

Proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014

Key Decision: CAS/09/13

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 Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014, taking account of the Local Authority's duties as prescribed in the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to secure sufficient school places, and to secure good outcomes for all children and young people in their local area.

Background

2. Officers within the Education Service believe that the long term viability of separate Infant and Junior Schools is uncertain due to changes in school funding which will come about as a result of the introduction of the National Funding Formula in 2015. This may result in a significant reduction to the value of the lump sum to all schools which will result in small schools experiencing an increased budget pressure in future. In essence, the higher the number of pupils on a school roll, the more financially secure a school will be, as economies of scale apply.
3. Combining separate Infant and Junior Schools has a number of advantages for children. Attending an 'all through' Primary School reduces breaks in children's learning and eliminates the need for additional transitions in a child's schooling. Primary schools support continuity of educational provision. There are also many advantages for parents / cares, including, only having to apply for a school place once for their child / children of Primary school age, only having to buy one school uniform.

4. Discussions with the schools and Church of England Diocese about amalgamating Belmont Infant School and Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School began in September 2013.
5. Following these initial discussions, using delegated powers, the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services approved the commencement of consultation on the proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014. The delegated decision report is attached as Appendix 2.
6. Consultation documents (included in Appendix 2) were distributed widely across the local area on 4 November 2013. A series of meetings were held between 7 November and 12 November 2013 so that Governors, staff, Parish Councils, parents, pupils and the local community could share their views with the Local Authority. Details of these meetings are included in Appendix 2.
7. The Council allowed 6 weeks for consultation (4 November to 13 December 2013). In determining this period of time for consultation, the Council has referred to "Making Changes to a Maintained Mainstream School - A Guide for Local Authorities and Governing Bodies". This document, issued by the Government, strongly advises that at least six weeks should be allowed for the consultation prior to publishing a proposal to make a change to a maintained mainstream school.
8. A full summary of the consultation responses is contained within the delegated decision report attached at Appendix 2.
9. The Government guidance highlighted in paragraph 7 states "*At the end of the consultation, the proposer (in this instance, the Local Authority) **should** consider the views expressed during that period before reaching any final decision on whether to publish statutory proposals. Where, in the course of consultation, a new option emerges which the proposer (the Local Authority) wishes to consider, it will probably be appropriate to consult afresh on this option before proceeding to publish statutory notices.*" The Council's constitution provides that the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services can decide to publish statutory proposals within the remit of her delegated authority.
10. The responses to the consultation were received and have been considered by officers in the County Council. Whilst there were almost as many responses (13) not in support of the proposal as there were in support of it (14), the responses received provided no evidence that not implementing the proposal would address the concerns over the future sustainability of small schools. Furthermore the responses did not suggest that leaving the two schools as separate schools would have the benefits that 'all through' primary schools have including continuity and progress of learning between 4 and 11, a single application of assessment criteria and pupil teaching and access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full primary range.

Decision to issue a Statutory Notice

11. With reference to the guidance highlighted in paragraph 7, in the course of the consultation period, the Council was not presented with any new options which would address the concerns regarding the sustainability of small schools, or which would propose a pattern of schools with the benefits that 'all through' Primary Schools have.
12. After full consideration of all the responses to the consultation and in the absence of a new option that the Council wished to consider, a decision was taken to publish a proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014. A statutory notice was therefore published on 9 January 2014 (attached as Appendix 3).
13. Once the proposal is published there follows a statutory 6 week representation period during which comments on the proposal can be made. These must be sent to the Local Authority. Any person can submit representations, which can be objections as well as expressions of support for the proposal. The representation period is the final opportunity for people and organisations to express their views about the proposal and ensure that they will be taken into account by the Decision Maker (in this instance, the County Council's Cabinet). Once the representation period has closed, a decision on the proposal must be made within 2 months i.e. by 20 April 2014.

Responses to the Proposal Published on 9 January 2014 for 6 weeks (The Statutory Notice Period)

14. The Council received 2 responses to the proposal :
 - 1 parent objected to the proposal for the following reasons:
 - Early Years and Key Stage 1 children are totally different from those of Key Stage 2 children.
 - The financial needs of the two age ranges must be considered and primary schools often view Year 6 pupils as being more important than other pupils to meet the needs of SATS results. Consequently Early Years and Key Stage 1 pupils' education deteriorates.
 - 1 Head Teacher of a Primary School in the local area supported the proposal as it was in the best interests of Belmont Infant and Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior Schools.

Factors to be considered by Cabinet

15. In making its decision on the proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014, there are a number of procedural matters which Cabinet must consider (as highlighted in DfE Guidance 'Making Changes to a Maintained Mainstream School - A Guide for Local Authorities and Governing Bodies' :

(a) **Is there any information missing?**

Information that Cabinet is required to consider is contained in the main body of this report and Appendices.

(b) **Does the published notice comply with statutory requirements?**

The notice published on 9 January 2014 is attached as Appendix 3. Officers prepared the notice as set out in the regulations and complied with statutory requirements.

(c) **Has the Statutory Consultation been carried out prior to the publication of the Notice?**

Full details of the consultation arrangements are included in Appendix 2. Officers applied DfE's guidance "Making Changes to Maintained Mainstream School - A Guide for Local Authorities and Governing Bodies" which sets out the statutory requirements for consultation.

(d) **Are the proposals "related" to other published proposals?**

Schedule 2 to the EIA 2006 provides that any proposals that are "related to" particular proposals (e.g. for a new school; school closure; change of age range etc.) must be considered together. The proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and the proposal to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014 are "related" therefore they must be considered together.

Further Factors to be considered by Cabinet

16. If satisfied that the procedural obligations have been discharged, Cabinet must then consider whether it wishes to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014, having regard to the following:

Effect on Standards and School Improvement

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

18. The most recent Ofsted Reports judged both schools as "good with outstanding features". Upon leaving both schools pupils' attainment is above average. In 2013 standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were in line with or above average. The proportion of pupils making expected progress across Key Stage 2 was better than that seen nationally. This evidence together with the benefits that Primary Schools (instead of separate Infant and Junior Schools) have lead Officers to believe that the proposed re-organisation will at least maintain these positive outcomes.

Diversity

19. Cabinet should consider how the proposal will contribute to local diversity. The proposal is for a Church of England (Controlled) Primary School which will increase diversity of provision in the local area. The other schools within a 2 mile radius are:
- St Thomas More RCVA Primary School
 - Belmont Cheveley Primary School
 - St Hild's C of E (Aided) Primary School
 - Durham Gilesgate Primary School
 - St Joseph's RCVA Primary School (Gilesgate)
 - Laurel Avenue Primary School
 - Sherburn Village Primary School
 - Pitlington Primary School
 - Finchale Primary School
 - West Rainton Primary School

Special Education (SEN) Provision

20. SEN provision, in the context of School Organisation Legislation and DfE guidance, is provision recognised by the Local Authority as specifically reserved for pupils with Special Education Needs.
21. Belmont Infant and Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior Schools have 10 places each which are reserved for partially sighted pupils. The proposal to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School will not impact on this provision as it will continue to operate from the current school buildings. Pupils with Special Educational needs will continue to have their needs met and the proposal, therefore, will not impact on the needs of individual pupils.

