

Cabinet

20 November 2013



Proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a primary School and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014

Key Decision: CAS/05/13

Report of Corporate Management Team

**Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services
Councillor Ossie Johnson, Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People's Services**

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To seek Cabinet approval to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a Primary School and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014.

Background

- 2 Durham County Council keeps under review the number of pupils attending each school and it also updates information every year about how many pupils are likely to be attending schools in the future. This is an important aspect of the County Council's function in planning school places across the County to ensure there are enough schools of a suitable size to meet local requirements and to provide the best possible education for the pupils they serve.
- 3 We are particularly keen to look at areas where there are separate Infant and Junior Schools to see if they could be amalgamated into primary schools. The Government is introducing a new way of funding schools which has potential implications for the sustainability of small schools therefore we believe that primary schools will be more viable in the long term.
- 4 Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School are located on the same site and the Head Teacher of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School has overseen the leadership of both schools since September 2012. Bringing the two schools together as one larger primary school will ensure a stronger and more viable establishment and will preserve primary education in Sacriston.

Decision Making Process

- 5 Sacriston Nursery and Infant and Junior Schools are Community Schools and therefore any changes proposed to make an alteration to the upper and lower age limit are made by the Local Authority. Decisions on school organisation proposals such as this are also taken by the Local Authority.
- 6 The Local Authority began consultation on the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School for six weeks between 3 June 2013 and 12 July 2013. After the County Council considered the views of those who responded to the consultation, a decision was taken on 18 July 2013 (attached as Appendix 2) to proceed to the next stage in the statutory process which was to issue a Public Notice proposing to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 1 September 2014 to create a Primary School and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014.
- 7 The Public Notice (attached as Appendix 3) was issued on 5 September 2013 for 6 weeks, when objections and comments on the proposal could be sent to the Local Authority.
- 8 When making a decision, Cabinet should be satisfied that the consultation undertaken met statutory requirements. Consultation and the publication of the Statutory Notice were carried out in accordance with the guidance provided by the Secretary of State on 'Making Changes to a Maintained Mainstream School'. Paragraphs 10-14 of this report provide details of the consultation and a summary of the responses received.
- 9 Consultation documents (attached in Appendix 2) were distributed widely across the local area on 3 June 2013. A series of meetings were also held so that Governors, Staff and Parents and the local community could share their views with the Local Authority. Details of the meetings are attached as Appendix 4.

Responses to the Consultation and Views of Interested Parties

- 10 Cabinet is requested to consider the views of all those who may be affected by the proposals.

Responses to Consultation

- 11 96 responded in writing using the response form, letter and email.
8 responded using the online response form (DCC website).
10 people attended the Information Sharing Evening.
29 members of staff attended the joint staff meeting.
12 Governors attended the joint Governing Body meeting.
5 parents attended the meetings specifically held for parents.

Summary of Responses

12 The following information provides a summary of the responses:-

- 78 parents of pupils attending Sacriston Nursery and Infant and Junior Schools support the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 to create a primary school and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School;
- 3 parents of pupils attending other schools support the proposal;
- 2 Governors of Sacriston Junior School support the proposal;
- 1 Governor of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School supports the proposal;
- 1 member of staff of Sacriston Junior School support the proposal;
- 5 members of staff of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School support the proposal;
- 1 member of staff of a neighbouring secondary school supports the proposal;
- 4 residents support the proposal;
- 3 pupils attending Sacriston Nursery and Infant School support the proposal;
- 3 pupils attending a neighbouring Secondary School support the proposal;
- 1 Trade Union representative supports the proposal;
- 1 parent of a pupil attending Sacriston Junior School is not in favour of the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 to create a primary school and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School;
- 1 member of staff at a neighbouring Infant School is not in favour of the proposal;

Themes that emerged from the responses were:-

- The transition for children from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 would be a lot easier;
- The proposal will raise the standards of the Junior School;
- A Primary School offers a more consistent approach to educating children and the transition between classes/Key Stages is more fluid and beneficial;
- A Primary School will bring about continuity and make tracking of pupils' progress easier;
- It will be more cost effective having only one school;
- Concern from one parent that the focus of attention would be mainly for Key Stage 1 pupils which would cause Key Stage 2 standards to worsen.

Analysis of Consultation Responses and Current Position

- 13 It is clear that the large majority of those stakeholders who responded to the consultation support the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 to create a primary school and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School. In particular they see the proposal as an opportunity to make the transition easier from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 and that a Primary School will bring about a more consistent approach to educating children than a separate Infant and Junior School.
- 14 A number of Governors and parents were of the view that adaptations are required to both buildings to enable them to function more effectively as a Primary School. Discussions are being held with the Head Teacher to enable a design to be produced for consideration by Governors and staff. The final design will focus on a solution that enables the primary curriculum to be delivered effectively.

Response to the Public Notice

- 15 No objections or comments were received by the end of the 6 week statutory notice period.

Further Considerations

- 16 Cabinet should also consider the effects this proposal could have on standards and school improvement.

