

**Eskdale School and Caedmon College, Whitby
Consultation on a Proposal for Amalgamation
February/March 2016**

**Parents and other stakeholders will be invited to attend one of
two consultation meetings which will take place:**

**Monday 14 March 2016 at 6.30pm and Tuesday 15 March 2016 at
6.30pm at Whitby Pavilion, West Cliff, Whitby, YO21 3EN**

**Please note that these meetings will present the same
information on both evenings. In order to allow the maximum
number of people to attend it is suggested that you only attend
one of them.**

North Yorkshire County Council and the governing bodies of Eskdale School and Caedmon College, Whitby are consulting parents, staff, pupils and the local community on a proposal to change how the two schools are organised. The proposal is to merge the leadership and governance of the two schools from **September 2016** with a move from three sites to two by **September 2017**. We would welcome your views on this proposal.

This paper sets out what the amalgamation would mean and how you can make your views known.

What is amalgamation?

It is a means of bringing two or more schools together as a single educational establishment to serve an area. It would involve the technical closure of Eskdale School as a separate entity and the enlargement of Caedmon College, Whitby to create a single school for 11-19 year olds providing education across two of the three current school sites.

The combined school would have a single governing body and leadership structure working in the best interests of all pupils. It would have a single budget and would operate across two of the existing sites and buildings with staff from both schools.

This would allow the two schools to combine the strengths and values of both schools through a single governing body, head teacher, staff and other resources. This would offer greater opportunities to pupils in terms of the breadth of the curriculum, having access to well-qualified specialist teachers and the extra-curricular and social opportunities open to them. It would allow the recent Ofsted judgement about standards at Eskdale School to be addressed rapidly and effectively. It would allow financial resources to be concentrated on delivering high quality frontline teaching.

The enlarged school could continue to work in collaboration with other schools or education providers in the wider area as other partnerships develop.

Why amalgamate?

The longstanding view of the Local Authority is that it would be in the best interests of children in the Whitby area for secondary schools to be working much more closely together and that a single organisational structure would be most likely to secure high quality education across the area.

This proposal would build on moves since 2004 towards closer collaboration when Caedmon School, Eskdale School and Whitby Community College joined together in a confederation. In 2010, a proposal for federation of three

schools went to public consultation, the response to which from the community was favourable. The governing bodies of Caedmon School and Whitby Community College agreed to federate although the governing body of Eskdale School did not feel able to proceed at that time. Caedmon School and Whitby Community College subsequently amalgamated in 2014, to become Caedmon College Whitby.

Eskdale School's Ofsted inspection in November 2015 deemed the school, for the second time, to require improvement and this requires a decisive and rapid response from the local authority. The decision to change the age range of the school is the principal way in which the governors hoped to bring about improvement but it is the local authority's view that this is unlikely to secure the rapid improvement necessary without the support of another educational provider.

The two schools share the same catchment area, serving the same Whitby town and rural communities. Both schools have worked hard to provide the very best quality of education to children across the area but they share a number of similar challenges, notably in respect of their financial positions where falling secondary school pupil numbers in the area have impacted on their budgets.

In the short term Eskdale School's very low pupil numbers threaten the school's financial viability as a separate establishment. Whilst this could have been addressed to some extent through the extension of its age range this would have been likely to be at the expense of the financial stability of Caedmon College and the system as a whole, particularly provision for young people aged 16-18 in Whitby preparing for further education and employment. Amalgamating the schools creates the potential for a financially secure and educationally sound future for secondary education in Whitby.

Educational Standards

Caedmon College, Whitby was last inspected by Ofsted in October 2014 (pre-amalgamation and as Whitby Community College) and was judged to be 'Good'. All elements of the inspection were graded 'Good'. A one day local authority review was carried out in September 2015 and found the school still to be good.

Eskdale School was inspected by Ofsted in November 2015 and was judged to 'Require Improvement' for a second time. Effectiveness of leadership and management, quality of teaching, learning and assessment and outcomes for pupils were all graded as 'Requires Improvement'. Personal development, behaviour and welfare were graded 'Good'.

The local authority does not hold standards data for Eskdale School because the school does not teach pupils who are at the end of a key stage with public examinations or statutory assessment. GCSE results for Caedmon College Whitby in 2015 show the school above both the national benchmark and the North Yorkshire average, an improvement on the 2014 results.

Bringing the two schools together would enable the combined expertise of the staff to be deployed more efficiently for all pupils. It would allow the implementation of a single curriculum and timetable. These measures would make improvement in standards more achievable and more practical to sustain.