Impact on School Places

22. The proposed C of E (Controlled) Primary School will be on the sites of the current Belmont Infant and Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior Schools with a capacity for 370 pupils. A school of this size would be large enough to accommodate the current and future pupils we expect will attend the proposed C of E (Controlled) Primary School. The maximum number of pupils anticipated to be at the school up to 2020 is 283 therefore no pupils will be displaced by the proposal.

Capital

23. Capital funding in the region of £175,000 will be required to carry out the necessary repairs to the roof of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School and to upgrade the ICT provision. The DSG School Capital Repair and Maintenance budget will provide this funding.

Travel and Accessibility for All

24. The proposed C of E (Controlled) Primary School will be on the sites of the current Belmont Infant and Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior Schools. Consequently there will be no increases to travel or journey time and no changes to the current accessibility of both schools.

Equality Impact

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

Other Issues

Views of Interested Parties

26. Cabinet should consider the views of all those affected by the proposal or who have an interest in them, including: pupils, families of pupils, staff, other schools, local residents, diocesan bodies and other providers and other Local Authorities. This includes statutory objections and comments submitted during the representation period (refer to paragraph 14).
27. DfE guidance advises that Decision Makers should not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view when considering representations made on proposals. Instead they should give greatest weight to representations from those stakeholders likely to be most directly affected by the proposals.
28. The report attached as Appendix 2 provides full details of the responses received during the consultation period from 4 November - 13 December 2013. In summary:
 - 26 written responses were sent to the County Council from:
 - 13 parents
 - 4 Governors
 - 8 members of staff
 - The Church of England Diocese
 - Of the 26, 13 are in support of the proposal and 13 are not in support of the proposal.
 - 1 parent responded using the online response form (DCC website) in support of the proposal.

Summary of Responses from those in Support of the Proposal

29. The following information provides a summary of the issues raised by those in support of the proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 August 2014:
- Stakeholders believe that a primary school will enable a consistent approach to teaching and learning across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and allow for an easier transition for pupils which will benefit them and lead to further improvement in attainment;
 - Current staff should be appointed to posts in the new school to ensure the current caring environment is continued;
 - Stakeholders felt the proposal cements the link and good practise already in place although for the amalgamation to have an immediate positive impact a joint staffroom needs to be created as well as a link walkway between the schools so that children can safely move between buildings.

Summary of Responses from those not in Support of the Proposal

30. The following information provides a summary of the issues raised at the consultation meetings and in written responses from those not in support of the proposal:
- There was a concern that the proposal would lead to the school being too small to accommodate future pupil numbers.
 - One parent and one member of staff felt that the current Infant and Junior Schools are the only split site schools in Belmont and should therefore remain;
 - Views were expressed that the proposal appears to be a money saving exercise for the County Council;
 - One governor was concerned that creating one bigger school may be detrimental to the wellbeing and ultimately the performance of both children and staff.

Recommendations and Reasons

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

33. Cabinet is recommended to agree:

- (i) that the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School should be changed from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School; and
- (ii) that Belmont Infant School should close from 31 December 2014.

Background Papers

Appendix 2 - Delegated Decision Reports

Appendix 3 - Statutory Notice

Appendix 4 - Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Capital funding in the region of £175,000 from the DSG School Capital Repair and Maintenance budget will be utilised to repair the roof of the Junior School building and to upgrade the ICT provision. There may be costs associated with any redundancies as a result of a new staffing structure being established for the proposed Primary school. There may also be costs associated with the termination of contracts at the two schools.

Staffing

Staff from both Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School and Belmont Infant School will be ring-fenced for posts in the C of E (Controlled) Primary School. Any staff displaced would be considered for alternative employment through Durham County Council's existing scheme and the School Brokerage Scheme.

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 has been carried out, and is attached as Appendix 4.

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

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

The relevant "protected characteristics" are: age, disability, gender re-assignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. It is not considered that there would be any adverse impact on those with protected characteristics.

Accommodation

Repairs to the roof of the Junior School building will be carried out.

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 School building and to upgrade the ICT in both buildings will be procured in accordance with the County Council's procurement arrangements.

Disability Issues

An equality impact assessment has been carried out which includes disability issues. Implementing the proposal would not impact on disability issues.

Legal Implications

Included within the body of the report.

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 its role in commissioning 14-19 education as determined by the Education and Skills Act 2008 and any subsequent legislation and training for young people.*

SUBJECT

To seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services to issue a statutory notice proposing to change the age range of Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a CE (Controlled) Primary School from 1 January 2015 and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014.

DECISION

If Key Decision insert No.

CAS/09/13 Proposed date for Cabinet decision - April 2014

ELECTORAL DIVISION/S

Belmont

CONSULTATION – CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER, OTHER MEMBERS & DATE

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder was consulted on 12 December 2013, Local Members were consulted on 13 December 2013.

RECORD OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

N/A

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

N/A

ACCESS TO THE REPORT

Is the report open to the public (Part A)

Yes

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

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Attached - Delegated Decision Report - Outcomes of Consultation on a Proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014.

CONTACT PERSON

Graeme Plews

CONTACT No.

03000 265777

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY

Graeme Plews

18/12/13

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

NOTES

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

DELEGATED DECISION

16 December 2013



Outcome of Consultation on a Proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to Close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014

Report of CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES

Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director, Children and Adults Service

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To provide details on the outcomes of consultation which was undertaken between 4 November 2013 and 13 December 2013, proposing a change to the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 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 23 September 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 Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014.
- 3 Consultation documents (attached as Appendix 3) were distributed widely (distribution list attached as Appendix 4) and meetings were held between 7-12 November 2013 with the Governing Bodies and staff of both schools, parents, and members of the local community at an Information Sharing Evening. Notes of these meetings are attached as Appendix 5.

Issues Raised at Consultation Meetings

4. At the meetings held between 7-12 November 2013, officers explained the reasons for the proposal and invited those present to express views and ask questions. The key issues discussed at the meetings are summarised as follows:
 - Questions were asked about how the Governing body and staffing structures for the proposed primary school would be comprised. Officers explained that the Governing Body would likely be comprised of governors from both schools. 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.