In the most recent school inspectors, Ofsted judged Sacriston Nursery and Infant School as 'outstanding' and Sacriston Junior School as 'satisfactory'. In light of the current 'outstanding' standard of education provided at the Nursery and Infant School, officers believe that the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School to create a Primary School and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School will have a positive effect on standards and school improvement.

SEN

- 17 Pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) will continue to have their needs met at the proposed Primary School. This proposal will not impact on the needs of individual pupils.

Impact on School Places

- 18 The proposed Primary School will be on the sites of the current Sacriston Nursery and Infant and Sacriston Junior Schools with a capacity for 447 pupils. A school of this size would be large enough to accommodate the current and future pupils we expect will attend the proposed Primary School.

Capital

- 19 Capital funding (in the region of £475,000) will be required to adapt the Infant and Junior buildings to facilitate the change to a Primary School.

The cost of this work will be met from the Department for Education (DfE) grant funding which has been allocated to the Local Authority.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 20 Officers believe that proceeding with the proposal will preserve and enhance education provision in Sacriston. Amalgamating Sacriston Nursery and Infant and Sacriston Junior Schools into one Primary School will provide a more viable educational establishment and will ensure that parents will be able to access a primary school place for their child(ren) at their local Community Primary School.
- 21 Cabinet is therefore recommended to agree:
- (i) that the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School should be extended from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a Primary School; and
 - (ii) that the use of Sacriston Junior School should be discontinued from 31 August 2014.

Background Papers

Attached as Appendix 2-4.

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Capital funding (in the region of £475,000) from the DfE Capital Maintenance Grant will be utilised to adapt the infant and junior buildings to facilitate the change to a primary school.

Staffing

Staff from both Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School will be ring-fenced for posts in the Primary School.

Risk

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

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty

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

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

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

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

Accommodation

Adaptations will be carried out to both buildings to enable an effective primary curriculum to be delivered.

Crime and Disorder

N/A.

Human Rights

Human Rights will not be affected by this proposal.

Consultation

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

Procurement

Capital works to the junior building will be procured in accordance with the County Council's procurement arrangements.

Disability Issues

N/A.

DELEGATED DECISION

18 July 2013



Outcomes of Consultation on a Proposal to Change the Age Range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a Primary School and to Discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014.

Report of Children and Adults Services

Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide details on the outcomes of consultation which was undertaken between 3 June 2013 and 12 July 2013, proposing a change to the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School with effect from 1 September 2014, and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014, and to seek approval to proceed to the next stage in the statutory process which is to issue a public notice.

Background

2. In a report dated 22 May 2013 (attached as Appendix 2) the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services approved consultation could begin on a proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a primary school and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014.
3. Consultation documents (attached as appendix 3) were distributed widely (distribution list attached as Appendix 4) and meetings were held between 4-6 June 2013 with the Governing Bodies and staff of both schools, parents and members of the local community at an Information Sharing Evening.

Issues Raised at Consultation Meetings

4. At the meetings held between 4-6 June, Officers explained the reason for the proposal and invited those present to express views and ask questions. The key issues from these meetings can be summarised as follows:
 - Resources must be allocated for adaptations to the buildings. Officers explained that it has been agreed to allocate some of the Capital Grant received from Central Government for work to the two Sacriston Schools.
 - Questions were asked as to how the Governing Body and staffing structures for the proposed primary school would be comprised. Officers explained that the Governing Body would be comprised in a way that would most effectively enable it to successfully manage the primary school. The County Council's School and Governor Support Service would work with the schools to establish an appropriate Governing body for the new school. A staffing structure would be produced by the Head Teacher and Governing Body for consultation with staff and Trade Unions if the proposal for a primary school is approved.

- Staff and parents asked whether there would be opportunities for staff to teach across the two schools prior to the amalgamation. The current Head Teacher stated that if it is appropriate to do so there would be opportunities for staff to gain experience of teaching a different Key Stage before the amalgamation.
- Parents asked if the proposal has any disadvantages for pupils. It was explained that evidence indicates that pupils can sometimes suffer a dip in performance when they transfer to the next phase of schooling such as moving from Infant to Junior School. A primary school should avoid this as the transition should be seamless. Any changes would be made in small steps and the primary school would have one ethos and this will reduce uncertainty children have when moving from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, as well as an opportunity to stabilise education in the two existing schools.

Responses to 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. 96 responded in writing using the response form, letter and email.
8 responded using the online response form (DCC website).
10 people attended the Information Sharing Evening.
29 members of staff attended the joint staff meeting.
12 Governors attended the joint Governing Body meeting.
5 parents attended the parents' meetings.

