

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE
CORPORATE DIRECTOR MEETING WITH EXECUTIVE MEMBERS

23 November 2021

**PROPOSALS TO AMALGAMATE GROVE ROAD AND WOODFIELD COMMUNITY
PRIMARY SCHOOLS, HARROGATE**

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Member approval to consult publicly on proposals to amalgamate Woodfield and Grove Road Community Primary Schools in Harrogate. This would create a single primary school operating on both school sites through the technical closure of Woodfield Community Primary School as a separate entity, and the enlargement of premises and expansion onto the Woodfield site of Grove Road Community Primary School.

2.0 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Grove Road Community Primary School serves much of High Harrogate. The school is currently operating at capacity. Woodfield Community Primary School serves Woodfield and parts of the Bilton area of Harrogate. The school has been under-subscribed for a number of years.
- 2.2 Grove Road Community Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2018 through a short inspection, which judged the school to continue to be good. This followed a more detailed inspection in 2014.
- 2.3 Woodfield Community Primary School was inspected by Ofsted in January 2020, who found the overall effectiveness to be inadequate and the school became subject to special measures. Any maintained school that is judged inadequate by Ofsted is required to become a sponsored academy. If an academy sponsor cannot be found, a school judged inadequate usually has to close. Woodfield school was issued with a Directive Academy Order in June 2020 but the Regional Schools Commissioner has been unable to secure an Academy Trust to sponsor Woodfield school due to viability concerns.
- 2.4 Since January 2020, there have been considerable changes in staffing at Woodfield School. The current acting executive headteacher and acting head of school took up leadership at the start of the summer term 2020. The latest monitoring visit by Ofsted to Woodfield School in June 2021 found that leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures, and that the local authority's statement of action and the school's action plan were both fit for purpose. It is important to recognise the efforts of all those who have been involved in this improvement journey.
- 2.5 However, the current arrangements can only be temporary and the absence of an academy sponsor means the school faces an uncertain future. Therefore, work began earlier this year to assess how education provision within the Woodfield community could be preserved. The current proposals for amalgamation have been developed by members of the school governing bodies and LA officers. The two governing bodies carefully considered the proposals before autumn half term, and

both agreed to ask the County Council to start a consultation. Both Governing Bodies see this as an exciting opportunity to enhance the facilities of Grove Road School, organising sustainable education across both sites aiming for the best possible provision for all pupils, and importantly ensuring that the Woodfield site continues to be used for education of the wider community.

3.0 SCHOOL PLACE SUFFICIENCY

3.1 As at November 2021 there are 49 pupils of mainstream school age at Woodfield Community Primary School and 292 pupils at Grove Road Community Primary School. Both schools also offer nursery provision for children aged 3 and 4. Current pupil numbers in each year group are set out below.

| Year group 2021-22 | Grove Road School | Woodfield School |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Reception | 40 | 6 |
| Year 1 | 37 | 2 |
| Year 2 | 40 | 11 |
| Year 3 | 41 | 4 |
| Year 4 | 43 | 12 |
| Year 5 | 47 | 3 |
| Year 6 | 44 | 11 |
| Total | 292 | 49 |

Places for children currently attending Woodfield School would be made available through the amalgamation with Grove Road. Parents could also express a preference for any alternative school.

3.2 Children living in both the Grove Road and Woodfield school catchment areas attend a range of primary schools, reflecting the choice of schools available nearby. There were 417 primary-aged pupils living in the Grove Road School catchment area in October 2020, and 31% attended Grove Road School. Children also attended a range of other schools, including St Peter's CE (15%) and St Robert's RC (14%).¹ There were 349 primary-aged pupils living in the Woodfield School catchment area in October 2020 and only 6% attended Woodfield School. Children also attended a range of other schools, including Richard Taylor CE VA (24%), Bilton Grange (22%) and Grove Road (16%).

3.3 Although pupil numbers at Grove Road have fallen slightly over the last few years, the school is operating around capacity. There are over 250 housing permissions in the school catchment area, and other land allocated for housing in the Local Plan (198 houses over a 15 year period). Depending on the pace of building and the extent of new pupils generated, numbers on roll at Grove Road may rise to over 300 over the next few years. The nature of the site and buildings, with limited playground space, a lack of playing field and rooms on several floors, would make expansion on the Grove Road site more difficult to achieve.