- Comments were made that the decision had already been made. Officers explained that no decision had been made. This period was consultation and no decision had been made because only the County Council's Cabinet can make the decision on whether to agree the proposal or not. At the end of the consultation period, all of the responses received will be considered and a decision then taken whether or not to move to the next stage in the process which is to issue a Statutory Notice which is published for six weeks. All of the information is then provided to Cabinet which is the decision making body. That decision would be taken in April 2014.
- Comments were made that Belmont Infant and Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior Schools work closely together now and a primary school may undo this. Officers explained that a primary school would build on the current arrangements as there will be one Governing Body and one Head Teacher that will bring about a consistent approach, one ethos and one set of principles. The staff, Local Authority and C of E Diocese will work together to ensure the proposed primary school will enhance the education provision which will be in children's best interests
- Concerns were raised that as the proposed primary school is a C of E Primary School that it may have more of a religious ethos imposed, than there is presently. Officers and the Director of Education for the Diocese of Durham and Newcastle, who was also present at the meetings, reassured people this would not happen. The Governing Body of the proposed primary school would have some Governors appointed by the Diocese but there is no intention to have more religious education imposed on pupils than there currently is. The proposed C of E Primary School would run in the same way as the existing Belmont C of E Junior School.
- Questions were asked if a new school would be built if the two schools became a primary school. Officers explained that the funding the County Council received from Government has been significantly reduced and needs to be allocated to those schools in the worst condition. Belmont schools are not as high a priority for a new build compared to other schools in the country. However the Local Authority is aware that the roof of the C of E Junior School is in very poor condition and a survey has been commissioned to determine the cost of repair.

Responses to the Consultation

- 5 Stakeholders were invited to respond in a variety of ways; written responses using the response form attached to the consultation document, letter, email or completing the response form on line via the County Council's website.
- 6 26 responded in writing using the response form, letter and email.
 - 1 responded using the online response form (DCC website)
 - 10 people attended the Information Sharing Evening.
 - 30 members of staff attended the joint staff meeting.
 - 20 Governors attended the joint Governing Body meeting.
 - 4 parents attended the parents' meeting.

Summary of Responses

7 The following information provides a summary of the responses:

- 5 parents of pupils attending Belmont Infant School support the proposal to change the age of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a primary school and to close Belmont Infant School;
- 3 Governors at Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School support the proposal;
- The CE Diocese of Durham supports the proposal;
- 4 parents of pupils attending Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School support the proposal;
- 1 member of staff of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School supports the proposal;
- 5 parents of pupils attending Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School do not support the proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a primary school and to close Belmont Infant School;
- 7 members of staff of Belmont Infant School do not support the proposal;
- 1 Governor at Belmont Infant School does not support the proposal;

Themes that emerged from the responses were:

- Stakeholders believe that a primary school will enable a consistent approach to teaching and learning across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and allow for an easier transition for pupils which will benefit them and lead to further improvement in attainment;
- One parent stated that current staff should be appointed to posts in the new school to ensure the current caring environment is continued;
- Stakeholders felt the proposal cements the link and good practise already in place although for the amalgamation to have an immediate positive impact a joint staffroom needs to be created as well as a link walkway between the schools so that children can safely move between buildings;
- One parent and one member of staff felt that the current Infant and Junior Schools are the only split site schools in Belmont and should therefore remain;
- One parent and a member of staff were of the view that the proposal appears to be a money saving exercise for the County Council;
- One governor was concerned that creating one bigger school may be detrimental to the wellbeing and ultimately the performance of both children and staff.

- Staff and a Governor at Belmont Infant School are concerned about the change in status from a Community School to a Church of England School.
- Some members of staff stated that current Year 2 pupils thrive in the Infant School because they have a level of responsibility for younger pupils which could be lost if a primary school was created.

Analysis of Consultation Responses and Current Position

8. Fourteen respondents to the consultation support the proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a primary school and to close Belmont Infant School. Thirteen respondents do not support the proposal. In particular they see the proposal as being beneficial to pupils and parents and that it will build on the links and good practice already in place. The proposal will allow long term strategic planning of curriculum and assessment, more options for creative and flexible staffing arrangements and continuous professional development for staff.
9. Some of the respondents in favour of the proposal are of the view that a covered walkway between the two schools is essential to provide a physical link between the Infant and Junior building and to provide a safe environment for the children. This was also raised at consultation meetings and is something that could possibly be considered.
10. Some of the respondents are concerned that a religious ethos would be imposed on the proposed primary school. However officers and the Director of Education for the Diocese of Durham and Newcastle have reassured people that this would not happen. The proposed C of E Primary School would be run in the same way as the existing Belmont C of E Junior School.

Recommendation

11. After full consideration of all responses to the consultation, the Corporate Director, Children and Adult Services is recommended to give approval for officers to issue a statutory notice proposing to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2014 and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014.

Background Papers

Attached

Contact: Sheila Palmerley

Tel: 03000 265731

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Capital funding from the DfE Capital Maintenance Grant will be utilised to carry out the necessary repairs to the roof of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School. The estimated cost is £175,000. Capital funding will be required if the provision of a covered walkway is agreed. This would then be the subject of a future costing exercise.

Staffing

Staff from both Belmont Infant School and Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School will be ring-fenced for posts in the C of E 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

Work to improve the condition of the roof of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School will be carried out.

Crime and Disorder

N/A

Human Rights

Human Rights will not be affected by this proposal.

Consultation

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

Procurement

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 Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School and closing Belmont Infant School will be carried out in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance.

DELEGATED DECISION

CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES

23 September 2013



Proposal to change the age range of Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a CE (Controlled) Primary School and to discontinue the use of Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014

Report of CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES
Rachael Shimmin, Corporate Director
Children and Adults Service

Purpose of the Report

- 2 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 Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a CE (Controlled) Primary School and to discontinue the use of Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014.

Background

- 3 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 is likely to have an impact on schools with low pupil numbers.
- 4 In light of this, the County Council believes that small schools could in the long term become unviable.
- 5 To address this in localities across the County where there are separate Infant and Junior Schools, the County Council wishes to consider, where appropriate, the possibility of bringing the two schools together into a single Primary school, creating a single larger school than two smaller schools thus creating a more viable and sustainable education establishment.

Recommendations and Reasons

- 6 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;
 - 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.
- 7 Belmont Infant and Junior Schools already work closely together as they share the same site. The proposed primary school would run across the two existing sites.
- 8 The current combined capacity of the two schools is for 340 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
Belmont Infant	132	126	112	112	110
Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior	160	164	168	171	171
TOTAL	292	290	280	283	281

- 9 Officers from the County Council have met with the Governing Bodies and Head Teachers of both schools and discussed the possibility of having a single Primary school rather than a separate Infant and CE (Controlled) Junior. We now wish to be allowed to begin consultation on the proposal.

Consultation Timescales

- 10 It is intended that a six week period of consultation on this proposal will commence on Monday 4 November 2013. Consultation documents will be widely distributed to key stakeholders, including to Governors, staff, parents, Local Members, Diocese, Community Groups, Parish Councils, neighbouring schools, Children's Centres, AAP groups etc. Meetings with Governors, Staff, Parents and the wider community will also be held during November 2013 for officers to provide information and answer queries.
- 11 The six week consultation period will end on Friday 13 December 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 January 2014 for six weeks. Cabinet would then be asked to make a decision on the proposal.

Decision

- 12 The Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services agrees that consultation can begin on the proposal to change the age range of Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a CE (Controlled) Primary School and to discontinue the use of Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014.

Background Papers

To follow.

