

**Proposal to change the Age Range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016**

**Key Decision CAS/07/15**

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**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**

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**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek Cabinet approval to change the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016 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. The Council is moving where possible towards a model of all through Primary Schools instead of having separate Nursery, Infant and Junior Schools. Officers within the Education Service believe that children and their families will benefit from continuity of education provision from age 3 to 11 in a single school, rather than two separate schools.
3. Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School are approximately 50 yards from each other and are located on the same site. The Head Teacher of Crook Nursery School took up a new post in another school from September 2015. The Deputy Head Teacher is acting Head Teacher for the 2015/16 academic year.
4. The change of leadership of Crook Nursery School and the proximity of the schools provided an opportunity to consider amalgamating Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School. Both school buildings would remain operational.
5. Discussions with the Chair of Governors of both schools, the Head Teacher of Crook Primary School and the Acting Head Teacher of Crook Nursery School about a possible amalgamation began in October 2015.
6. 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 Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016. The delegated decision report is included in Appendix 2.

7. Meetings were held with Governors and staff on 12 October 2015 and a public consultation was undertaken between 2 November 2015 and 11 December 2015. Consultation documents (included in Appendix 2) were distributed widely across the local area on 19 October 2015. As well as the meetings with Governors and staff, an information sharing meeting for parents, pupils and the local community was held on 3 November 2015 so that their views could be shared with the Local Authority.
8. A full summary of the consultation responses is included in the delegated decision report attached as Appendix 2.
9. 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).
10. The responses to the consultation were received and considered by officers in the County Council. The large majority (14), including 6 Governors, 4 parents and a former MP were in support of the proposal. Only 4 respondents, including the Local MP were not in support of it. The responses received provided no evidence 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 Nursery and Primary education, access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full primary range and the opportunity to work as one Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) encompassing both nursery and reception classes to enable children to be integrated in those early years and their progress monitored more easily. A summary of the responses is provided in paragraphs 17-19.
11. Officers have considered very carefully the Local MP's response. In the response, the MP raised a number of concerns and feels that the Local Authority has failed to recognise the value of nursery schools and the strong role they make in delivering outstanding education to the most disadvantaged children in County Durham.
12. Officers believe that there are educational benefits for nursery age children being integrated into a Primary School. In an "all through" setting, children receive uninterrupted education from Nursery to Year 6. Nursery schools do usually have positive outcomes, however there is no national data against which to benchmark this. Early Years Education is judged across Nursery and Reception year in a school, therefore national data is only available for outcomes at the end of Reception. If children are taught in a single Early Years Foundation Stage rather than two separate schools, their progress can be tracked across this full key stage in the same school.

## **Decision to Issue a Statutory Notice**

13. 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 Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016. A statutory notice was therefore published on 7 January 2016 (attached as Appendix 3).
14. Once the proposal is published there follows a statutory 4 week representation period during which time 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 4 April 2016.

## **Responses to the Proposal Published on 7 January 2016 for 4 weeks (the Statutory Notice Period)**

15. No responses were received by the end of the 4 weeks statutory notice period.

## **Decision Making Process**

### **Factors to be considered by Cabinet**

#### **(a) Related Proposals**

16. 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.
17. The proposal to change the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and the proposal to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016 are 'related' therefore they must be considered together.

#### **(b) Consideration of Consultation and Representation Period**

18. 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.
19. Cabinet must consider all the views submitted, including all objections and comments on the proposal. Details of the consultation are included in paragraphs 6-10. The Statutory Notice published on 7 January 2016, which expired on 4 February 2016 (the representation period) is attached as

Appendix 3. Officers prepared the notice as set out in the regulations and complied with statutory requirements.

20. The report attached as Appendix 2 provides full details of the responses received during the consultation period from 2 November 2015 - 11 December 2015. In summary:
- 10 written responses were sent to the County Council from
    - 4 members of staff
    - 2 Governors
    - 2 Parents
    - a former MP
    - the local MP
  - Of the 10, 8 are in support of the proposal, and 2 are not in support of the proposal
  - 8 responses were received via the online response form (DCC website) from
    - 4 Governors
    - 2 Parents
    - 2 Residents
  - Of the 8, 6 are in support of the proposal, and 2 are not in support of the proposal.