3.4 Pupil numbers at Woodfield School have fallen significantly in the last couple of years, and the number on roll is now 49, compared to 80 in January 2020 and 92 in January 2019. The LA forecasts numbers to remain in the 40s for the next few years. There are no significant housing permissions within the school catchment

¹ There is also a shared catchment area for Grove Road and Coppice Valley Schools, in which 17 % of primary-aged pupils living in the catchment area attended Grove Road.

area, although there are several housing developments underway or planned (about 630 houses) outside the school catchment area, about a mile from the school.

- 3.5 As part of the amalgamation proposals, it is proposed to increase the Published Admission Number (PAN) of Grove Road Community Primary School from 40 to 50. The PAN is the number of school places that must be offered in reception each year.
- 3.6 If the proposals went ahead, there would be 350 primary school places available across the two sites of the amalgamated Grove Road School. As there are currently 280 primary school places available at Grove Road School, and 150 at Woodfield School, this would be an overall reduction of 80 places. Given current forecasts, including the likely demand from new housing in the catchment areas, and current patterns of parental preference, there would appear to be sufficient primary places available in the local area, as:
- Overall birth rates are falling in Harrogate district, from 1,425 in 2016/17 to 1,308 in 2018/19.
 - Pupils living in the Grove Road and Woodfield catchment areas attend a wide variety of primary schools, as noted above.
 - There would be scope to increase the PAN at Grove Road School at a later date, if required and subject to consultation through the Admission Arrangements consultation.
- 3.7 Grove Road Community Primary School has indicated that if the proposals went ahead, they would operate as a split site school:
- From September 2022, all Nursery children would be based at the current Woodfield site (Grove Road Nursery); all Year Reception to Year 6 pupils would be based at the current Grove Road site.
 - All families of children currently attending Woodfield school and who choose to join Grove Road Community Primary School can be accommodated at the existing Grove Road site
 - From September 2023, all Nursery children and Reception pupils (2023 cohort) would be based at the current Woodfield site (Grove Road Early Years); all Year 1 to Year 6 pupils would be based at the Grove Road site.
 - Growth is expected to continue so that eventually Grove Road Early Years and Grove Road Key Stage 1 would be located at the current Woodfield site and Grove Road Key Stage 2 would be accommodated at the current Grove Road site.

Some Targeted Mainstream Provision would also be based at the current Woodfield site, in addition to that already available on the Grove Road site. Additional capacity would be available on the Grove Road site for specialist provision such as Thrive (social and emotional wellbeing), science, humanities and drama.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

REVENUE

- 4.1 Pupil numbers determine the level of funding that a school receives. Woodfield School has projected in-year budget deficits of £119k in the financial year 2021/22, £103.3k in 2022/23 and £128.4k in 2023/24, and a forecast cumulative budget deficit of £98k in 2021/22, £201.4k in 2022/23, and £329.8k in 2023/24.
- 4.2 Grove Road School has projected in-year surpluses of £73.3k in 2021/2, £50.2k in 2022/3 and £69.5k in 2023/4, and a forecast cumulative budget deficit of £158.2k in 2021/2, £108k in 2022/3, and £38.6k in 2023/4. The school is currently forecasting

to return to an overall budget surplus position by 31st March 2026.

- 4.3 Grove Road School has produced a long-term financial forecast to explore the viability of the amalgamation proposal. This model suggests that where the PAN is set at 50, the financial position can be sustainable over the long term. This is dependent on both pupil numbers and the level of staffing and there will always be some degree of uncertainty in any school financial forecast over the longer term. Should the amalgamation go ahead on 31 August 2022, any deficit on the Woodfield budget on that date would be absorbed by the County Council.

