrade IT systems if the Primary School is established. Costs for this will be in the region of £500,000.

Staffing

Staff from both Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools would be ring-fenced for posts in the Primary School.

Risk

If the proposal was not implemented there is a risk that the existing schools would become unviable as the new funding formula is likely to have an impact on small schools.

Equality and Diversity

As a public body, the Council must take into account the Equality Act 2010, a consolidating Act which brings together previous Acts dealing with discrimination. Decisions must be reviewed for potential impact on persons with "protected characteristics". An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached as Appendix 4.

S.149 of the 2010 Act also lays down the Public Sector Equality Duty whereby from the 5 April 2011, local authorities and other organisations exercising public functions must have due regard to 3 key areas:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't; and
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't.

The relevant "protected characteristics" are: age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Accommodation

The Primary School will be established using the accommodation in the current Infant and Junior Schools.

Crime and Disorder

N/A

Human Rights

Human rights will not be affected by this proposal.

Consultation

Details of the consultation undertaken are included in the body of the report.

Procurement

Any capital works to the school will be procured in accordance with the County council's procurement arrangements.

Disability Issues

N/A

Legal Implications

Covered in the body of the report paragraphs 8, 15 and 16.

DECISION RECORD (Version August 2014)

Please complete all sections

DECISION MAKER

Rachael Shimmin
Corporate Director
Children and Adults Services

**AUTHORITY BY REFERENCE TO
SCHEME OF DELEGATION/COMMITTEE
REPORT**

2. Table 3, paragraph 1.4

SUBJECT

3. To seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services to issue a statutory notice proposing to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4 - 7 to 4 - 11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015.

DECISION

4. **If Key Decision insert No.**
CAS/06/14 Proposed date for Cabinet decision - March 2015.

ELECTORAL DIVISION/S

5. Benfieldside

CONSULTATION – CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER, OTHER MEMBERS & DATE

6. The Cabinet Portfolio Holder was consulted on 23 December 2014. The Local Members were consulted on 23 December 2014.

RECORD OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

7. N/A

**A NOTE OF DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE IN
RELATION TO THE ABOVE CONFLICT**

8. N/A

ACCESS TO THE REPORT

Is the report open to the public (Part A)

Yes

9. Is the report exempt (Part B) – if so please specify the exemption paragraph and the reason for exemption applying the Public Interest Test

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Attached - Delegated Decision Report - Outcomes of Consultation on a Proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4 - 7 to 4 - 11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015.

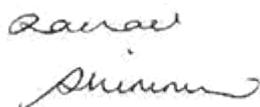
CONTACT PERSON

Graeme Plews

CONTACT No.

03000 265777

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY



5/1/15

This form must be sent electronically to delegations@durham.gov.uk within 24 hours of the decision being made.

NOTES

1. The reference No. will be assigned by Democratic Services.
2. The relevant paragraph within the decision makers delegated powers should be identified.
3. A brief heading should be inserted.
4. Brief details of the decision should be inserted. This note must set out the substance of the decisions, options considered and the reasons for the chosen option. Take care not to divulge any commercially sensitive information. If it's a Key Decision insert the No.
5. List the electoral division/s that will be affected by the decision.
6. Set out the consultation you have undertaken with Cabinet portfolio holder and others.
7. See Guidance "Consultation with Portfolio Holder".
8. **See Guidance "Consultation with Portfolio Holder".**
9. Please refer to the Access to Information Requirements that came into force from 1 March 2006 and the internal guidance that has been issued in this respect.
10. Person authorised to make the decision. When sent to democratic services, this will be an electronic signature.
11. Enter the date the decision was made.

DELEGATED DECISION

CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES



5 January 2015

Outcome of consultation on a proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4 - 7 to 4 - 11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015.

Report of CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES

Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director, Children and Adults Service

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide details on the outcome of consultation which was undertaken between 20 November 2014 and 23 December 2014, proposing a change to the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4 - 7 to 4 - 11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015, and to seek approval to proceed to the next stage in the statutory process which is to issue a Statutory Notice.

Background

- 2 In a report dated 19 November 2014 (attached as Appendix 2) the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services approved consultation could begin on a proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4 - 7 to 4 - 11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015.
- 3 Consultation documents (attached as Appendix 3) were distributed widely (distribution list attached as Appendix 4) and meetings were held between 26 November and 4 December 2014 with the Governing Bodies and staff of both schools, and parents and members of the local community at a parents meeting and Information Sharing Evening.

Issues Raised at Consultation Meetings

- 4 At the meetings held between 26 November and 4 December 2014, officers explained the reasons for the proposal and invited those present to express views and ask questions. The key issues discussed at the meetings are summarised as follows:-
 - Questions were asked if the two schools would eventually be replaced by a new build if the proposal for the Primary School was approved. Officers explained that the County Council did not have the funding currently

available to replace the two schools with a new build, but in the long term the aspiration would be to have a single site for the Primary School.

