

## Statutory proposals for school closures

As set out in the Establishment and Discontinuance Regulations the information below **must** be included in a proposal to close a school:

### Contact details

Proposal, published by North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AE, to discontinue:

Weaverthorpe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Weaverthorpe, Malton, North Yorkshire, YO17 8ES from 31 August 2022.

Weaverthorpe Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a 3-11 Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school in North Yorkshire.

### Implementation

It is proposed to close the school from 31 August 2022.

### Reason for closure

Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School, in the Ryedale area, was Inspected by Ofsted in January 2020 and found to be 'Inadequate'. The inspection report was published by Ofsted in July 2020.

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 the 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.

Formal partnership with another local maintained school was explored as an option to sustain Weaverthorpe School both educationally and financially. Local Authority officers and the Diocese of York (the Church body with responsibility for the school) worked together to discuss the situation with the potential partner schools in the local area during the summer and autumn terms of 2021. None of those discussions resulted in an acceptable partnership proposal for the future of Weaverthorpe School.

It is considered highly unlikely that a partnership arrangement with another local school, such as federation or amalgamation, can now be identified. The School is in a vulnerable position for multiple reasons, not least because the temporary leadership arrangements cannot continue beyond the end of the current academic year. The interim executive board of Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School decided, with regret, that in line with the advice of local authority officers they would ask the County Council to consider a consultation on the future of the School.

## Pupil numbers and admissions

The numbers (distinguishing between compulsory and non-compulsory school age pupils), age range, sex, and special educational needs of pupils (distinguishing between boarding and day pupils) for whom provision is currently made at the school.

There are currently 21 pupils on roll at the school of compulsory school age, plus 2 in nursery. Nine of the 21 pupils are female, and 12 pupils are male.

	Pupil numbers	PAN
Reception	0	7
Year 1	4	7
Year 2	2	7
Year 3	3	7
Year 4	1	7
Year 5	5	7
Year 6	6	9
Totals	21	

The school's age range is 3-11 years, and provision is available for boys and girls. There is no boarding provision. Information on special educational needs of pupils is not provided as this would contravene the Data Protection Act. Total pupil numbers are significantly lower than the capacity of the school which is designed to accommodate around 49 pupils.

## Displaced pupils

A statement and supporting evidence about the need for school places in the area including whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

Details of the schools or further education colleges at which pupils at the school to be discontinued will be offered places, including—

- a) any interim arrangements;
- b) the provision that is to be made for those pupils who receive educational provision recognised by the local authority as reserved for children with special educational needs; and
- c) in the case of special schools, the alternative provision made by local authorities other than the local authority which maintain the school.

Details of any other measures proposed to be taken to increase the number of school or further education college places available in consequence of the proposed discontinuance.

- a) No interim arrangements have been necessary

The nearest school to Weaverthorpe, 2.5 miles from Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School, is Luttons Community Primary School, which has places available in all year groups. This school has the capacity to take any additional pupils as a result of the proposed closure, and has indicated a willingness to do so.

It is proposed that the catchment area of Luttons Community Primary School is expanded to include the current Weaverthorpe School catchment area. There is an

area of Weaverthorpe's catchment area that is currently shared with Hertford Vale CE Primary School and it is proposed that area (Butterwick) remains part of Hertford Vale's catchment area. The York CE Diocese have indicated early stage support for this approach.

Parents have a right to express a preference for any school and, in the case of community and voluntary controlled schools, the relevant Local Authority is the admissions authority and will meet that preference provided there are vacant places or the school is happy to admit above the published admission number. In the case of Voluntary Aided and Academy schools, the local governing body decide the conditions for admission to their particular school. Where a child attends a school which is not their normal school or nearest school, parents are normally responsible for making transport arrangements.

- b) This is a mainstream primary, and therefore, not a school that is reserved for providing to pupils with special educational needs
- c) This is a mainstream school, and therefore, not a special school that is reserved for providing to pupils with special educational needs

## Impact on the community

A statement and supporting evidence about the impact on the community of the closure of the school and any measures proposed to mitigate any adverse impact.

In some communities the school is the only meeting space. Weaverthorpe has a Village Hall with hall, kitchen, toilets and a small meeting room. A hearing loop, PA system, large screen and Wifi are available. The existing school facilities are not currently used by the community.

The Weaverthorpe school buildings and playground are owned by the Diocese of York and the school playing field is owned by the County Council. Any decisions about the future of the site and buildings would be taken separately from the decision on whether to close the school.

Whilst the impact on the wider economic and social sustainability of the community is an important consideration, the key consideration is to determine whether the proposal is in the best interests of children's education.

## Rural primary schools

Where proposals relate to a rural primary school designated as such by an order made for the purposes of Section 15 (Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA), a statement that the local authority or the governing body (as the case may be) considered Section 15(4) EIA.

Weaverthorpe CE VC is designated as a rural school under the Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) Order. The School Organisation regulations and guidance contain a presumption against closure of rural schools, and it is a requirement that proposers must consider the effect of the discontinuance of any rural primary school on the local community. The statutory guidance specifically states that 'This does not

mean that a rural school will never close, but the case for closure should be strong and a proposal must be clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area.' The guidance states that when producing a proposal, the proposer must carefully consider:

- the likely effect of the closure of the school on the local community;
- the proportion of pupils attending the school from within the local community i.e. is the school being used by the local community;
- educational standards at the school and the likely effect on standards at neighbouring schools;
- the availability, and likely cost to the LA, of transport to other schools;
- whether the school is now surplus to requirements (e.g. because there are surplus places elsewhere in the local area which can accommodate displaced pupils, and there is no predicted demand for the school in the medium or long term);
- any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the closure of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase; and
- any alternatives to the closure of the school.

These are examined in turn below.

### **The likely effect of closure of the school on the local community**

Please see the section above 'Impact on the Community'

### **The proportion of pupils attending the school from within the local community i.e. is the school being used by the local community**

As of October 2021 there were 32 Primary aged children who were living in the catchment area of Weaverthorpe School and attending a North Yorkshire School. Of those, 23 were attending Weaverthorpe and 9 were attending elsewhere.

### **The availability, and likely cost to the LA, of transport to other schools**

If the school closed, there would be a potential additional cost to the Local Authority in providing transport to other schools. Free home to school transport would be provided for entitled pupils within the enlarged catchment area in accordance with the County Council's Home to School Transport policy. The County Council's Home to School transport policy sets out that free school transport will be provided to the catchment school or nearest school to a child's home address if it is over the statutory walking distances set out by law. This is:

- Two miles for children under eight years of age;
- Three miles for children aged over eight; or
- where the route to the catchment or nearest school is not safe to walk accompanied by a responsible adult.

If the nearest catchment or nearest school is full, transport will be provided, in accordance with the authority's transport policy, to the nearest school with places available.

Children from low income families (children entitled to free school meals or whose parent are in receipt of the maximum level of Working Tax Credit) have additional eligibility criteria for additional home to school transport and details are available on the County Council's website at <http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/article/26071/School---travel-support>

### Transport to Luttons Community Primary School

The following section only applies in the event that Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School does proceed to closure in August 2022, and that Luttons CP School becomes a catchment School for the Weaverthorpe area from September 2022.

The LA Road Safety team have assessed the route between Weaverthorpe village and Luttons CP School and it is considered to be a safe walking route (child accompanied as necessary) based on the standard criteria applied to all assessments. However, having considered the matter the County Council is minded to apply discretion as allowed under the Home to School Transport policy in the circumstances of a school closure.

It is proposed that all existing Weaverthorpe School pupils who live in the School's existing catchment area and beyond 2 miles from Luttons CP School would be deemed to be eligible for free home to school transport to Luttons CP School on their transfer in September 2022. This proposed approach would also apply to any new starters in the Reception year at Luttons CP School in September 2022 who meet the same distance and residency criteria. This would provide support to the small number of families who are affected by the closure and who would otherwise not be eligible for transport assistance to Luttons CP School based on the criteria set out above.

