

**Cabinet**

**16 July 2014**



**Proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014**

**Key Decision: CAS/01/14**

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### **Report of Corporate Management Team**

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

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#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek Cabinet approval to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate 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. Officers believe that, combining separate Infant and Junior Schools is in the best interests of children and their families. 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 in a way that separate Infant and Junior Schools do not, simply because of the separate organisational and educational ethos. There are also many advantages for parents/carers, 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. Further benefits of 'all through' Primary Schools are included in the consultation document in Appendix 2.

4. Discussions with the schools and Church of England Diocese about amalgamating South Pelaw Infant School and Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School began in February 2014.
5. Following these initial discussions, using delegated powers, the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services approved the commencement of consultation on the proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014. The delegated decision report is included in Appendix 2.
6. Consultation documents (included in Appendix 2) were distributed widely across the local area on 10 March 2014. A series of meetings were held between 12 to 17 March 2014 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. Consultation was undertaken between 10 March and 4 April 2014.
7. A full summary of the consultation responses is contained within the delegated decision report attached as Appendix 2.
8. When considering the responses to the consultation the Council has referred to the Department for Education (DfE) guidance "School Organisation - Maintained Schools - Guidance for Proposers and Decision-Makers" which states that "the decision-maker (in this case the Local Authority) should consider the views of those affected by a proposal or who have an interest in it, including cross-LA border interests. The decision-maker should not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view. Instead, they should give the greatest weight to responses from those stakeholders likely to be most affected by a proposal - especially parents of children at the affected school(s)".
9. The responses to the consultation were received and considered by officers in the County Council. The large majority (49) were in support of the proposal and only 5 were not in support of it. The responses received provided no evidence that not implementing the proposal would address the concerns over the future sustainability of small schools. Furthermore the responses did not suggest that leaving the two schools as separate schools would have the benefits that 'all through' primary schools have including continuity and progress of learning between 4 and 11, a single application of assessment criteria and pupil teaching and access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full primary range. A summary of the responses is provided in paragraphs 15-19.

### **Decision to issue a Statutory Notice**

10. After full consideration of all the responses to the consultation, the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services used delegated powers to agree to publish proposals to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014. A statutory notice was therefore published on 1 May 2014 (attached as Appendix 3).

11. Once the proposal is published there follows a statutory 4 week representation period during which comments on the proposal can be made. These must be sent to the Local Authority. Any person can submit representations, which can be objections as well as expressions of support for the proposal. The representation period is the final opportunity for people and organisations to express their views about the proposal and ensure that they will be taken into account by the Decision Maker (in this 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 24 July 2014.

### **Responses to the Proposal Published on 1 May 2014 for 4 weeks (The Statutory Notice Period)**

12. No objections or comments were received by the end of the 4 week statutory notice period.

### **DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

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

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

13. Any proposal that is 'related' to another proposal must be considered together. A proposal should be regarded as 'related' if its implementation (or non implementation) would prevent or undermine the effective implementation of another proposal. Where proposals are 'related' the decisions should be compatible.
14. The proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014 are "related" therefore they must be considered together.

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

15. Cabinet needs to be satisfied that the appropriate consultation and representation period have been carried out and that the proposer (in this case the Local Authority) has had regard to the responses received. If the Local Authority has failed to meet the statutory requirements, this proposal maybe deemed invalid and therefore should be rejected.
16. Cabinet must consider all the views submitted, including all objections and comments on the proposal. Details of the consultation are included in paragraph 6. The Statutory Notice published on 1 May 2014 and which expired on 28 May 2014 (the representation period) is attached as Appendix 3. Officers prepared the notice as set out in the regulations and complied with statutory requirements.

17. The report attached as Appendix 2 provides full details of the responses received during the consultation period from 10 March - 4 April 2014. In summary:

- 52 written responses were sent to the County Council from:
  - 24 parents
  - 9 Governors
  - 19 members of staff
- Of the 52, 48 are in support of the proposal and 4 are not in support of the proposal.
- 2 Governors responded using the online response form (DCC website), 1 in support of the proposal, and 1 not in support of the proposal.

### **Summary of Responses from those in Support of the Proposal**

18. The following information provides a summary of the issues raised by those in support of the proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014:

- Stakeholders believe that the proposal will bring about greater continuity which will benefit pupils and staff who will gain a better understanding of the whole primary age range;
- Stakeholders believe that the proposal will be positive for children and their education;
- Stakeholders believe that the proposal will lead to opportunities for development that benefit outcomes for children;
- Stakeholders believe that the proposal makes sense educationally and can be achieved with little disruption.

### **Summary of Responses from those not in Support of the Proposal**

19. 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:

- Views were expressed that the proposal is a cost saving exercise and that the two schools can work in partnership as separate schools;
- Concern was expressed that the proposal is a take over of South Pelaw Infant School by Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School.

20. If satisfied that the procedural obligations have been discharged, Cabinet must then consider whether it wishes to agree the proposal having regard to the following:

(i) **Education Standards and Diversity of Provision**

21. Officers believe that educationally the proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate 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;

22. The most recent Ofsted Reports judged both schools as "good". In recent years, the pattern of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 has been above average. Given pupils' starting points when they enter Reception their outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 suggest that they achieve well. 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.