- Questions were asked about the lessons that had been learned from previous amalgamations. Lessons learned are that the closer the two schools work together during the consultation period the smoother the transition will be for pupils, staff and parents and also the importance of good communication with Governors, staff, parents, pupils and Local Authority Officers. The Governors were given names of schools that had amalgamated recently.
- Questions were asked about governance arrangements for the Primary School. Officers explained that attempts would be made to form a Governing body that comprises Governors of both the current Infant and Junior Schools, where possible.
- Questions were asked about how and when the staffing structure for the Primary School would be determined. Officers explained the staffing structure would be a separate consultation to the consultation on the proposal to amalgamate the two schools. The process would be supported by the County Council's School and Governor Support Service and Human Resources Team. Work on the proposed staffing structure could begin before the decision on the amalgamation proposal is made. If the amalgamation is approved then these plans for staffing can be implemented immediately in plenty of time for the Primary School opening. If the amalgamation is not approved then the consultation on a proposed new staffing structure can end and both schools would continue to run separately.
- Questions were asked about whether the school uniform would change. Officers and the Head Teacher explained that any changes to the school uniform would be consulted upon with parents and pupils. This would be a matter for the Governors and Head Teacher of the school to make a decision about school uniform.
- Questions were asked about how teaching would operate across both sites because the road between the two schools is dangerous for the younger children. Officers and the Head Teacher explained that these plans would be made by the Senior Leadership Team of the Primary School but it is not envisaged that there would be regular movement of children. Parents discussed traffic problems that exist on the road where the Junior School is. Officers agreed to alert the Highways Department.

Responses to the Consultation

- 5 Stakeholders were invited to respond in a variety of ways; written responses using the response form attached to the consultation document, letter, email or completing the response form on line via the County Council's website.
- 6 17 responded in writing using the response form, letters and email.
3 responded using the online response form (DCC website).
5 people attended the Information Sharing Evening.

18 members of staff, 1 NUT representative and the Chair of Governors of Shotley Bridge Infant School attended the joint staff meeting.

17 Governors (9 from Shotley Bridge Infant School, 7 from Shotley Bridge Junior School and 1 who is a Governor at both schools) attended the joint Governing Body meeting.

Summary of Responses

7 The following information provides a summary of the 20 responses received using the response form, letter, email, on-line:

- 8 parents of pupils attending Shotley Bridge Infant School support the proposal
- 8 parents of pupils attending Shotley Bridge Junior School support the proposal;
- 2 parents of pupils attending both schools support the proposal;
- 1 Governor of Shotley Bridge Infant School supports the proposal;
- 1 parent of a pupil attending another school does not support the proposal

Themes that emerged from the responses were:-

- Primary Education is very beneficial to both children and staff;
- The proposal will enable pupils and staff from both buildings to get more used to each other;
- Concerns that the cost of school uniforms could be a financial burden if the uniforms had to be replaced as soon as the Primary School opened;
- Concern that adding a classroom could lead to larger class sizes;
- The proposal is a cost cutting exercise which has not been developed with the interests of the children in mind.

Analysis of Consultation Responses and Current Position

8 19 respondents to the consultation support the proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4 - 7 to 4 - 11 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school. One respondent does not support the proposal. Those in support recognise the proposal as being very beneficial to both children and staff.

9 Some respondents stated their concerns over the cost of having to buy new school uniform. The Leadership team of the proposed new primary school would make decisions about uniform following consultation with parents and pupils.

Recommendations and Reasons

10 After full consideration of all responses to the consultation, the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services is recommended to give approval for officers to issue a statutory notice proposing to change the age range of

Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4 - 7 to 4 - 11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015.

Background Papers

Attached.

Contact: Sheila Palmerley

Tel: 03000 265731

Delegated Decision-Outcome of Proposal to Change Age Range of Shotley Bridge Infant School

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Capital funding from the DfE Capital Maintenance Grant will be utilised to provide the additional classroom, change signage and upgrade IT systems if the Primary School is established. Costs for this will be in the region of £500,000.

Staffing

Staff from both Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools would be ring-fenced for posts in the Primary School.

Risk

If the proposal was not implemented there is a risk that the existing schools would become unviable as the new funding formula is likely to have an impact on small schools.

Equality and Diversity

As a public body, the Council must take into account the Equality Act 2010, a consolidating Act which brings together previous Acts dealing with discrimination. Decisions must be reviewed for potential impact on persons with "protected characteristics". An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment has been carried out.

S.149 of the 2010 Act also lays down the Public Sector Equality Duty whereby from the 5 April 2011, local authorities and other organisations exercising public functions must have due regard to 3 key areas:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't; and
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't.