CAPITAL

- 4.4 The scope for site improvements are being explored, including reopening a gate at the rear of the Woodfield School site, to provide a shorter, safer walking route to and from both sites. Some capital works may be able to be funded from Section 106 developer contributions, while other funding may be a call on the Schools Condition Grant, for which the next allocation will be made from central government to the County Council in spring 2022.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Changing the structure of school provision requires the publication of statutory notices by the LA to affect a school closure, enlargement and expansion on to an additional site. Three school organisation proposals would be required, which would all be linked:
- Grove Road Community Primary School – enlargement of premises
 - Grove Road Community Primary School – expansion onto an additional site (the Woodfield site)
 - Woodfield Community Primary School – technical closure of the school as a separate entity
- 5.2 These proposals would follow the DfE’s statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers.² In particular, the proposals would need to ensure that the expansion onto an additional site is genuinely a change to an existing school and not the establishment of a new school, and demonstrate how the proposed arrangements are likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for those children.
- 5.3 Under the schools causing concern guidance and related legislation,³ any maintained school like Woodfield that has been judged inadequate by Ofsted is required to become a sponsored academy. The Regional Schools Commissioner has been unable to secure an Academy Trust to sponsor Woodfield School due to viability concerns. Where the Secretary of State considers that a school would not be viable as an academy, it is expected the local authority will close the school and the Secretary of State can direct them to do so if necessary. Any proposal to close the school and cease education provision on the Woodfield school site would be consulted on separately. An academy order can also be revoked where a school has been re-inspected by Ofsted and judged Good or Outstanding, and the

² DfE, *Making significant changes (‘prescribed alterations’) to maintained schools Statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers* (Oct 2018) and *Opening and closing maintained schools Statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers* (Nov 2019).

³ DfE, *Schools causing concern Guidance for local authorities and Regional Schools Commissioners on how to work with schools to support improvements to educational performance, and on using their intervention powers* (Sept 2020).

Secretary of State is satisfied that the improvement can be sustained without the support of a strong sponsor. As noted above, while Ofsted has recognised the improvements that have been made at Woodfield, the current leadership arrangements can only be temporary.

6.0 PROPOSED CONSULTATION PROCESS AND TIMESCALES

6.1 A draft consultation document is attached in Appendix 1.

6.2 All of the School Organisation proposals would follow the same expected timescales:

| | |
|---|---|
| Executive Member approval to consult | Tues 23 November 2021 |
| Call in period ends | Wed 1 December |
| Consultation period including public meetings | Thurs 2 December – Fri 28 January 2022 (including 6 weeks term time) |
| Executive Member report published | 14 February |
| Executive decision to publish statutory notices (If approved the following timetable would apply) | Tues 22 February |
| Call in period ends | Wed 2 March |
| Statutory Notices published (4 weeks for representations to be made) | Thurs 3 March (Harrogate Advertiser published on Thursdays) |
| Representation period starts | Thurs 3 March |
| Representation period ends | Thurs 31 March |
| Final decision by County Council's Executive (or by the Executive Member if there are no objections to the statutory proposals) | Tuesday 19 April |
| Call in period ends | 27 April |
| Implementation of proposals | 31 August |
| The amalgamated school starts to operate on two sites | 1 September |

6.3 The County Council is the employer for staff at both Grove Road Community Primary School and Woodfield Community Primary School and the Governing Bodies will seek to protect employment as far as possible for staff currently employed at Woodfield. A separate HR consultation process for staff and their professional associations will commence in the spring term and the Governing Bodies will most likely propose an internal transfer of staff from Woodfield to Grove Road, following Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) principles.

6.4 Parents at Grove Road and Woodfield schools were notified on 21 October of the decision by the two governing bodies to ask the County Council to consult on an amalgamation proposal, prior to publication of an entry in the County Council's Forward Plan. Following enquiries from parents, and in consultation with LA officers, the two schools issued frequently asked questions to help answer general queries about the process, and how the amalgamation could work (Appendix 2).

7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Executive Member for Schools is recommended to give approval to consult publicly on proposals:

To amalgamate Grove Road Community Primary School and Woodfield Community Primary School in Harrogate from 1 September 2022. This would create a single primary school operating on both school sites through the technical closure of Woodfield Community Primary School as a separate entity, and the enlargement of premises and expansion onto the Woodfield site of Grove Road Community Primary School.

Stuart Carlton
CORPORATE DIRECTOR – CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICE.

