

Cabinet

14 February 2024

**Proposal to close Rookhope Primary School
on 31 August 2024**

Key Decision: CYPS/02/2024



Report of Corporate Management Team

John Pearce, Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services

Councillor Ted Henderson, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services

Electoral division(s) affected:

Weardale.

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To seek Cabinet approval to close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024, taking account of the Local Authority's duties as prescribed in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to secure sufficient places and to ensure good outcomes for all children and young people in the local area.

Executive summary

- 2 Rookhope Primary School has the lowest pupil numbers of any school in Co. Durham and serves the least populated part of the county. There are currently 5 children on roll and these pupils are being educated at St. John's Chapel Primary School.
- 3 The breadth of curriculum and the opportunity for social development of pupils at Rookhope Primary School will be enhanced by them being educated at St. John's Chapel Primary School. All of the children involved in this move have spent significant curriculum time with other pupils across the (now) Durham Dales Federation (formerly the Upper Durham Dales Federation,) in St. John's Chapel Primary School.
- 4 No preferences were expressed for a place in Reception in September 2022 or September 2023. There is no anticipated development in this part of the county that will bring about an increase to these numbers.

- 5 The most recent Ofsted inspection (date 18/10/2017) judged the school to be 'Good. That report however did draw attention to the fact that those pupils with lower starting points did not make as much progress as their peers and that improving the quality of learning in early years remains a focus so that children are challenged to reach their full potential in all areas of the early years' curriculum.
- 6 A decision was made to enrich and widen the curriculum for pupils at the school in collaboration with other small primary schools in the upper dales including Wearhead, St John's Chapel and Forest of Teesdale Primary schools. The most recent Ofsted inspection (date 27 March 2019) judged St. John's Chapel Primary School to be 'Good' and the most recent Ofsted inspection for Wearhead Primary School (date 11 September 2019) judged the school to be 'Good'.
- 7 This group of schools became a formal Federation (the Upper Durham Dales Federation) from September 2019 all keeping their own individual URN numbers but federating under one governing body.
- 8 An Executive Head Teacher post was created with leadership oversight across all schools with all school sites used to facilitate different parts of the curriculum.
- 9 Forest of Teesdale Primary School closed on 31 August 2022 due to the fact that only one pupil was on roll at the time and the school was becoming unviable. However, the Federation now also includes Hamsterley Primary School, therefore the proposed closure of Rookhope Primary School would mean that 3 schools remained in the Federation which at the same time became the Durham Dales Federation.
- 10 It was agreed by the Corporate Director on 21 August 2023, to use their delegated powers to agree the start of a proposal to close the school on 31 August 2024.
- 11 Following the completion of the initial consultation process, the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services approved the issuing of a statutory notice proposing to close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024.
- 12 The statutory notice was issued on 16 November 2023. During the 4-week statutory representation period, no comments were received.
- 13 As part of the statutory process there are a range of factors that must be considered by Cabinet as the decision maker. These are covered in paragraphs 34 to 41 of this report.

Recommendation

14 Cabinet is recommended to:

- (a) agree to close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024.

Background

- 15 Rookhope Primary School, set in the relatively small rural community of Upper Weardale, has the lowest pupil numbers of any school in Co. Durham and serves the least populated part of the county. There are currently 5 children on roll who are being educated at St. John's Chapel Primary School. No pupils started in Reception in September 2022 or September 2023, and there are currently no expressions for a first preference to start in Reception at Rookhope Primary School for September 2024. There is no anticipated development in this part of the county that will bring about an increase to these numbers.
- 16 The most recent Ofsted inspection (date 18/10/2017) judged the school to be 'Good. That report however did draw attention to the fact that those pupils with lower starting points did not make as much progress as their peers and that improving the quality of learning in early years remains a focus so that children are challenged to reach their full potential in all areas of the early years' curriculum.
- 17 A decision was made to enrich and widen the curriculum for pupils at the school in collaboration with other small primary schools in the upper dales including Wearhead, St John's Chapel and Forest of Teesdale Primary schools. The most recent Ofsted inspection (date 27 March 2019) judged St. John's Chapel Primary School to be 'Good' and the most recent Ofsted inspection for Wearhead Primary School (date 11 September 2019) judged the school to be 'Good'.
- 18 This group of schools became a formal Federation from September 2019 all keeping their own individual URN numbers but federating under one governing body.
- 19 Forest of Teesdale Primary School closed on 31 August 2022 due to the fact that only one pupil was on roll at the time and the school was becoming unviable. However, the Federation now also includes Hamsterley Primary School which has the largest pupil roll of the schools therein, therefore the proposed closure of Rookhope Primary School would mean that 3 schools remained in the Durham Dales Federation.
- 20 The breadth of curriculum and the opportunity for social development of pupils at Rookhope Primary School was the key driver for the 5 pupils on roll to be educated at St John's Chapel Primary School. Governors accept that pupil numbers are unlikely to increase over the next 5 years to enable the breadth of curriculum and social development needs required for the school to be sustainable in the long term.