The relevant "protected characteristics" are: age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Accommodation

The Primary School will be established using the accommodation in the current Infant and Junior Schools.

Crime and Disorder

N/A

Human Rights

Human rights will not be affected by this proposal.

Consultation

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Adults Services has been consulted about moving to the next stage in the process and is happy for the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services to use delegated powers to approve that a statutory notice can be issued.

Procurement

Any capital works to the school will be procured in accordance with the County Council's procurement arrangements.

Disability Issues

N/A

Legal Implications

The statutory process for changing the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School and closing Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school will be applied in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance.

DECISION RECORD*Please complete all sections***DECISION MAKER**

Rachael Shimmin
Corporate Director
Children and Adults Services

AUTHORITY BY REFERENCE TO SCHEME OF DELEGATION

Under the County Council's constitution, the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services, is authorised to discharge any function of the Executive in relation to:

- 1.4 *The Council's role as Local Education Authority and its role in commissioning 14-19 education as determined by the Education and Skills Act 2008 and any subsequent legislation and training for young people.*

SUBJECT

To seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services to begin consultation on the proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 to create a Primary School from 1 September 2015 and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015.

DECISION

If Key Decision insert No.

Key Decision when Cabinet meets to decide on proposal.

ELECTORAL DIVISION/S

Benfieldside.

CONSULTATION – CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER, OTHER MEMBERS & DATE

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder was consulted on 21 October 2014. The Local Members were consulted on 12 November 2014.

RECORD OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

N/A

A NOTE OF DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE IN RELATION TO THE ABOVE CONFLICT

N/A

ACCESS TO THE REPORT

Is the report open to the public (Part A)

Yes

Is the report exempt (Part B) – if so please specify the exemption paragraph and the reason for exemption applying the Public Interest Test

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Attached

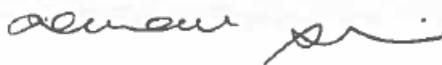
CONTACT PERSON

Graeme Plews

CONTACT No.

03000 265777

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY



20/11/12

This form must be sent electronically to delegations@durham.gov.uk within 24 hours of the decision being made.

NOTES

1. The reference No. will be assigned by Democratic Services and notified to you.
2. The relevant paragraph within the decision makers delegated powers should be identified.
3. A brief heading should be inserted.
4. Brief details of the decision should be inserted. This note must set out the substance of the decisions, options considered and the reasons for the chosen option. Take care not to divulge any commercially sensitive information.
5. Set out the consultation you have undertaken with Cabinet portfolio holder and others.
6. Please refer to the Access to Information Requirements that came into force from 1 March 2006 and the internal guidance that has been issued in this respect.
7. List papers used which the decision was based – must be retained and readily accessible.
8. Person authorised to make the decision. When sent to democratic services, this will be an electronic signature.
9. Enter the date the decision was made.

DELEGATED DECISION

CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES

19 November 2014



Proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015

Report of CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES

Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director, Children and Adults Service

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services to begin consultation on a proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015.

Background

- 2 Officers within the Education Service believe that the long term viability of separate Infant and Junior Schools is uncertain due to changes in school funding which will come about as a result of the introduction of the National funding formula in 2015. This may result in a significant reduction to the value of the lump sum to all schools which will result in small schools experiencing an increased budget pressure in future.
- 3 To address this in localities across the county where there are separate Infant and Junior Schools, the County Council wishes to consider, where appropriate, the possibility of bringing the two schools together into a single Primary School, creating a single larger school instead of two smaller schools thus creating a more viable and sustainable education establishment.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 4 The County Council believes there are many benefits for parents and children of having all through Primary Schools. Examples of these include:
 - the parental considerations for families who currently have children attending both schools. Having a single school in the community removes the need for parents to buy two school uniforms;
 - removing the need for parents to apply for a place at a Junior School;

- pupils' progress can be monitored across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 in the same school;
 - school inspectors will be able to make judgements more accurately about the education children receive when they can see 'the whole picture' within a single Primary School rather than two separate schools;
 - fewer points of transition for children which can interrupt their education and unsettle them.
- 5 Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools already work closely together for the benefit of pupils. The proposed Primary School would run across the two existing sites.
- 6 The current combined capacity of the two schools is for 390 pupils. However to enable a two form entry Primary School to be created, an additional classroom would be built to increase the size of the school to 420 pupils. This work would be funded from the School Capital Maintenance Grant from the Department for Education (DfE). A capacity of 420 would be enough to accommodate future numbers that we expect will attend the school as illustrated below:-

School	Projected Roll at Sept 2015	Projected Roll at Sept 2016	Projected Roll at Sept 2017	Projected Roll at Sept 2018	Projected Roll at Sept 2019
Shotley Bridge Infant	162	149	146	148	159
Shotley Bridge Junior	178	187	198	193	194
TOTAL	340	336	344	341	353

- 7 Officers from the County Council have met with the Chair of Governors from both schools and discussed the possibility of having a single Primary School rather than separate Infant and Junior Schools. Officers now wish to begin consultation on the proposal to amalgamate them into a single Primary School.