Summary of Responses

7. The following information provides a summary of the responses:-
 - 78 parents of pupils attending Sacriston Nursery School and Sacriston Junior School support the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 to create a primary school and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School;
 - 3 parents of pupils attending another school support the proposal;
 - 2 Governors of Sacriston Junior School support the proposal;
 - 1 Governor of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School supports the proposal;
 - 1 member of staff of Sacriston Junior School supports the proposal;
 - 5 members of staff of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School support the proposal;
 - 1 member of staff of a neighbouring secondary school supports the proposal;
 - 4 residents support the proposal;
 - 3 pupils attending Sacriston Nursery and Infant support the proposal;
 - 3 pupils attending a neighbouring secondary school support the proposal;
 - 1 Trade Union representative supports the proposal;
 - 1 parent of a pupil attending Sacriston Junior School is not in favour of the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 to create a primary school and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School;
 - 1 member of staff at a neighbouring Infant School is not in favour of the proposal;

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Capital funding from the DfE Capital Maintenance Grant will be utilised to adapt the infant and junior buildings to facilitate the change to a primary school.

Staffing

Staff from both Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School will be ring-fenced for posts in the Primary School.

Risk

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

Equality and Diversity

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

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

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

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

Accommodation

Adaptations will be carried out to both buildings to enable an effective primary curriculum to be delivered.

Crime and Disorder

N/A

Human Rights

Human Rights will not be affected by this proposal.

Consultation

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

Procurement

Capital works to the buildings will be procured in accordance with the County Council's procurement arrangements.

Disability Issues

N/A

Legal Implications

The statutory process for changing the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and discontinuing the use of Sacriston Junior School will be carried out in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance.

REF No.

DECISION RECORD

Please complete all sections

DECISION MAKER

Rachael Shimmin
Corporate Director
Children and Adults Services

AUTHORITY BY REFERENCE TO SCHEME OF DELEGATION

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

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

SUBJECT

To seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services to issue a statutory notice proposing to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a primary school and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014.

DECISION

If Key Decision insert No.

CAS/05/13. Proposed date for Cabinet decision - November 2013.

ELECTORAL DIVISION/S

Sacriston

CONSULTATION – CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER, OTHER MEMBERS and DATE

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder was consulted on 16 July 2013. Local Members were consulted on 16 July 2013.

RECORD OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

N/A

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".

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

N/A

ACCESS TO THE REPORT

Is the report open to the public (Part A)

Yes

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

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Attached

CONTACT PERSON

Graeme Plews

CONTACT NO.

Tel: 03000 265777

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY

DATE

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

NOTES

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. List papers used which the decision was based – see limitations on use. If used must be forwarded along with the delegated decision form, and report.
11. Person authorised to make the decision. When sent to democratic services, this will be an electronic signature.
12. Enter the date the decision was made.

DELEGATED DECISION

CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES

22 May 2013



Proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a Primary School and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014

Report of CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES

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

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services to begin consultation on a proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a primary school and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014.

Background

- 2 The Government has introduced a new way of allocating funding to schools which is predominantly based on the number of pupils in the school. This will likely have an impact on schools with low pupil numbers.
- 3 In light of this, the County Council believes that some small schools could in the long term become unviable.
- 4 To address this in localities across the County where there are separate Infant and Junior Schools, the County Council wishes to consider, where appropriate, the possibility of bringing the two schools together into a single Primary school.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 5 Governors of an increasing number of schools in the County are realising the educational and financial benefits of having shared leadership arrangements across groups of schools to enhance provision for children and families within their local area.
- 6 An example of such is Sacriston. The Head Teacher of the Junior School retired in July 2012 and the Governors of both Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School agreed that the existing Head Teacher of the Nursery and Infant School should oversee the leadership of both schools from September 2012. This arrangement is working well.

- 7 The two schools are adjacent to each other, separated by a playground. It will be possible therefore for the primary school to run across both sites. There will be some remodelling work necessary to create an improved entrance area and to increase the size of some of the classrooms in the Junior building.
- 8 The current combined capacity of the two schools is for 450 pupils. This capacity will be large enough to accommodate the current and future numbers that we expect will attend the school as illustrated below:-

School	Projected Roll at Sept 2014	Projected Roll at Sept 2015	Projected Roll at Sept 2016	Projected Roll at Sept 2017	Projected Roll at Sept 2018
Sacriston Nursery & Infant	121	114	119	115	119
Sacriston Junior	176	169	172	174	167
TOTAL	297	283	291	289	288

- 9 The County Council believes there are many benefits for parents and children of having all through Primary schools. Examples of some of these include:
- the parental considerations for families who have more than one child. Having a single school in the community removes the logistical concerns for parents having to take their young children to two different schools;
 - parents only having to buy one school uniform;
 - removing the need for parents to apply for a place at a Junior School;
 - pupils' progress can be monitored across Key Stage 1 education and Key Stage 2 education in the same school;
 - school inspectors will be able to make judgements more accurately about the education children receive when they can see 'the whole picture' within a single Primary School rather than two separate schools;
 - fewer points of transition for children which can interrupt their education and unsettle them.
- 10 Officers from the County Council have met with Governors of both schools and Governors have agreed that it is now appropriate to begin consultation more widely on the proposal to have a single Primary School in Sacriston.