- 21 When potential financial liability is a factor in a school not being in a position to deliver an effective curriculum, it becomes incumbent on a local authority to take steps to resolve in the best interests of pupil outcomes.
- 22 Indications, therefore, from pupil data and Ofsted reports show that decisions should be taken promptly to provide sustainable and effective education for the five pupils who are on roll at Rookhope Primary School.
- 23 At the meeting with Governors of the Durham Dales Federation held on 2 October 2023 as part of the initial consultation, The Durham Dales Federation did not object to the proposal to close Rookhope Primary School as they agreed that a school with only five pupils on roll could not be sustainable for the long term. The five pupils on roll who are being educated at St. John's Chapel Primary School with other children have developed both educationally and socially and are happy in that school.
- 24 This view supports that of officers within the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services.
- 25 In undertaking this process, the Council has referred to the Department for Education (DFE) guidance – "Opening and closing maintained schools January 2023". This guidance states that the decision-maker (in this case the Cabinet) needs to be satisfied that appropriate fair and open local consultation has been carried out and that the proposer (in this case the Council's Education Service) has given full consideration to all the responses received. The decision-maker should not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a view. Instead, they should give the greatest weight to responses from those stakeholders likely to be most affected by a proposal – especially parents of children at the affected school(s).
- 26 An initial, non-statutory consultation on a proposal to close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024 was held between 18 September and 29 October 2023. A meeting with Governors of the Durham Dales Federation was held on 2 October 2023. A live event was held over Microsoft Teams on 5 October for parents, the wider community and other stakeholders to hear the proposal explained by senior council officers and for them to ask questions and express views.
- 27 The responses to the consultation were received and considered by officers in the Council. Of the 22 responses received, 10 respondents strongly disagree with the proposal, 3 disagree with it, 8) strongly agree with it, 1 neither agrees nor disagrees with it.

- 28 In summary, the main concerns expressed by those strongly disagreeing or disagreeing with the proposal were: closing Rookhope Primary School the school will take the heart out of Rookhope. It will affect the children, it will affect the families, it will stop new families coming into the area.; that the Council should have promoted the school more to attract pupils; and that affordable housing should be built in the area and jobs created to attract families which in turn will increase pupil numbers.
- 29 Those strongly agreeing with the proposal felt the existing arrangement with children attending St John's Chapel Primary School is providing a far more positive educational experience than attending Rookhope with just 5 children in attendance, mostly in different year groups. Keeping Rookhope Primary School open and returning children to this school environment would be a negative experience for them and could have a potential negative impact on the finances of the Durham Dales Federation: and that the proposal was the correct one due to low pupil numbers and financial viability.

Decision to Issue a Statutory Notice

- 30 After considering all of the consultation responses received, the Corporate Director of Children and Young People's Services agreed to publish proposals to close Rookhope Primary School. A statutory notice was therefore published on 16 November 2023.
- 31 More responses (59%) received during the initial consultation period did not support the proposal than did support it as indicated in paragraph 27 of this report. Those respondents however did not provide evidence of how sustainable numbers could be achieved or alternative viable options to support their preferred option which is to retain Rookhope Primary School.
- 32 Once a proposal is published there follows a statutory 4-week representation period during which comments can be made. These must be sent to the Local Authority. Any person can submit representations, which can be objections or expressions of support. The representation period is the final opportunity for people and organisations to express their views about the proposal. Once the representation period has closed (14 December 2023), a decision on the proposal must be made by the decision-maker (in this case the Cabinet) within 2 months, i.e. by 14 February August 2024.