Consultation Timescales

- 8 It is intended that consultation on this proposal will commence in November 2014. Consultation documents will be widely distributed to key stakeholders, including to Governors, staff, parents, Local Members, MP, Diocese, Community Groups, Parish Councils, neighbouring schools, Children's Centres, AAP groups etc. Meetings with Governors, Staff, Parents and the wider community will also be held during November 2014 for officers to provide information and answer queries.
- 9 The consultation period will end in December 2014 and all responses to the consultation will be carefully considered. If it is decided to proceed with the proposal at that stage, a statutory notice will be published in January 2015 for four weeks. Cabinet would then be asked to make a decision on the proposal.

Decision

- 10 The Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services agrees that consultation can begin on the proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015.

Background Papers

None.

Contact: Sheila Palmerley

Tel: 03000 265731

Delegated Decision-Shotley Bridge Infant School

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Any funding required to improve the condition of the buildings and/or to increase the capacity will be met from the Council's Schools Capital Maintenance Grant budget, allocated on an annual basis from the Department for Education.

Staffing

Staff from both Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools would be ring fenced for posts in the proposed Primary School.

Risk

The risk of not proceeding with the proposal is that the schools become unviable as the new funding formula is likely to have an impact on small schools.

Equality and Diversity

As a public body, the Council must take into account the Equality Act 2010, a consolidating Act which brings together previous Acts dealing with discrimination. Decisions must be reviewed for potential impact on persons with "protected characteristics". An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment will be carried out as appropriate.

S.149 of the 2010 Act also lays down the Public Sector Equality Duty whereby from the 5 April 2011, local authorities and other organisations exercising public functions must have due regard to 3 key areas:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
- Advance equality of opportunity between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't; and
- Foster good relations between those who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who don't.

The relevant "protected characteristics" are: age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Accommodation

The proposed single Primary School will be on the existing sites of the Infant and Junior Schools.

Crime and Disorder

N/A

Human Rights

Human rights will not be affected by this proposal.

Consultation

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Adults Services and the Local Members have been consulted and they support the proposal to create a Primary School. They agree that the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services should use delegated powers to approve that wider consultation begins on this proposal.

Procurement

Any capital works to the school will be procured in accordance with the County Council's procurement arrangements.

Disability Issues

N/A

Legal Implications

N/A

Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools



**Proposal to Change the Age Range of
Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11
from 1 September 2015 to create
a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge
Junior School as a separate school
on 31 August 2015.**

Public Consultation Information

Introduction

This document provides you with some information about the County Council's proposal to establish a single primary school in Shotley Bridge. The Head Teacher of Shotley Bridge Junior School resigned at Easter 2014 and meetings were held with Governors of Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools to discuss leadership arrangements. It was agreed that the Head Teacher from the Infant School would oversee the leadership of both schools from 2 June 2014.

In addition to the change in leadership arrangements, the County Council now wishes to consult with you on a proposal to amalgamate Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools into a Primary School from 1 September 2015. This would be achieved by changing the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and by closing Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015.

You may have some questions to ask about this proposal. This document attempts to answer some of these questions and explain how you can let the County Council know what you think about the proposed changes.

1. Why is the County Council proposing to amalgamate Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools into a single Primary School?

We are moving where possible towards a model of all through Primary Schools instead of separate Infant and Junior schools as we believe that educationally it is the right thing to do for pupils, parents and staff and will ensure the schools are sustainable in the long term. The amount of money that a school has in its budget is predominantly based on the number of pupils in the school. In light of this, the County Council believes that some small schools could in the long term become unviable. To address this in the areas across the county where there are separate Infant and Junior Schools the County Council wishes to consider, where appropriate, the possibility of bringing the two schools together into a single primary school. There are very few Infant and Junior Schools left across the county now.