Consultation Timescales

- 11 It is intended that a six week period of consultation on this proposal will commence on Monday 3 June 2013. Consultation documents will be widely distributed to key stakeholders, including, to Governors, staff, parents, Local Members, Community Groups, Parish Councils, neighbouring schools, Children's Centres, AAP groups etc. Meetings will also be held for officers to provide information and answer queries as follows:
- Tuesday 4 June 2013 - Governing Bodies of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School
 - Wednesday 5 June 2013 - Staff of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School

- Thursday 6 June 2013 - Drop-in sessions for parents at the beginning and end of the school day.
 - Thursday 6 June 2013 - Information sharing meeting for the wider community, to be held in the evening.
- 12 The six week consultation period will end on Friday 12 July 2013 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 early Autumn for six weeks. Cabinet would then be asked to make a decision on the proposal.

Decision

- 14 The Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services agrees that consultation can begin on the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014.

Background Papers

Consultation document.

Contact: Sheila Palmerley Tel: 03000 265731

Delegated Decision-Change Age Range of Sacriston Nurs and Inf

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

It is likely that work will be required to create an entrance/reception area to the current infant building and to increase the size and improve the layout of some teaching areas in the current junior building. Options to create a joint staffroom are also being considered. Costs of the work will be met from the Capital Maintenance Grant provided from the Government.

Staffing

Staff from both the Infant and Junior Schools will be ring fenced for posts in the Primary School.

Risk

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

Equality and Diversity

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

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

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

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

Accommodation

Work will be undertaken to refurbish both schools to enhance accommodation and curriculum delivery.

Crime and Disorder

N/A

Human Rights

Human rights will not be affected by this proposal.

Consultation

Local members have been consulted and they support the proposal and the process outlined for consultation.

Procurement

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

Disability Issues

N/A

Legal Implications

N/A

REF No.

1.

DECISION RECORD

Please complete all sections

DECISION MAKER

Corporate Director
Children and Adults Services

AUTHORITY BY REFERENCE TO SCHEME OF DELEGATION

2.

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

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

SUBJECT

3.

Officers seeking approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services to begin consultation on the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014.

DECISION

4.

Approval given for officers to begin consultation.

CONSULTATION – CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER, OTHER MEMBERS & DATE

5.

Consulted Local members between 8 May - 22 May 2013. The proposal and decision making process will be discussed with the Cabinet Portfolio Holder between 22 May - 30 May 2013.

ACCESS TO THE REPORT

Is the report open to the public (Part A)

Yes

6.

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

BACKGROUND PAPERS

7. Consultation Document

CONTACT PERSON

Sheila Palmerley

CONTACT No.

03000 265731

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY

8.	9.
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This form must be sent electronically to _____ democratic services within 24 hours of the decision being made.

NOTES

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



Sacriston Nursery and Infant and Sacriston Junior Schools



**Proposal to Change the Age Range of Sacriston
Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11
from 1 September 2014 to create a Primary
School and to discontinue the use of Sacriston
Junior School
from 31 August 2014**

Public Consultation Information



Introduction

Durham County Council keeps under review the number of pupils attending each school and it also updates information every year about how many pupils are likely to be attending schools in the future. This is an important aspect of the County Council's function in planning school places across the County to ensure there are enough schools of a suitable size to meet local requirements and to provide the best possible education for the pupils they serve.

We are particularly keen to look at areas where there are separate Infant and Junior Schools to see if they could be amalgamated into primary schools. We have been discussing with Governors of the Infant and Junior Schools the possibility of having one community primary school instead of two separate schools.

The Government is introducing a new way of funding schools which has potential implications for the sustainability of small schools, therefore we believe that primary schools will be more viable in the long term. The County Council is being proactive in planning for the future rather than only looking at the current funding arrangements. We believe that bringing the two schools together now as one primary school will lead to a stronger and more viable establishment which will help to secure the future of primary education across the two current schools.

We now want to consult with you to hear your views on a proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 so that it becomes a primary school. Linked to this would be a proposal to formally discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014 to enable the single school to be established.

You will no doubt have many questions to ask about this proposal if it is decided to go ahead with the change. This consultation document aims to answer some of these questions and explains how you can let the County Council know what you think about the proposed changes:-

1. Why is the County Council proposing to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School so that it becomes a primary school?

We are moving where possible towards a model of all through Primary Schools instead of separate Infant and Junior schools. As mentioned earlier, the Government is introducing a new way of how schools will be funded which has particular implications for the sustainability of small schools, therefore we believe that primary schools will be more viable in the long term.

The Head Teacher at Sacriston Junior School retired in 2012 and the Governing Bodies of both schools agreed that the Head Teacher of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School should become the Head Teacher of both schools from September 2012. This arrangement is working extremely well. The schools are working more closely together and there is a greater sharing of resources, expertise and facilities to enhance teaching and learning. There are already a number of other examples across the County where schools have shared leadership arrangements with one Head Teacher managing two schools. The reason this is done is to provide a more cost effective model of education provision in localities across the County.