Eligibility would continue for the length of the child's attendance at Luttons CP School, unless there were to be a future change of address for the family that meant the distance and residency criteria were no longer satisfied.

Arrangements for home to school transport will be confirmed at the end of the statutory process following consultation.

**Whether the school is now surplus to requirements (e.g. because there are surplus places elsewhere in the local area which can accommodate displaced pupils, and there is no predicted demand for the school in the medium or long term)**

The view of the Local Authority is that there are sufficient places in the local area which can accommodate displaced pupils.

A preference exercise has been undertaken for existing pupils in Reception to Year 5 and all have been provisionally allocated a place (in the event of closure) at their preferred school for September 2022. A small number of parents have chosen to transfer their children to a new school on an earlier date.

### **Any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the closure of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase**

It is not considered that there would be significant additional car use given the small number of pupils who would be affected by the closure.

### **Any alternatives to the closure of the school**

The Regional Schools Commissioner has been unable to identify a MAT that would be prepared to sponsor the school due to viability concerns. These concerns related to the low pupil numbers and the associated financial challenges that presents.

A potential sponsor MAT trust could not be identified because they did not consider Weaverthorpe to be viable as a stand-alone school. It was therefore clearly important to explore if a formal partnership with another local maintained school could be an option to sustain Weaverthorpe School both educationally and financially. Local Authority officers and the Diocese of York worked together to discuss the situation with the potential partner schools in the local area during the summer and autumn terms of 2021. The schools contacted by the LA were the Federation of Luttons and Sherburn CE plus Hertford Vale and West Heslerton schools. These schools were unable to help Weaverthorpe at this time. The York Diocese also approached the Federation of Sledmere and Wetwang schools in the East Riding about the potential for collaboration with Weaverthorpe. Ultimately, none of those discussions resulted in an acceptable partnership proposal for the future of Weaverthorpe School.

It is considered highly unlikely that a partnership arrangement with another local school, such as federation or amalgamation, can now be identified. The school is in a vulnerable position for multiple reasons, not least because the temporary leadership arrangements cannot continue beyond the end of the current academic year.

### **Balance of denominational provision**

Where the school has a religious character, a statement about the impact of the proposed closure on the balance of denominational provision in the area and the impact on parental choice.

Weaverthorpe is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School. The LA is under an obligation to consider the impact on the proportion of church places before it determines the outcome of school closure proposals.

The nearest alternative Church of England School is Sherburn CE VC Primary School which is situated 4.1 miles from Weaverthorpe School. Sherburn CE VC Primary School is federated with Luttons Community Primary School.

Weaverthorpe is situated close to the county boundary with the East Riding. Sledmere CE VC Primary School is situated within five miles of Weaverthorpe.

The Diocese is supporting the LA with the consultation and has expressed no specific concerns about the impact on proportionality of places in this area.

### **Maintained nursery schools**

Not applicable

## Sixth form provision

Not applicable

## Special educational needs provision

The existing provision at Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School is not reserved for pupils with special educational needs.

## Travel

Details of length and journeys to alternative provision.

The proposed arrangements for travel of displaced pupils to other schools including how the proposed arrangements will mitigate against increased car use.

Eligibility for home to school transport will be determined in line with the County Council's current home to school transport policy and procedures based on each child's home address and individual circumstances.

Where a child attends a school which is not their normal school or the nearest school, parents are normally responsible for making transport arrangements.

Parents were, and will be, reminded of the County Council's home to school transport policy when considering alternative schools. Pupils up to the age of 8 would normally be eligible for free home to school transport if they live more than 2 miles from their normal area school (or 3 miles for those over the age of 8). Parents can always express a preference for a school other than their normal area school, however, they would usually be responsible for making transport arrangements. Eligibility is assessed on an individual basis taking into account the child's home address.

North Yorkshire County Council's Home to School transport policy states that 'Transport will be arranged so that children will not normally spend more than 1 hour 15 minutes travelling to a secondary school or 45 minutes to a primary school. Journey times might need to be longer than this in some more rural areas and where road or weather conditions mean that these times are not practical.' This is in line with statutory guidance from the Department for Education. The journey times for children living within the current Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School catchment area to other nearby primary schools would be well within these guidelines. The nearest schools are:

- Luttons Community Primary School which is situated 2.5 miles from Weaverthorpe School.
- Sherburn CE VC Primary School (Federated with Luttons CP School) is the nearest alternative Church of England Primary School, which is situated 4.1 miles from Weaverthorpe School.
- Sledmere CE VC Primary School and Wold Newton Foundation School are both within the East Riding of Yorkshire and both situated within six miles of Weaverthorpe.

Pupils would be eligible for travel arrangements from NYCC in line with the transport policy, and as specifically proposed both in this paper and in the report to Executive on 22 March 2022.

### **Procedure for making representations (objections and comments)**

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 Strategic Planning - Children and Young People's Service, North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall, Northallerton, DL7 8AE, or by email to [schoolorganisation@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation@northyorks.gov.uk) by 29 April 2022.

### **Consultation**

The decision to consult on closure was taken by the Executive Member for Schools on 7 December 2021 following a request from governors. A consultation paper setting out the proposal was sent to parents of pupils on roll, staff at the school as well as other interested parties and individuals. A copy of the consultation paper and a list of the consultees is included as Appendices 2 and 3 respectively. The consultation period ran from 7 January 2022 to 18 February 2022. A virtual public meeting was held online on 20 January 2022, notes of the meeting are attached as Appendix 4. There have been eight consultation responses received (Appendix 5).

### **Appendices**

- Appendix 1b: Statutory Notice**
- Appendix 2: Consultation Paper**
- Appendix 3: List of the Consultees**
- Appendix 4: Notes of the Public Meeting**
- Appendix 5: Consultation Responses**
- Appendix 6: FAQ document**
- Appendix 7: Equality Impact Assessment**





# *Consultation Document*

Proposal to close Weaverthorpe CE  
VC Primary School from 31 August  
2022

## **Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School**

January 2022

This paper sets out details of a proposal to close Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School with effect from 31 August 2022. It gives the background to the proposal. There will be a public meeting on 20th January 2022 at 6pm

In the interests of safety to reduce the risk of transmission of coronavirus, this meeting will take place as a virtual (online) meeting via MS Teams. If you would like to take part in this meeting please contact: [schoolorganisation@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation@northyorks.gov.uk) for further information on how to join. Parents and known stakeholders will be sent the link directly.

If you do not have the facilities to participate in the virtual (online) meeting but would still like to engage directly in the consultation process then please liaise with Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School.

### **Background**

Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School, in the Ryedale area, was Inspected by Ofsted in January 2020 and found to be 'Inadequate'. The inspection report was published by Ofsted in July 2020.

The Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) issued a directive academy order (DAO) in July 2020 as the school was now eligible for intervention under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

The headteacher left the school in the summer term 2020 and an acting headteacher took over the leadership of the school in September 2020. The previous governing body was dissolved, and replaced with an Interim Executive Board (IEB) in September 2020.

For all schools who have been issued with a DAO it is the responsibility of the RSC to broker sponsorship of the school by a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). This MAT would then take on the governance and management of the school on conversion to academy status. In the period of time since the DAO was issued the RSC has been unable to identify a MAT that would be prepared to sponsor the school due to viability concerns. These concerns related to the low pupil numbers and the associated financial challenge that presents.