23. 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:

- Bullion Lane Primary School
- Cestria Primary School
- Newker Primary School
- St Cuthbert's RCVA Primary School (Chester-le-Street)
- Pelton Community Primary School
- Red Rose Primary School
- St Benet's RCVA Primary School (Ouston)
- Roseberry Primary School
- Ouston Primary School

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

24. The proposed C of E (Controlled) Primary School will be on the sites of the current South Pelaw Infant and Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior Schools with a capacity for 418 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 348 therefore no pupils will be displaced by the proposal.

(iii) **Proposed Admission Arrangements**

25. The proposed number of pupils to be admitted to Reception of the proposed C of E (Controlled) Primary School in September 2015 will be 60.

(iv) **National Curriculum**

26. All maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum unless they have secured an exemption for groups of pupils or the school community. The proposed C of E (Controlled) Primary School **will** follow the National Curriculum.

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

27. Cabinet must have regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) of LAs/Governing Bodies, which requires them to have 'due regard' to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination;
- advance equality of opportunity; and
- foster good relations.

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

(vi) **Travel and Accessibility**

29. The proposed C of E (Controlled) Primary School will be on the sites of the current South Pelaw Infant and Chester-le-Street 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.

(vii) **Capital**

30. Capital funding in the region of £20,000 will be required to upgrade the ICT provision and provide appropriate signage. The School Capital Maintenance Grant allocated to the LA from the DfE will provide this funding.

31. **School Premises and Playing Fields**

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

The sites of Chester le Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School and South Pelaw Infant School **do have** suitable outdoor space.

### **Recommendations and Reasons**

30. Officers believe that proceeding with the proposal will preserve and enhance education provision in Chester-le-Street and specifically South Pelaw. Amalgamating South Pelaw Infant and Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior Schools into one C of E (Controlled) Primary School will provide a more viable educational establishment.
31. 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.
32. Cabinet is recommended to agree:
  - (i) that the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School should close as a separate school from 31 December 2014.

### **Background Papers**

Appendix 2 - Delegated Decision Reports

Appendix 3 - Statutory Notice

Appendix 4 - Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance**

Capital funding in the region of £20,000 from the School Capital Maintenance Grant will be utilised to upgrade the ICT provision and provide appropriate signage. 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 Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School and South Pelaw 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**

N/A



## **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**

Works to upgrade the ICT in both buildings and to provide appropriate signage 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**

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

**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 Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a CE (Controlled) Primary School from 1 January 2015 and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014.

**DECISION**

If Key Decision insert No.

CAS/01/14 Proposed date for Cabinet decision - July 2014

**ELECTORAL DIVISION/S**

Chester-le-Street North

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

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder was consulted on 4 April 2014. The Local Member was consulted on 4 April 2014.

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

N/A

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

N/A

**ACCESS TO THE REPORT**

Is the report open to the public (Part A)

Yes

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

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Attached - Delegated Decision Report - Outcomes of Consultation on a Proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014.

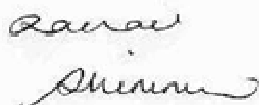
**CONTACT PERSON**

Graeme Plews

**CONTACT No.**

03000 265777

**AUTHORISED SIGNATORY**



14 April 2014

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

**NOTES**

1. The reference No. will be assigned by Democratic Services 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.

14 April 2014



**Outcome of Consultation on a Proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate School from 31 December 2014**

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**Report of Children and Adults Services**

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

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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To provide details on the outcome of consultation which was undertaken between 10 March 2014 and 4 April 2014, proposing a change to the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate 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 3 March 2014 (attached as Appendix 2) the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services approved consultation could begin on a proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate 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 12 - 17 March 2014 with the Governing Bodies and staff of both schools, and members of the local community and parents 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 12 - 17 March 2014, officers explained the reasons for the proposal and invited those present to express views and ask questions. The key issues discussed at the meetings are summarised as follows:
  - Questions were asked as to why the proposal was to be implemented as early as 1 January 2015 and would it not be better to implement it from the start of an academic year. Officers explained that experience of previous amalgamations demonstrated that early implementation was generally

preferable because it reduced uncertainty for parents, staff and pupils. As the proposal is not likely to have a negative impact on standards of teaching and learning there is no reason to delay the process. If the proposal is agreed there would be very little change for pupils and parents as the C of E Primary School would run across the sites and buildings of the current Infant and Junior Schools.

- Questions were asked about how the Governing Body and staffing structures for the proposed C of E 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 the C of E Primary School is approved.
- Questions were asked about whether the name of the proposed C of E Primary School would change. Officers explained that the name of the school would be decided by the Governing Body in consultation with the Diocese.
- Questions were asked about whether the timings to the school day would change. The Head Teacher of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School stated that there would be no change to the opening times, but the closing times would be brought closer together so that they were not 30 minutes apart as at present.

## **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 52 responded in writing using the response form, letter and email.  
2 responded using the online response form (DCC website)  
14 people attended the Information Sharing Evening.  
36 members of staff attended the joint staff meeting.  
14 Governors attended the joint Governing Body meeting.