### **Summary of Responses received to the Proposal**

21. The following information provides a summary of the issues raised during the consultation on the proposal to change the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016:
- Stakeholders believe that the proposal will ensure that progress is continuous and transition from each building is smooth, adds value to the education of the children and will allow pupils to leave Crook Primary School with higher standards which will improve their future life chances;
  - Stakeholders believe that the proposal will bring about opportunities for all staff in both establishments to develop their professional knowledge and will enable resources to be shared by children in either phase of education.
  - One stakeholder, a former MP believes that the proposal will avoid problems with transition that can occur when moving from Primary to Reception as children can progress directly to Reception without having to move provider.
  - Stakeholders believe that the benefits of Primary Education referred to in the consultation document are contrived.
  - The Local MP is concerned that the Local Authority has failed to recognise the value of nursery schools and the strong role made in delivering outstanding education to the most disadvantaged children in County Durham.
22. 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**

23. Officers believe that educationally the proposal to change the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school is in the best interest of pupils and their families. The proposal has many benefits for children, parents and staff including:
- continuity and progress of learning between Nursery and Primary education;
  - unified leadership and management of the curriculum, teaching and learning and social development;
  - access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full primary range;
  - the same approaches to Early Years Literacy and Maths Skills to allow accelerated learning;
  - increased opportunities for professional development of staff enhancing the outcomes for children;
  - school Inspectors will be able to make judgements more accurately about the education children receive when they can see the 'whole picture' within Nursery and Primary Education being delivered in a single school.
24. The most recent Ofsted reports judged Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School as 'good'. Both schools already work closely together for the benefit of all pupils. Officers believe that amalgamating the two schools will not have any negative impact on the standard of education provided to children in these schools.

**(d) School Size and Demand for Places**

25. The proposed amalgamated school will be on the site of the current Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School. The current capacity of Crook Primary School is for 406 pupils. Crook Nursery School provides 78 part-time nursery places. The proposed amalgamation will not affect these capacities. The maximum numbers of pupils anticipated to be at the school (Reception - Year 6) is not expected to be more than 380 therefore no pupils will be displaced by the proposal.

**(e) Proposed Admission Arrangements**

26. The proposed number of pupils to be admitted to Reception of the proposed amalgamated Primary School will be 58. There will be up to 78 part-time nursery places.

**(f) National Curriculum**

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

**(g) Equal Opportunity Issues and Community Cohesion**

28. 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 quality of opportunity and
- factor good relations

An Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out and is attached as Appendix 4. This provides more detail on the impact of the proposal and highlights that there will be no impact on gender, disability, race/ethnicity, religion/belief, sexual orientation.

The proposal aims to bring about education improvement to benefit pupils in the Crook community.

**(h) Travel and Accessibility**

29. The proposed amalgamated Primary School will be on the sites of the current Crook Primary and Crook Nursery Schools. Consequently there will be no increases to travel or journey time and no changes to the current accessibility of both schools.

**(i) Capital**

30. Capital funding in the region of £25,000 will be required to upgrade the ICT provision and provide appropriate signage. This will be funded from a DfE grant allocated to the Local Authority.

**(j) School Premises and Playing Fields**

31. 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 Crook Primary and Crook Nursery Schools do have suitable outdoor space.

**(k) School Funding Implications**

32. The main source of funding for primary schools is the primary and secondary formula, which allocates a fixed amount at the start of the financial year. Where primary schools have a nursery unit they also receive funding through the Early Years Single Funding Formula (EYSFF) in respect of 3 and 4 year olds; this funding is amended termly to take account of the number of hours provided.

Nursery schools are funded through a combination of EYSFF and the nursery school formula. The EYSFF hourly rate is higher for nursery schools than for nursery units in primary schools.

In 2016-17 there will be no adjustment to formula funding following amalgamation, but the amalgamated school will receive EYSFF funding at the nursery unit rate with effect from the autumn term.

Estimated funding for 2016-17 is shown below:

	£
Primary school formula funding	1,453,000
Nursery school formula funding	92,000
EYSFF	156,000
	1,701,000

The EYSFF funding for 2016-17 is estimated to be £25,000 less than it would be for a nursery school, due to the reduced rate of funding/hour for the autumn and spring terms. For a full year the estimated reduction in EYSFF funding is £41,000.

The full-year reduction in funding arising from the amalgamation is £133,000, comprising £92,000 in respect of the nursery school formula and £41,000 in respect of EYSFF funding at the lower hourly rate.

There will be some savings to the amalgamated school in respect of staffing (headteacher etc) and savings on service level agreements are estimated to be in the region of £10,000.

### **Recommendations and Reasons**

33. Officers believe that proceeding with the proposal will preserve and enhance education provision in Crook and will bring about wider educational benefits for pupils, parents and staff.
34. Cabinet is recommended to agree:
  - (i) that the age range of Crook Primary School should be changed from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and
  - (ii) that Crook Nursery School should close as a separate school on 31 August 2016.

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance**

Funding in the region of £25,000 will be required for necessary ICT upgrades and signage for the new school. This will be met from the Council's Schools Capital Maintenance Grant budget, allocated on an annual basis from the Department for Education.