2. What are the benefits of Primary Education?

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

- Continuity and progress of learning between 4 and 11;
- Unified leadership and management of the curriculum, teaching and learning, and social development;
- A single approach to inclusion and well-being;
- More flexible and efficient use of both human and financial resources across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 education;
- Access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full primary range;
- Continuity, especially for the most vulnerable children and those with special needs;
- A single application of assessment criteria and pupil tracking;
- Opportunities for increased social development, older pupils having some appropriate pastoral responsibility for young children;
- Access to the full range of facilities for all children is provided through the 3-11 age range;
- Parents having closer contact with the school over a longer period of time to help build positive relationships for the benefit of their children;
- Parents only have to deal with one staff team, school day timings, whole school policies etc. This is particularly beneficial if a parent has more than one child in different key stages within the primary age range;
- Parents only have to buy one school uniform;
- A primary school allows staff the opportunity to gain broader professional development from working with a wider range of ages;
- Professional support from a larger staff team;
- Management of whole school issues would extend the skills of teaching and support staff;
- School Inspectors will be able to make judgements more accurately about the education children receive when they can see 'the whole picture' within a single primary school rather than two separate schools.

In summary it is believed that primary schools have more opportunity, through daily contact, for those working within the school to work together in the best interests of the pupils. They benefit from the consistency that working under the leadership of one Head Teacher and one Governing Body brings. A single primary school will reduce the disruption and adjustments which children have to make when they transfer from Infant to Junior School. If the proposal to amalgamate is approved, staff and Governors of the two schools would work closely together, supported by the Local Authority, to ensure a smooth transition from the existing separate Infant and Junior Schools to the new Primary School. Parents would be fully involved throughout the transition process.

3. Where will the proposed Primary School be?

If the proposal is agreed, the Primary School would be located at the existing sites of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School. The combined capacity of the two schools is 450 pupils. A school of this size would be large enough to accommodate the current and future pupils who we expect will attend the proposed primary school as the table overleaf demonstrates.

School	Projected Roll at Sept 2014	Projected Roll at Sept 2015	Projected Roll at Sept 2016	Projected Roll at Sept 2017	Projected Roll at Sept 2018
Sacriston Nursery & Infant	176	169	172	174	167
Sacriston Junior	121	114	119	115	119
TOTAL	297	283	291	289	286

4. Will there be any staff changes?

Staff from both schools will be ring-fenced for posts in the new Primary School. There will be a separate consultation with staff about the process for being appointed to posts in the new Primary School.

5. How do we respond to this consultation?

We would like to hear what you think about the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a primary school and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014.

We are holding an Information Sharing Evening at Sacriston Junior School on 6 June 2013 at 7.00 pm.

We are holding drop-in sessions for parents at Sacriston Junior School on 6 June 2013 at 9.00 am and at Sacriston Nursery and Infant School on 6 June 2013 at 2.45 pm.

Officers from the County Council will be available at these events to answer any questions you have about this proposal and to listen to your own views.

You can also respond in one of the following ways by 12 July 2013.

- (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 or complete the response form online via the Education Learning Section of the County Council's website: www.durham.gov.uk

7. What happens after 12 July 2013 when the consultation period ends?

All the responses to the consultation will be considered carefully. If the County Council decides to proceed with the proposal, a Statutory Notice would then be published for 6 weeks when objections could be made. We would aim to make a decision on whether or not to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School to create a primary school and discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School in Autumn 2013.

RESPONSE FORM

CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF SACRISTON NURSERY AND INFANT SCHOOL FROM 3-7 TO 3-11 TO CREATE A PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM 1 SEPTEMBER 2014 AND TO DISCONTINUE THE USE OF SACRISTON JUNIOR SCHOOL FROM 31 AUGUST 2014

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

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery | <input type="checkbox"/> Infant | <input type="checkbox"/> Junior |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primary | <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary | <input type="checkbox"/> Special |

Please state which school:

OR a Pupil at

- | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nursery | <input type="checkbox"/> Infant | <input type="checkbox"/> Junior |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primary | <input type="checkbox"/> Secondary | <input type="checkbox"/> Special |

Please state which school:

OR a

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Governor | <input type="checkbox"/> Member of Staff |
|-----------------------------------|--|

Please state which school:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <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 Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 to create a primary school and discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior 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 12 July 2013 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

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

Name:
Address:
.....
Signed: **Date:**

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO

Children and Adults Services

Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form for Consultation

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

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

1. Are you
 Male Female

2. How old are you?
 Under 16 16-24 25-44 45-64 65+

3. Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?
(This may include any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity which has a substantial effect on your day to day life. Long-standing means it has lasted, or is likely to last, for over a year.)
 Yes No

4. What is your religion or belief?
 Christian Hindu Jewish Muslim Sikh Buddhist
 Other (please specify)

5. How do you describe your sexuality?
 Heterosexual/Straight Gay Woman/Lesbian Gay Man Bisexual
 Other (please specify)

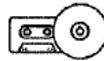
6. To which of these groups do you belong?
 White Asian or Asian British Black or Black British
 Travelling Community Mixed Arab or Middle Eastern
 Other (please specify)

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

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



Braille



Audio



Large
Print

REVIEW OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN SACRISTON
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION LIST