Contact: Sheila Palmerley

Tel: 03000 265731

Delegated Decision-Change Age Range of Delves Lane Junior

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

Any funding required to improve the condition of the building will be met from the Capital Maintenance Grant provided from the Government.

Staffing

Staff from both the Infant and CE (Controlled) Junior Schools will be ring fenced for posts in the CE (Controlled) 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

N/A

Crime and Disorder

N/A

Human Rights

Human rights will not be affected by this proposal.

Consultation

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder for Children and Adults Services and Local members have been consulted and they support the process and the process outlined for consultation.

Procurement

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

Disability Issues

N/A

Legal Implications

N/A

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 its role in commissioning 14-19 education as determined by the Education and Skills Act 2008 and any subsequent legislation and training for young people.*

SUBJECT

To seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services to begin consultation on the proposal to change the age range of Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a CE (Controlled) Primary School from 1 January 2015 and to discontinue the use of Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014.

DECISION

If Key Decision insert No.

ELECTORAL DIVISION/S

Belmont

CONSULTATION – CABINET PORTFOLIO HOLDER, OTHER MEMBERS & DATE

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder was consulted on 18 September 2013. Local Members were consulted on 26 and 27 September 2013.

RECORD OF ANY CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARED BY AN EXECUTIVE MEMBER

N/A

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

N/A

ACCESS TO THE REPORT

Is the report open to the public (Part A)

Yes

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

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

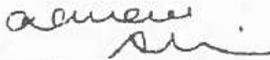
CONTACT PERSON

Graeme Plews

CONTACT No.

03000 265777

AUTHORISED SIGNATORY



07/11/13

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

NOTES

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

Belmont Church of England (C of E) (Controlled) Junior and Belmont Infant Schools



**Proposal to Change the Age Range of
Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School
from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015
to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School
and to close Belmont Infant School as a
separate school from 31 December 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 review provision in areas where there are separate Infant and Junior Schools to see if they could be amalgamated into all through primary schools. New funding arrangements for schools have potential implications for the sustainability of small schools, therefore the County Council believes that primary schools will be more viable in the long term. We have been discussing with Governors of the Infant and Junior Schools in Belmont the possibility of having one Church of England (C of E) Primary School instead of two separate schools.

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 wish to hear your views on the proposal to have a single primary school. The primary school would be established by changing the age range of Belmont C of E Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 so that it becomes a C of E Primary School and formally close Belmont Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014 to enable the single school to open.

You will no doubt have many questions to ask about this proposal. 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 Belmont C of E Junior 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 we believe that educationally it is the right thing to do for pupils, parents and staff and will ensure the schools are sustainable in the long term. The amount of money that a school has in its budget is predominantly based on the number of pupils in the school. In light of this, the County Council believes that some small schools could in the long term become unviable. To address this in the areas across the county where there are separate Infant and Junior Schools the County Council wishes to consider, where appropriate, the possibility of bringing the two schools together into a single primary school. There are very few Infant and Junior Schools left across the county now.

2. What are the benefits of Primary Education?

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

- Continuity and progress of learning between 4 and 11;

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

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

If the proposal to amalgamate is approved, staff and Governors of the two schools would work closely together, supported by the Local Authority, and by the Diocese of Durham. To ensure a smooth transition from the existing two separate schools into a new Primary School. Parents would be fully involved throughout the transition process.

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

At present both schools are judged as 'good with outstanding features' by Ofsted. They already work closely together for the benefit of all pupils and will continue to do this whether or not the proposed amalgamation takes place. There is a comprehensive Transition Programme to ensure that children settle quickly into Year 3. Year 6 'Reading Buddies' work with Year 2 children each lunchtime. Joint assemblies are held when the Infant children go to the Junior School. Non-uniform fundraising days are usually planned together and the Head Teachers regularly take assemblies in each other's schools.

Staff in both schools benefit from Professional Development Training together. Joint staff meetings are held each term in order to moderate assessments in writing and maths. Results have risen over the past 3 years at the end of Key Stage 1 and are significantly above average in all subjects. The vast majority of pupils then enter the Junior School where this trend continues so that by Year 6 results are again significantly above national expectations.

4. What type of school is being proposed?

The proposal is for a Church of England (C of E) Primary School for children aged 4 to 11 to serve the local community in Belmont. It would be run in the same way as the existing Belmont C of E Junior School. There are many other schools of this type in County Durham and throughout England. This type of school is called "Voluntary Controlled" which means that it is fully maintained and funded by Durham County Council as its Local Authority, but its Governing Body includes a small number of Governors appointed by the Diocese of Durham as Trustees. Just as is the case with the existing Junior School, the Durham Diocesan Board of Education will work in partnership with the Local Authority to support and advise the Primary School.

The Diocese supports the proposal. There is a very strong working relationship between Durham County Council and the Diocese.

The admission arrangements for a place in Reception at the proposed Primary School will be the same as they currently are for a place in Reception at Belmont Infant School.

5. Where will the proposed C of E Primary School be?

If the proposal is agreed, the C of E Primary School would be located at the existing sites of Belmont Infant School and Belmont C of E Junior School. The combined capacity of the two schools is 340 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 below 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
Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior	160	164	168	171	171
Belmont Infant	132	126	112	112	110
TOTAL	292	290	280	283	289

6. Will the County Council provide a nursery as part of the proposal?

The County Council does not intend to provide a nursery. If the school wanted to have a nursery the Governing Body could agree to run childcare and this can include funded nursery places for 3 and 4 year old children. If the Governing Body of the proposed C of E Primary School decided to do this they would need to be satisfied that there is adequate room in the school to provide space for nursery age children.

7. Will there be any staff changes?

If the proposal is agreed, a new staffing structure would be developed for the primary school. It is expected that posts will be filled from existing staff at Belmont Infant and Belmont C of E Junior Schools. There would be a separate consultation with staff about the process for being appointed to posts in the new Primary School.

8. How do we respond to this consultation?

We would like to hear what you think about the proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E Primary School and to formally close Belmont Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014.

We are holding an Information Sharing Evening at Belmont C of E Junior School on 12 November 2013 at 7.00 pm. All interested parties are invited to attend.

We are also holding drop-in sessions for **parents** at Belmont C of E Junior School on 12 November 2013 at 9.00 am and at Belmont Infant School on 12 November 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 13 December 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

9. What happens after 13 December 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 in Spring 2014 on whether or not to create a single Primary School and close Belmont Infant School as a separate school.