### **Staffing**

It is anticipated there will be no staffing implications.

### **Risk**

The risk of not proceeding with the proposal is that the opportunity of continuity of education and easing the transition from nursery to reception class is missed.

### **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 to assess the likely impact of the proposal on specific groups.

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 single Primary School will be on the existing site of Crook Primary and Crook Nursery Schools.

### **Crime and Disorder**

N/A



**Human Rights**

Human rights will not be affected by this proposal.

**Consultation**

Details of 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.

**DECISION RECORD (Version August 2014)*****Please complete all sections***

AUTHORITY BY REFERENCE TO DECISION MAKER	SCHEME OF DELEGATION/COMMITTEE	REPORT
Rachael Shimmin Corporate Director Children and Adults Services		2. Table 3, paragraph 1.4

Rachael Shimmin Corporate Director Children and Adults Services	2. Table 3, paragraph 1.4
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**SUBJECT**

3. To seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services to issue a statutory notice proposing to extend the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016.
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**DECISION**

4. <b>If Key Decision insert No.</b> CAS/07/15 - Proposed date for Cabinet March 2016
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**ELECTORAL DIVISION/S**

5. Crook
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**CONSULTATION – CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER, OTHER MEMBERS & DATE**

6. The Cabinet Portfolio Holder was consulted on 8 December 2015. The Local Members were consulted on 8 December 2015. Cabinet Portfolio Holder consulted by Director and in agreement on 16/12/15.
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**RECORD OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER**

7. None
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**A NOTE OF DISPENSATION GRANTED BY THE HEAD OF PAID SERVICE IN RELATION TO THE ABOVE CONFLICT**

8. N/A
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## 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

## CONTACT PERSON

Sheila Palmerley

## CONTACT No.

03000 265731

## AUTHORISED SIGNATORY

10.



## DATE

11. 16<sup>th</sup> December, 2015.

This form must be sent electronically to [delegations@durham.gov.uk](mailto:delegations@durham.gov.uk) within 24 hours of the decision being made.

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## 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.

**15 December 2015**

**Outcome of Consultation on a Proposal to Change the Age Range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016.**

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**Report of CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES**

**Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director, Children and Adults Service**

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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To provide details on the outcome of consultation which was undertaken between 12 October 2015 and 11 December 2015 proposing to change the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016, and to seek approval to proceed to the next stage in the process which is to issue a statutory notice.

**Background**

- 2 In a report dated 30 September 2015 (attached as Appendix 2) the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services approved consultation could begin on a proposal to change the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016.
- 3 Consultation documents (attached as appendix 3) were distributed widely (distribution list attached as Appendix 4) and meetings were held between 12 October 2015 and 3 November 2015 with the Governing Bodies and staff of both schools and parents and members of the local community at an Information Sharing Meeting.

**Issues Raised at Consultation Meetings**

4. At the meetings held between 12 October 2015 and 3 November 2015 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:
  - Concerns were raised that the nursery building will be demolished once the proposal has been approved. Officers explained that there was no intention to demolish the nursery building. The building would continue to be used for nursery age children but be part of the Primary school on the same site rather than being a separate school.

- Questions were asked if pupils in Reception would access the nursery building. Officers and the Head Teacher of Crook Primary School emphasised that the amalgamation of the schools would present opportunities for pupils in Reception to access the nursery building and also for pupils in the nursery building to access the Reception classes in the Primary School building. This would assist with pupils' transition.
- Questions were asked if the proposal was merely a cost saving exercise. Officers explained that there were no savings to the County Council as the finances for schools can only be used by schools for the education of children. The proposal is aimed at enhancing education provision for children by creating all through provision from Nursery age to year 6 in a single school.
- Comments were made that the proposal was a positive one. Having elements of Reception brought into the nursery is an advantage, particularly for transition. It also presents an opportunity for staff development.

## **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
  - 10 responded in writing using the response form, letters and email,.
  - 8 responded using the online response form (DCC website).
  - 11 people attended the Information Sharing Evening.
  - 21 Governors attended the joint Governing Body Meeting.
  - 37 members of staff attended the joint staff meeting.

## **Summary of Responses**

- 7 The following information provides a summary of the 18 responses received using the response form, letter, email, on line.
  - 3 parents of pupils attending Crook Primary School support the proposal.
  - 1 parent of a pupil attending Crook Nursery School supports the proposal.
  - 1 Governor of Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School supports the proposal.
  - 3 members of staff of Crook Primary School support the proposal.
  - 1 Governor of Crook Nursery School supports the proposal.
  - 4 Governors of Crook Primary School support the proposal.
  - 1 resident, a former MP for the area supports the proposal.
  - The Local MP does not support the proposal.
  - The Acting Head Teacher of Crook Nursery School does not support the proposal.
  - 2 residents do not support the proposal.