Report prepared by John Lee, Strategic Planning Officer

Appendix 1: Draft consultation document
Appendix 2: Frequently asked questions



Consultation Document

**Proposals to amalgamate
Grove Road Community Primary School and
Woodfield Community Primary School, Harrogate**

from 1 September 2022

**Grove Road Community Primary School
and Woodfield Community Primary School, Harrogate**

November 2021

This paper sets out proposals by North Yorkshire County Council to amalgamate Grove Road Community Primary School and Woodfield Community Primary School in Harrogate. This would mean that Woodfield Community Primary School would become part of Grove Road Community Primary School from 1 September 2022 with both school sites remaining open. As part of the amalgamation there would need to be a technical closure of Woodfield Community Primary School as a separate entity and the enlargement of premises and expansion onto the Woodfield site of Grove Road Community Primary School.

The Governing Bodies of both Grove Road and Woodfield schools have asked North Yorkshire County Council to carry out this consultation.

Both Governing Bodies see this as an exciting opportunity to enhance the facilities of Grove Road School, organising sustainable education across both sites aiming for the best possible provision for all pupils, and importantly ensuring that the Woodfield site continues to be used for education of the wider community.

This paper gives the background to the proposals. There will be public meetings on:

**# 2021 at # pm at #
and
2021 at # pm at #**

Background

Grove Road Community Primary School serves much of High Harrogate. The school is currently operating at capacity. Woodfield Community Primary School serves Woodfield and parts of the Bilton area of Harrogate. The school has been under-subscribed for a number of years.

Grove Road Community Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2018 through a short inspection, which judged the school to continue to be good. This followed a more detailed inspection in 2014.

Woodfield Community Primary School was inspected by Ofsted in January 2020, who found the overall effectiveness to be inadequate and the school became subject to special measures. Any maintained school that is judged inadequate by Ofsted is required to become a sponsored academy. The Regional Schools Commissioner has been unable to secure an Academy Trust to sponsor Woodfield School due to viability concerns. Where a school would not be viable as an academy, it is expected the local authority will close the school and that the Secretary of State can direct them to do so if necessary.

Since January 2020, there have been considerable changes in staffing at Woodfield School. The current acting executive headteacher and acting head of school took up leadership at

the start of the summer term 2020. The latest monitoring visit by Ofsted to Woodfield School in June 2021 found that leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures, and that the local authority's statement of action and the school's action plan were both fit for purpose. It is important to recognise the efforts of all those who have been involved in this improvement journey.

However, the current arrangements can only be temporary and the absence of an academy sponsor means that Woodfield School faces an uncertain future. Therefore work began earlier this year to assess how education provision within the Woodfield community could be preserved. The current proposals for amalgamation have been developed by members of the school governing bodies and LA officers. The two governing bodies carefully considered the proposals before autumn half term, and both agreed to ask the County Council to start this consultation on the amalgamation of Woodfield and Grove Road Community Primary Schools.

Pupil Numbers

As at October 2021 there are 49 pupils of mainstream school age at Woodfield Community Primary School and 292 pupils at Grove Road Community Primary School. Both schools also offer nursery provision for children aged 3 and 4. Current pupil numbers in each year group (as at November 2021) are set out below.

| Year group 2021-22 | Grove Road School | Woodfield School |
|--------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| Reception | 40 | 6 |
| Year 1 | 37 | 2 |
| Year 2 | 40 | 11 |
| Year 3 | 41 | 4 |
| Year 4 | 43 | 12 |
| Year 5 | 47 | 3 |
| Year 6 | 44 | 11 |
| Total | 292 | 49 |

Places for children currently attending Woodfield School would be made available through the amalgamation with Grove Road. Parents could also express a preference for any alternative school.

As part of the amalgamation proposals, it is proposed to increase the Published Admission Number (PAN) of Grove Road Community Primary School from 40 to 50. The PAN is the number of school places that must be offered in reception each year.

If the proposals went ahead, there would be 350 primary school places available across the two sites of the amalgamated Grove Road School. As there are currently 280 primary school places available at Grove Road, and 150 at Woodfield, this would be an overall reduction of 80 places. Given current forecasts, including the likely demand from new housing in the catchment areas, and patterns of parental preference, there would appear to be sufficient primary places available in the local area. Birth rates in the district are falling, and pupils living in the Woodfield and Grove Road catchment areas attend a wide variety of primary schools. There would be scope to increase the PAN at Grove Road School at a later date, if required and subject to consultation.