Responses to the proposal published on 16 November 2023 (The Statutory Notice Period)

- 33 No responses were received by the end of the 4-week statutory notice period.

Decision-Making Process - Factors to be considered by Cabinet

(a) Demand and Need

- 34 When determining proposals to discontinue (close) provision, Cabinet should be satisfied that there is sufficient capacity elsewhere in the local area to accommodate displaced pupils, and the likely supply and future demand for places in the medium and long term. Cabinet should take into account the overall quality of alternative places in the local area, balanced with the need to reduce excessive surplus capacity in the system. Cabinet should have regard for the local context in which the proposals are being made, taking into account the nature of the area, the age of the children involved and, where applicable, alternative options considered for reducing excess surplus capacity. There is sufficient capacity at nearby schools to meet demand in the short, medium and long term. There are significant spare places at St. John's Chapel primary School, Wearhead Primary School and Stanhope Barrington primary School. The five pupils on roll at Rookhope Primary School are currently being taught at St. John's Chapel Primary School. There is no anticipated development in the area that is likely to significantly increase pupil numbers.

(b) Equal Opportunity Issues

- 35 Cabinet must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which requires them to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination;
- advance quality of opportunity;

foster good relations between people with a protected characteristic and those without that characteristic;

- 36 Cabinet should be satisfied that the proposal has shown a commitment to providing access to a range of opportunities which reflect the ethnic and cultural mix of the area in which a school is located, whilst ensuring that such opportunities are open to all. The cultural mix in the villages in Upper Weardale is the same and educating pupils in a larger, more viable school will enable greater social interaction and access to more opportunities.
- 37 An equality impact assessment (Appendix 2) has been carried out on this proposal. It is evident that there would be limited impact on

protected groups of pupils as only five pupils are currently on roll and are not being educated at Rookhope Primary School.

(c) Travel

- 38 The five pupils currently on roll at Rookhope Primary School are being taught at St. John's Chapel Primary and are being provided with free home to school transport. This arrangement will continue if the proposal to close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024 is agreed. Consequently, there will be no increase in travelling time from that currently experienced.

(d) Funding

- 39 The closure of Rookhope Primary School will enable pupils to be educated in a larger and more viable establishment. Where a school is closing and other local schools need to take on displaced pupils, the following will apply in terms of the revenue funding support schools will receive for taking on additional pupils. Schools' core allocations in any given year are based on the number of pupils that they had on roll at the previous autumn census. This means that schools that take on additional pupils could be funded for fewer pupils for a given year. Local authorities can use growth funding to support schools to manage the revenue costs of an increase in pupil numbers before schools receive the corresponding increase in their core funding.

(e) Rural schools and the presumption against closure

- 40 DfE guidance – "Opening and closing maintained schools January 2023" states that there is a presumption against the closure of rural schools. This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but the case for closure should be strong and the proposal clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area. We believe the information provided in this report clearly shows why the proposal is in the best interests of educational provision in this area.
- 41 When considering the proposal to close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024, Cabinet must consider:
- The likely effect of the closure of the school on the local community. Although the closure of a school is emotive, this proposal will have a positive effect on children and their families by providing education in a larger and more financially viable establishment.
 - The proportion of pupils attending the school from within the local community i.e. is the school being used by the local community; There are only five pupils on roll at Rookhope Primary School and

these pupils are currently being taught at St. John's Chapel Primary School. No preferences were expressed for a place in Reception for September 2022 or September 2023 and there is no projected growth in the area which would result in more pupils attending Rookhope Primary School.