RESPONSE FORM

CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF BELMONT C OF E JUNIOR SCHOOL FROM 7-11 TO 4-11 TO CREATE A C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL FROM 1 JANUARY 2015 AND TO CLOSE BELMONT INFANT SCHOOL FROM 31 DECEMBER 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

- Nursery Infant Junior
 Primary Secondary Special

Please state which school:

OR a Pupil at

- Nursery Infant Junior
 Primary Secondary Special

Please state which school:

OR a

- Governor Member of Staff

Please state which school:

- Resident Local Member
 Trade Union Representative Parish/Town Council Representative
 Community Group Diocese
 Neighbouring Authority MP
 Other (please state):

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

Yes No

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

[Large empty rectangular box for providing comments]

Please return this form by 13 December 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

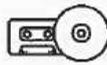
Other (please specify)

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

AAA

Large
Print

REVIEW OF PRIMARY EDUCATION IN BELMONT
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION LIST
November 2013

School	Govs	Staff	Pupils	Total	How Delivered	Date Delivered
Belmont Infant	*	20	135	155	AW	04/11/13
Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior	*	30	165	195	AW	AW
Belmont School Community Arts College	N/A	20	20	20	AW	04/11/13 AW
St. Leonard's Catholic School	N/A	10	10	10	AW	
Durham Free School	N/A	10	10	10	AW	
Belmont Cheveley Park Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW	04/11/13 AW
Gilesgate Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW	
Laurel Avenue Community Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW	
Pittington Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW	
Sherburn Village Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW	
St. Hild's College CE (Aided) Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW	
St. Joseph's RCVA Primary, Gilesgate	N/A	10	10	10	AW	
St. Thomas More RCVA Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW	
Gilesgate Nursery	N/A	5	5	5	AW	04/11/13 AW
Laurel Avenue Nursery	N/A	5	5	5	AW	
St. Hild's Nursery	N/A	5	5	5	AW	

*Governors letters sent out by SGSS

TOTAL documents = 625

DCC website

Elected DCC Members	
Ossie Johnson, Barbara Armstrong, Simon Henig, Patrick Conway, Katie Corrigan, Bill Moir	Emailed 04/11/13
MPs	
Roberta Blackman-Woods MP mail@roberta.org.uk	Emailed 04/11/13
INTERNAL – Email 04/11/13	
CAS SLT, Julian Wilson, Barry Piercy, Liam Cairns, Gerard Darby, John Wilkinson, Joanne Barker, School Places & Admissions Team, Julie Arnett, Janet Greaves, Joanne Walt, Paul Rockett, Lynn Elliott, Jane-le-Sage, Margaret Hanratty, Linda Bailey, Chris Young, David Shirer, Adrian White	
RC and CE Diocese and DfE	
RC Diocese Director education@diocesehn.org.uk	Emailed 04/11/13
CE Diocese Director Jeremy.litt@drmnnewcanglican.org	
DfE school.organisationproposals@education.qsi.gov.uk	
Trade Unions	
c.d.thompson@hotmail.co.uk john.kesterton@ascl.org.uk ksmith@atl.org.uk terry.scarr@gmb.org.uk mwilliams.nasuwat@live.co.uk northern@nut.org.uk trevorblacklock@hotmail.com h.pink@unison.co.uk	Emailed 04/11/13
Directors of CYPS of Neighbouring LAs	
Murray Rose DARLINGTON murray.rose@darlington.gov.uk	Emailed 04/11/13
Margaret Whellans GATESHEAD Margaretwhellans@gateshead.gov.uk	
John Collings NEWCASTLE john.collings@newcastle.gov.uk	
Keith Moore SUNDERLAND keith.moore@sunderland.gov.uk	
Libraries (5 each)	
Belmont Library, Cheveley Park Shopping Centre, Belmont, DH1 2AA	AW 04/11/13
Community Centres, Community Associations (5 each)	
Belmont Community Centre, Sunderland Road, Gilesgate Moor, Durham, DH1 2LL	Posted 05/11/13
Audrey Barnes, Belmont Community Association, Belmont Comp School, Belmont, Durham, DH1 2QP	
Kim Rowling, Durham City Centre Youth Project, Mill House, Gilesgate, Durham	
Steve Johnson, Gilesgate Community Association, Vane Tempest House, Maynard Row, Durham, DH1 1QF	
Parish Councils (JM passing on to Parish Councils/AAPs in Belmont area)	
John Murphy john.murphy3@durham.gov.uk	E-Mail 04/11/13
Children's Centres (5 each)	
Belmont Pre-School , Belmont Community Centre, Sunderland Road, Belmont, Durham, DH1 2LL	Posted 05/11/13
Giant Steps , Cheveley Park Primary School, Scardale Way, Durham, DH1 2TX	

**SPECIAL JOINT MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BODIES OF
BELMONT (C of E) (Controlled) JUNIOR SCHOOL and
BELMONT INFANT SCHOOL
HELD AT BELMONT JUNIOR SCHOOL ON
THURSDAY 7 NOVEMBER 2013 AT 5.15 P.M.**

Present:

Mrs P J Conway, Mrs S Draper, Mr M Gilbank, Mr K Holroyd, Mrs M Laverick, Mrs P Mesquita da Paz, Mrs G N Middleton, Mr G Moore, Mrs M Pattinson, Mrs K Pennison, Mrs E Roffe (Acting Headteacher, Belmont Junior School), Mrs L Smith, Mrs R Sundavadra, Rev Dr M Trelfall-Holmes, Mr A T Unwin, Mr M Watson, Mrs R Wickens, Mrs I Wilkinson, Mrs J Wynn (Headteacher, Belmont Infant School) and Mr W M Young

Also Present:

Mrs M Denton, Clerk to the Governing Body
Mr G Plews, School Organisation Manager
Mr J Fitt, Director of Education for Dioceses of Durham & Newcastle

Action

1. Introduction and Welcome

Graeme Plews, School Organisation Manager, Jeremy Fitt, Director of Education and Mary Denton, Clerk introduced themselves to Governors.

2. Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED:

THAT the following apologies for absence be received and accepted:

- Miss L Ewing
- Mr M J Lyons
- Mr P Radcliffe

Graeme Plews(GP) outlined the proposal to reorganise Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School and Belmont Infant School to create a 340 place primary school. This would involve closing Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014 and changing the age range of Belmont CE Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a Primary School.

GP explained that Belmont Infant School and Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School are relatively small schools and changes to the way schools are funded mean that the amount of money that a school has in its budget is predominantly based on the number of pupils in the school. In light of this, the County Council believes that some small schools would in the long term become unviable.

GP also explained that there are advantages to primary schools such as continuity, consistency and easier transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. Evidence shows that standards can dip when pupils move from infant to junior schools and this would be avoided if a primary school was to be created. The benefits of primary education and the changes to school funding arrangements were the factors behind the proposal to create a CE (Controlled) Primary School for Belmont.

Governors were in possession of the public consultation information and lengthy discussions ensued around the following issues:-

- Why close the Infant School, had any other options been considered?

GP explained that the Local Authority could have considered closing both schools and merging them into a primary school. That option had not been developed however because that would have created a new school and there is a presumption from Government that new schools are likely to be Free Schools or Academies. Jeremy Fitt (JF) stated that the Diocese supports the proposal on educational grounds.

- Staffing Issues

GP explained that should the proposal be approved the Governing Body and Head Teacher would determine a staffing establishment for the Primary School.

- Buildings, will there be money for a new build or significant refurbishment?