June 2013

School	Govs	Staff	Pupils	Total	How Delivered	Date Delivered
Sacriston Infant and Nursery	9*	25	200	234	AW	03/06/13
Sacriston Junior	12*	30	170	212	AW	
Fyndoune Community College	N/A	25		25	AW	03/06/13
Durham Community Business College	N/A	25		25	AW	
St. Bede's RCVA Primary	N/A	10		10	AW	
Plawsworth Road Infant	N/A	8	10	18	AW	
Nettleworth Primary	N/A	10		10	AW	03/06/13
Edmondsley Primary	N/A	10		10	AW	
Witton Gilbert Primary	N/A	10		10	AW	
Langley Park Primary	N/A	10		10	AW	
Langley Park Nursery	N/A	10		10	AW	03/06/13
Edmondsley Nursery	N/A	10		10	AW	

*Governors letters posted 28/05/13

TOTAL documents = 670

DCC website

Elected DCC Members	
Heather Liddle, Simon Wilson, Ossie Johnson, Barbara Armstrong, Simon Henig	Emailed 03/06/13

MPs	
Kevan Jones MP kevanjonesmp@parliament.uk	Emailed 03/06/13
Roberta Blackman-Woods MP mail@roberta.org.uk	

INTERNAL -- Email 03/06/13
CAS SLT, Hugh Stephenson, Julian Wilson, Barry Piercy, Liam Cairns, Gerard Darby, John Wilkinson, Joanne Barker, School Places & Admissions Team, Julie Arnett, Sue Smith, Nora Waugh, Joanne Wait, Paul Rockett, Lynn Elliott, Julie Rimmer, Jane-le-Sage, Margaret Hanratty, Shirley Fall, Philip Hodgson, Linda Bailey, Angela Pearson, Irene Cochrane, David Shirer

RC and CE Diocese and DfE	
RC Diocese Director education@diocesehn.org.uk	Emailed 03/06/13
CE Diocese Director Jeremy.fitt@drmnewcanglican.org	
DfE school.organisationproposals@education.gsi.gov.uk	

Trade Unions	
c.d.thompson@hotmail.co.uk john.kesterton@ascl.org.uk jgreig@atl.org.uk terry.scarr@gmb.org.uk mwilliams.nasuw@live.co.uk northern@nut.org.uk trevorblacklock@hotmail.com h.pink@unison.co.uk	Emailed 03/06/13

Directors of CYPS of Neighbouring LAs	
Margaret Whellans GATESHEAD Margaretwhellans@gateshead.gov.uk	Emailed 03/06/13
John Collings NEWCASTLE john.collings@newcastle.gov.uk	
Gill Alexander NORTH TYNESIDE gill.alexander@northtyneside.gov.uk	
Helen Watson SOUTH TYNESIDE helen.watson@southtyneside.gov.uk	

Libraries (5 each)	
Sacrison Library, Plawsworth Road, Sacrison, Co Durham. DH7 6HU	AW 03/06/13

Community Centres, Community Associations (5 each)	
Lilac Community House, 20 Lilac Avenue, Sacrison	Posted 04/06/13
Sacrison Community Association, Front Street, Durham. DH7 6JT	
Witton Gilbert Community Centre, Sacrison Lane, Witton Gilbert, Durham. DH7 6TF	
Plawsworth & Kimblesworth Community Association, Springfield, Nettlesworth, Chester-le-Street. DH2 3PN	

Parish Councils (AM passing on to Parish Councils/AAPs in Sacrison area)	
Andrew Megginson Andrew.megginson@durham.gov.uk	E-Mail 03/06/13

Children's Centres (5 each)	
Fyndoune Sure Start	AW 03/06/13
DCBC Hub	

PUBLIC NOTICE

Proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery & Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a Primary School and to close Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014.

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 Sacriston Nursery & Infant School (Community) Woodside, Sacriston, Durham DH7 6LQ and, Sacriston Junior School (Community), Woodside, Sacriston, Durham DH7 6LQ.

It is proposed to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery & Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a primary school and to close Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014.

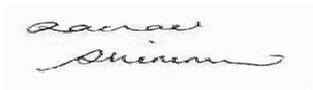
The current capacity of Sacriston Nursery & Infant School is 210 and the capacity of Sacriston Junior School is 237. The proposed capacity of the Primary School will be 447. The current admission number for the Nursery and Infant School is 70 and the current admission number for the Junior School is 60. The proposed admission number for the Primary School will be 64. The admission authority will be the Local Authority. Home to School Transport will be in accordance with the Authority's Home to School Transport policy and the Local Authority will not need to provide additional free Home to School Transport to the proposed primary school.

Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School are located on the same site and have shared one Head Teacher since September 2012. A Primary School would allow for the use of facilities in both buildings and enable staff to share resources and expertise across the full primary age range. Some capital expenditure will be used to improve the buildings to facilitate the delivery of the primary curriculum.

This Notice is an extract from the complete 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.

Within six weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them 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. Website: www.durham.gov.uk Email: schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk.