The two schools share high aspirations for their students which governors believe are the foundation for a single mission for all Whitby students for the long term.

Pupil Numbers

The two schools have a total net capacity of 2,017. The number of secondary school students in the area is currently 1,387, which is expected to peak at just over 1,600 in the next ten years based on current forecasts. There are currently 1,082 pupils on roll at Caedmon College Whitby, and 310 at Eskdale School. The net

capacities at Caedmon College Whitby and at Eskdale School are 1579 and 438 places respectively.

In the longer term pupil numbers across the Whitby area will gradually start to rise as a result of increased numbers of primary pupils feeding through into secondary school and some new housing. Bringing the two schools together would ensure that all students can be accommodated in a way which makes best use of the resources available.

Management Structure

Each school currently has a single Headteacher in post and its own senior leadership team.

If the proposal is agreed there would be a single Headteacher across the enlarged school. As Caedmon School would remain open and be enlarged the Headteacher from the school would take on that role. It would be necessary to ensure sufficient leadership capacity to implement the new arrangements successfully. Beneath this there would be a single senior management team. There are no plans to restructure other staffing immediately following the amalgamation but there will clearly be opportunities to avoid duplication and to realise efficiencies in the way that resources are organised.

Having a single leadership and management structure would mean a consistent approach to teaching and learning across the enlarged school, drawing on the best ideas and practice from each of the two existing schools. It creates the potential to develop richer curriculum opportunities for all pupils.

Staff Development, Recruitment and Retention

Recruitment of high quality teaching staff is a known challenge along the coast area. The schools draw staff and governors from the same geographical area sometimes competing between themselves to attract the most talented candidates.

The strength of any school is determined by the quality of its leaders and staff and this amalgamation offers the opportunity to support existing staff in developing their skills and to make employment more attractive for new members of staff in the future. It creates greater opportunities for training and development. In the longer term it creates opportunities for developing talent and succession planning.

Governance

Each school currently has its own governing body. A single governing body will provide an effective and accountable mechanism for the enlarged school to combine resources, purchasing, systems and staff. This will release strategic capacity for the head teacher, offering value for money and helping the combined school to remain viable. It will allow resources to be maximised towards frontline teaching. There may be opportunities for Eskdale governors with the appropriate skills and experience to join a reconstituted governing body for the enlarged school.

Finance

Eskdale School is predicting an in-year deficit of £134k in 2016/17. Caedmon College is predicting an in-year deficit of £180k, a combined in-year deficit for 2016/17 of £314k if no action is taken. Actual pupil numbers are known to be lower than assumed in these forecast budgets so the in-year deficit position across both schools is likely to be larger than this in 2016/17 by a further c£70,000.

For 2017/18 there is forecast to be a combined in-year deficit of £423k (£103k at Eskdale and £320k at Caedmon). As Caedmon College has significant balances this does not translate into a year-end deficit but balances would be eroded from £680k this year to £179k at the end

of 2017/18. Eskdale's balances are forecast to be eroded after the current financial year leading to year end deficits from 2016/17 onwards. This is not a sustainable position for either school. Necessary actions to address this would impact on frontline teaching at both schools.

These forecasts take no account of the impact of Eskdale School becoming an 11-16 school from 2016/17. It is likely that its numbers would grow as it retained some or all of its Y9 pupils into Y10 (and Y11 the following year) and that Caedmon's numbers would correspondingly reduce, changing the balance of financial pressures between the two schools. As much as £1m in funding could switch from Caedmon School to Eskdale School as a result of changes to pupil numbers over time. However given that overall school funding is driven by pupil numbers this shows that without further efficiencies the secondary education system in Whitby is not financially secure.

Funding for all schools is uncertain and although the number of secondary pupils in the area is expected to increase in time, both schools are currently vulnerable. Amalgamation would increase the financial resilience of educational provision in the Whitby area.

The Governing Bodies of both schools, having explored various options for strengthening the two schools, feel that this proposal

would help to secure a better future for all pupils by increasing opportunities at a time of challenge.

Sites and Accommodation

Eskdale School is accommodated on a single site on the East Side of Whitby. Caedmon College Whitby is accommodated on two adjacent sites on the West Side of Whitby. The sites are known as the Normanby Site (formerly Whitby Community College) and Scoresby Site (formerly Caedmon School). The two schools are 1.3 miles apart, a five minute journey by road.