2. What are the benefits of Primary Education?

Evidence gathered over a number of years shows that Primary Schools (instead of separate Infant and Junior schools) have many benefits for children, parents and staff. Some of these include:

- Continuity and progress of learning between 4 and 11;
- Unified leadership and management of the curriculum, teaching and learning, and social development;
- A single approach to inclusion and well-being;
- More flexible and efficient use of both human and financial resources across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 education;
- Access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full primary range;
- Continuity, especially for the most vulnerable children and those with special needs;
- A single application of assessment criteria and pupil tracking;
- Opportunities for increased social development, older pupils having some appropriate pastoral responsibility for young children;

- Access to the full range of facilities for all children is provided through the 4-11 age range;
- Parents having closer contact with the school over a longer period of time to help build positive relationships for the benefit of their children;
- Parents only have to deal with one staff team, school day timings, whole school policies etc. This is particularly beneficial if a parent has more than one child in different key stages within the primary age range;
- Parents only have to buy one school uniform;
- A primary school allows staff the opportunity to gain broader professional development from working with a wider range of ages;
- Professional support from a larger staff team;
- Management of whole school issues would extend the skills of teaching and support staff;
- School Inspectors will be able to make judgements more accurately about the education children receive when they can see 'the whole picture' within a single primary school rather than two separate schools.

In summary it is believed that primary schools have more opportunity, through daily contact, for those working within the school to work together in the best interests of the pupils. They benefit from the consistency that working under the leadership of one Head Teacher and one Governing Body brings. A single primary school may reduce the potential for disruption and adjustments which children have to make when they transfer from Infant to Junior School.

If the proposal to amalgamate is approved, staff and Governors of the two schools would work closely together, supported by the Local Authority to ensure a smooth transition from the existing two separate schools into a new Primary School.

3. Will the standard of education that both schools currently provide be affected if they become one school?

At present both schools are judged as 'Good' by Ofsted. They already work closely together for the benefit of all pupils and will continue to do this whether or not the proposed amalgamation takes place. Officers believe that amalgamating the two schools will not have any negative impact on the standard of education provided to children in these schools.

4. Where will the proposed Primary School be?

If the proposal is agreed, the Primary School would be located at the existing sites of Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools. Although the schools are not on the same site, they are within walking distance of each other, promoting good liaison between staff and leaders. The proximity of the two schools will ensure that senior leaders can be responsive to urgent matters that arise on either site.

The current combined capacity of the schools is 390 pupils. A school of this size would be large enough to accommodate the current and future pupils who we expect will attend the proposed Primary School as the table overleaf demonstrates. However to ensure that the school can accommodate pupils from possible future housing developments and to enable a two form entry

school, the Local Authority would intend to provide an additional classroom on the site of the current Junior School. This would enable 60 pupils per year group to be admitted. The overall capacity of the single Primary School would then be for 420 pupils.

School	Projected Roll at Sept 2015	Projected Roll at Sept 2016	Projected Roll at Sept 2017	Projected Roll at Sept 2018	Projected Roll at Sept 2019
Shotley Bridge Infant	162	149	146	148	159
Shotley Bridge Junior	178	187	198	193	194
TOTAL	340	336	344	341	363

5. Will there be any staff changes?

If the proposal is agreed, a new staffing structure would be developed for the Primary School. Posts will be filled from existing staff at Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior School. There would be a separate consultation with staff about the process for being appointed to posts in the new Primary School.

6. How do you respond to this consultation?

We would like to hear what you think about this proposal. To help you do that we are holding an Information Sharing Evening for **parents at Shotley Bridge Junior School on 2 December 2014 at 7.00 p.m.** An Information Sharing Evening for members of the **wider community and other interested parties** will be held at **Shotley Bridge Infant School on 4 December 2014 at 7.00 pm.** All interested parties are invited to attend. Officers from the County Council will be present to answer any questions you have and listen to your views.

You can also respond in one of the following ways by **23 December 2014**:

- (i) Send in the attached response form or write to: Adam Williams, School Places and Admissions Team, Children and Adult Services, Business Reply Service, Licence No DU63 (Freepost), Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5BR.
- (ii) Email your views to schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk or complete the response form online via the Education and Learning Section of the County Council's website: www.durham.gov.uk

7. What happens after 23 December 2014 when the consultation period ends?

All the responses to the consultation will be considered carefully. If the County Council decides to proceed with the proposal, a Statutory Notice would then be published for 4 weeks when objections could be made. After the notice period has ended the County Council's Cabinet Members will make a decision on whether or not to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School to create a single Primary School and close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school.

RESPONSE FORM

CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF SHOTLEY BRIDGE INFANT SCHOOL FROM 4-7 TO 4-11 TO CREATE A PRIMARY SCHOOL AND TO CLOSE SHOTLEY BRIDGE JUNIOR SCHOOL AS A SEPARATE SCHOOL ON 31 AUGUST 2015

1. Please tick **one** box from the list below to let us know if you are responding to this consultation **mainly** as a:

Parent/Carer of a pupil(s) at

- Shotley Bridge Infant School
 Shotley Bridge Junior School
 *Other School

*Please state which school:

OR a Pupil at

- Shotley Bridge Infant School
 Shotley Bridge Junior School
 *Other School

*Please state which school:

OR a Governor/Member of Staff (delete as appropriate) at

- Shotley Bridge Infant School
 Shotley Bridge Junior School
 *Other School

*Please state which school:

OR a

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resident | <input type="checkbox"/> Local Member |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trade Union Representative | <input type="checkbox"/> Parish/Town Council Representative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Group | <input type="checkbox"/> Diocese |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Neighbouring Authority | <input type="checkbox"/> MP |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please state): | <input type="text"/> |

2. Looking at the information in this document do you support the proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school?