GP explained that the County Council now receives significantly less capital funding for improving the condition of schools therefore it is highly unlikely that a new build school will happen. Use of funding has to be prioritised so that it is allocated to maintain or repair those schools in worst condition. GP stated that a survey had been requested on the extent of repairs required to the roof of the Junior School.

- How would the Governing Body be comprised?

GP explained that a Governing Body would be established to ensure the effective management of the proposed Primary School and that the process would be led by the C of E Junior School Governing Body as it was the school where the age range would be extended if the proposal is agreed. The composition of the Governing Body would be looked at in detail in April 2014 after a decision on the proposal has been made. Both GP and JF felt that the Primary School Governing Body would include Governors from the existing Infant School.

- New Housing

GP explained that housing developments were taken into account when projecting future pupil numbers.

- **Admissions and school places**

GP explained that parents will only have to apply for a place in Reception if the proposed primary school is agreed and not apply for a place in Year 3 as they do currently. JF confirmed that there would be no changes to the current admission criteria.

GP then explained how the proposal would progress following this meeting and the timescales involved for each stage.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 7.00 pm

**Notes of the Drop-in Session held on Tuesday 12 November 2013 at 9.00 am
at Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School on the Proposal to Extend the Age
Range of Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from
1 January 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School
from 31 December 2014**

Present: Graeme Plews, School Organisation Manager

1 Parent

Graeme Plews (GP) explained the reasons for the proposal to create a primary school which were the benefits that primary education bring about including consistency, continuity and a more gradual and easier transition process for children and the fact that changes to school funding arrangements mean that the smaller the school roll is, the less budget the school will receive which will impact on its ability to deliver an effective curriculum. Belmont Infant and Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior Schools are both relatively small schools and by bringing them together as one larger primary school will make the school more viable and preserve primary education in Belmont for the long term.

The parent in attendance asked how the proposal would assist with children's transition. GP explained that transition should be improved because of the consistency and continuity that a primary school brings. The examples of working together that the two schools have introduced would be continued, and the fact that a primary school would have one Governing Body and one Head Teacher will mean that it has the same ethos and the same set of principles and working practices from Reception through to Year 6.

The parent queried the influence of the Church if the primary school is to be a C of E Controlled Primary School. GP explained that the main difference between a C of E Controlled School and a Community School is that some members of the Governing Body are appointed by the Diocese but the remainder of the Governing Body would be made up of the same category of Governor as the current schools. There is no intention to impose a religious education on pupils. The C of E Primary School would be run in the same way as the existing Belmont C of E Junior School.

Notes of the Parents Drop-in Session held on Tuesday 12 November 2013 at 2.45 pm at Belmont Infant School on the Proposal to Extend the Age Range of Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014

Present: Graeme Plews, School Organisation Manager

3 Parents

Graeme Plews (GP) explained the reasons for the proposal to create a primary school which were the benefits that primary education bring about including consistency, continuity and a more gradual and easier transition process for the children and the fact that changes to school funding arrangements mean that the smaller the school roll is, the less budget the school will receive which would impact on its ability to deliver an effective curriculum. Belmont Infant and Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior Schools are both relatively small schools and by bringing them together as one large primary school will make the school more viable and preserve primary education in Belmont for the long term

One parent was concerned that a large primary school would remove some of the practices undertaken by the Infant School pupils such as taking registers unsupervised to the office. This would not happen in the primary school as they would need to be supervised. GP explained that the proposed primary school would still operate across the two school sites so there should be no changes to arrangements such as that.

One parent asked if there would be staff changes. GP explained that if the proposal was agreed the Governing Body for the primary school and Head Teacher would determine a staffing structure to ensure the effective operation of the primary school.

One parent asked how pupil numbers were calculated. GP explained that the Local Authority looked at trends in parental preference, information on housing developments and data on birth rates received from the Health Authority.

Parents asked why the primary school was not proposed for the start of a school year. GP explained that the final decision would not be made until April 2014 which does not give enough time for the staff to be appointed for the proposed primary school to open in September 2014. Leaving it until September 2015 is too long therefore 1 January 2015 is the earliest and most practical date for the proposed primary school to open.

Notes of the Staff Meeting held on Thursday 7 November 2013 at 3.30 pm to discuss the Proposal to extend the Age Range of Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a CE (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014

Present: Graeme Plews, School Organisation Manager

Approximately 30 Members of Staff

Also present was Jeremy Fitt, Director of Education for the Dioceses of Durham and Newcastle

Graeme Plews (GP) opened the meeting by introducing himself and explaining the key function of the School Places and Admissions Team which is to plan the pattern and provision of school places across County Durham for the present and the future to ensure there are sufficient school places to meet the current and future needs of families in County Durham. GP explained the factors used to project future pupil numbers which are trends in parental preference, housing developments and information on birth rates.

GP explained that Belmont Infant School and Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School are relatively small schools and changes to the way schools are funded mean that a greater proportion of a school's budget is now pupil-related. It therefore follows that the bigger the pupil roll, the larger a school's budget will be which should make the school more viable in the long term.

GP also explained that there are advantages to primary schools as opposed to having separate infant and junior schools such as continuity, consistency and easier transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. Evidence shows that standards can dip when children move from infant to junior schools and this would be avoided if a primary school was in existence. The benefits of primary education and the change to school funding arrangements were the factors behind the proposal to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School for Belmont.

Members of staff asked if any other options had been considered other than extending the age range of Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School. GP explained that the Local Authority could have considered closing both schools and merging them into a primary school. That option had not been developed however because that would have created a new school and there is a presumption from Government that new schools are likely to be Free Schools or Academies.

Members of staff commented that both schools are good schools, work very well together and that the proposed primary school could undo this. GP replied that the Local Authority was aware of how well the schools worked together and a primary school would build on this as it will enable one Governing Body and one Head Teacher to determine the principles and ethos and allocate resources accordingly in the best interests of children.

Members of staff asked if all jobs would be safe or whether there would be redundancies. GP explained that if the proposal was approved the Governing Body for the primary school and the Head Teacher would determine a staffing structure that would enable the primary school to most effectively deliver the curriculum.

Members of staff commented that they thought the decision had already been made to create a primary school. GP explained this was not the case. This was the initial consultation which commenced on 4 November 2013 and expires on 13 December 2013. At the end of that period all the views and comments received would be analysed to determine whether to issue a Statutory Notice. If a Statutory Notice is issued, it will be issued in January 2014 for six weeks during which time objections can be made. At the end of the six week notice period, all views and comments will be considered by Durham County Council's Cabinet who will decide whether or not to agree the proposal to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School.

Members of staff asked if a new school would be built if the two schools become a primary school. GP explained that the funding the County Council received from Government to maintain and improve its school buildings has been significantly reduced and it is very unlikely therefore that there will be any new build schools for the foreseeable future. Use of the funding has to be prioritised so that it is allocated to maintain or repair schools in the worst condition.