## **Summary of Responses**

- 7 The following information provides a summary of the responses:
- 6 parents of pupils attending South Pelaw Infant School support the proposal to change the age of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a C of E primary school and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school;
  - 16 parents of pupils attending Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School support the proposal;
  - 9 Governors of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School support the proposal;
  - 1 Governor of South Pelaw Infant School supports the proposal;

- 6 members of staff of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School support the proposal;
- 1 member of staff of South Pelaw Infant School supports the proposal;
- 1 parent of a pupil attending South Pelaw Infant School does not support the proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a primary school and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school;
- 1 parent of a pupil attending Chester le Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School does not support the proposal;
- 2 members of staff of South Pelaw Infant School do not support the proposal;
- 1 Governor of South Pelaw Infant School does not support the proposal.

Themes that emerged from the responses were:

- Stakeholders believe that the proposal will bring about greater continuity which will benefit pupils and staff who will gain a better understanding of the whole primary age range;
- Stakeholders believe that implementation of the proposal will be positive for children and their education;
- Two parents in support of the proposal hoped that the proposal will lead to the closing times of the schools being brought closer together;
- Stakeholders believe that the proposal will lead to opportunities for development that benefit outcomes for children;
- One Governor felt that the proposal will make the transition smoother from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2;
- One member of staff in support of the proposal expressed concern over the potential for redundancy;
- One parent in support of the proposal felt that a physical link between the two school buildings should be created;
- One Governor felt that the proposal makes perfect sense educationally and can be achieved with little disruption;
- One Governor and one parent were of the view that the proposal was a cost saving exercise and believed that the two schools can work in partnership as separate schools;
- One member of staff was of the view that the proposal will lead to a huge problem with parking before and after school and that there could also be

- communication problems due to the proposed primary school operating across two buildings;
- One member of staff was of the view that the decision to amalgamate the two schools has already been made and that it will destroy the happy and caring environment of a small school. Concern was also expressed that the proposal is a take over of South Pelaw Infant School by Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School.

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

8. Forty nine respondents to the consultation support the proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school. Five respondents do not support the proposal. In particular they see the proposal as being beneficial to pupils and parents and that it will lead to greater continuity and a smoother transition between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
9. One of the respondents in favour of the proposal is of the view that a physical link between the two buildings is necessary. This is something that could be considered after the proposed C of E Primary School has become established if it is considered a priority and capital funding is available.
10. Two of the respondents were of the view that the proposal is a take over of the Infant School by the existing Junior School. Officers believe this is not the case and a staffing structure will be produced to reflect what the Primary School will need to function effectively. All existing staff would be ring-fenced for posts in the structure. Experience of previous amalgamations demonstrate that there are not significant job losses.

### **Recommendation**

11. After full consideration of all responses to the consultation, the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services is recommended to give approval for officers to issue a statutory notice proposing to change the age range of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 from 1 January 2015 and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014.

### **Background Papers**

Attached

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance**

Capital funding from the DfE Capital Maintenance Grant will be utilised to change signage and upgrade IT systems if the Primary School is established. Costs for this will be in the region of £20,000. 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 South Pelaw Infant School and Chester-le-Street 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 has been carried out.

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

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

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

### **Accommodation**

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

### **Crime and Disorder**

N/A



## **Human Rights**

Human Rights will not be affected by this proposal.

## **Consultation**

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

## **Procurement**

Any Capital works 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 Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School and closing South Pelaw Infant School will be applied in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance.

REF No.

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

Rachael Shimmin  
Corporate Director  
Children and Adults Services

**AUTHORITY BY REFERENCE TO  
SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

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

- 1.4 *The Council's role as Local Education Authority and 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 Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a C of E (Controlled) Primary School from 1 January 2015 and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014.

**DECISION**

If Key Decision insert No.

**ELECTORAL DIVISION/S**

Chester-le-Street North

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

The Cabinet Portfolio Holder was consulted on 27 February 2014. The Local Member was consulted on 27 February 2014.

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

N/A

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

N/A

### ACCESS TO THE REPORT

Is the report open to the public (Part A)

Yes

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

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

Attached

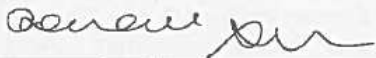
### CONTACT PERSON

Graeme Plews

### CONTACT No.

03000 265777

### AUTHORISED SIGNATORY



5/3/14

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

### NOTES

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

**DELEGATED DECISION**

**CHILDREN AND ADULTS SERVICES**



**3 March 2014**

**Proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014**

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

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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval from the Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services to begin consultation on a proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014.

**Background**

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

**Recommendations and Reasons**

- 4 The County Council believes there are many benefits for parents and children of having all through Primary Schools. Examples of 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.
- 5 Chester-le-Street C of E Junior and South Pelaw Infant Schools already work closely together as they share the same site. The proposed primary school would run across the two existing sites.
- 6 The current combined capacity of the two schools is for 418 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
South Pelaw Infant	142	134	139	146	151
Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior	206	206	198	185	177
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>340</b>	<b>337</b>	<b>331</b>	<b>328</b>

- 7 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 separate Infant and Junior Schools. Officers now wish to begin consultation on the proposal to amalgamate them into a single Primary School.

#### Consultation Timescales

- 8 It is intended that consultation on this proposal will commence on Monday 10 March 2014. 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 March 2014 for officers to provide information and answer queries.
- 9 The consultation period will end on Friday 4 April 2014 and all responses to the consultation will be carefully considered. If it is decided to proceed with the proposal at that stage, a statutory notice will be published in the middle of April for four weeks. Cabinet would then be asked to make a decision on the proposal.