Yes No

3. Do you have any comments on this proposal including any impact the changes would have on you?

Please return this form by 23 December 2014 to:

Mr Adam Williams, School Places and Admissions Team, Children and Adults Services,
Business Reply Service Licence No DU63 (Freeport), Durham County Council, County Hall,
Durham DH1 5BR

(The information that you send may need to be passed to colleagues or shared with partners. It may also be published in a summary of responses received to this consultation but results will not contain your name or anything that could identify you. If you require an acknowledgement to your response, please provide details below.)

Name:

Address:

.....

Signed: **Date:**

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO

Children and Adults Services

Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form for Consultation

We want to make it easy for everyone to tell us what they think. Our aim is to be fair and your answers to the following questions will help us find out the views from a wide range of people and understand any differences in the answers of particular groups. Your answers will be confidential and used for this consultation only.

You only need to answer if you feel happy to do so.

1. Are you

Male Female

2. How old are you?

Under 16 16-24 25-44 45-64 65+

3. Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

(This may include any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity which has a substantial effect on your day to day life. Long-standing means it has lasted, or is likely to last, for over a year.)

Yes No

4. What is your religion or belief?

Christian Hindu Jewish Muslim Sikh Buddhist

Other (please specify)

5. How do you describe your sexuality?

Heterosexual/Straight Gay Woman/Lesbian Gay Man Bisexual

Other (please specify)

6. To which of these groups do you belong?

White Asian or Asian British Black or Black British

Travelling Community Mixed Arab or Middle Eastern

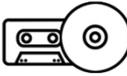
Other (please specify)

Please ask us if you would like this document summarised in another language or format.

العربية (Arabic) (中文 (繁體字)) (Chinese) اردو (Urdu)
polski (Polish) ਪੰਜਾਬੀ (Punjabi) Español (Spanish)
বাংলা (Bengali) हिन्दी (Hindi) Deutsch (German)
Français (French) Türkçe (Turkish) Melayu (Malay)



Braille



Audio



**Large
Print**

**PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF SHOTLEY BRIDGE INFANT SCHOOL
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION LIST
NOVEMBER 2014**

School	Govs	Staff	Pupils	Total	How Delivered	Date Del/Posted
Shotley Bridge Infant	11	30	160	201	AW ¹	24/11/14
Shotley Bridge Junior	13	35	165	213	AW ¹	
Shotley Bridge Nursery School Ltd	N/A	5	85	90	AW ¹	24/11/14
Benfieldside Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	24/11/14 (left in school reception area)
Bishop Ian Ramsey Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
Castleside Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
Consett Infant	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
Consett Junior	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
Delves Lane Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
Ebchester CE Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
Leadgate Infant	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
Leadgate Junior	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
Moorside Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
Our Lady & St. Joseph's RCVA Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
St. Mary's RCVA Primary, Blackhill	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
St. Patrick's RCVA Primary, Consett	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
St. Pius X RCVA Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
The Grove Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	
Beechdale Nursery	N/A	5	104	110	AW ¹	24/11/14 (left in nursery reception area)
Consett Infant Nursery	N/A	5	52	60	AW ¹	
Delves Lane Nursery	N/A	5	52	60	AW ¹	
Moorside Nursery	N/A	5	50	60	AW ¹	
St. Patrick's Nursery	N/A	5	52	60	AW ¹	
The Grove Nursery	N/A	5	54	60	AW ¹	
Consett Academy	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	24/11/14 (left in school reception area)
St. Bede's Catholic School & Sixth Form	N/A	10	10	10	AW ¹	

*Governors consultation document posted (21/11/14)
AW¹ – delivered by hand

**TOTAL number of hard copies of consultation documents distributed =
and also the consultation document was placed on the DCC website**