- Educational standards at the school and the likely effect on standards at neighbouring schools; The most recent Ofsted inspection of 8 October 2018 judged the school to be 'Good'. The Ofsted report identified weaknesses and consequently a decision was made to enrich and widen the curriculum for pupils at the school in collaboration with other small primary schools in the upper dales including Wearhead, St John's Chapel and Rookhope Primary schools.
- Whether the school is now surplus to requirements (e.g. because there are surplus places elsewhere in the local area which can accommodate displaced pupils, and there is no predicted demand for the school in the medium or long term); All of the data indicates that there are sufficient places at other schools within a reasonable travelling distance to accommodate the current pupil on roll and there is no predicted demand for places in the future.
- Any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the closure of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase; There will be no increase in the use of motor vehicles as the council is currently providing free home to school transport to the five pupils on roll at Rookhope Primary School to attend St. John's Chapel Primary School.
- Any alternatives to the closure of the school. The Upper Durham Dales Federation was created which included Rookhope Primary School in an attempt to preserve education in small rural areas. However, whilst the Federation has worked in terms of enriching the curriculum and providing greater social opportunities for all pupils across all schools, parents/carers have not chosen to enrol their children at Rookhope Primary School. There is no likelihood of pupil numbers increasing in the future and consequently there is no alternative to closure.
- Whether the school is now surplus to requirements (e.g. because there are surplus places elsewhere in the local area which can accommodate displaced pupils, and there is no predicted demand for the school in the medium or long term). There is a consistent theme throughout this report that the proposal to close Rookhope Primary School is due to very low pupil numbers which are not anticipated to increase and that places are available in other

schools in the area. Consequently, Rookhope Primary School is surplus to requirements.

- Wider school organisation and capacity of good schools in the area to accommodate displaced pupils. There are other school in the area that can more effectively educate the pupils on roll at Rookhope Primary School which are more financially viable for the long term. The most recent Ofsted inspection (date 27 March 2019) judged St. John's Chapel Primary School to be 'Good' and the most recent Ofsted inspection for Wearhead Primary School (date 11 September 2019) judged the school to be 'Good'.

Conclusion

- 42 As evidenced through this report, the proposal to close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024 will have a positive impact for students, their families. The key objective of the proposal is to improve educational outcomes for pupils in the area which have been negatively impacted by the extremely small number of children on roll at the school. This is affecting its ability to offer an effective education and in due course will impact on the financial viability of the school.
- 43 Schools need to be sustainable to meet the challenges in a rapidly changing educational environment. The objectives of this proposal are to significantly enhance the quality of education provision for children within local communities whilst ensuring choice of provision and curriculum breadth are enhanced. The proposal to close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024 and for children in that area to be educated in a larger school that allows for more social interaction and which provides a broader education will provide a sustainable model to improve education outcomes in the area. Therefore, educationally it is in the best interests of children and their families.
- 44 Officers believe this recommendation provides the best future option for the children, the school, and the communities it serves based on educational outcomes, pupil numbers, site issues and sustainable and equitable finances.
- 45 Should Cabinet agree to close Rookhope Primary School, it will impact on the amount of funding across the Durham Dales Federation as there will be a reduction of one lump sum to the value of £128,000 and other smaller elements of formula funding. However, the proposal to close the school will result in a fairer distribution of the significant funding currently allocated to educate one pupil.
- 46 Although most responses (59%) received during the initial consultation were not in support of the proposal those respondents have not

suggested alternative practicable solutions for the education of children and young people living in the area.

47 No responses were received to the statutory notice.

Background Papers

- Delegated Decision Reports dated 21 August 2023 and 6 November 2023.
- Corporate Management Team Report dated 22 August 2023 'Options for the future of Rookhope Primary School'.
- Consultation document: 'Proposal to close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024'.
- Consultation document distribution list –September 2023
- Public notice: 'Proposal to close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024'.

Author(s)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Legal Implications

The actions described in this report are intended to comply with the Council's duty to exercise its functions with a view to promoting high standards and the fulfilment of each pupil's learning potential in accordance with S13A of the Education Act 1996.

Finance

Schools are funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant, using a formula to determine allocations to schools. The closure of this school would not create savings for the council and would not result in a significant change in funding for other schools. For 24-25, formula funding for Rookhope will be 5/12s of what it would be for a full year. The saving of 7/12s will be reallocated across all schools through the formula. Similarly, a lump saving of £128,000 will be made which will be shared across all schools. From April 2025, the pupil-led element of formula funding that would otherwise be allocated to Rookhope would be allocated to the schools to which the pupils were admitted following closure.