#### Decision

- 10 The Corporate Director, Children and Adults Services agrees that consultation can begin on the proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014.

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**Background Papers**

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None.

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**Contact: Sheila Palmerley**

**Tel: 03000 265731**

**Delegated Decision-Change Age Range of Dalves Lane Junior**

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **Finance**

Any funding required to improve the condition of the buildings will be met from the Council's Schools Repair and Maintenance budget.

### **Staffing**

Staff from both South Pelaw Infant and Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior Schools would be ring fenced for posts in the proposed C of E (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**

The proposed single primary school will be on the existing site of the Infant and Junior Schools.

### **Crime and Disorder**

N/A

### **Human Rights**

Human rights will not be affected by this proposal.

**Consultation**

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

**Procurement**

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

**Disability Issues**

N/A

**Legal Implications**

N/A



Contact: Graeme Plews  
Direct Tel: 03000 265777  
Fax: 0191 386 0487  
email: [graeme.plews@durham.gov.uk](mailto:graeme.plews@durham.gov.uk)  
Our ref: CAS/SPASO/GP/SA



7 March 2014

To All Interested Parties

**Consultation on a Proposal to Change the Age Range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a Separate School from 31 December 2014.**

This paper is to provide you with some information about the County Council's proposal to establish a single primary school in South Pelaw. You may be aware that the Head Teacher of South Pelaw Infant School has informed the County Council of her intention to leave at Easter 2014. Meetings have been held with governors of both South Pelaw Infant and Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School to discuss leadership arrangements. It has been agreed that the Head Teacher from the Junior School will oversee the leadership of both schools from that date. At these meetings the possibility of amalgamating the two schools into a single primary school was also discussed.

The County Council now wishes to consult with you on a proposal to amalgamate South Pelaw Infant School and Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School into a C of E (Controlled) Primary School from 1 January 2015. This would be achieved by changing the age range of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School from 7 - 11 to 4 - 11 from 1 January 2015 to create a Primary School and by closing South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014.

You may have some questions to ask about this proposal. This letter attempts 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 Chester-le-Street 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

**Cont'd...**

**Children and Adults Services**

Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UJ  
Main Telephone 03000 260 000

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.

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

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

**4. What type of school is being proposed?**

The proposal is for a Church of England (C of E) (Controlled) Primary School for children aged 4 to 11 to serve the local community of Pelaw. It would be run in the same way as the existing Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School. The Diocese supports the proposal and there is a very strong working relationship between Durham County Council and the Diocese.

**5. Where will the proposed C of E (Controlled) Primary School be?**

If the proposal is agreed, the C of E (Controlled) Primary School would be located at the existing sites of South Pelaw Infant School and Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School.

**6. Will the school opening and closing times change if the proposed C of E (Controlled) Primary School is approved?**

If the proposal for a single Primary School is agreed, the Head Teacher and Governing Body will review the school opening and closing times to facilitate arrangements for parents/carers picking up children from school.

**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 South Pelaw Infant and Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School. 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 this proposal. To help you do that we are holding an Information Sharing Evening at Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School on **Monday 17 March 2014 at 6.30 pm**. All interested parties are invited to attend. Officers from the County Council will be present to answer any questions you have about the proposal and listen to your views.

You can also respond in one of the following ways by **4 April 2014**.

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

**9. What happens after 4 April 2014 when the consultation period ends?**

All the responses to the consultation will be considered carefully. If the County Council decides to proceed with the proposal, a Statutory Notice would then be published for 4 weeks when objections could be made. We would aim to make a decision in July 2014 on whether or not to change the age range of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School to create a single Primary School and close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school.

Yours sincerely



Graeme Plews  
School Organisation Manager  
Education Service  
Children and Adults Services  
Durham County Council

## RESPONSE FORM

### CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF CHESTER-LE-STREET 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 SOUTH PELAW INFANT SCHOOL AS A SEPARATE 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 Chester-le-Street C of E Junior School from 7-11 to 4-11 to create a C of E Primary School and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school?

Yes  No

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

**Please return this form by 4 April 2014 to:**

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

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

**Name:** .....

**Address:** .....  
.....

**Signed:** ..... **Date:** .....

# EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING WE DO

## Children and Adults Services

### Equality and Diversity Monitoring Form for Consultation

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

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

1. Are you

Male  Female

2. How old are you?

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

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

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

Yes  No

4. What is your religion or belief?

Christian  Hindu  Jewish  Muslim  Sikh  Buddhist

Other (please specify)

5. How do you describe your sexuality?

Heterosexual/Straight  Gay Woman/Lesbian  Gay Man  Bisexual

Other (please specify)

6. To which of these groups do you belong?

White  Asian or Asian British  Black or Black British

Travelling Community  Mixed  Arab or Middle Eastern

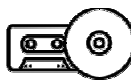
Other (please specify)

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

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



Braille



Audio



Large  
Print



**PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF CHESTER-LE-STREET CE JUNIOR  
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT DISTRIBUTION LIST  
MARCH 2014**