Themes that emerged from the responses were:

- The proposal will ensure that progress is continuous and transition from each building is smooth and adds value to the education of the children.

- The proposal will allow pupils to leave Crook Primary School with higher standards which will improve their future life chances.
- Children will be better prepared to enter Reception.
- The proposal will bring about opportunities for all staff in both establishments to develop their professional knowledge.
- The proposal will lead to a smoother transition from Nursery to Primary education.
- The proposal will enable resources to be shared by children in either phase.
- The proposal will erode the quality of education provided by Nursery Schools.
- The benefits of all through Primary Education are contrived.
- The proposal does not take account of the evidence that demonstrates that Nursery Schools deliver the very best education for young children, particularly those from disadvantaged homes.
- One former Local MP supports the amalgamation and responded to say that problems with transition from Nursery to Reception can be avoided if children attend school nurseries where they can progress directly to Reception without having to move provider. Schools have the unique advantage of being able to offer continuity across the transition to Reception which is a critical time for children. The former Local MP views the proposal as one which will open up new opportunities for children and their families in Crook.
- The Local MP has raised a number of concerns and feels that the Local Authority has failed to recognise the value of nursery schools and the strong role they make in delivering outstanding education to the most disadvantaged children in County Durham. Although it is often cheaper and more efficient to deliver primary education i.e. through amalgamations of Infant and Junior Schools, particularly where there are falling rolls and the schools are co-located, this is not true when it comes to nursery schools.

### **Analysis of Consultation Responses and Current Provision**

- 8 The large majority of respondents are in favour of the proposal and view it as a positive one which will be beneficial to children, parents and staff. In particular they see the proposal as enabling a smoother transition and ensuring children are better prepared when starting the primary phase of education. The proposal allows for continuous education which will ensure that children enter Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with the best possible start as systems and learning processes will be continuous.
- 9 Taking account of the comments made by respondents who believe that the proposal will erode the quality of education provided by Nursery Schools, the most recent Ofsted judgements for both Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School are 'Good' and therefore officers believe that the amalgamation will not have any negative impact on the standard of education provided to children. The existing Head Teacher of the Primary School would be Head Teacher of the proposed all through Nursery/Primary School and would aim to establish a staffing structure that will maintain the high standard of education that is currently provided across both schools.

- 10 Officers remain firmly of the view that the proposal to amalgamate Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School into a single school will bring about wider educational benefits for pupils, parents and staff.

### **Recommendations and Reasons**

- 11 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 extend the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016.

### **Background Papers**

Attached.

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance**

Any funding required for necessary ICT upgrades and signage for the new school will be met from the Council's Schools Capital Maintenance Grant budget, allocated on an annual basis from the Department for Education.

### **Staffing**

It is anticipated there will be no staffing implications.

### **Risk**

The risk of not proceeding with the proposal is that the opportunity of continuity of education and easing the transition from nursery to reception class is missed.

### **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 is carried out to assess the likely impact of the proposal on specific groups.

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 Primary School will be on the existing site of Crook Primary and Crook Nursery 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 single Primary School providing education for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11. They agree that the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services should 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 extending the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 and closing Crook Nursery School as a separate school will be applied in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance.

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## Appendix 2

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REF No.

### 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 begin consultation on a proposal to extend the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016.

#### DECISION

4. **If Key Decision insert No.**  
Key Decision when Cabinet meets to decide on the proposal.

#### ELECTORAL DIVISION/S

5. Crook

#### CONSULTATION – CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER, OTHER MEMBERS & DATE

6. The Cabinet Portfolio Holder was consulted on 28 September 2015. The Local Members were consulted on 29 September 2015.

#### RECORD OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

7. None

#### 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

## CONTACT PERSON

Sheila Palmerley

## CONTACT No.

03000 265731

## AUTHORISED SIGNATORY

10



## DATE

11.

11/09/15

This form must be sent electronically to [delegations@durham.gov.uk](mailto: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**



**30 September 2015**

**Proposal to extend the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016.**

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**Report of CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES**

**Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director, Children and Adults Service**

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**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 extend the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016.

**Background**

2. Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School are approximately 50 yards from each other and are located on the same site. The Head Teacher of Crook Nursery School has recently retired and the Deputy Head Teacher has become the Acting Head Teacher until 31 July 2016. Both schools work closely together for the benefit of all pupils.
3. The potential change of leadership of the Nursery School and the proximity of the schools provides an opportunity to consider amalgamating Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School and discussions have been held with the schools about this proposal.
4. Officers within the Education Service believe that children and their families will benefit from continuity of education provision from age 3-11 in a single school, rather than two separate schools. Transition from the Nursery phase into the Primary phase would be seamless in a single school. The opportunity to work as one Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) encompassing both nursery and reception classes will enable children to be integrated in those early years and their progress monitored more easily. This should avoid any dip in learning created by changing schools and make the move from nursery to reception free from anxiety.