The closure of Rookhope Primary School will enable pupils to be educated in a larger and financially more viable school rather than in a very small school that is offering a limited curriculum.

There may be costs associated with any redundancies.

Consultation and Engagement

Consultation has been carried out in accordance with DfE statutory guidance. The approach to consultation is described in the report.

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

The proposal to close Rookhope Primary School is expected to bring about educational improvement for children by them being educated in a larger, more sustainable school in Upper Weardale.

The focus on improved education outcomes is seen as a positive experience in a child's education and ensures that children who are protected under the Equality and Diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty can maximise their potential.

The main groups affected are children attending Rookhope Primary School, their families and staff.

Consideration over whether to close Rookhope Primary School will lead to improved standards and a better curriculum offer. The proposal to close Rookhope Primary School will benefit pupils, staff and parents. Education will be provided in a larger establishment which offers greater social interaction to facilitate a positive learning experience for children and provide equal access to all.

The main groups affected are children attending Rookhope Primary School, their families and staff. An Equality Impact Assessment is included in Appendix 2 to this report.

Climate Change

The recommendation of this report involves increased use of transport from Rookhope to St. John's Chapel. This will be more than compensated by the reduction in the number of schools and subsequent reduction in the pupil carbon footprint and use of antiquated heating systems. This will contribute to the Council's net zero carbon target.

Human Rights

Human rights are not affected by the recommendation in this report.

Crime and Disorder

No impact.

Staffing

Some staff employed by the 3 schools in the Durham Dales Federation are on temporary contracts which enables any staffing adjustments deemed necessary to be made by not extending temporary contracts.

Accommodation

Should Rookhope Primary School close, the building will be declared surplus to CYPS requirements and be part of the council's disposal of buildings programme. Prior to the school closing, there may be issues with water ingress from the roof. Any work required to resolve this will come from the council's School Capital allocation.

Risk

A key risk is that because of actions taken by the Council (including the failure to make timely interventions), pupils do not receive an adequate education.

Procurement

None.

Appendix 2: Durham County Council Equality Impact Assessment

The Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010) requires Durham County Council to have 'due regard' to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people from different groups. Completion of this template allows us to provide a written record of our equality analysis and demonstrate due regard and must be used as part of decisions making processes with relevance to equality.

Please contact equalities@durham.gov.uk for any necessary support.

Section One: Description and Screening

Service/Team or Section	Children and Young People Service
Lead Officer	Graeme Plews, Education Provision Lead Officer
Subject of the impact assessment	Proposal to close Rookhope Primary School.
Report date (Cabinet/CMT/Mgt team etc)	Delegated Decisions 21 August 2023 and 6 November 2023
MTFP Reference (if relevant)	
Start Date	August 2023
Review Date	At various planned stages within the development of the proposal.

Subject of the Impact Assessment

Please give a brief description of the policy, proposal, or practice as appropriate (a copy of the subject can be attached or insert a web-link)

The purpose of the impact assessment is to provide information for the decision-making process. It is designed to appraise the likely impacts of the proposals on people with characteristics protected under the Equality Act 2010.

This equality impact assessment will assess the potential impact on the two different options, to consider the future provision of education for pupils attending

Rookhope Primary School. This will ensure that a solution is found to the current challenges associated with falling pupil rolls, the quality of education provision and the breadth and efficiency of the curriculum.

Background

Rookhope Primary school, set in the small rural community of Rookhope, has the lowest pupil numbers of any Durham school and serves the least populated part of the county. From 1 September 2023 there will be 5 children on roll, and they will be taught at St. John's Chapel Primary School. No pupils started in Reception in September 2022 or September 2023. There is no anticipated development in this part of the county that will have the effect of increasing these numbers.

The most recent Ofsted inspection (date 18/10/2017) judged the school to be 'Good. However, a decision was made to enrich and widen the curriculum for pupils at the school in collaboration with other small primary schools in the upper dales including Wearhead, St John's Chapel and Forest of Teesdale Primary Schools. However, Forest of Teesdale Primary School closed on 31 August 2022

This group of schools became a formal Federation from September 2019 all keeping their own individual URN numbers but federating under one governing body.

The table below shows the current and projected pupil rolls for Rookhope Primary School.