School	Govs	Staff	Pupils	Total	How Delivered	Date Del/Posted
<b>Chester-le-Street CE Junior</b>	17*	**	210	210	AW <sup>1</sup>	<b>10/3/14</b>
<b>South Pelaw Infant</b>	14*	**	150	150	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Beamish Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	<b>10/3/14 (left in school reception area)</b>
Bullion Lane Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Cestria Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Newker Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Ouston Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Pelton Community Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Red Rose Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Roseberry Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
St. Benet's RCVA Primary, Ouston	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
St. Cuthbert's RCVA Primary, C-L-S	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
West Pelton Primary	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Beamish Nursery	N/A	5	5	5	AW <sup>1</sup>	<b>10/3/14 (left in nursery reception area)</b>
Bullion Lane Nursery	N/A	5	5	5	AW <sup>1</sup>	
St. Benet's Nursery	N/A	5	5	5	AW <sup>1</sup>	
Roseberry Nursery	N/A	5	5	5	AW <sup>1</sup>	
The Hermitage School	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	<b>10/3/14 (left in school reception area)</b>
Park View Community School	N/A	10	10	10	AW <sup>1</sup>	

\*Governors consultation letter posted (5/3/14)

\*\* Staff consultation letter emailed to HT of Junior School to copy for all staff of both schools (6/3/14 - GP)

<sup>1</sup> AW – delivered by hand

**TOTAL number of hard copies of consultation documents distributed = 565  
and also the consultation document was placed on the DCC website**

<b>Elected DCC Members</b>	
Simon Henig, Ossie Johnson, Barbara Armstrong, Tracie Smith	<b>Emailed 10/3/14</b>
<b>MPs</b>	
Kevan Jones MP <a href="mailto:kevanjonesmp@parliament.uk">kevanjonesmp@parliament.uk</a>	<b>Emailed 10/3/14</b>
<b>INTERNAL – Email (10/3/14)</b>	
CAS SLT, Julian Wilson, Barry Piercy, Liam Cairns, Gerard Darby, John Wilkinson, Joanne Barker, School Places & Admissions Team, Julie Arnett, Alison Aitchison, Joanne Walt, Paul Rockett, Lynn Elliott, Jane-le-Sage, Margaret Hanratty, Linda Bailey, Chris Young, David Shirer, Adrian White, Phil Hodgson, Sheila Palmerley	
<b>RC and CE Diocese and DfE</b>	
RC Diocese Director <a href="mailto:education@diocesehn.org.uk">education@diocesehn.org.uk</a>	<b>Emailed 10/3/14</b>
CE Diocese Director <a href="mailto:Jeremy.fitt@drmnewcanglican.org">Jeremy.fitt@drmnewcanglican.org</a>	
DfE <a href="mailto:school.organisationproposals@education.gsi.gov.uk">school.organisationproposals@education.gsi.gov.uk</a>	
<b>Trade Unions</b>	
<a href="mailto:c.d.thompson@hotmail.co.uk">c.d.thompson@hotmail.co.uk</a> <a href="mailto:john.kesterton@ascl.org.uk">john.kesterton@ascl.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:ksmith@atl.org.uk">ksmith@atl.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:terry.scarr@gmb.org.uk">terry.scarr@gmb.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:dan.lister0@gmail.com">dan.lister0@gmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:northern@nut.org.uk">northern@nut.org.uk</a> <a href="mailto:trevorblacklock@hotmail.com">trevorblacklock@hotmail.com</a> <a href="mailto:h.pink@unison.co.uk">h.pink@unison.co.uk</a>	<b>Emailed 10/3/14</b>
<b>Children's Centres (5 each)</b>	
<b>Bright Star Nursery</b> , Gainford House, Picktree Lane, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3SR	<b>AW 10/3/14</b>
<b>Bullion Lane Children's Centre</b> , Gray Avenue, Chester-le-Street, DH2 2EL	
<b>Busy Bodies Childcare</b> , Ouston Infant School, Cromarty, Ouston, Chester-le-Street, DH2 1JU	
<b>Buttercup Nursery</b> , Pelton Community Primary, Ouston Lane, Pelton, Chester-le-Street, DH2 1EZ	
<b>Castle View Private Day Nursery</b> , Blind Lane, Chester-le-Street, DH3 4AF	
<b>Eden Garden Nursery</b> , St. Benet's Way, Ouston, Chester-le-Street, DH2 1QX	
<b>Little Ducklings Nursery</b> , West Pelton Primary, West Pelton, Stanley, DH9 6SQ	
<b>Mains Farm House Nursery</b> , West Lane, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3HL	
<b>Selby Cottage Childcare Centre</b> , The Close East, Chester-le-Street, DH2 2EY	
<b>Libraries (10 each)</b>	
Chester-le-Street Library, Station Road, Chester-le-Street, DH3 3BP	<b>AW 10/3/14</b>
<b>Parish Councils (AM passing on to Parish Councils and AAP in Ouston/Chester-le-Street area)</b>	
Andrew Megginson <a href="mailto:Andrew.megginson@durham.gov.uk">Andrew.megginson@durham.gov.uk</a>	<b>E-Mail 10/3/14</b>

**Notes of the Joint Governing Body Meeting of South Pelaw Infant School  
and Chester le Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School  
held at Chester le Street C of E Junior School**

**on Wednesday 12 March 2014 at 3.45 pm**

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Present:        Sheila Palmerley, Strategic Manager School Places and Admissions  
                  Graeme Plews, School Organisation Manager  
                  14 Governors

Sheila Palmerley (SP) opened the meeting by introducing herself and Graeme Plews (GP) and explained the role of the School Places Team which is to plan the pattern and provision of school places across County Durham for the present and the future. Part of the future planning responsibility includes looking at the impact of changes to the way schools are funded as there could be an impact on small schools.