Elected DCC Members	
Simon Henig, Ossie Johnson, Peter Oliver, Stephen Robinson	Emailed 24/11/14
MPs	
Pat Glass MP pat.glass.mp@parliament.uk	Emailed 24/11/14
INTERNAL – Email (24/11/14)	
CAS SLT, Julian Wilson, Barry Piercy, Gerard Darby, John Wilkinson, Joanne Barker, School Places & Admissions Team, Julie Arnett, Alison Aitchison, Joanne Walt, Ian Jacques, Lynn Elliott, Jane-le-Sage, Margaret Hanratty, Linda Bailey, Chris Young, David Shirer, Adrian White, Phil Hodgson, Sheila Palmerley, Sarah Armstrong, Linda Bailes, Nora Waugh, Jill Robson	
RC and CE Diocese and DfE	
RC Diocese Director education@diocesehn.org.uk	Emailed 24/11/14
CE Diocese Director Jeremy.fitt@drmnewcanglican.org	
DfE SchoolOrganisation.NOTIFICATIONS@education.gsi.gov.uk	
Trade Unions	
c.d.thompson@hotmail.co.uk john.kesterton@ascl.org.uk ksmith@atl.org.uk terry.scarr@gmb.org.uk dan.lister0@gmail.com northern@nut.org.uk trevorblacklock@hotmail.com h.pink@unison.co.uk	Emailed 24/11/14
Directors of CYPS of Neighbouring LAs	
Margaret Whellans GATESHEAD Margaretwhellans@gateshead.gov.uk	Emailed 24/11/14
Daljit Lally NORTHUMBERLAND daljit.lally@northumberland.gov.uk	
Children's Centres (5 each)	
Bishop Ian Ramsey Pre-School , Manor Road, Medomsley, Consett, DH8 6QN	Posted 24/11/14
Leadgate Children's Centre , West Street, Leadgate, County Durham, DH8 7PN	
Libraries (10 each)	
Consett Library , Victoria Road, Consett, County Durham, DH8 5AT	Posted 24/11/14
Parish Councils (CW passing on to Parish Councils and AAP in Shotley Bridge/Benfieldside area)	
Corinne Walton corinne.walton@durham.gov.uk	E-Mail 24/11/14



PUBLIC NOTICE

Proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4-7 to 4-11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015.

Notice is given in accordance with Section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Durham County Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Shotley Bridge Infant School (Community), Benfieldside Road, Shotley Bridge, Consett, DH8 0SQ and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School (Community), Snows Green Road, Shotley Bridge, Consett, DH8 0ES.

It is proposed to amalgamate Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior School into a Primary School from 1 September 2015. This will be achieved by changing the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4 - 7 to 4 - 11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School from that date and by closing Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school from 31 August 2015.

Where possible the Local Authority is taking the opportunity to amalgamate Infant and Junior Schools into Primary Schools as they have wider educational benefits for pupils, parents, and staff than separate Infant and Junior Schools. Establishing a single Primary School is more sustainable in the long term as changes to the way schools are to be funded in the future could impact on small schools.

The current capacity of Shotley Bridge Infant School is for 180 pupils and the current capacity of Shotley Bridge Junior School is for 210 pupils. The capacity of the proposed Primary School will be for 420 pupils. The proposed admission number will be 60.

The Head Teacher from Shotley Bridge Infant School has overseen the leadership of both schools since June 2014. The schools are already working closely together for the benefit of all pupils. The Local Authority believes that amalgamating the two schools will not have any negative impact on the standard of education provided to children in those schools.

All services currently run from the existing schools for the local community will continue to be provided if the school becomes a Primary School.

This Notice is an extract from the full proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from: Mr Graeme Plews, School Places and Admissions Team, Children and Adults Services, Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UJ. It is also available on the County Council's website at www.durham.gov.uk/article/5142

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Mr Adam Williams, School Places and Admissions Team, Children and Adults Services, Business Reply Service, Licence No. DU63 (Freepost), Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5BR. Objections and comments can also be sent:

- via the County Council's website at www.durham.gov.uk/article/5142; or
- e-mailed to schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachel Shimmin', written over a faint horizontal line.

Rachel Shimmin
Corporate Director
Children and Adults Services

Publication Date: 8 January 2015

Durham County Council – Altogether Better equality impact assessment form

NB: Equality impact assessment is a legal requirement for all strategies plans, functions, policies, procedures and services. We are also legally required to publish our assessments.

You can find help and prompts on completing the assessment in the guidance from page 7 onwards.

Section one: Description and initial screening

Section overview: this section provides an audit trail.

Service/team or section: School Places and Admissions, Education, CAS

Lead Officer: Sheila Palmerley

Start date: 20 November 2014

Subject of the Impact Assessment: (please also include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate)

Proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4 –7 to 4 -11 from 1 September 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Shotley Bridge Junior School as a separate school on 31 August 2015. The schools are on separate sites but within walking distance of each other. The intention is that a Primary School will run across the current sites encompassing the infant and junior age ranges. The main change is that there will be Primary School in Shotley Bridge rather than a separate Infant and Junior School. All staff will be ring-fenced for a post in the new Primary School. Due to the number of that will be available job losses are not foreseen. Durham County Council's relevant policies and procedures will be applied when the staffing establishment is being implemented. There will be no travel or travel cost implications due to the proposed primary school being located on the same sites as the current Infant and Junior Schools.