### **Details of any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected when making the Decision**

5. Officers considered taking no action which would mean continuing to run two small schools. However the benefits indicated in paragraph 4 would not materialise.
6. The preferred option is to consult on establishing a single school. The option of keeping both schools open was rejected.

### **Consultation Timescales**

7. It is intended that consultation on this proposal will commence in November 2015. Consultation documents will be widely distributed to key stakeholders, including Governors, staff, parents, Local Members, MP, Community Groups, Parish Councils, neighbouring schools, Children's Centres, Early Years Providers, AAP groups etc. Meetings with staff, parents and the wider community will also be held in November 2015 for officers to provide information and answer queries.
8. The consultation period will end in December 2015 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 2016 for four weeks. Cabinet would then be asked to make a decision on the proposal.

### **Recommendation and Reasons**

9. As both schools already work closely together for the benefit of pupils, bringing the two schools together as one large school providing education for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11 operating across both of the existing school buildings would enhance this arrangement.

### **Decision**

10. The Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services agrees that consultation can begin on the proposal to extend the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016.

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**Contact: Sheila Palmerley**

**Tel: 03000 265731**

**Delegated Decision- Proposal to extend the age range of Crook Primary School**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance**

Any funding required for necessary ICT upgrades and signage for the new school will be met from the Council's Schools Capital Maintenance Grant budget, allocated on an annual basis from the Department for Education.

### **Staffing**

It is anticipated there will be no staffing implications.

### **Risk**

The risk of not proceeding with the proposal is that the opportunity of continuity of education and easing the transition from nursery to reception class is missed.

### **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.

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 Primary School will be on the existing site of Crook Primary and Crook Nursery 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 single Primary School providing education for pupils between the ages of 3 and 11. 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**

The statutory process for extending the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 and closing Crook Nursery School as a separate school will be applied in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance.

# **Crook Nursery School and Crook Primary School**



**Crook Primary School**



**Crook Nursery School**

**Proposal to amalgamate  
Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery  
School on existing sites from 1 September 2016.**

## **PUBLIC CONSULTATION INFORMATION**





## **Introduction**

Durham County Council is consulting on a proposal to amalgamate Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School to form a split site school for pupils aged between 3 and 11 from 1 September 2016. This would be achieved by changing the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and by closing Crook Nursery School as a separate school in name only on 31 August 2016.

**There is no intention to discontinue the use of the Nursery School building.**

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

### **1. Why has the proposal been brought forward?**

The Council is moving where possible towards a model of all through Primary Schools instead of having separate Nursery, Infant and Junior Schools as the Council believes that educationally it is in the best interests of the children, parents and staff. Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School are approximately 50 yards from each other and are located on the same site. Both schools work closely together for the benefit of all pupils and having a single school on the same site would be helpful for families in the local community.

### **2. What are the benefits of the proposal?**

The Council believes that the proposal will have many benefits for children, parents and staff. Some of these include:

- Continuity and progress of learning between Nursery and Primary education;
- School ethos and aims and values shared in a single school;
- Unified leadership and management of the curriculum, teaching and learning and social development;
- Access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full primary range;
- The same approaches to Early Years Literacy and Maths skills to allow accelerated learning;
- Having a close team to support children's journey into reception;
- A cohesive approach to address the needs of SEND children;
- Increased opportunities for professional development of staff enhancing the outcomes for all children;
- 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 Nursery and Primary Education being delivered in a single school.

Transition of progress, learning and development from the Nursery phase into the Primary phase would be seamless in a single school. The opportunity to work as one Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) encompassing both nursery and reception classes will enable children to be integrated in those early years and their progress monitored more easily. This should avoid any

dip in learning created by changing schools and make the move from nursery to reception free from anxiety.

If the proposal to amalgamate is approved, the Local Authority would work closely with staff and Governors of the two schools to provide support with governance, finance, personnel and curriculum matters.

**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 so they start from a strong position. They already work closely together and will continue to do this whether or not the proposed amalgamation takes place. Officers believe that learning and progress can be improved further if the two schools are amalgamated and therefore the proposal will not have any negative impact on the standard of education provided to children in these schools.

**4. Where will the proposed single school be?**

If the proposal is agreed, the school would be located on the existing site of Crook Nursery and Primary Schools. The proximity of the two schools will ensure that senior leaders can be responsive to urgent matters that arise in either building.