Both schools are operating with surplus places of approximately 30%.

In bringing the two schools together consideration has been given to whether there is scope to reduce the number of sites across which education would be delivered in order to reduce surplus places and achieve greater efficiency. The only option which allows for a reduction of sites but without requiring major capital investment is the disposal of the Eskdale site and concentration of education across the two sites which form part of Caedmon College.

The County Council would consider reinvesting any capital receipt from the disposal of the Eskdale site to support the development of the single school on the remaining two

sites, subject to the necessary approvals.

How would the enlarged school be organised?

The two schools would legally become a single educational establishment. Existing pupils at both schools would automatically be placed on roll at the enlarged school. New pupils would apply to the single enlarged school.

The governing body and leadership would look carefully at how best to organise education across the remaining two sites as part of planning the transition to the new arrangements. The local authority would consider with the governing body how any capital receipt from the disposal of the current Eskdale site might be reinvested in school facilities in Whitby for the benefit of young people.

Admissions to the school would be made through the North Yorkshire County Council admissions arrangements. The enlarged school would have a single catchment area which would cover the same area currently covered by the two schools. Transport eligibility will continue to be determined in line with the Council's home to school transport policy.

As school budgets are funded largely by pupil numbers the enlarged school would have a larger combined budget which,

although smaller than the budgets for the two separate schools, would allow the funding to be used more flexibly to sustain a broad and balanced curriculum, and to be used more efficiently by making savings through a single approach. It is estimated that amalgamating the schools across two sites would lead to an initial saving of £61,000 per annum (once transitional funding ended) but there would be significant potential for further efficiencies in staffing, procurement and other costs over time.

A single governing body would be created which would include parent governors, at least one staff governor, the head teacher and co-opted governors as appointed by the governing body. Co-opted governors can include parents of pupils at the school, staff of the school and other members of the community with the experience and skills needed to challenge and develop the school. It is likely that existing governors from both current schools would express an interest in being put forward for these posts.

School staff would continue to be employed by North Yorkshire County Council and would be under the direction of a single Headteacher. Existing staff would be consulted about any changes to their terms and conditions of employment arising from the amalgamation.

The leadership and governing bodies of both schools will work with the local authority to carefully plan the transition to the new arrangements and to communicate these to parents and staff.

Next Steps

The consultation period will run until 1 April 2016. At the end of the consultation period, the responses will be analysed by North Yorkshire County Council.

The County Council's Executive will decide in April whether to publish statutory proposals for the amalgamation and a final decision will be taken in June for implementation in September 2016.

How You Can Find Out More

Meetings will be held for parents of pupils attending either of the schools, and for any member of the community who would like to learn more.

Meetings will be held at Whitby Pavilion, West Cliff, Whitby, YO21 3EN on Monday 14 March 2016 at 6.30pm and Tuesday 15 March 2016 at 6.30pm. Interested individuals can attend whichever of these meetings is most convenient. The information provided at the meetings will be the same. In order to allow as many people to attend as possible it is suggested that you only attend one of these meetings.

Separate meetings will be held for staff.

As is the norm with consultations individual responses or correspondence will not be responded to but a Frequently Asked Questions document will be updated to reflect questions raised.

This consultation document and further information can be found on the North Yorkshire County Council website consultations page.

You can attend one of the meetings. A note will be taken of the issues raised at the meetings and will be considered as part of the consultation response but we would also appreciate written responses.

Please complete the response sheet online at:

www.northyorks.gov.uk/eskdalecaedmonproposal

OR

You can complete the attached response sheet and return it to:

Freepost RTKE-RKAY-CUJS
Eskdale and Caedmon Amalgamation Proposal
North Yorkshire County Council
Children & Young Peoples Service
County Hall
NORTHALLERTON
DL7 8AE

The closing date for responses is **1 April 2016**

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The closing date for this consultation is 1 April 2016

Observations and/or suggestions on the proposal:

You are not required to complete the personal information below. However, it will be helpful if you do so.

Name

Address

Postcode

Date

Your interest in Eskdale School and/or Caedmon College, Whitby -Please tick appropriate box.

Parent/carer of pupil at Eskdale School

Member of staff at Eskdale School

Pupil of Eskdale School (*please state year group below*)

Parent/carer of pupil at Caedmon College, Whitby

Member of staff at Caedmon College, Whitby

Pupil of Caedmon College, Whitby (*please state year group below*)

Other (Please State)

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, responses to the consultation may be accessed by members of the public.