Both schools are relatively small when compared to other schools across the county which could mean it is possible that they may become unviable in the long term when the new national funding arrangements come into effect. This will not have an impact however on equality/diversity/cohesion.

Who are the main stakeholders: General public / Employees / Elected Members / Partners/ Specific audiences/Other (please specify) –
 General Public, Governors, Staff, Parents, Pupils, Elected Members, MPs, Neighbouring Schools, Trade Unions, Diocese, Department for Education, Community Groups, Parish Councils, Residents’ Associations, AAP Board, Neighbouring Authorities, CAS/DCC Staff

Is a copy of the subject attached? Yes / No consultation document and report on the outcomes of the consultation are attached.

Initial screening

Prompts to help you:
 Who is affected by it? Who is intended to benefit and how? Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups? Is it likely to affect relations between different communities or groups, for example if it is thought to favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others? Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality?

Is there an actual/potential negative or positive impact on specific groups within these headings?

Indicate :Y = Yes, N = No, ?=Unsure

Gender	N	Disability	N	Age	N	Race/ethnicity	N	Religion or belief	?	Sexual orientation	?
--------	---	------------	---	-----	---	----------------	---	--------------------	---	--------------------	---

How will this support our commitment to promote equality and meet our legal responsibilities?

Reminder of our legal duties:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination & harassment
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting good relations between people from different groups
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and taking account of someone’s disability, even where that involves treating

them more favourably than other people

- Involving people, particularly disabled people, in public life and decision making

The proposal to change the age range of Shotley Bridge Infant School from 4 -7 years of age to 4 -11 years of age from 1 September 2015 will create a Primary School which will provide equal access for all regardless of gender, disability, age, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

What evidence do you have to support your findings?

The main groups affected by this proposal are pupils attending Shotley Bridge Infant School and Shotley Bridge Junior School. If the proposal is implemented it would help to secure the future of primary education across the two schools. Pupils and staff will not be adversely affected.

The consultation was undertaken between 20 November 2014 and 23 December 2014. Consultation documents were distributed widely and meetings were held with Governors and Staff of Shotley Bridge Infant and Junior Schools, parents, and members of the local community at a parents meeting and an Information Sharing Evening. Stakeholders were invited to respond in a variety of ways: written responses using the response form attached to the consultation document, letter, email or completing the response form online via the County Council's website.

17 responded in writing using the response form, letter and email

3 responded using the online response form (DCC website)

18 people attended the meeting for parents

3 people attended the Information Sharing Evening

24 members of staff attended the joint staff meeting

17 Governors attended the joint Governing Body meeting

- Of the 20 responses received during the consultation period, 19 supported the proposal. Stakeholders believe that a primary school will enable a consistent approach to teaching and learning across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and allow for an easier transition for pupils which will benefit them and lead to further improvement in attainment.
- One respondent was of the view that the proposal is a cost cutting exercise which is not in the best interests of children. Officers believe this is not the case as in addition to being a more viable establishment, a Primary School has educational benefits that separate Infant and Junior Schools do not

Decision: Proceed to full impact assessment – Yes/No

Date: 23 December 2014 (the end of the consultation.)

If you have answered ‘No’ you need to pass the completed form for approval & sign off.

Section two: Identifying impacts and evidence- Equality and Diversity

Section overview: this section identifies whether there are any impacts on equality/diversity/cohesion, what evidence is available to support the conclusion and what further action is needed.

	Identify the impact : does this increase differences or does it aim to reduce gaps for particular groups?	Explain your conclusion, including relevant evidence and consultation you have considered.	What further action is required? (Include in Sect. 3 action plan)
Gender			
Age			

Disability			
Race/Ethnicity			
Religion or belief			
Sexual orientation			

How will this promote positive relationships between different communities?

If this proposal is implemented, positive relationships will continue to be strengthened between different communities with no adverse impact.

Section three: Review and Conclusion

Summary: please provide a brief overview, including impact, changes, improvements and any gaps in evidence.

The main change associated with this proposal is that there will be a Primary School in Shotley Bridge rather than separate Infant and Junior Schools. This will preserve and enhance education in Shotley Bridge by providing a more sustainable educational establishment together with the benefits that Primary Schools have for children, parents and members of staff that separate Infant and Junior Schools do not.

Action to be taken	Officer responsible	Target Date	In which plan will this action appear
--------------------	---------------------	-------------	---------------------------------------

When will this assessment be reviewed?	Date: In March 2015 when the decision is taken whether to implement the proposal or not.		
Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?	No		
Lead officer - sign off: <i>Sheila Palmerley</i>			Date: 15.1.2015
Service equality representative - sign off: 			Date: 29.01.15
Please email your completed Impact Assessment to the Equality team - equalities@durham.gov.uk.			