School	Capacity	Projected Rolls					
		NOR 2023/24	NOR 2024/25	NOR 2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Rookhope Primary	52	5	3	3	2	1	0

This EIA considers the two options outlined within the report, and the potential impact of each:

- Option 1 - Do nothing, retaining the current education arrangements of the federation in the hope that additional pupils enrol.
- Option 2- Consult on a proposal to formally close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024;

The preferred option was to close Rookhope Primary School. A public consultation process on the closure of the school was undertaken.

Who are the main people impacted and/or stakeholders? (e.g., general public, staff, members, specific clients/service users, community representatives):

General Public, Governors, Staff, Parents, Pupils, Primary schools within the area, Elected Members, MPs, Neighbouring Schools, Trade Unions, Diocese, Department for Education, Community Groups, Parish Councils, Residents' Associations, AAP Board, Neighbouring Authorities, CAS/DCC Staff

Screening

Is there any actual or potential negative or positive impact on the following protected characteristics¹?

Protected Characteristic	Negative Impact Indicate: Yes, No or Unsure	Positive Impact Indicate: Yes, No or Unsure
Age	N	N
Disability	N	N
Gender reassignment	N	N
Marriage and civil partnership (‘eliminate discrimination’ employment only)	N/A	N/A
Pregnancy and maternity	N/A	N/A
Race	N)	N

¹ <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/equality-act/protected-characteristics>

Religion or Belief	N	N
Sex	N	N
Sexual orientation	N	N

Please provide **brief** details of any potential to cause discrimination or negative impact. Record full details and any mitigating actions in section 2 of this assessment.

Overall impact on pupils

Overall, there may be impacts on all pupils who currently attend Rookhope Primary School if the proposal is agreed. There is also likely to be an increase in travel time for pupils. Positive impacts are likely to occur with improved teaching and learning facilities which will allow increased opportunities for greater social interaction and breadth of experiences, resulting in a positive impact on pupils.

Overall impact on staff

There may be staff reductions if the proposal is agreed.

Age

Pupils

There will be no impact as primary education will still be available.

Staff

There will be no impact in relation to staff reductions, as a result of the proposal being agreed.

Disability

Pupils

There are no potential impacts associated with transferring schools for the pupils currently on roll at Rookhope Primary School as they are currently being taught at an alternative school and this arrangement is expected to continue.

Staff

There are no potential impacts on staff in relation to the options proposed.

Sex

Review of equality impact based on specific proposed options

Option 1 – Do nothing - retain the current education arrangements of the federation in the hope that additional pupils enrol

If this option was implemented, families in Rookhope would have a primary school in the village.

In relation to potential equality impacts, option 1 would have a potential positive impact as it would allow pupils to continue to attend a school within their local community which would alleviate any potential stress of travelling to a school outside of their local area for their primary education. However, as highlighted in the report if the situation remains the same, this will have a potential negative impact on the quality of education provided.

Option 2 – Close Rookhope Primary School on 31 August 2024

If this option was implemented a more sustainable solution to education in the upper dale and enhance the curriculum and learning opportunities for the small number of pupils in this location would be provided.

However, this option would have a potential negative impact in relation to those pupils living in Rookhope. Pupils would be expected to travel out of their local community to attend a primary school, which may have cost implications for some families if they were not eligible for school transport.

Please provide **brief** details of positive impact. How will this policy/proposal promote our commitment to our legal responsibilities under the public sector equality duty to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation,
- advance equality of opportunity, and
- foster good relations between people from different groups?

We recognise the need to treat all those involved in the review fairly; in particular we have had regard to the named 'protected' characteristic and our specific duty to carry out our discussions and decision making in ways that eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations; for people who share a relevant protected characteristic; and those who do not.

Evidence

What evidence do you have to support your data analysis and any findings?

Please **outline** any data you have and/or proposed sources (e.g., service user or census data, research findings. Highlight any data gaps and say whether or not you propose to carry out consultation. Record your detailed analysis, in relation to the impacted protected characteristics, in the following section of this assessment.

Current data identifies one pupil on roll at Forest of Teesdale Primary School who is being educated in an alternative school.