A potential sponsor MAT could not be identified because they did not consider Weaverthorpe to be viable as a stand-alone school. It was therefore clearly important to explore if a formal partnership with another local maintained school could be an option to sustain Weaverthorpe School both educationally and financially. Local Authority (LA) officers and the Diocese of York (the Church body with responsibility for the school) worked together to discuss the situation with the potential partner schools

in the local area during the summer and autumn terms of 2021. The schools contacted were the Federation of Luttons and Sherburn CE plus Hertford Vale and West Heslerton schools. The York Diocese also approached the Federation of Sledmere and Wetwang schools in the East Riding about the potential for collaboration with Weaverthorpe. None of those discussions resulted in an acceptable partnership proposal for the future of Weaverthorpe School.

Wold Newton is a Primary School in the East Riding. It was not among the group of schools initially contacted to establish if they had interest in collaborating with Weaverthorpe School. However, the Governing Body of Wold Newton Foundation School considered the position of Weaverthorpe School at their meeting on 2 December and confirmed that it would not be feasible for them to form a collaboration at this time.

It is considered highly unlikely that a partnership arrangement with another local school, such as federation or amalgamation, can now be identified. The School is in a vulnerable position for multiple reasons, not least because the temporary leadership arrangements cannot continue beyond the end of the current academic year.

At a recent meeting the IEB of Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School decided, with regret, that in line with the advice of LA officers they would ask the County Council to consider a consultation on the future of the School. Governors felt they had exhausted all options open to them to secure the future provision following the Ofsted judgement, the issuing of a DAO by the RSC, the inability to secure a MAT sponsor and the absence of a collaboration option within the local maintained sector.

The Chair of the IEB has written to parents to explain the current situation and why it was considered necessary to consider consultation. This was followed by an initial meeting with parents on 10 November. This meeting was attended by officers from the LA and Diocese who provided a further explanation of the circumstances and the required statutory process. On 7 December 2021 the NYCC Executive Member for Schools approved that this consultation could be undertaken.

Where schools are subject to a DAO, the Secretary of State can also order that a school is closed if it is considered unviable. If the statutory closure process were not followed, the RSC may need to consult with the Secretary of State to determine if powers to direct closure for Weaverthorpe School should be exercised.

## **Factors Affecting the School's Viability**

### School Leadership and Standards

The Ofsted inspection in January 2020 found Weaverthorpe Church of England VC Primary School to have serious weaknesses and to be 'inadequate' overall. Significantly, leadership and management was judged to be inadequate with the result that the school was deemed inadequate overall. The Quality of Education, Personal Development and Early Years provision were judged to require improvement; Behaviour and Attitudes was judged 'good'; safeguarding was not effective.

Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School remains vulnerable as a stand-alone school due to the uncertain nature of leadership beyond the current temporary arrangements. The

most recent substantive Headteacher left the school in the summer term of 2020. Following this, the IEB, supported by the LA, arranged for interim leadership to be provided by the headteacher of Langton Primary School. Due to the presence of the DAO, and the intention for academy sponsorship, the arrangement was initially established for a period of up to one year with an end date of the summer term 2021. Further, as a consequence of the DAO, and combined with the very low number of pupils entering the school, it is considered that the IEB is unlikely to be successful in any attempt to recruit a replacement substantive headteacher, especially of the calibre required to continue to drive the necessary improvements and at the pace required. Since a suitable sponsor had not been identified before the end of the summer term 2021, the Governing Body of Langton Primary School agreed to a one-year extension to the interim leadership arrangements but have now confirmed that the temporary arrangement cannot continue beyond July 2022. Therefore, Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School will be without secure leadership, leaving any improvements in the quality of education that have already been achieved at further risk.

Ofsted's routine monitoring inspections were temporarily suspended during the earlier parts of the pandemic; however, Ofsted did undertake remote visits to school and noted in March 2021 that 'Leaders and those responsible for governance are taking effective action to provide education in the current circumstances.' This was typical of inspection visits at the time, where the range of evidence available to inspectors was narrower than would normally be the case during an on-site inspection, and so, the level of assurance provided was more limited. The interim Headteacher, the IEB and the LA were praised for the work they had carried out in the school: the interim headteacher has 'responded well to the challenges [she has] faced since taking up post in September 2020.' Furthermore, 'since its inception in September 2020, members of the IEB have focused intensively on securing improvement to the education on offer for pupils and the systems to keep them safe. Members of the IEB regularly visit the school so that they can be sure that leaders' actions are improving the school' and 'since the last inspection, the local authority has worked with leaders and the IEB to improve the school. They have provided stability in leadership by brokering the support of the current acting headteacher. They have also worked with the acting headteacher to prioritise the actions needed to improve the school.'

Ofsted resumed their monitoring visits in the summer term 2021 and Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School was inspected in June 2021. Inspectors concluded that 'Leaders and Managers are taking effective actions towards the removal of the serious weaknesses designation'.

In the view of LA school improvement advisers and school leaders, despite the clear progress to date, the improvements in provision and specifically the quality of education, are not yet sufficiently well embedded to ensure all children, from their different starting points, achieve success. An additional temporary part-time leadership post (Assistant Headteacher) was added to the staffing structure in September 2021 to bring in extra capacity with a remit to improve curriculum planning which remained at the early stages of development. Leaders have planned and invested in resources to support the curriculum, but the impact of this is yet to be seen in outcomes for pupils. The school improvement service has placed the School

in the highest category of support and a principal adviser undertakes regular monitoring, challenge and support activities working closely with the interim leadership and the IEB.

### PupilNumbers

Weaverthorpe is a 3-11 Community Primary School and currently has 25 children on roll. The school is located in the Malton and Norton outer area, serving families living in the village of Weaverthorpe and surrounding area. The number of children at Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School has been falling over the past few years:

2015/16 – 41  
 2016/17 – 43  
 2017/18 – 36  
 2018/19 – 41  
 2019/20 – 36  
 2020/21 – 26  
 2021/22 – 25 (plus 2 in Nursery)

In the recent Autumn term 22 of the 25 pupils attending Weaverthorpe School had a home address that was in the Weaverthorpe catchment area. These 22 pupils made up 71% of the 31 pupils who were living within the catchment area at the time. The remaining nine children in catchment attended other North Yorkshire schools.

The School can accommodate up to 49 pupils if all spaces are in use and therefore has the potential to contribute 49 places in the local area. Forecasts indicate that these numbers will not recover significantly in the longer term and may reduce still further.

The current numbers in each year group at the school are:

	Total
Reception	1
Year 1	6
Year 2	2
Year 3	3
Year 4	2
Year 5	5
Year 6	6
Total	25

### BreadthofCurriculum

At the time of the 'inadequate' Ofsted judgement in January 2020 there were 40 pupils on roll (including nursery). As numbers have fallen since this judgement, the IEB and the LA have become increasingly concerned that, in future, pupils will not have access to the full range of experiences they need, particularly opportunities for learning and playing with children their own age. Due to the forecasted financial position and the reduction in numbers, school leaders and governors may have to make further decisions relating to reducing the number of teaching groups and increasing in the mix of age ranges in each class. Leaders and governors are obligated to consider the

impact on children's access to age-appropriate curriculum, particularly when the present curriculum offer struggles to meet current expectations.

#### PrimarySchoolplacesinthelocalarea

The nearest school to Weaverthorpe, 2.5 miles from Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School, is Luttons Community Primary School, which has places available in all year groups. This school has the capacity to take any additional pupils as a result of the proposed closure, and has indicated a willingness to do so. The table below shows more detail on the hypothetical combined position for Weaverthorpe and Luttons based on numbers in January 2022.

Year Group 2021/22	Weaverthorpe (Current capacity 49)	Luttons (Current capacity 56)	Total Weaverthorpe and Luttons combined
Reception	1	5	6
Year 1	6	6	12
Year 2	2	3	5 (23)
Year 3	3	5	8
Year 4	2	5	7
Year 5	5	3	8
Year 6	6	1	7(30)
Total	25	28	53

Luttons Community Primary School currently operates a two class structure but has the flexibility and capacity to increase these arrangements should the need arise in future.