SP then referred to the discussions with Governors before the February 2014 half-term about the pending retirement of the Head Teacher of South Pelaw Infant School and the possibility of amalgamating the schools. The County Council wishes to bring the Infant and Junior Schools together as a single Primary School as educationally there are significant benefits.

At this point one Governor expressed the view that some Governors felt that only the short-term leadership arrangements for the Head of South Pelaw Infant School had been agreed, not a consultation on a proposed reorganisation. SP explained that it is the Local Authority that proposes school reorganisation proposals hence the Governing Body is not the decision making body nor is the Governing Body the body that agrees whether or not to commence a consultation. It would however be better if the Local Authority and Governors could effectively work together to shape the future of primary education for the area. When discussions commence about possible school reorganisation proposals, experience to date has shown that people would prefer the process to be carried out as soon as possible so that uncertainty is kept to a minimum. SP stressed that it is only a consultation on a proposal at this stage, no decision has been made.

A Governor asked if the Local Authority had a timetable for the proposal. SP explained that the consultation runs from 10 March - 4 April 2014. This period includes the meetings scheduled with Governors and staff and the Information Sharing Meeting to be held on 17 March 2014. SP stated that the consultation meetings had been arranged by the Local Authority following consultation with the Head Teachers. All responses received will be carefully analysed and a report would then be presented to the Corporate Director of Children and Adults Services either requesting permission to move to the next stage in the process which is to issue a Statutory Public Notice, or recommending that the schools should remain as separate schools and that the proposal should proceed no further.

If a decision is made to issue a Statutory Notice, this would be published in late April 2014 (after the Easter holidays) for a period of four weeks. All responses to the Statutory Notice would be analysed and a report presented to Durham County Council's Cabinet to make the final decision in July 2014. If the proposed reorganisation is agreed by Cabinet a staffing structure for the C of E Primary School will then be developed.

The Cabinet is made up of the Leader of the Council and nine other councillors, each with their own portfolio such as Children and Young People, Economic Regeneration, Neighbourhoods and Local Partnerships etc.

SP then referred to some of the key points in the consultation document i.e. the benefits of primary education, the type of school being proposed and where it would be located.

The meeting was then opened up to questions:-

**Q** Does the name of the proposed school have to be Chester le Street C of E Primary School?

**A** No, the name of the school would be decided by the Governing Body and Diocese.

**Q** Why does the amalgamation not come into effect from 1 September 2015 as was previously indicated?

**A** 1 September 2015 was the earliest date the amalgamation could take place to coincide with the beginning of an academic year as it could not be achieved by 1 September 2014. However 1 January 2015 is an achievable timescale for the amalgamation to be implemented. Experience to date of in-year school reorganisations has not demonstrated that there has been a negative impact on teaching and learning.

**Q** Will there still be single age classes as there are now?

**A** That is dependent on future school budgets. The proposed staffing structure would be developed in line with the priorities for the school and affordability.

**Q** Will there be someone with Early Years experience in the senior management structure?

**A** People require the relevant skills and experience to effectively carry out the duties of the post in any restructure. The County Council's HR Team would work with the schools to determine a model for the staffing structure. There would be senior management presence on both sites. The Head Teacher of Chester le Street C of E Junior School stated that she was of the opinion that staff from both schools view the proposal positively and see it as an opportunity to enhance education delivery.

**Q** How will the Governing Body of the proposed C of E Primary School be set up?

**A** Governors will be involved in establishing the Governing Body for the proposed C of E Primary School. Governors from both schools can be members of various committees and could form a working group to develop the staffing structure. The Head Teacher stated that it was unlikely there would be much change from the current staffing structure as they are effective for both schools therefore there is not a need for much change.

**Q** Have parents who have applied for a place in Reception for September 2014 been informed of the proposed reorganisation?

**A** Copies of the consultation document were hand delivered to Nursery Schools and Children's Centres. We will look to see how we can inform parents who have applied for a place at South Pelaw Infant School for September 2014.

The meeting ended at 4.45 pm

P.S. Letters have been sent to all parents/carers who stated South Pelaw Infant School as their first preference for September 2014. The letter tells them of the proposal, reassures them that it does not affect their preference and explains where the consultation document can be found on the DCC website.

**Notes of the Joint Staff Meeting of South Pelaw Infant School  
and Chester le Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School held at  
Chester le Street C of E Junior School**

**on Thursday 13 March 2014 at 3.45 pm**

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Present: Sheila Palmerley, Strategic Manager, School Places and Admissions  
Graeme Plews, School Organisation Manager  
36 members of staff

Sheila Palmerley (SP) opened the meeting by introducing herself and Graeme Plews (GP) and explained the role of the School Places Team which is to plan the pattern and provision of school places across County Durham for the present and the future. Part of the future planning responsibility includes looking at the impact of changes to the way schools are funded as there could be an impact on small schools. The Local Authority believes that Primary Schools are more beneficial educationally than separate Infant and Junior Schools.