**5. What would the proposed single school look like?**

Essentially at the beginning, both the nursery and the primary school would not appear very much different to how they are now, for example the timings of the school day remaining unchanged. It is envisaged that the nursery aged children will begin to wear the Crook Primary School uniform to create a feeling of belonging to the same school. However school uniforms can be expensive and this would be a gradual process over time with new uniforms only being bought as children grow. Furthermore school uniform for nursery aged children is not statutory, so whilst preferable it is not something that would be insisted upon.

Transition from nursery to primary education will be made even easier for children as Early years staff in both buildings will be working closer together. A successful amalgamation will be achieved by sensitively responding to children's needs.

As a single School, all staff would have the opportunity to have involvement with the full primary and early years age range which would widen their experience and enable improved career progression. The recruitment and retention of staff would therefore be enhanced.

**6. Will children automatically transfer from the nursery to the primary sector of the school?**

Parents will still need to apply for a place in the Reception year group at their preferred primary school(s).

## 7. What is the timescale for the process?

The table below sets out the expected timescales of the process.

Date	Stage
November - December 2015	<b>Initial Consultation</b> All responses received by the closing date will be analysed and included in a report for the Council to consider and decide whether to take the proposal forward.
January 2016	<b>Statutory Public Notice</b> If the Council decides to proceed with the proposal, statutory notices would be published in the local newspaper, posted on school gates and on the DCC website. These notices would provide four weeks for comments or objections to be made.
March 2016	<b>Decision Making</b> Durham County Council's Cabinet would consider responses to the statutory notice and make the final decision as to whether to agree the proposal or not.
April - August 2016	Preparation for the single school opening.
1 September 2016	Single school opens

## 8. How do you respond to this consultation?

The Council would like to hear what you think about this proposal. To help you do that an Information Sharing Evening is being held for at Crook Primary School at 6.00 pm on Tuesday 3 November 2015. Parents and prospective parents are encouraged to attend. Officers from the County Council will be present to answer any questions you have and listen to your views.

You can respond in one of the following ways by .

- (i) Send in the attached response form or write to: 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.
- (ii) Email your views to [schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk) or complete the response form online via the Current Consultation Section of the County Council's website@ [www.durham.gov.uk](http://www.durham.gov.uk)

## RESPONSE FORM

### CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF CROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM 4-11 TO 3-11 FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2016 AND TO CLOSE CROOK NURSERY SCHOOL AS A SEPARATE SCHOOL ON 31 AUGUST 2016

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**

- ☐ Crook Nursery School  
☐ Crook Primary School  
☐ \*Other School

\*Please state which school:

**OR a Pupil at**

- ☐ Crook Nursery School  
☐ Crook Primary School  
☐ \*Other School

\*Please state which school:

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

- ☐ Crook Nursery School  
☐ Crook Primary 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 Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 and to close Crook Nursery 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 11 December 2015 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

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(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)

**PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE CROOK NURSERY AND CROOK PRIMARY SCHOOL**  
**CONSULTATION DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION LIST**  
*October 2015*

School	Govs	Staff	Pupils	Total	How Delivered	Date Delivered
<b>Crook Nursery</b>	11*	10	78	100	AW <sup>1</sup>	<b>19/10/15</b>
<b>Crook Primary</b>	13*	40	380	440	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Hartside Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	<b>19/10/15</b> (left in school reception area)
Howden-le-Wear Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Peases West Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Stanley Crook Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
St. Cuthbert's RCVA Primary, Crook	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Emerald Nursery & Childcare	N/A	5	45	50	AW <sup>1</sup>	<b>19/10/15</b>
Howden-le-Wear Pre-School	N/A	5	8	15	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Kid Zone	N/A	5	35	40	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Peases West Nursery	N/A	5	25	30	AW <sup>1</sup>	
St. Cuthbert's RCVA Nursery	N/A	5	16	20	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Westfield House Nursery	N/A	5	35	40	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Parkside Academy	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	<b>19/10/15</b> (left in school reception area)

\*Governors consultation document posted (16/10/15)  
 AW<sup>1</sup> – delivered by hand

Document was placed on the DCC website (20/10/15)  
 Document shared on DCC Facebook page (??/??/15)  
 Document shared on 3 Towns Area Action Partnership (AAP) Facebook page (20/10/15)