A table on the County Council website <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/current-consultations> shows the other local schools, their pupil number and the forecast position in future years which takes account of expected housing developments.

In October 2021 there were a total of 80 primary aged children living in the catchment areas of the two schools (49 Luttons, 31 Weaverthorpe). At first, this may appear a concern given that Luttons School only has a current capacity of 56 places. However, Luttons is situated closer to more North Yorkshire Schools than is Weaverthorpe and there is an established pattern of a number of families from Luttons choosing alternative schools. The latest data (October 21 census) shows that 21 of the 49 Luttons area pupils, or 42%, were attending neither Luttons or Weaverthorpe schools. There is no reason to expect that this pattern of attendance would change given we understand it is largely explained by the geographical extent of the Luttons catchment area including the settlement of Duggleby.

For the first time in July 2021 the County Council was able to access NHS data for GP registrations at postcode level. This will be incorporated into a revised methodology in the coming year as we believe it will enable a higher degree of forecast accuracy. The latest data received in October 2021 for Luttons, Weaverthorpe and Sherburn areas

is shown below. This identifies any child who is registered with a GP practice on 30 September 2021 and who lives in the schools' catchments areas:

<b>NHS data for year group cohorts</b>	<b>Weaverthorpe</b>	<b>Luttons</b>	<b>Total W &amp; L</b>	<b>Sherburn CE</b>
Rec entry 2025	2	3	<b>5</b>	10
Rec entry 2024	5	4	<b>9</b>	4
Rec entry 2023	2	7	<b>9</b>	9
Rec entry 2022	4	13	<b>17</b>	9
Rec entry 2021	2	6	<b>8</b>	14
REC 2020 (Y1 now)	7	14	<b>21</b>	15
REC 2019 (Y2 now)	4	5	<b>9</b>	19
REC 2018 (Y3 now)	4	7	<b>11</b>	14
REC 2017 (Y4 now)	5	11	<b>17</b>	11
REC 2016 (Y5 now)	6	10	<b>16</b>	11
REC 2015 (Y6 now)	4	8	<b>13</b>	14

It is notable that the Weaverthorpe numbers are remaining at a low level for the coming years. However, this data shows a higher combined cohort for Reception entry in September 2022 driven by the number (13) for Luttons. However, this is considered to be a short-term issue, as the local cohorts for entry in the following three years are at a much lower level. A review of the data for the Sherburn CE catchment area also shows no evidence of a rise in the local pre-school population.

### The Financial Position

Pupil numbers determine the school budget. The critical concerns are Ofsted's Inadequate judgement, the DAO and the inability to find a sustainable leadership solution for the school, but the fall in pupil numbers has also undermined the school's future financial position.

Based on the start budget submitted in May 2021 the school had a budget surplus of £36.7k at the end of the 2020/21 financial year; the funding for the 2020/21 financial year was based on 39 pupils. However, the school is projecting in-year budget deficits of £48.8k in 2021/22 and £26.9k in 2022/23 and an overall cumulative budget deficit of £39k at the end of 2022/23. The budget projections are based on pupil assumptions of 25 in 2021/22 and 21 in 2022/23, so the position will deteriorate further if pupil numbers fall below that level. There appears to be no reasonable prospect of financial recovery.

These budget projections already reflect a notional reduction in staffing from 3.2 FTE to 2.5 FTE in September 2022.

The School may benefit from an additional £10k sparsity funding in 2022/23; this is to subject to the completion of school budget allocations for next financial year which will be finalised in January 2022.

## **The Proposal**

For the reasons above it is proposed that Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School should close with effect from 31 August 2022.

It is proposed that the catchment area of Luttons Community Primary School is expanded to include the current Weaverthorpe School catchment area. There is an area of Weaverthorpe's catchment area that is currently shared with Hertford Vale CE Primary School and it is proposed that area (Butterwick) remains part of Hertford Vale's catchment area. The York CE Diocese have indicated early stage support for this approach. The LA invite all stakeholders to comment on these catchment area proposals during the consultation. These arrangements would be implemented from September 2022 only in the event of closure for Weaverthorpe School.

## **Admissions and Transport**

LA officers are undertaking a managed and co-ordinated process for the allocation of alternative school places for September 2022, and for those allocations to be implemented in the event that the School does proceed to closure through the statutory process. Ideally, this 'preference exercise' would not have been undertaken until after the initial six week consultation and this was explained to parents at the meeting in School on 10 November. However, feedback from the parents, via the School, was that they wanted assistance sooner to reduce their period of uncertainty. This position was further evidenced by a small, but significant, number of transfer applications having already been made. The LA have therefore commenced the preference exercise in the interests of fairness for all parents and to avoid a first come first served scenario.

Parents, as is their right, may request a transfer earlier than September 2022 and the LA would be obliged to respond. However, irrespective of the required date of transfer, all applications will be managed via this single preference exercise.

LA officers will be available to support Weaverthorpe parents during the exercise with advice and guidance – please contact Vickie Hemming-Allen on 01609 535481 or Lisa Herdman on 01609 534953.

Free transport is provided to the catchment school, or nearest school to the home address, subject to qualifying distance:

- two miles for children under eight years of age;
- three miles for children aged over eight; or
- where the route to the catchment or nearest school is not safe to walk accompanied by a responsible adult.

The LA Road Safety team will assess the road from Weaverthorpe to Luttons against standard criteria, and parents will be notified of the outcome as soon as possible.



## Staff

A separate consultation process, including a staff meeting, will run in parallel with the closure process.

## The School Site

The Weaverthorpe school buildings and playground are owned by the Diocese of York and the school playing field is owned by NYCC. Any decisions about the future of the site and buildings would be taken separately from the decision on whether to close the school.

Any capital receipt from the disposal of the school site would be determined with reference to the appropriate legislation and regulation.

## Additional Information

This consultation document should be read in conjunction with the following documents which can be found here <https://www.northyorks.gov.uk/consultations> :

- A frequently asked questions document
- A map showing the local catchment areas
- Other schools – capacity and forecast (based on October 2021 Census)

## 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  
Weaverthorpe  
Strategic Planning  
North Yorkshire County Council  
County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON  
DL7 8AE

Online responses may be submitted by following this link:

<https://consult.northyorks.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=163958972021>

Responses to the consultation will be published on the County Council's website. Your personal details, and those of others you may refer to, will not be published.

**The closing date for responses is Friday 18th February 2022**

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

If the County Council's Executive decides to proceed with the closure proposal, then statutory notices would be published in the local press on Friday 1 April 2022. These notices provide a further four weeks for representations to be made. A final decision is then scheduled to be taken by North Yorkshire County Council's Executive in May 2022. If agreed, the school would close on 31 August 2022.

### **Anticipated Key Dates**

All dates are subject to approvals at each stage.

Consultation opens	7 January 2022
Public meeting	20 January 2022
Consultation closes	18 February 2022
County Council's Executive considers consultation response	22 March 2022
Statutory Notices published (4 weeks for representations to be made)	1 April – 29 April 2022
Final decision by County Council's Executive	May 2022
Proposed school closure date	31 August 2022

## Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School Consultation

This is a consultation on proposals to close Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School from 31 August 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.

Reading our Privacy Notice will help you understand how and why we process your personal data. [www.northyorks.gov.uk/privacy-notices](http://www.northyorks.gov.uk/privacy-notices)

Do you have any comments about the closure proposal?  
(Please do not disclose any personal information in your answer)

Do you agree with the catchment area proposals that would apply from September 2022 in the event of closure? **Yes / No**

Do you have any further comments about catchment areas?  
(Please do not disclose any personal information in your answer)

What is your interest/status? Parent / Governor / Teacher / Community / Other

Other (please  
state)

Name of school:

To confirm your proximity to school and to prevent duplicate responses we are asking you to provide your name and address. This information will be removed from any analysis or reports.