SP explained that consultation on the proposal commenced on 10 March 2014 and ends on 4 April 2014. A number of responses had already been received, the majority of which supported the proposal. Part of the consultation includes meetings with Governors, staff and the wider community. All responses to the consultation would be analysed and a report would then be presented to the Corporate Director of Children and Adults Services either requesting permission to move to the next stage in the process which is to issue a Statutory Public Notice, or recommending that the schools should remain as separate schools and that the proposal should proceed no further. If a decision is made to issue a Statutory Notice, this would be published in late April 2014 for a period of four weeks. All responses to the Statutory Notice would be analysed and a report presented to Durham County Council's Cabinet to make the final decision in July 2014. If the proposed reorganisation is agreed, that allows for July - December 2014 for planning for the C of E Primary School.

SP stated that concerns have been raised that the timescales are short and would it not be better to wait until September 2015 for the proposal to be implemented. It is better to propose an earlier implementation date as long as it can be achieved as that reduces uncertainty for pupils, parents, staff and Governors. Pupils and parents should not see any difference during the 2014/2015 school year if the amalgamation is implemented from 1 January 2015 as the C of E Primary School would run across the existing sites and buildings.

SP then opened the meeting to questions:-

**Q** Will all jobs be safe?

**A** If the decision is made in July 2014 to agree the amalgamation, the Governors would then produce a staffing structure for the Primary School to reflect what it needs. All existing staff would be ring-fenced for posts in the structure. Experience of previous amalgamations demonstrates that there are not significant job losses. There will be the same number of pupils to teach, some staff may retire etc. Producing a staffing structure would be a separate process to the amalgamation and the County Council's HR Team would support the school through that process.

**Q** How does the school uniform get chosen?

**A** That is for the Governors and leadership of the school to discuss with the Diocese.

There were no further questions and the meeting ended at 4.10 pm.

**Notes of the Information Sharing Evening held on  
Monday 17 March 2014 at 6.30 pm to discuss the Proposal to change the  
age range of Chester le Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31  
December 2014**

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Present: Sheila Palmerley, Strategic Manager School Places and Admissions  
Graeme Plews, School Organisation Manager  
14 Members of the Public (including the Head Teacher of Chester le Street C  
of E (Controlled) Junior School

Sheila Palmerley (SP) opened the meeting by introducing herself and Graeme Plews (GP) and then explained the role of the School Places Team which is to plan the pattern and provision of school places across County Durham for the present and for the future. Part of the future planning responsibility includes looking at the impact of changes to the way schools are funded which could impact on small schools. Consequently because of this and because primary schools have educational benefits for pupils, parents and staff that separate Infant and Junior Schools do not, the Local Authority is proactively taking opportunities to bring separate Infant and Junior Schools together as one Primary School.

SP then explained the timescales for the proposed re-organisation. Initial consultation commenced on 10 March 2014 and ends on 4 April 2014. Part of that consultation includes meetings with Governors, staff and the wider community. We have already received a number of responses, the majority of which are in support of the proposal. Information received will be included in a report to the Corporate Director of Children and Adults Services at the end of the consultation period asking for approval to publish a Statutory Notice if appropriate, after considering the consultation responses. This would be valid for four weeks and would be published after the Easter holidays. This gives people the final opportunity to respond. At the end of the Notice period, a report is written to the County Council's Cabinet as it is Cabinet that is the decision maker. The proposal would be decided in July 2014.

This allows the period July 2014 - December 2014 for planning to take place for the C of E Primary School to open on 1 January 2015. It is better to prepare an earlier implementation date than the start of the 2015/16 school year in this case as it reduces uncertainty for pupils, parents, staff and Governors. There should be very little change for pupils and parents as the Primary School would run across the existing sites and buildings. If the proposal however is not agreed, the two schools will continue to run as separate schools as they do now.

SP stressed that the Local Authority did not have funding for a new building nor would a Nursery Unit be provided as part of the proposal. However we would work with the school to ensure the buildings were maintained.

The meeting was then opened up to questions:-

- Q** Would a parent who has a child starting in Year 2 in September 2014 have to apply for a place in Year 3 for September 2015 if the proposal is agreed?
- A** No, the child would automatically be part of the C of E Primary School if the proposal is agreed. The only applications for a place in a Primary School are for Reception.

- Q** Will the Head Teacher of Chester le Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School be Head Teacher of the C of E Primary School?
- A** Yes, because the proposal is to change the age range of Chester le Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school.
- Q** Will the name of the proposed C of E Primary School change if the timescales are reducing?
- A** The Governors can/may wish to change the school name in consultation with the Diocese. The reduced timescales do not affect this.
- Q** Will the school uniform change in January 2015?
- A** (From HT) The school uniform would not change in January 2015. There would be a transition and the current uniforms will be worn until the time came for them to be replaced naturally. The uniforms are very similar currently so there is no need to change them immediately.
- Q** Is there funding available to physically connect the two schools?
- A** The Local Authority has looked at providing linked corridors for some previous amalgamations, but it is not always the most effective use of funding. It is better to let the Primary School become established to enable priorities to be identified for how to most effectively use the funding the Local Authority has available. ICT and signage will be provided at the outset and we will work with the Head Teacher to identify what is required in the future. If a linked corridor was seen as being necessary, that could be looked at in future subject to funding being available.
- Q** One advantage of separate schools is that small children are able to mix together and are not intimidated by older, larger pupils. Will playtimes and lunchtime periods change in the C of E Primary School?
- A** Break times will be looked at but there is no intention for the younger children to mix with the children in Year 6 for example.
- Q** Will the C of E Primary School get more resources to improve the outdoor and grounds areas?
- A** Bringing the two schools together will enable the C of E Primary School to have a larger budget to be used across the whole school and there will be economies of scale.
- Q** Will the times of the school day change?
- A** (From HT) They would not be exactly the same, but will be brought closer together so that there is not a 30 minutes difference between the closing times as there is at present. The Junior School has been awarded £5,000 from a Walk to School Initiative to provide a shelter for parents.
- Q** Will Breakfast Club provision change?
- A** (From HT) No, there would be no reason to change that. The Breakfast Club is shared between the two schools now.
- Q** Is there a concern over school numbers?