Some members of staff were concerned that the ethos of the school would change if it became a C of E (Controlled) Primary School. GP explained that there would be little if any change as the present Junior School is a C of E School. Jeremy Fitt explained that it is not the intention for a religious education to be imposed on children. The Governing Body for the proposed C of E Primary School would have up to 25% of Governors appointed by the Church of England Diocese, but the remainder of the Governing Body would be made up with the same category of Governor as the current schools.

A member of staff asked whether the proposal had any downsides as the consultation document did not refer to any and therefore did not give a balanced view. GP explained that the consultation document highlighted the benefits of primary education and that the Local Authority would not consult on a proposal that would have a negative impact on children. GP however acknowledged that reorganisation proposals can cause uncertainty for staff and if the proposal is approved, support would be provided by the Local Authority to help both schools through the transition process.

A member of staff asked if the two schools could remain as they are but share a Head Teacher. This would avoid costs associated with changing signs, stationery and school uniforms if a primary school was created. GP replied that could be put forward as a response to the consultation to be considered.

A member of staff commented that staff with experience in a particular Key Stage may be uncomfortable teaching a different Key Stage. GP replied that teaching across the whole primary curriculum would provide staff with greater experience which would benefit them in their professional development as well as benefitting children.

The meeting ended at 5.15 pm.

**Notes of the Information Sharing Evening held on Tuesday 12 November 2013
at 7pm to discuss the Proposal to extend the Age Range of Belmont CE
(Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a
CE (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School
from 31 December 2014**

Present: Graeme Plews, School Organisation Manager
Adam Williams, School Places & Admissions Assistant

8 Members of the public

Also present was: Jeremy Fitt, Director of Education for the Dioceses of Durham
and Newcastle
Janice Wynn, Head Teacher of Belmont Infant School

Graeme Plews (GP) opened the meeting by introducing himself and Adam Williams (AW) and allowing Jeremy Fitt (JF) to introduce himself. GP then explained the key functions of the School Places and Admissions Team which is to plan the pattern and provision of school places to meet the current and future needs of families in County Durham, GP explained the factors and to plan future pupil numbers which are trends in parental preference, housing developments and information on birth rates.

GP explained that Belmont Infant School and Belmont CE (Controlled) Junior School are relatively small schools and changes to the way schools are funded mean that the amount of money that a school has in its budget is predominantly based on the number of pupils in the school. In light of this, the County Council believes that some small schools would in the long term become unviable.

GP also explained that there are advantages to primary schools as opposed to having separate infant and junior schools such as continuity, consistency and easier transition from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. Evidence shows that standards can dip when children move from infant to junior schools and this would be avoided if a primary school was to be created. The benefits of primary education and the change to school funding arrangements were the factors behind the proposal to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School for Belmont.

A member of the public asked how the Senior Management Team (SMT) would work across the two sites. GP explained that the Governing Body and Head Teacher would be responsible for producing a staff structure for the primary school. It was then asked if there would only be one Head Teacher to which GP confirmed there would be one Head Teacher only.

A member of the public commented on the falling rolls stated in the document and asked where these figures come from. GP explained the County Council has projected rolls from 2014 into 2027. These rolls are produced using trends in parental preference, housing developments (currently none planned in the Belmont area) and health service birth rate statistics.

A member of the public commented that they had been part of a similar process before in a secondary school in another Authority where two schools had been amalgamated into one with one of the buildings closing. After a few years of the proposal taking effect there was an increase in pupils and the school was not big enough – what if this was to happen here? Janice Wynn (JW) reminded those present that neither of the buildings would be closing as part of this proposal so it would be highly unlikely this would happen. GP also informed the group that the buildings currently have spare capacity.

A member of the public queried if the proposal was to remove capacity from the school(s). GP explained that there is no intention to remove places from either of the schools as part of this proposal and that there is no financial saving to the County Council. Changes to school funding arrangements made by Government means that more funding is attached to individual pupils therefore schools with lower pupil numbers will receive less funding than those with higher numbers. JF explained that money is now driven by pupil numbers and that the Diocese supports the proposal on educational grounds. JF also commented that one school would be easier to manage than two and that staff would have greater career development opportunities in a primary school as they could be deployed across the whole school. GP reminded those present that no decision has been made yet as we are only at the consultation stage. All comments received at the end of the consultation period will be considered along with minutes of all consultation meetings.

A member of the public raised the question why the County Council was consulting on opening the proposed primary school in the middle of the school year. GP explained the final decision would not be made by Cabinet until April 2014 which does not leave sufficient time for the Governing Body and all staff appointments to be made for the primary school to open in September 2014. If the primary school did not open until September 2015 that would cause unnecessary uncertainty. Therefore the most practical date for the primary school to open is 1 January 2015.

A member of the public asked if staff positions in the proposed primary school would be advertised externally. GP explained that all posts in the proposed primary school would be ring-fenced for staff in the existing schools.

A member of the public queried whether pupils in Year 2 would have to apply for a place in Year 3 if the proposal goes ahead. GP informed that should the proposal go ahead pupils would continue through the school year on year and would not need to apply for a place between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 as they do currently.

A member of the public asked whether there were any future plans for one of the buildings to be closed. GP explained that there are no plans for either of the buildings to close. GP and JF also explained that there is no money available to look at having a single site primary school (one building), as the capital funding the County Council receives has significantly reduced.

A member of the public queried whether a restructure of the current Governing Bodies would have to take place should the proposal go ahead. A Governor present at the meeting stated that a restructure would take place and would be led by the Junior School's Governing Body due to them being the school extended. He went on to state that the two Governing Bodies would most likely amalgamate but this could be looked at properly after April when a decision on the proposal has been made.

A member of the public commented that should the proposal go ahead most of April until January would be spent sorting staffing structures etc. They asked if during this time the County Council would be helping with the transition of the two schools and how much disruption would likely to be caused to pupils during this time. JW explained that the schools were already in a good position as they work together for a lot of things already including the current Head Teachers carrying out assemblies in each other's schools. It was for these reasons that JW believes the children would be unlikely to notice much change during this transition period onwards should the proposal go ahead.

A member of the public raised the concern that staffing issues could still be a problem and asked if there is a support network to assist with this. GP explained that the County Council will support the school with our Finance, School and Governor Support Service (SGSS), Human Resources (HR) and Educational Development Service (EDS) teams. JW explained that the two schools already share an Educational Development Partner (EDP) which is very helpful. JF added that the Diocese would also support the schools.

A member of the public asked what the staff thought about the proposal. JW explained that as with any change people were worried of the unknown and concerned slightly regarding their positions. JW went on to explain that it was up to the staff to see the positives and that the SLT would make sure staff are utilised in the best possible way for their talents. JF explained that a Local Authority he previously worked for had converted all Infant and Junior Schools into Primary Schools and there had been no major problems with any of them. JW added that whilst there would be no major savings made by the proposal the school would save money in areas such as Service Level Agreements and staff training however that is not what this proposal is about.

A member of the public commented there seems to be an acceptance from the staff that the proposal will go ahead and that they are now looking at how they will make it work. GP explained that staff, Governors, The Diocese and the County Council all want it to work so the support will be there to make it happen.