Name:

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?

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

FREEPOST RTKE-RKAY-CUJS  
Weaverthorpe  
Strategic Planning  
North Yorkshire County Council  
County Hall NORTHALLERTON  
DL7 8AE

Or to submit your response online go to

<https://consult.northyorks.gov.uk/snapwebhost/s.asp?k=163958972021>

To be received by no later than 18 February 2022

**Appendix 3**Weaverthorpe CE Primary School – List of Consultees

Weaverthorpe CE Primary	Parents	via school
	Staff and governors	via school
	Chair of Governors	
Neighbouring Schools	West Heslerton CE	
	Luttons CP	
	Sherburn CE	
	Hertford Vale CE	
	Norton CP	
	Rillington Primary	
	Settrington CE	
	Langton Primary	
	Leavening CP	
	Wetwang CE	
	Wold Newton Primary	
Sledmere CE Primary		
Unions and Professional Associations: (as at September 2021)	NAHT	
	NASUWT	
	NEU (formerly NUT & ATL)	
	VOICE	
	ASCL	
	UNISON	
Diocesan Directors	York Diocese	
	Middlesbrough Diocese	
Neighbouring Local Authority:	East Riding of Yorkshire	
Local County Councillor - (Thornton Dale & the Wolds)	Janet Sanderson	
Ryedale District Councillor: (Wolds)	Tracie Middleton	
Local Parish/Town council	Weaverthorpe Parish Council	
	Foxholes Parish Council	
Community Organisations	Library Service	
Local MP	Kevin Hollinrake	
RSC		

Secretary of State:		
Early Years Providers within 5 mile radius of Weaverthorpe CE Primary School		

**Appendix 4****Record of Online Public Meeting concerning the proposed closure of Weavertorpe CE VC Primary School**

Virtual Public Meeting held on 20 January 2022 at 18:00 using Microsoft Teams

**Present:**

County Councillor Patrick Mulligan- Executive Member for Education and Skills

Amanda Newbold, Assistant Director- Education and Skills NYCC

Andrew Dixon, Strategic Planning Manager NYCC,

Andrew Smith, Diocesan Director of Education- Church of England Diocese of York

Rachel Ray, Interim Headteacher- Weavertorpe CE VC Primary School

Rev. Andy Bowden- Chair of Interim Executive Board- Weavertorpe CE VC Primary School.

Approximately 26 people attended the meeting

The meeting was opened by Andy Bowden, Chair of Governors, who introduced himself, thanked everyone for attending and introduced Cllr Patrick Mulligan who would be acting as Chairperson for this meeting.

Cllr Patrick Mulligan then explained his role as Executive Member for Education and Skills, the format of the meeting and then introduced the members of the panel who would be available to answer questions following the consultation.

He also explained to attendees that the meeting would be recorded for the purposes of compiling a note of the issues discussed at the meeting but that the recording would be destroyed once this had been done.

He then passed over to Andrew Dixon, Strategic Planning Manager to give a short presentation on the circumstance leading to the proposal, the reasons for the proposal and the process that this entailed.

**Presentation**

Andrew Dixon gave a presentation detailing the proposal.

**Q&A**

Cllr Sanderson stated that she didn't want to speak first as she felt that the community should ask questions but she realised this might be daunting for people using a virtual platform so she would ask a forward thinking question. The presentation stated that the school site is owned by diocese and school and as there is little provision for children in the wolds could it be used for some for some kind of community use if worst came to the worst?

Andrew Dixon explained that any decision on the future of the site would be part of a subsequent process following the process regarding the closure proposal. Cllr Sanderson could express a view on the future appropriate use for the site as part of this process, but that the decision would be part of a different decision making process.

Cllr Sanderson stated that she hoped it did not come to that but that it was important to forward think.

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Femi Shellard introduced himself as Chair of Parish council and former Chair of Governors of Weaverthorpe School. He asked that as reference had been made in the presentation to an interim inspection can this be made into a full inspection. Can the local authority lobby Ofsted for this so that the full current position can be taken into consideration rather than an out of date report? The work of current Headteacher and IEB can then be taken into account as this doesn't seem to have been considered so far.

Amanda Newbold stated that Ofsted have resumed normal cycle of inspections. She said this means that it is typically 2 year cycle for schools judged Inadequate to be inspected, however for several terms there were no inspections and so a backlog situation. At some point in the near future Weaverthorpe will have an inspection but we cannot predict when that will be. Ofsted deliberately don't tell schools or Local Authority when they will be inspected.

A parent said that reference was made in the presentation to being unable to find an acceptable solution and asked for clarification of what this means and what would make a solution acceptable. She also asked for clarification over whether options had been turned down by Weaverthorpe or by the other schools that had been approached.

Andrew Dixon stated than in order to be acceptable a solution would need to continue the improvements necessary and also place the school on a secure financial footing. None of the schools contacted felt able to consider partnership at this time with the exception of Sledmere and Wetwang. Sledmere and Wetwang did consider a partnership proposal at this time but the Local Authority was unable to support this proposal as there was no financial recovery plan for the school.

The parent asked if it was then the Local Authority turning down the proposals?

Andrew Dixon confirmed that in the one instance of Sledmere and Wetwang it was because the proposal was unable to give a financial recovery within the period required which would be the current financial year plus three years.

The parent also asked the panel to comment on Norton College and whether they had been approached with regards to a partnership.

Andrew Dixon explained that any approach to an Academy would have been made via the Regional School Commissioner as part of the search for a sponsor rather than by the Local Authority. This question was raised in the Autumn term and NYCC contacted the RSC to get a response. RSC confirmed that they didn't approach Norton College for two reasons: that it is not Church of England Trust and also they would also look for trust with experience and record at primary provision.

A member of the public asked following on from the comments about Norton College Academy, they aren't CofE but neither are Luttons. Luttons was last inspected by Ofsted in 2016 and have the Local Authority had an update on Luttons and if not will they get one before the school is recommended to parents?

Amanda Newbold said there were two parts to the question and that she would answer regarding Ofsted and that Andrew could follow up the issue of a school being recommended. Luttons school have been inspected recently and the community can expect this to be published soon.

Andrew Dixon explained that although the word 'recommended' had been used in the question it is just the catchment proposal from September 2022 that most of the Weaverthorpe catchment area be covered by an extended Luttons catchment area as it is by



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far the nearest school. However, that is markedly different from saying this school is the school being recommended for parents. Parental preference is enshrined in law and parents will choose for a whole range of reasons. So we could see dispersed pattern of preference.

The member of the public asked has it not just been chosen for cost reasons rather than what's best for the children? Why not Hertford Vale when its our nearest Church school. Why are you instead dividing the village? Would you not provide transport to Hertford Vale as the nearest church school?

Andrew Dixon explained that Sherburn CE is the closest church school but Hertford Vale already serves part of the catchment in Butterwick. If people wish to make representations about alternatives to the catchment proposal be it about Hertford Vale or Sherburn C.E this would be considered as part of the process. The proposal as it stands is based on proximity and this takes into account not just cost but also accessibility.

The member of the public asked if this is based on Luttons getting a good inspection?

Amanda Newbold responded on this and apologised for a mistake in an earlier response regarding the Luttons inspection. Amanda confirmed that the report has been published and it has remained good. There are lots of strengths listed and Ofsted have, as always, listed things they will be focusing on in their next inspection. No change to overall judgement and this is a normal Section 8 monitoring inspection.