Signed:



Rachael Shimmin
Corporate Director
Children and Adults Services

Publication Date: 5 September 2013

Notes of the Joint Governing Body Meeting of Sacriston Nursery and Infant and Sacriston Junior Schools held at Sacriston Nursery and Infant School

on Tuesday 4 June 2013 at 4.00 pm

Present: Sheila Palmerley, Graeme Plews, Angela Pearson, 12 Governors

Graeme Plews (GP) opened the meeting by explaining the key functions of the School Places and Admissions Team and how that team strategically and pro-actively plan school places across County Durham. GP stated that Governors had previously met with Caroline O'Neill and Sheila Palmerley and agreed that the Local Authority should produce a proposal for consultation on the possibility of creating one Community Primary School from the existing Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School.

GP explained that the Local Authority was being proactive in looking to preserve and enhance primary school education provision in Sacriston because changes to the way schools will be funded have potential implications for the sustainability of small schools, therefore we believe that primary schools will be more viable in the long term. We believe that bringing the two schools together now as one Primary School will lead to a stronger and more viable educational establishment. The consultation period on the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a Primary School and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014 started on 3 June 2013 and will end on 12 July 2013. This meeting was an opportunity for Governors to express views and ask questions.

The following questions were then asked:-

- Q** Will there be money for adaptations to the buildings? The two schools need to reflect the fact that it is one school.
- A** The Local Authority receives grant from Central Government for capital works to schools and Councillors have agreed to allocate some of this grant for work to the two Sacriston Schools. Officers have visited the schools to determine what adaptations could be made and a design will be produced by the end of June 2013 for the Head Teacher and Governors to consider.
- Q** Should the adaptations have not been designed and brought to Governors' attention before the consultation started?
- A** The proposal to create a primary school focusses on education benefits. The building would follow later but it will be educationally driven and the final design will focus on an education solution.
- Q** Could the consultation document not have been reduced and written so that it could be more easily understood by parents?
- A** We are always looking at ways of improving the layout of the consultation document, but there is some content and wording that has to be included.
- Q** Will a primary school mean that will be more teaching assistants?
- A** At this stage a staffing structure has not been produced for the primary school, but there will be opportunity for a wider skill force to be utilised across the primary spectrum.

Those Governors present were encouraged to submit written responses to the proposal to enable Durham County Council's Cabinet to see the level of support for the proposal.

The meeting ended at 5.20 pm

Notes of the Joint Staff Meeting of Sacriston Nursery and Infant and Sacriston Junior Schools held at Sacriston Nursery and Infant School

on Wednesday 5 June 2013 at 4.00 pm

Present: Sheila Palmerley, Graeme Plews, Angela Pearson, 29 Members of Staff,
Trevor Blacklock (NUT)

Graeme Plews (GP) opened the meeting by explaining the key functions of the School Places and Admissions Team and how that team strategically and pro-actively plan school places across County Durham. GP stated that Governors had previously met with Caroline O'Neill and Sheila Palmerley and agreed that the Local Authority should produce a proposal for consultation on the possibility of creating one Community Primary School from the existing Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School.

GP explained that the Local Authority was being proactive in looking to preserve and enhance primary school education provision in Sacriston because changes to the way schools will be funded have potential implications for the sustainability of small schools, therefore we believe that primary schools will be more viable in the long term. We believe that bringing the two schools together now as one Primary School will lead to a stronger and more viable educational establishment. The consultation period on the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a Primary School and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014 started on 3 June 2013 and will end on 12 July 2013. This meeting was an opportunity for staff to express views and ask questions. Governors of both schools had met the day before and appeared to support the proposal.

The following questions were then asked:-

Q How will the Governing Body for the Primary School be comprised as the proposal is to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School to create the Primary School?

A The Governing Body will be comprised in a way that will most effectively enable it to successfully manage the Primary School.

Q How does the ring-fencing work? There is a fear that staff coming together could lead to redundancies.

A We are only at the beginning of what is a lengthy process before it is confirmed whether the proposal will be approved or not which is likely to be towards the end of 2013. If the proposal is approved the Head Teacher and Governing Body will produce a staffing structure for consultation with staff and Trade Unions. Posts in the structure will be restricted to those staff in Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School.

Q Will there be three year protection for teaching staff who may be offered lower graded posts?

A Yes, three years protection will be applied in these instances.

Q Will staff on maternity leave or long term sickness be consulted?

A Yes

Q Will there be slot-in or redeployment?

A It is too early to say, but there is no overlap of staff. For instance there is only one Caretaker across both schools, not one Caretaker per school.

Q What rights to temporary staff have?

A Temporary staff with more than one year's service have the same rights as permanent staff.

Q What support is available to staff if the reorganisation goes ahead?

A Support will be provided by HR, Trade Unions and The Education Service. Staff will be able to have individual meetings with Trade Unions and the proposed structure would be subject to full consultation with Trade Unions. The Local Authority and the schools will work together to produce and implement a structure to enhance education provision.

Q Will there be the opportunity for movement of staff between the two schools before September 2014?

A The Head Teacher has already been approached by some members of staff to ask if they can do this to broaden their experience. If it was felt appropriate to do so, this could be facilitated.