<b>Elected DCC Members</b>	
Ossie Johnson, Simon Henig, Andrea Patterson, Maureen Stanton, Eddie Tomlinson	<b>Emailed 19/10/15</b>
<b>MPs</b>	
Pat Glass MP <a href="mailto:pat.glass.mp@parliament.uk">pat.glass.mp@parliament.uk</a>	<b>Emailed 19/10/15</b>
<b>INTERNAL – Email (19/10/15)</b>	
CAS SLT, Julian Wilson, Barry Piercy, Gerard Darby, John Wilkinson, Joanne Barker, School Places & Admissions Team, Julie Arnett, Joanne Walt, Ian Jacques, Lynn Elliott, Margaret Hanratty, Linda Bailey, Chris Young, David Shirer, Adrian White, Phil Hodgson, Sheila Palmerley, Sarah Armstrong, Linda Bailes, Nora Waugh, Jill Robson, Janet Bennett, Kath Allison, Elaine Wilson, Sue Smith, Jennifer Morris	
<b>RC and CE Diocese and DfE</b>	
RC Diocese Director <a href="mailto:education@diocesehn.org.uk">education@diocesehn.org.uk</a>	<b>Emailed 19/10/15</b>
CE Diocese Director <a href="mailto:paul.rickeard@drmnnewcanglican.org">paul.rickeard@drmnnewcanglican.org</a>	
DfE <a href="mailto:SchoolOrganisation.NOTIFICATIONS@education.gsi.gov.uk">SchoolOrganisation.NOTIFICATIONS@education.gsi.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Trade Unions</b>	
<a href="mailto:c.d.thompson@hotmail.co.uk">c.d.thompson@hotmail.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:john.kesterton@ascl.org.uk">john.kesterton@ascl.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:ksmith@atl.org.uk">ksmith@atl.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:terry.scarr@gmb.org.uk">terry.scarr@gmb.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:dan.lister0@gmail.com">dan.lister0@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:northern@nut.org.uk">northern@nut.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:secretary1@durham.nut.org.uk">secretary1@durham.nut.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:unison@durham.gov.uk">unison@durham.gov.uk</a>	<b>Emailed 19/10/15</b>
<b>Libraries (10 each)</b>	
<b>Crook Library</b> , Civic Centre, North Terrace, Crook, County Durham, DL15 9ES	<b>AW<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Doctor's Surgeries (10 each)</b>	
<b>North House Surgery</b> , Hope Street, Crook, County Durham, DL15 9HU	<b>AW<sup>1</sup></b>
<b>Parish Councils (SD passing on to Community Groups/AAPs in Crook area – no Parish Council)</b>	
Sandy Denney <a href="mailto:sandy.denney@durham.gov.uk">sandy.denney@durham.gov.uk</a>	<b>E-Mail 19/10/15</b>

**TOTAL number of hard copies of consultation documents printed = 900**





## PUBLIC NOTICE

### **Proposal to change the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and to close Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016**

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 Crook Primary School (Community), Croft Avenue, Crook, DH8 8QG and to close Crook Nursery School (Community), Croft Avenue, Crook, DL15 8QG.

It is proposed to amalgamate Crook Primary and Crook Nursery Schools which share the same site into a single school from 1 September 2016. This will be achieved by changing the age range of Crook Primary School from 4-11 to 3-11 from 1 September 2016 and by closing Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016.

Where possible the Local Authority is taking the opportunity to amalgamate Nursery, Infant and Junior Schools into Primary Schools as they have wider educational benefits for pupils, parents, and staff such as continuity and progress of learning between Nursery and Primary Education and access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full Nursery/Primary age range.

The current capacity of Crook Primary School is for 406 pupils and there are currently 78 part time nursery places at Crook Nursery School. This proposal will not change the capacity of Crook Primary School nor the nursery places available at Crook Nursery School. The proposed admission number to Reception in the Primary School will remain at 58.

At present, Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School are judged 'Good' by Ofsted. The schools are already working closely together for the benefit of all pupils and this proposal will enhance that arrangement. 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 schools become a single 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/consultations](http://www.durham.gov.uk/consultations).

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/consultations](http://www.durham.gov.uk/consultations); or
- e-mailed to [schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk).

Signed:

Rachael Shimmin  
Corporate Director  
Children and Adults Services

**Publication Date: 7 January 2016**

## 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.

<b>Section one: Description and initial screening</b>	
<b>Section overview:</b> this section provides an audit trail.	
<b>Service/team or section:</b> School Places and Admissions, Education, CAS	
<b>Lead Officer:</b> Sheila Palmerley	<b>Start date:</b> 2 November 2015
<p><b>Subject of the Impact Assessment:</b> (please also include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate)</p> <p>Proposal to amalgamate Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School to form a split site school for pupils aged between 3 and 11 from 1 September 2016. This would be achieved by changing the age range of Crook Primary School from 4 –11 to 3 -11 from 1 September 2016 and by closing Crook Nursery School as a separate school on 31 August 2016.</p> <p>The objective of the proposal is to enhance nursery and primary education in Crook. The Council is moving where possible towards a model of all through Primary Schools instead of having separate Nursery, Infant and Junior Schools. The Council believes that educationally this is in the best interests of the children, parents and staff. The schools are approximately 50 yards from each other and are located on the same site. The intention is that a Primary School will run across the current sites encompassing the nursery, infant and junior age ranges. There is no intention to discontinue the use of either building.</p>	

The Governors and management of the schools will establish a structure of staff from both Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School to ensure that the curriculum is delivered across both sites with staff who have the experience and skills to do so. Durham County Council's relevant policies and procedures will be applied when the staffing establishment is being implemented. It is expected that there will be no staffing reductions.