Another parent said that she was responding from a parents perspective. She didn't feel that parents have been supported and although it's been said that they had been corresponded with she felt that they've just been left to do it themselves. They had had to arrange visits to other schools by themselves. Due to an outbreak of covid they hadn't all been able to visit schools and so had had to make decisions based on Ofsted inspections etc. She said they felt totally let down and like no one had been supporting them. She said Weaverthorpe school were doing the best they can but that it was a matter for the Local Authority.

Andrew Dixon responded that the preferencing process has been carried out and it was noted pretty quickly that this process need to be extended due to the prevailing covid situation. However, it was a balance to strike between giving enough time and completing it early enough to have the desired intention of giving clarity to parents relatively quickly. Ultimately in terms of visiting schools and contacting other schools that is a parents responsibility as the Local Authority wouldn't be in a position to know which schools parents wanted to visit and there could be a wide variety of schools. If there are still concerns about need to make decisions but not having information then please contact the admissions team over the phone and they will do all they can to help. He acknowledged that there had been a been a difficult period but said that there had been generally a good level of response from parents. He confirmed how parents could access the contact details for the admissions team and undertook to get that information to parents again via school.

A grandparent of a pupil said that one of her big concerns was that the childrens' education has already been disrupted by covid and isn't the closure proposal just making it worse. Should we not be trying to maintain stability. Also the inspection of Luttons has thrown up some things that need looking at, will having more children make it more difficult for a school that needs a bit of help already. She made a second point that the path between Weaverthorpe and West Lutton is not safe as a walking route and cannot understand why this has not been looked at. Parents from Weaverthorpe school should be assured that they will get transport provision as this is a long and busy road. It should also be born in mind that many parents at Weavethorpe probably do not drive.

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Her final point was to express that if we always knew leadership was temporary why wasn't someone else brought in to take over before and move the school on before it goes to this point. Also the community will suffer seriously.

Andrew Dixon responded regarding the walking route. The point is well understood and it does need to be communicated to parents, so once the report is agreed then this will be shared. It's over two miles which is the distance at which transport is provided for KS1 pupils so we can say with certainty KS1 transport would be available if they live in Weaverthorpe, but until exercise is complete we cannot say for key stage 2 pupils. We understand the concern and will communicate as soon as possible.

Amanda Newbold responded regarding the disruption to children's education. Going through consultation and change is never ideal or preferred choice. Unfortunately the situations surrounding this school mean that the consultation is required at this time. We would welcome comments on impact of covid in this consultation period and we invite people to respond to this consultation. However, covid has affected ability to support from other schools as they often didn't have the capacity themselves over covid period. Regarding the appointment of a Headteacher this has been raised previously and this is a matter for the governing board to decide. Good governing boards will consider the options and check the viability of these options. They would consider whether the pupil numbers and the funding attached to these numbers allows them to recruit a headteacher to solely lead their school or whether they can work with another school to share a leader. Unfortunately, when the school has an academy order this limits options for sharing leadership in the long term to academies. We know that the Regional Schools Commissioner had looked at all options for this and found none so that ruled out that option. So governors rightly had to look at interim leadership with the help of the Local Authority. They managed to secure the support from the Langton Governing Body and Mrs Ray, this was temporary but they have kindly and generously extended this interim support for two years. In response to the question about Lutton's recommendations in their report: all reports have recommendations. In the Lutton's report you will see that all the recommendations are about curriculum, this is typical of a lot of recent reports. A new framework came in just prior to the covid outbreak and schools had been working on that framework in the term ahead of the outbreak. They have then had to try and work on the new framework against the backdrop of the difficult circumstance over the last two years. Lutton's have also recently had a change of leadership and the bullet points they were given to work on are not a surprise. The school are able to work on these points. However, you will know which school is right for your child and will be able to look at the school yourself. You can then decide if that school ethos etc. is right for your family if that is required.

An parent asked about the Ofsted report in October at Lutton's. How come Lutton's got their Ofsted inspection last year but the one for Weaverthorpe couldn't be done. This all seems a bit planned.

Amanda Newbold responded that Ofsted are required to inspect all schools within a 5 year window so because its last one was 5 years ago Lutton's were required to have a visit. There were a number of schools across North Yorkshire that did have inspections on that timescale for that reason. Schools that are judged inadequate are judged on a 2 year cycle and schools that are judged Good are typically inspected on a 4 to 5 year cycle. At the time of that inspection Ofsted would not have known about this consultation so it is unrelated in every way to this process.

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The parent said that she had already removed her children. She stated that there was no support from anyone during covid. School now have wonderful new teachers in but now they've been upset, kids are upset. It's a done deal you want us to close to boost Luttons numbers. I want to thank the Headteacher and the teachers for coming in and getting them stable. My children have surprised me since they went back and now you are going to disrupt all that and worry the kids and its quite sad and I'm very upset with it.

Cllr Patrick Mulligan thanked the parents for that contribution. This isn't a foregone conclusion and everything will be taken into account before a decision is made.

The parent said I don't think you think about the children, these kids have been locked up in their houses. They've been locked in their houses and now they've gone back, they've got wonderful teachers and now you do this to them. I can't believe you're doing this to the community, children and the teachers are sad, its heartbreaking.

Cllr Mulligan said we understand your sentiments and we are sympathetic towards them.

A parent asked if we could please go over the Sledmere and Wetwang proposal as I feel you skirted over that a bit. Could you please explain why the LA didn't think this proposal was financially acceptable.

Andrew Dixon responded that the financial cost of the proposal were such that the school could not achieve a balanced budget and therefore could not achieve recovery plan within the required period. Similar to considerations of other North Yorkshire schools. Being able to move into partnership and continue the improvement required in a school is not an easy task. Sledmere's assessment was that the level of support that would be needed, the input of staffing to a level that was essentially not affordable by Weaverthorpe. This was such that, on the pupil numbers that are projected, the budget would continue in an annual deficit and therefore a cumulative deficit.

The parent asked what those requirements were

Andrew Dixon explained that he did not have details of the proposal to hand but it was essentially the Leadership requirements and costs

The parent asked if that was not offset by the fact that a full Headteacher would not have to be employed?

Andrew Dixon said that would have been a consideration when the judgement was made. The full range of requirements made it unaffordable.

The parent asked what these other requirements were?

Andrew Dixon stated that he could only respond in broad terms that it was staffing requirements.

The parent asked if this similar kind of leadership and staffing was required by other schools going into partnership for example Luttons when they federated?

Andrew Dixon explained that Federation is a matter for each Governing Body and not a Local Authority decision. One of the considerations for those Governing Bodies would be whether the requirements were financially sustainable for the schools. Governors at both schools (Luttons and Sherburn) must have decided that the package was sustainable at the time, but this was not the case with the proposals available to Weaverthorpe.

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The same parent said that saying NYCC are not involved with Federation is not true because NYCC decides on budgetary issues and whether they are willing to go ahead with it.

Andrew Dixon responded that in that respect yes the LA are involved in the process. However, the decision on whether to implement a Federation is a decision for Governors.

The parent said that it seems like a proposal was agreed but it wasn't allowed to go ahead by the LA for financial reasons. Was it not the case that NYCC wouldn't approve anything because they want the school to close?

Andrew Dixon explained that this was not the case at all, we put a lot support in to looking at options with maintained schools which it was hoped might be able to create a situation where through improvement and removal of Academy Order we could then see a formal Federation form. We put considerable effort into approaching other schools.

Andrew Smith said that to follow up on discussions, some of the reasons for the support package is based on where it is at with their journey of improvement. The current staffing model in the school is a reflection of this and is more expensive because of that. This would need to be continued for a longer period of time. Any maintained collaboration can only be for a temporary period. In terms of legislation the only way for the school out of the current situation is by academisation. So any short term arrangement with a maintained school is not a long term solution. So, this would not solve the viability issue from that point of view and also the issue of increased costs in the short to medium term to continue that improvement journey. Some of the reason that NYCC needed to say no to that proposal was because of these increased costs that would be necessary. It must be clearly said that Federation cannot be an alternative to academisation, the Department for Education has been clear on that and it will likely be even more strongly the case going forward.