The Financial Position

Grove Road School has produced a long-term financial forecast to explore the viability of the amalgamation proposal. This model suggests that where the PAN is set at 50, the financial position can be sustainable over the long term. This is dependent on both pupil numbers and the level of staffing and there will always be some degree of uncertainty in any school financial forecast over the longer term.

Should the amalgamation go ahead from 31 August 2022, any deficit on the Woodfield School budget on that date would be absorbed by the County Council.

The Proposal

It is proposed to amalgamate Grove Road Community Primary School and Woodfield Community Primary School from 1 September 2022. As part of the amalgamation there would need to be a technical closure of Woodfield Community Primary School as a separate entity, and the enlargement of premises and expansion onto the Woodfield site of Grove Road Community Primary School.

If this proposal went ahead, Grove Road Community Primary School would operate as a split site school:

- From September 2022, all Nursery children would be based at the current Woodfield site (Grove Road Nursery); all Year Reception to Year 6 pupils would be based at the current Grove Road site.
- All families of children currently attending Woodfield school and who choose to join Grove Road Community Primary School can be accommodated at the existing Grove Road site
- From September 2023, all Nursery children and Reception pupils (2023 cohort) would be based at the current Woodfield site (Grove Road Early Years); all Year 1 to Year 6 pupils would be based at the Grove Road site.
- Growth is expected to continue so that eventually Grove Road Early Years and Grove Road Key Stage 1 would be located at the current Woodfield site and Grove Road Key Stage 2 would be accommodated at the current Grove Road site.

Some Targeted Mainstream Provision would also be based at the current Woodfield site, in addition to that already available on the Grove Road site. Targeted Mainstream Provision offers enhanced levels of specialist support over and above that usually available in mainstream schools, to provide an appropriate environment and personalised support for children and young people with SEND, who are able to access mainstream learning.

Additional capacity would be available on the Grove Road site for specialist provision such as Thrive (social and emotional wellbeing), science, humanities and drama.

Both Governing Bodies see this as an exciting opportunity to enhance the facilities of Grove Road School, organising sustainable education across both sites aiming for the best possible provision for all pupils, and importantly ensuring that the Woodfield site continues to be used for education of the wider community.

Staff

The County Council is the employer for staff at both Grove Road Community Primary School and Woodfield Community Primary School and the Governing Bodies will seek to protect employment as far as possible for staff currently employed at Woodfield. A separate HR

consultation process for staff and their professional associations will commence in the spring term and the Governing Bodies will most likely propose an internal transfer of staff from Woodfield to Grove Road, following Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) (TUPE) principles.

Alternative options for Woodfield Primary School

Any maintained school like Woodfield that has been judged inadequate by Ofsted is required to become a sponsored academy. The Regional Schools Commissioner has been unable to secure an Academy Trust to sponsor Woodfield School due to viability concerns.

Where the Secretary of State considers that a school would not be viable as an academy, it is expected that the local authority will close the school and the Secretary of State can direct them to do so if necessary. Any alternative proposal to close the school and cease education provision on the Woodfield school site would be consulted on separately.

An academy order can also be revoked where a school has been re-inspected by Ofsted and judged Good or Outstanding, and the Secretary of State is satisfied that the improvement can be sustained without the support of a strong sponsor. As noted above, while Ofsted has recognised the improvements that have been made at Woodfield, the current leadership arrangements can only be temporary.

What Happens Next?

Your views about this proposal are welcomed. You can either complete and return the attached response sheet, or submit an online response.

Paper responses should be returned to North Yorkshire County Council at the address below:

FREEPOST RTKE-RKAY-CUJS
Grove Road and Woodfield
Strategic Planning
North Yorkshire County Council
County Hall
NORTHALLERTON
DL7 8AE

Online responses may be submitted by following this link:

<#>

The closing date for responses is 28 January 2022

All responses to the consultation received by this date will be considered by the County Council's Executive committee on 22 February 2022.

If the County Council's Executive decides to proceed, then statutory proposals would be published on 3 March on the County Council's website and statutory notices placed in the local press and on the school gates. These statutory proposals would provide a further four weeks for representations to be made. A final decision would then be made in April 2022 by the County Council's Executive (or by the Executive Member for Education and Skills, if there were no objections to statutory proposals). If agreed, the schools would amalgamate from 1 September 2022.