Screening Summary

On the basis of this screening is there:	Confirm which refers (Y/N)
Are you proceeding to full impact assessment (sections 2&3 of this template) based on the screening (section 1) information provided?	Y

Sign Off

Lead officer sign off:	Date:
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Equality representative sign off (where required):

Date:

S Tracey, C Holt

If carrying out a full assessment please proceed to section two.

If not proceeding to full assessment, please ensure your screening record is **attached to any relevant decision-making records or reports**, retain a copy for update where necessary, and forward a copy to equalities@durham.gov.uk

If you are unsure of assessing impact, please contact the corporate equalities team for further advice at equalities@durham.gov.uk

Section Two: Data analysis and assessment of impact

Please provide details of impacts for people with different protected characteristics relevant to your screening findings. You need to decide if there is or likely to be a differential impact for some. Highlight the positives e.g., benefits for certain groups, advancing equality, as well as the negatives e.g., barriers for and/or exclusion of particular groups. Record the evidence you have used to support or explain your conclusions and any necessary mitigating actions to ensure fair treatment.

Protected Characteristic: **Age**

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Record of evidence to support or explain your conclusions on impact.	What further action or mitigation is required?
Option 1 This would have a potential negative impact by the school not being able to offer a broad and balanced curriculum and would deny the opportunity for the five pupils on roll to form peer groups.	Current data (November 2023) shows the percentages for the following year group: Year 2- 1 pupil Year 3 – 1 pupil Year 4 – 1 pupil Year 6 – 2 pupils	Consultation with young people and parents/carers to understand further the potential issues the options bring. Ensure this EIA is updated as the proposal develops.

<p>Option 2</p> <p>This option will have a potential positive impact in relation to educational opportunities, facilities and accessibility for children aged 4-11.</p>		<p>Regular correspondence with pupils, and with parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of changes and able to support their children.</p> <p>Need to consider home to school transport for pupils.</p> <p>If required, all school-based staff will be supported by the relevant school policies and procedures.</p>
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Protected Characteristic: **Disability**

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
No impact as the pupils on roll do not have an EHCP or mobility issues.		

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Protected Characteristic: **Gender reassignment**

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?

Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation

What further action or mitigation is required?

No potential impact

Protected Characteristic: **Marriage and civil partnership ('eliminate discrimination' employment only)**

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?

Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation

What further action or mitigation is required?

No impact

Protected Characteristic: **Pregnancy and maternity**

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?

Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation

What further action or mitigation is required?

No potential impact

Protected Characteristic: **Race**

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?

Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation

What further action or mitigation is required?

No potential impact.

Current pupil data indicates the pupils on roll at Rookhope Primary School are White British.

Protected Characteristic: **Religion or belief**

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?

Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation

What further action or mitigation is required?

No potential impact

Protected Characteristic: **Sex**

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?

Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation

What further action or mitigation is required?

No potential impact.	Current pupil data indicates there are female pupils at the alternative school currently being attended by the pupils on roll at Rookhope Primary School all of whom are female.	
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Protected Characteristic: **Sexual orientation**

What is the actual or potential impact on stakeholders?	Explain your conclusion considering relevant evidence and consultation	What further action or mitigation is required?
No potential impact		

Section Three: Conclusion and Review

Summary

Please provide a brief summary of your findings; a summary of any positive and/or negative impacts across the protected characteristics, links to the involvement of different groups and/or public consultation, mitigations and conclusions made.

From the process of equalities impact assessment, it is evident that there would be no potential or actual impact on protected groups of pupils, and staff.

Will this promote positive relationships between different communities? If so, how?

Action Plan

Action	Responsibility	Timescales for implementation	In which plan will the action appear?
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As part of the consultation process ensure that we engage with all young people and families to understand the impact.			
Ensure this EIA is updated as the proposal develops			
Regular correspondence with pupils, and with parents/carers to ensure that they are aware of changes and able to support their children.			
Need to consider home to school transport for pupils			

Review and connected assessments

Are there any additional or connected equality impact assessments that need to be undertaken? (If yes, provide details)	
When will this assessment be reviewed? Please also insert this date at the front of the template	As and when the proposal develops.

Sign Off

Lead officer sign off:	Date:
Equality representative sign off (where required):	Date:

Please ensure this equality impact assessment