A member of the public asked that bearing in mind so much budget was spent on supply teachers when did NYCC become aware of the leadership and financially problems at the school?

Andrew Dixon stated that in terms of the Leadership concerns the concerns were writ large at the time of the Ofsted inspection. I cannot comment on the financial issues and I don't know if any members of the Governing Body present are able to comment.

Cllr. Patrick Mulligan explained that that would be difficult to comment on as there is currently an Interim Executive Board with members who were not necessarily involved at that time.

The member of the public stated that she understood that it was known in the Governing Body minutes going back as far as 2017 and commented she believed it is 29 pupils that are needed in order to keep the school viable. When the pupil numbers started to drop was there any research done into why the pupils were leaving?

Andy Bowden stated that once the pupils left the school we weren't in contact with parents after they left.

The member of the public asked if the Governing body were aware of complaints being made at that time?

Andy Bowden stated that complaints were discussed which would be able to be seen in the minutes of those meeting.

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The member of the public stated that those minutes cannot be seen anymore. Clearly there were leadership issues and I am struggling to see when NYCC became aware. Are you saying that you were only aware of the issues when Ofsted raised them? Who actually authorises the financial expenditure particularly on supply teachers when so many teachers were leaving on sick?

Amanda Newbold said that she was not sure which period was being referred to with regards supply teachers. At the moment Mrs Ray would have management of that, before that it would have been a matter for the previous Headteacher. The oversight of those decisions sits with the Governing Board.

The member of the public said that it was a shame that as all of that structure has gone we are now in this position.

Amanda Newbold explained that if you get in contact with the Clerk or Chair of Governors you could get a copy of minutes unless they were confidential.

The member of the public asked what would make them confidential? Could items not just be redacted?

Amanda Newbold explained that at each meeting Governors would decide which items would be treated as confidential and they would be kept separate.

The member of the public asked is there a way of accessing all minutes but just with items redacted?

Amanda Newbold explained that if you contact the current board they will be able to give you the minutes subject to data Governance.

A parent said that following on from the previous question how did NYCC not notice that the school was going under? I am not blaming the old Headteacher and Governing Board, they've gone, that's it. What I am blaming is why are NYCC not doing inspections to make sure their schools are not up to standard. How do we know Luttons will not be the same given Weaverthorpe was just left to go under.

Cllr Patrick Mulligan said that he would pass over to others to respond but that he doesn't think it is fair to blame NYCC.

The parent asked who was to blame then?

Cllr Patrick Mulligan explained that schools are largely autonomous under the leadership of the Headteacher and Governors. The LA has some powers of intervention but the school leadership cannot just be exonerated and blame North Yorkshire.

The parent asked who was above the Headteacher and the Governing Body then?

Cllr Patrick Mulligan explained that the Governing Board was above the Headteacher.

Amanda Newbold explained that Local Management of Schools is devolved to Governing Bodies and Headteachers. So the day to day management of the school sits within the school. The role of the Local Authority is to have that broader oversight, support and challenge. Weaverthorpe were receiving support and challenge prior to the report. Across the county is not possible to have a duplicate set of staff who can replicate the work of the leadership for every school.

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The parent asked why didn't the local authority intervene to find out why staff were off school, why were children leaving school and why were there safeguarding issues.

Amanda Newbold responded that they are all appropriate questions for Governing Bodies to be asking. I am sure the IEB, Mrs Ray and her board at Langton are all familiar with asking those kind of questions.

A parent asked what sort of support will be put in place once the school closes. I have a child who will have to walk past an empty building that was his school and he's got a EHCP so routine is key to him.

Amanda Newbold stated that support would be from the LA via the EHCP and also via Mrs Ray and her team to get a transition plan in place for the individual pupils.

Mrs Ray added that our hearts go out to the whole community. We will do everything we can to support the children our number one priority. As Amanda referenced our current IEB are extremely rigorous in their monitoring of current standards in the school and we will continue to do that for the future. My door is open and we'll have a coffee. We are all there to help.

The parent said that we cannot thank the staff enough, my children are coming on leaps and bounds. It's really the time after change rather than the transition itself. Why do parents have to explain to their children why the school is closed.

Mrs Ray responded that we can help with that if it goes ahead and working with new schools. We want to make sure we reduce impact as much as possible.

A member of the Interim Executive Board responded to a previous question about about minutes of full governing board and confirmed they are on the website dating back to December 2017 and running through till October 2021.

A parent asked if we could return to discussing NYCC responsibilities. It is my understanding that the appointed senior officer has a responsibility to ensure that standards are maintained schools and to provide support and guidance. With that in mind do NYCC maintain that they are not responsible?

Amanda Newbold said that as has been set out a number of times there were a combinations of factors including standards, finances and pupil numbers were triggers for the consultation. LA does take responsibility for oversight and we take a risk based approach. We provide additional support to schools where we identify that there are issues. Weaverthorpe at the moment is receiving a high level of support from the local authority. Schools get different levels of support over different periods. Prior to ofsted report there had been a detailed review of what was going on at Weaverthorpe. The LA had sent a warning letter 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020 stating that the LA could and would use its powers of intervention if that was necessary. The school had that letter and were working on that when the Ofsted inspection took place.

The parent asked if the LA could provide detail of the support from the LA in relation to that warning letter.

Amanda Newbold said that she would be able to but not in this meeting. Amanda explained she had joined North Yorkshire since this inspection has happened.

Andrew Dixon explained that the Council could provide this information as part of an update to FAQ including information on the walked route.

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The parent asked that as part of that it be detailed when did standards drop too low. It was clearly at some point prior to the warning letter. This gives me concern as I don't feel that the support was provided. I appreciate that it might feel like we are going back over the situation but it is relevant to closure as LA should've provided support which may have prevented there being an academy order.

Amanda Newbold said that we will provide as much information on support and challenge as we can.

Cllr Patrick Mulligan reminded attendees all of these issues would be taken into consideration as part of the consultation process.

A parent said that people keep talking about 2019 and there were obviously issues before then. I have had children in the school for many years and there were staff going off sick and all sorts going on before then. Do the LA not do sickness monitoring?

Amanda Newbold explained that that would be the responsibility of Headteacher and Governors. The school might use the council's service but it would be the school who would do that work. The council can advise and support if the school approach the council for that support.

The parent asked that surely you want to know why so much money was being spent and wasted with staff being off sick. I cannot understand how this public money has been wasted in this way. Why was a Headteacher not put in place as soon as the previous Headteacher left. It is like its been left on purpose so that Ofsted know they can't come in because there isn't a permanent member of teaching staff. You guys are coming in now when school are good. Where were you when this was happening years ago?

Amada Newbold stated that the only thing she had to add was that this was the same with finances, the Governors are the people who should be asking these questions on a monthly and termly basis.

Cllr Patrick Mulligan said that he thought the discussion was becoming circular but that your comments will be taken into account.

A member of the public stated that we only had a local authority governor on the governing board for about a month, we could never fulfil that position. It just seems that governors were leaving and any questions that were raised didn't come up in the minutes and were not included. As a separate point she said that at the recent (November) meeting at the school she purposely asked if minutes were being taken and were guaranteed we would get an emailed copy of them,

Andrew Dixon explained that the decision was taken that the best way to respond to both questions from that night, and to various questions that were raised by the parish council, was via the FAQ document which is now on record. There were many and varied questions raised and we feel we took some time to make sure we referred to the outline notes from that meeting to make sure that all questions were answered. If you feel there were questions that were not answered please either ask it now or submit it to let us know.