Anticipated key dates

All dates are subject to approvals at each stage.

| | |
|--|-------------------------|
| Consultation opens | 2 December 2021 |
| Public meetings | # at # pm |
| Consultation closes | 28 January 2022 |
| County Council's Executive considers consultation responses | 22 February 2022 |
| Statutory Proposals published (4 weeks for representations to be made) | 3 March – 31 March 2022 |
| Final decision by County Council's Executive (or the Executive Member for Education and Skills, if there are no objections to the statutory proposals) | April 2022 |
| Amalgamation takes place | 1 September 2022 |

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**Grove Road Community Primary School and Woodfield
Community Primary School, Harrogate
Consultation on proposals to amalgamate**

Observations and/or suggestions:

Please do not disclose any personal data in your response

Interest/Status

e.g. Parent/Governor/Teacher/Community

Name of School

Signed

Date:

| |
|-----------------------------|
| Name (Block Capitals) |
| Address: |
| |
| |
| Postcode: |

To help us assess whether we have provided clear information, please let us know whether you found this consultation easy to understand? YES/NO

Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

.....
...

Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, responses to the consultation may be published on the County Council’s website where it may be accessed by members of the public. Your personal details will not be published.

Please send this response sheet to the following “FREEPOST” address. You do not need to use a postage stamp.

FREEPOST RTKE-RKAY-CUJS
Grove Road and Woodfield Schools
Strategic Planning
North Yorkshire County Council
County Hall
NORTHALLERTON
DL7 8AE

Or go to:

[###](#)

and submit your response there

To be received by no later than 28 January 2022

We are collecting this information for the purpose of gathering views on the proposal. Your personal data will not be published or passed to any other organisation unless a legal obligation compels us to do so. We may contact you to discuss your views further. For more information about how your personal data is handled at North Yorkshire County Council please visit: www.northyorks.gov.uk/privacy

Proposals to amalgamate Grove Road Community Primary School and Woodfield Community Primary School, Harrogate

Frequently asked questions

What does amalgamation mean?

An amalgamation is the process of joining Grove Road Community Primary School and Woodfield Community Primary School together. It is different to a merger or federation because we are not creating a new school, or working together as two schools. Woodfield Community Primary School would become a part of Grove Road Community Primary School.

How does this happen?

The Woodfield school site would become part of Grove Road from 1 September 2022. This means that there would be one school (Grove Road Community Primary School) operating across two sites. As part of the amalgamation, Woodfield Community Primary (as it is now) would close and places for children currently attending Woodfield would be made available through the amalgamation with Grove Road.

Why does it need to happen?

Woodfield Community Primary School was judged Inadequate by Ofsted at inspection in January 2020. Any maintained school like Woodfield that has been judged inadequate by Ofsted is required to become a sponsored academy. The Regional Schools Commissioner has been unable to secure an Academy Trust to sponsor Woodfield School due to viability concerns.

Where a school would not be viable as an academy, it is expected that the local authority will close the school and the Secretary of State can direct them to do so if necessary.

Why amalgamate and not just close?

Both governing bodies recognise that the Woodfield site is a valuable asset to the local community for educational purposes and by pursuing an amalgamation they can secure its future for the benefit of local children. The amalgamation ensures education provision remains located in the heart of the Woodfield community.

Why Grove Road and not another local school?

Grove Road has a good Ofsted rating and is in close proximity to families whose children currently attend Woodfield Community Primary School. Grove Road has already successfully welcomed many families who previously attended Woodfield and leaders from Grove Road worked with Woodfield school in 2020 and at the start of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Both schools have a similar ethos in relation to inclusive education.

Why is this proposal exciting for Grove Road?

The sites are within a mile of each other, which would make it easy to facilitate movement between locations during the school day. This creates an exciting opportunity to enhance the facilities of Grove Road Community Primary School, organising sustainable education across both sites, aiming for the best possible provision for all pupils, and importantly ensuring that the Woodfield site continues to be used for education of the wider community.

Why are the proposals being put forward now?

The latest Ofsted monitoring report of Woodfield Community Primary School in July states that “Leaders and managers are taking effective action towards the removal of special measures” and it is important to recognise the efforts of all those who have been involved in this improvement journey. However, the current arrangements can only be temporary and the absence of an academy sponsor means that Woodfield School faces an uncertain future. These proposals would keep education provision within the Woodfield community.