There will be no travel or cost implications due to the amalgamated school being located on the same site as the current Crook Primary and Nursery Schools.

The proposal will ensure that nursery and primary education in Crook will be maintained with a model that will bring about improvement.

It is not expected there will be a negative impact on community cohesion.

**Who are the main stakeholders:** General public / Employees / Elected Members / Partners/ Specific audiences/Other (please specify) –

General Public, Governors, Staff, pupils attending Crook Primary and Nursery Schools, providers of Early Years Education, Elected Members, MPs, Neighbouring Schools, Trade Unions, Diocese, Department for Education, Community Groups, Parish Councils, Residents' Associations, AAP Board, CAS/DCC Staff

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

<b>Initial screening</b>											
<p>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?</p>											
<p>Is there an actual/potential negative or positive impact on specific groups within these headings?          Indicate :Y = Yes, N = No, ?=Unsure</p>											
Gender	N	Disability	N	Age	N	Race/ethnicity	N	Religion or belief	N	Sexual orientation	N
<p><b>How will this support our commitment to promote equality and meet our legal responsibilities?</b></p> <p>Reminder of our legal duties:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eliminating unlawful discrimination &amp; harassment</li> <li>▪ Promoting equality of opportunity</li> <li>▪ Promoting good relations between people from different groups</li> <li>▪ Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and taking account of someone's disability, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people</li> <li>▪ Involving people, particularly disabled people, in public life and decision making</li> </ul> <p>The proposal to amalgamate Crook Primary and Nursery Schools will create a split site Primary School which will bring about educational improvement and will continue to provide equal access for all regardless of gender, disability, age, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation.</p> <p>Durham County Council has a statutory duty to ensure that all pupils in County Durham can have a place at a school in County Durham and this proposal does not deny them that opportunity.</p>											



### **What evidence do you have to support your findings?**

The main groups affected by this proposal are pupils attending Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School. If the proposal is approved it will have benefits for children, parents and staff. Some of these include:

- Continuity and progress of learning between Nursery and Primary education;
- School ethos and aims and values shared in a single school;
- Unified leadership and management of the curriculum, teaching and learning and social development;
- Having a close team to support children's journey into reception;
- Increased opportunities for professional development of staff enhancing the outcomes for all children;

A consultation was undertaken between 2 November 2015 and 11 December 2015. Consultation documents were distributed widely and meetings were held with Governors and Staff of Crook Primary and Nursery Schools, parents, and members of the local community at 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.

- 10 responded in writing using the response form, letter and email
- 8 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 18 responses received during the consultation period, 14 supported the proposal. Stakeholders believe that the proposal is a positive one which will be beneficial to children, parents and staff. In particular they see the proposal as enabling a smoother transition and ensuring children are better prepared when starting the primary phase of education. The proposal allows for continuous education which will ensure that children enter Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) with the best possible start as systems and learning processes will be continuous.

Those not in support of the proposal view it as being a cost-cutting exercise and that the Local Authority has failed to recognise the value of nursery schools and the strong role they make in delivering outstanding education to the most disadvantaged children in County Durham. The most recent Ofsted judgements for both Crook Primary School and Crook Nursery School are 'Good' and therefore officers believe that the amalgamation will not have any negative impact on the standard of education provided to children. The existing Head Teacher of the Primary School would be Head Teacher of the proposed all through Nursery/Primary School and would aim to establish a staffing structure that will maintain the high standard of education that is currently provided across both schools with no impact.

**Decision: Proceed to full impact assessment - No      Date: 11 December 2015 (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 split site Primary School in Crook rather than separate Nursery and Primary Schools. The proposal will ensure that nursery and primary education in Crook will be maintained with a model that will bring about improvement.

Action to be taken	Officer responsible	Target Date	In which plan will this action appear
When will this assessment be reviewed?	Date: In March 2016 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>S. Palmerley</i>			Date: 13 January 2016
Service equality representative - sign off: <i>Q McLeod</i>			Date: 2 February 2016
Please email your completed Impact Assessment to the Equality team - <a href="mailto:equalities@durham.gov.uk">equalities@durham.gov.uk</a>			