Those staff present were encouraged to submit written responses to the proposal and the meeting ended at 4.45 pm.

**Notes of the Parents Drop-in Sessions held at
Sacriston Nursery and Infant School and Sacriston Junior School**

on Thursday 6 June 2013 at

**9.00 - 10.00 am (Sacriston Nursery and Infant School) and
2.45 - 3.45 pm (Sacriston Junior School)**

Attendees: 2 Parents (9.00 - 10.00 am)
3 Parents (2.45 - 3.45 pm)

Graeme Plews (School Organisation Manager)

Graeme Plews (GP) explained that the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School to create a Primary School and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School was aimed at preserving and enhancing primary school education provision in Sacriston. Changes to the way schools will be funded have potential implications for the sustainability of small schools, therefore we believe that primary schools will be more viable in the long term. We believe that bringing the two schools together now as one Primary School will lead to a stronger and more viable educational establishment.

- One parent asked if there were plans to physically link the two schools. GP replied that officers have already visited the school to determine what adaptations could be made to assist with the amalgamation including the creation of a Reception/waiting area for the primary school. Any adaptations to the buildings will be educationally driven.
- One parent asked who the Head Teacher would be for the primary school. GP explained that as the proposal was to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School to make it the primary school, the Head Teacher of that school will be the Head Teacher of the proposed primary school.
- One parent asked if the junior building was to be demolished. GP explained that the proposed Primary School would run across both of the current school sites. It is not intended to demolish the junior building.
- Two parents expressed support for the proposal saying that children won't have to be unsettled when moving from Infant School to Junior School and that they could see the educational benefits of having one primary school.

**Notes of the Information Sharing Meeting held at
Sacriston Nursery and Infant School
on Thursday 6 June 2013 at 7.00 pm**

Present: Graeme Plews, Adam Williams (Notes), Lesley Farnaby (Head Teacher of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School), Chris France (NAS UWT).
In addition 9 members of the public were in attendance.

Graeme Plews (GP) opened the meeting by explaining the key functions of the School Places and Admissions Team and how that team strategically and proactively plan school places across County Durham.

GP explained that the Local Authority was being proactive in looking to preserve and enhance primary school education provision in Sacriston because changes to the way schools will be funded have potential implications for the sustainability of small schools, therefore we believe that primary schools will be more viable in the long term. We believe that bringing the two schools together now as one Primary School will lead to a stronger and more viable educational establishment.

The consultation period on the proposal to change the age range of Sacriston Nursery and Infant School from 3-7 to 3-11 from 1 September 2014 to create a Primary School and to discontinue the use of Sacriston Junior School from 31 August 2014 started on 3 June 2013 and will end on 12 July 2013. Meetings had previously been held with Governors, staff and parents and all those groups appeared to support the proposal. This meeting was an opportunity for the wider public to express views and ask questions.

The following questions were asked:-

Q Will the proposal lead to mixed age classes?

A Lesley Farnaby (LF) stated that classes would be organised in the same way that they are currently.

Q Which other schools in the area have gone through this process and what has the impact been?

A There are a number of separate Infant and Junior Schools that have been amalgamated, including Woodhouse Close Infant and Junior Schools, Woodham Burn Infant and Junior Schools and Ushaw Moor Infant and Junior Schools. All of these amalgamations have been successful and have had a positive impact. Currently there are consultations on amalgamating Ouston Infant and Junior Schools and Delves Lane Infant and Junior Schools.

Q The Deputy Head Teacher at the Junior School has tendered his resignation. How will this post be filled and will it have an impact on the staffing structure produced for the Primary School?

A (LF) The vacant Deputy Head Teacher post would likely be filled by a temporary internal appointment.

Q Will this proposal have an impact on the number of staff required and will there be redundancies?

A All staff will continue to be employed until 31 August 2014. Any appointments up to that date would be temporary appointments. The intention is not to lose staff and the staffing structure for the school will be produced to enable the school to effectively deliver the primary curriculum.

Q What help will the school get during the process?

A DCC will fully support the schools through the process by providing HR support, Governance support and educational support.

Q Will the Before and After School Clubs also be amalgamated?

A (LF) The Before and After School Clubs may be run slightly differently but they will continue to run as will other groups such as Homework Clubs. Exactly how they will operate will be developed nearer the time.

Q Does this proposal have any disadvantages for pupils?

A Evidence indicates that pupils suffer a dip in performance when they transfer phases of school such as Infant School to Junior School. A Primary School should avoid this as the transition will be much more seamless.

(LF) Any changes would be done in small steps and the primary school will have one ethos and this will reduce any uncertainty children have when moving from the Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2 curriculum. Transition was highlighted by OfSTED and this is an opportunity to resolve this issue as well as an opportunity to stabilise education in Sacriston.

Q Will there be opportunities for staff to teach across the two buildings prior to the amalgamation?

A If it is appropriate to do so, there will be opportunities for staff to gain experience of teaching a different Key Stage before the amalgamation.

There were no further questions and the meeting ended at 7.40 pm.