A member of the public commented that they saw keeping the two buildings and not moving children around as a big plus.

As there were no further questions the meeting closed at 8pm.



PUBLIC NOTICE

Proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 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 Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School, Buckinghamshire Road, Belmont, DH1 2QP and to close Belmont Infant School (Community), Buckinghamshire Road, Belmont, DH1 2QP.

It is proposed to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 to create a Church of England (C of E) Primary School and to close Belmont Infant School from 31 December 2014.

The current capacity of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School is 208 and the current capacity of Belmont Infant School is 162. The proposed capacity of the C of E Primary School will be 370. The published admission number for Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School for September 2014 is 52 and for Belmont Infant School is 44. The proposed admission number for the proposed C of E Primary School will be 52. 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.

Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School and Belmont Infant School are located on the same site and already work closely together for the benefit of all pupils. Examples of this include joint assemblies, and Year 6 'Reading Buddies' working with Year 2 children each lunchtime. Bringing the two schools together as a C of E Primary School is a natural progression and would also allow for a greater 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 repair the roof of the current C of E Junior School. Consideration will also be given to providing a linked walkway.

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 Mr Adam Williams, School Places and Admissions Team, Children and Adults Services, Business Reply Service, Licence No. DU63 (Freepost), Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham, DH1 5BR. Objections and comments can also be sent via the County Council's website at www.durham.gov.uk or e-mailed to schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk.

Signed:

Rachel Shimmin
Corporate Director
Children and Adults Services

Publication Date: 9 January 2014

Durham County Council – Altogether Better equality impact assessment form

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

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

Section One: Description and Initial Screening

Section overview: this section provides an audit trail.	
Service/team or section: School Places and Admissions, Education, CAS	
Lead Officer: Sheila Palmerley	Start date: 4 November 2013
<p>Subject of the Impact Assessment: (please also include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate)</p> <p>Proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7 – 11 to 4 -11 from 1 January 2015 to create a primary school and to close Belmont Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014. The schools are currently separate establishments on a site that also includes Belmont Community School which is a secondary school . The intention is that a Church of England (C of E) Primary School will run across the current sites encompassing the infant and junior age ranges. The greatest change is that there will be a C of E (Controlled) Primary School in Belmont rather than a separate Infant School and C of E (Controlled) Junior School. All staff will be ringfenced for a post in the Primary School.</p> <p>Both schools are relatively small when compared to other schools across the county which could mean it is possible that they may become unviable in the long term when the new national funding arrangements come into effect. This will not have an impact however on equality/diversity/cohesion.</p>	
<p>Who are the main stakeholders: General public / Employees / Elected Members / Partners/ Specific audiences/Other (please specify) –</p> <p>General Public, Governors, Staff, Parents, Pupils, Elected Members, MPs, Neighbouring Schools, Trade Unions, Diocese, DfE, Community Groups, Parish Councils, Residents’ Associations, AAP Board, Neighbouring Authorities, CAS/DCC Staff</p>	

Is a copy of the subject attached? Yes / No

Consultation document and report on the outcomes of the consultation are attached.

Initial screening

Prompts to help you:

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

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

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

Gender	N	Disability	N	Age	N	Race/ethnicity	N	Religion or belief	N	Sexual orientation	N
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How will this support our commitment to promote equality and meet our legal responsibilities?

Reminder of our legal duties:

- Eliminating unlawful discrimination & harassment
- Promoting equality of opportunity
- Promoting good relations between people from different groups
- Promoting positive attitudes towards disabled people and taking account of someone’s disability, even where that involves treating them more favourably than other people
- Involving people, particularly disabled people, in public life and decision making

The proposal to change the age range of Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7 -11 years of age to 4 -11 years of age from 1 January 2015 will create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School which will provide equal access for all regardless of gender, disability, age, race/ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation.

What evidence do you have to support your findings?

The main groups affected by this proposal are pupils attending Belmont Infant and Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior Schools. If the proposal is implemented we will be helping to secure the future of primary education across the two schools.

Decision: Proceed to full impact assessment – Yes/No

Date: 13 December 2013 (the end of the consultation.)

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

Section Two: Identifying Impacts and Evidence - Equality and Diversity

Section overview: this section identifies whether there are any impacts on equality/diversity/cohesion, what evidence is available to support the conclusion and what further action is needed.			
	Identify the impact : does this increase differences or does it aim to reduce gaps for particular groups?	Explain your conclusion, including relevant evidence and consultation you have considered.	What further action is required? (Include in Sect. 3 action plan)
Gender	No	The current schools and the proposed C of E Primary School provide education for boys and girls.	
Age	No	The current schools provide education for children aged between 4 and 11 years and the proposed Cof E Primary School will continue to provide education across the same age range.	
Disability	No	The proposed C of E Primary School would operate across the current buildings of Belmont Infant and Junior School which are accessible. The Junior School also provides a location for pupils with sight impairment and this provision would continue if the proposed Primary School comes into effect.	
Race/Ethnicity	No	Race/Ethnicity is not a criterion for admission to the current Infant and Junior Schools and would not be a criterion for entry to the proposed C of E Primary School.	
Religion or belief	No	The proposed C of E Primary would be run in exactly the same way as the current C of E Junior School.	
Sexual orientation	No		

How will this promote positive relationships between different communities?

If this proposal is implemented it is unlikely to have a significant impact on the relationships between different communities.

Section Three: Review and Conclusion

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

The greatest change is that there will be a C of E Primary School in Belmont rather than separate Infant and Junior Schools. The consultation was undertaken between 4 November 2013 and 13 December 2013. Consultation documents were distributed widely and meetings were held with Governors and Staff of Belmont Infant and Belmont C of E (Controlled) Junior Schools, parents, and members of the local community at an Information Sharing Evening. Stakeholders were invited to respond in a variety of ways: written responses using the response form attached to the consultation document, letter, email or completing the response form online via the County Council's website.

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

1 responded using the online response form (DCC website)

10 people attended the Information Sharing Evening

30 members of staff attended the joint staff meeting

20 Governors attended the joint Governing Body meeting

4 parents attended the meetings specifically held for parents.

- Out of 27 responses received during the consultation period, 14 supported the proposal. Stakeholders believe that a primary school will enable a consistent approach to teaching and learning across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 and allow for an easier transition for pupils which will benefit them and lead to further improvement in attainment.
- Some stakeholders expressed the view that the current Belmont Infant and C of E Junior School are the only split site schools in Belmont and should remain as they are. However this could have a potential negative impact if the 2 schools remained as they are because of the way changes to the way schools are funded penalises small schools

Action to be taken	Officer responsible	Target Date	In which plan will this action appear
Timeline of actions attached			
When will this assessment be reviewed?	Date: In April 2014 when the decision is taken whether to implement the proposal or not.		
Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?	No		
Lead officer - sign off: Sheila Palmerley			Date:24.2.24
Service equality representative - sign off: 			Date:24.2.14

Please email your completed Impact Assessment to the Equality Team - equalities@durham.gov.uk.