What are the timescales?

The County Council's Executive Member for Education and Skills will be asked on 23 November to start the consultation. If he agrees, public consultation would run from 2 December to 28 January. Parents would be provided with a consultation document containing further details about the proposals and a response form for their views. There would also be public consultation meetings where parents of children at both schools would be able to find out further information, ask questions, and put forward their views.

On 22 February, the County Council's Executive committee would consider all the responses to the consultation and decide whether to proceed with the next step of the proposal. This would involve publishing statutory proposals on the County Council's website and putting statutory notices in the local press and on the school gates. This would give a further four weeks during March for representations to be made. A final decision would then be made by the County Council's Executive in April, and if agreed, Woodfield school would close on 31 August and Grove Road would assume use of the site currently occupied by Woodfield school from 1 September 2022.

Where have these proposals come from?

The proposals have been developed by members of the school governing bodies and LA officers over several months. The two governing bodies carefully considered the proposals before the autumn half term, and both agreed to ask the County Council to start a consultation.

How would the proposals work practically?

Our initial plans, to be considered as part of the consultation, are:

- From September 2022, all Nursery children would be based at the current Woodfield site (Grove Road Nursery); all Year Reception to Year 6 pupils would be based at the current Grove Road site.
- All families of children currently attending Woodfield school and who choose to join Grove Road Community Primary School can be accommodated at the existing Grove Road site
- From September 2023, all Nursery children and Reception pupils (2023 cohort) would be based at the current Woodfield site (Grove Road Early Years); all Year 1 to Year 6 pupils would be based at the Grove Road site.
- Growth is expected to continue so that eventually Grove Road Early Years and Grove Road Key Stage 1 would be located at the current Woodfield site and Grove Road Key Stage 2 would be accommodated at the current Grove Road site.

What if I have children at both sites?

The intention is to have a walking bus, across the iron bridge to the back of the Woodfield playing field, that enables parents to drop their child at either school and then children who need to will be able to walk safely to the other site accompanied by school staff. We will look at the timings of the school day to ensure that parents who choose to drop off or collect children from both sites are able to do so. Grove Road school also have wrap around care provision that will continue to be available from 7:30am to 5:30pm. Other opportunities, including clubs, will be looked at closely across both sites.

We'd welcome parents' ideas and views as part of the consultation process.

How would the amalgamated school meet the needs of my child?

The school would work closely with parents, as both Grove Road and Woodfield Schools do now, to meet the needs of individual children. The school would ensure early identification of needs and appropriate support in school and with partner agencies and services as required.

What if I want to move my child to another school?

We would encourage you to share your concerns with your child's Headteacher in the first instance.

There will be opportunities for children and their families to visit Grove Road school and meet key staff as part of the proposal, however if parents feel it would be

beneficial, families are invited to contact the school for an earlier visit. Of course, parents may wish to explore a transfer to another school in the area. If so, please see the information about applying for an in-year school place at:

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/changing-schools-and-year-applications>

The County Council's School Admissions Team can be contacted by email or telephone. Email: schooladmissions@northyorks.gov.uk Tel: 01609 533679

What about admissions for Reception for September 2022?

Parents can apply to either Grove Road or Woodfield School this year to join Reception in September 2022, and if the amalgamation goes ahead, from September 2022, Reception children would be educated at the current Grove Road school site. Children who join the school as part of the September 2023 Reception intake would be based at the current Woodfield site and would remain there until the end of their Year 2.

The deadline for making an application to join reception in September 2022 is 15 January 2022:

<https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/apply-place-primary-or-secondary-school>

How can parents get involved?

Subject to approval, there will be a public consultation period from 2 December to 28 January. You would be able to send your ideas by online response form or post. There would also be public consultation meetings, where you would be able to find out more information, ask questions, and put forward your views.

What if I have any concerns now?

Please contact:

Margaret Beagle, Grove Road Chair of Governors via cofg@groveroad.northyorks.sch.uk

Janet Booth, Woodfield Chair of Governors via cofg@woodfield.northyorks.sch.uk

Mr Parkhouse via headteacher@groveroad.northyorks.sch.uk

Mr Atkinson and Miss Marwood via headteacher@woodfield.northyorks.sch.uk