A The numbers at South Pelaw Infant School are dropping in the short-term but that is not the case at Chester le Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School.

There were no further questions and the meeting ended at 7.10 pm



## PUBLIC NOTICE

**Proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 South Pelaw Infant School as a separate 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 Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School, Hilda Park, Chester-le-Street, DH2 2JT and to close South Pelaw Infant School, Hilda Park, Chester-le-Street, DH2 2JT.

It is proposed to amalgamate South Pelaw Infant School and Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School into a C of E (Controlled) Primary School from 1 January 2015. This will be achieved by changing the age range of Chester-le-Street 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 by closing South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014.

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

The current capacity of Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School is for 238 pupils and the current capacity of South Pelaw Infant School is for 180 pupils. The capacity of the proposed C of E (Controlled) Primary School will be for 418 pupils. The proposed admission number will be 60 which is the same as the current admission numbers for South Pelaw Infant School and Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School.

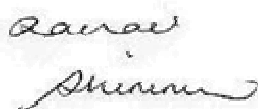
At present, South Pelaw Infant School and Chester-le-Street C of E (Controlled) Junior School are judged 'Good' by Ofsted. They already work closely together for the benefit of all pupils. The Local Authority believes that amalgamating the two schools will not have any negative impact on the standard of education provided to children in those schools.

This Notice is an extract from the full proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from: Mr Graeme Plews, School Places and Admissions Team, Children and Adults Services, Durham County Council, County Hall, Durham DH1 5UJ. It is also available on the County Council's website at [www.durham.gov.uk/pages/service.aspx?serviceid=9523](http://www.durham.gov.uk/pages/service.aspx?serviceid=9523)

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

- via the County Council's website at [www.durham.gov.uk/pages/service.aspx?serviceid=9523](http://www.durham.gov.uk/pages/service.aspx?serviceid=9523); or
- e-mailed to [schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation@durham.gov.uk).

Signed:



Rachel Shimmin  
Corporate Director  
Children and Adults Services

**Publication Date: 1 May 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

<b>Section overview: this section provides an audit trail.</b>	
<b>Service/team or section:</b> School Places and Admissions, Education, CAS	
<b>Lead Officer:</b> Sheila Palmerley	<b>Start date:</b> 10 March 2014
<p><b>Subject of the Impact Assessment: (please also include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate)</b></p> <p>Proposal to change the age range of Chester-le-Street Church of England (C of E) (Controlled) Junior School from 7 – 11 to 4 -11 from 1 January 2015 to create a primary school and to close South Pelaw Infant School as a separate school from 31 December 2014. The schools are currently separate establishments on the same site. The intention is that a CoE Primary School will run across the current sites encompassing the infant and junior age ranges. The main change is that there will be a C of E (Controlled) Primary School in South Pelaw rather than a separate Infant School and C of E (Controlled) Junior School. All staff will be ringfenced for a post in the new Primary School. There will be no travel or travel cost implications due to the proposed primary school being located on the same sites as the current Infant and Cof E Junior Schools.</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>	

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

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

**Initial screening**

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

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

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

Gender	N	Disability	N	Age	N	Race/ethnicity	N	Religion or belief	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 Chester – le - Street 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 South Pelaw Infant and Chester – le – Street C of E (Controlled) Junior Schools. If the proposal is implemented it would help to secure the future of primary education across the two schools. Pupils and staff will not be adversely affected.

The consultation was undertaken between 10 March 2014 and 4 April 2014. Consultation documents were distributed widely and meetings were held with Governors and Staff of South Pelaw Infant and Chester – le - Street 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.

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

2 responded using the online response form (DCC website)

14 people attended the Information Sharing Evening

36 members of staff attended the joint staff meeting

14 Governors attended the joint Governing Body meeting

- Of the 54 responses received during the consultation period, 49 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 were of the view that the proposal is a take over of South Pelaw Infant School by the existing Cof E Junior School. Officers believe this is not the case and a staffing structure will be produced to reflect what the Primary School will need to function effectively. All existing staff would be ring-fenced for posts in the structure and there are no job losses identified at this stage.

**Decision: Proceed to full impact assessment – Yes/No**

**Date: 4 April 2014 (the end of the consultation.)**

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

### **Section two: Identifying impacts and evidence- Equality and Diversity**

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

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


**How will this promote positive relationships between different communities?**

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

**Section three: Review and Conclusion**

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

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

Action to be taken	Officer responsible	Target Date	In which plan will this action appear
When will this assessment be reviewed?	Date: In July 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: <i>Sheila Palmerley</i>			Date:23.5.14
Service equality representative - sign off: 			Date:23.5.14

Please email your completed Impact Assessment to the Equality team - [equalities@durham.gov.uk](mailto:equalities@durham.gov.uk).