The member of the public explained that she was relying on those minutes to be taken to ensure that questions were included and not edited out.

Cllr Patrick Mulligan stated that he felt FAQs were comprehensive so I have to support Andrew on this. I would encourage you to please respond with the questions so we can add them in if required.

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Cllr Janet Sanderson said she had been very interested to hear everything that people have had to say. I have been a governor of two schools. It's a really really tough job. It is so much work I really really appreciate the effort of the governors. I offer my thanks to governors of both previous and current boards. Its not a good position that we are in I have taken in the issues you have raised and I will represent you to the end.

A member of the public asked if it could be answered why there was only a Local Authority governor for such a short time.

Amanda Newbold said that she did not know the answer I'll have to go and look it up and then respond through the FAQs

Cllr Patrick Mulligan thanked the attendees for their input and said we have total empathy. Nobody wants to close the school believe me. We will take all views raised into account. I am going to have further discussions with officers as some issues bear further discussion. Thanks for attending and I wish you the best for the future.



Do you have any comments about the closure proposal?	Do you agree with the catchment area proposals?	Do you have any further comments about catchment areas?	Do you have any suggestions for improvement?	What is your interest/status?
What plans do the council have as regards new housing in the village as it will have a bearing on numbers of future pupils	No	Sherburn has plans for many new houses so may have excess numbers and weaverthorpe once took pupils from further afield Once this education facility is closed it is unlikely to be ever reinstated so the question is can it ride a few lean years and be there for higher numbers as the village grows again Once a school closes the community rapidly declines and new families will not want to move out into a dying village		Community
I'm very disappointed about the possible closure of the school. If you close the school the least you can do is provide transportation for all the pupils to Lutton not just the ones that are under 8.	Yes			Parent
If the school now has a competent head and governors who can turn round firstly the educational achievements of the children and secondly the financial shortfall from predecessors the school should be kept open. The children are already showing a marked educational improvement with the executive head	No	Hertford Vale would be a much preferred choice to Luttons primary for premises and facilities but Weaverthorpe is the ideal school site for premises, facilities and distance from Butterwick.	Remove the academy order. Put a full time competent Head in charge. (+ governors who know what their job entails of course) Payment plan to recoup financial shortfall. Incentive to stop parents 'jumping ship' early.	Community

<p>in charge and staff and children are much happier. The academy order should be removed and the financial shortfall made up by County for the lack of support the school has had since being deemed inadequate.</p>				
<p>I think it's such a sad sad shame that we are in this situation when I feel it could have been prevented with intervention from NYCC and a follow up of the warning letter should have happened I also think this will have a massive impact on the children of the school as they have such a long time off due to covid</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>NOT A SAFE WALKING ROUTE.</p>	<p>NYCC have through out all of this consultation not given clear answers or had correct information to hand</p>	<p>Parent</p>
<p>NYCC, the governors and the Head (in charge when inadequate ousted given) should be held to account.</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Parents should be advised/helped with school placements available if the school is to close. Many going out of area - into East Yorkshire for schools.</p>	<p>NYCC needs to investigate why there wasn't a liny governor involved way before the decision to close the school - lan adequate safeguarding and debts should have been addressed a long time ago!</p>	<p>Community</p>
<p>I believe there are a lot of measures which would help to improve the number of children attending the school but while we have this amount of uncertainty it will be hard to encourage a new generation of pupils. I knew Ofsted report should be carried out to lift the SM on the school. Also no pupil should be allowed to move school while Weaverthorpe school is open. The</p>	<p>Yes</p>			<p>Grandparent who has lived in the village since 1940</p>

<p>Governors should not have let the school get into this position.</p>				
<p>Many representations to the previous headteacher about parents concerns were expressed by parents regarding the finances at the school, the quality of teaching, the high sickness rates in staff, which left children with a lack of continuity, and high turn over of staff. The LA have a responsibility to ensure that standards of education are being maintained, and when they're not, to put in place interventions in order to assist. I am aware that the LA gave a written warning to the school prior to the Ofsted visit in January 2020, however it is unclear what, if any support was given. In March 2020, it was clear that a partnership with Wetwang and Sledmere had been explored. This partnership was agreed and due to go ahead and approved by both schools. NYCC have acknowledged in a public meeting, that they rejected this partnership, as they did not want to invest the funding required in order for the Weaverthorpe School to recover, and potentially go on to find an academy. The LA are also unwilling to appoint a permanent headteacher, or governing board, and therefore the school has no opportunity to recover from the 'inadequate' rating, by Ofsted, which</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The catchment area and proposed nominated school is West Lutton. NYCC has assessed the walking route and deemed it safe. Despite this, they have offered what appears to be a good will gesture to fund the current displaced school children funding for transport. I am unsure of the criteria which would apply in order to prove the walking route safe. The route in places has no footpath, and the areas of the road which have a 'step off' are less than a metre in width. Beyond this is the gypsey race, which in winter fills with water. The 'step offs' are unsuitable for a pushchair and therefore it appears that when the supervising adult has additional children, who are not of walking age, they would be unable to safely walk this route. The route is in the majority is unlit, meaning in the winter months, primary school aged children are expected to walk on a national speed limit road, with no lighting or footpath in places. The vehicles that use this route are heavy agricultural vehicles, and Heavy Goods Vehicles</p>	<p>NYCC have not been transparent during this process. Despite assurances that minutes were taken in both meetings, these were only put in a Q and A format, which missed important discussions and responses by representatives for NYCC. Holding an online meeting, with the excuse of covid, at a time when restrictions were being lifted and other public meetings going ahead, prevented much of the community attending, and therefore not having a true representation at this meeting. Although the decision was appealed by the Parish Council, and NYCC were aware of many members of public being unable to attend, they went ahead regardless. NYCC have overtly flaunted the fact that they have not followed due process during this consultation, and it has been very clear from the very start that they were unable to answer relevant questions, being under prepared for meetings and unable to</p>	<p>Parent</p>

<p>was solely based on the management and governance of the school. It is clear from discussions during governors meetings, that there were concerns raised regarding the high sickness rates of staff, the finances of the school, and spending, yet none of this was questioned by the LA, despite a representative being present. The LA have therefore sealed the schools fate. Refusing any option presented due to funding has orchestrated the schools closure. This process has been less than transparent, and indicated that NYCC have from the very beginning, been determined to close another rural school, despite government guidance. There were other options, NYCC have failed to take these and have been negligent throughout. This will have a detrimental affect on our community, but more importantly on our children's wellbeing.</p>		<p>which access local factories. Although NYCC have offered a sweetener, in the form of funding for transport for the current children, they have waived their responsibility for future children attending this school. This walk way is unsuitable for both adults and children, and I fear that NYCC are waiting for a fatality before reconsidering their decision. In addition to this, it appears that the NYCC have failed to address the environmental impact, with multiple vehicles travelling to the school, therefore increasing the carbon footprint. In a world where the cost of living is already beyond many peoples means, to ask parents to find additional funds for travel, is unacceptable and clearly has not been a consideration.</p>	<p>furnish parents and members of public with information and answers to questions. I would suggest in future, that before making the decision to close a school, they should allow the public consultation to take place.</p>	
<p><b>Weaverthorpe School closure consultation – submission by Weaverthorpe Parish Council</b></p>				<p>Parish Council</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standards at the school have been improving since the Ofsted inspection in 2020, this can only be shown if a fresh Ofsted inspection was to take place. It is incumbent on the local authority to try everything it can to have the school re-inspected prior to facing closure. The RSC should also be lobbying for a fresh inspection, by not having a fresh Ofsted report, the school has been condemned, as a result it appears the consultation has been pre- determined</li> <li>• Has sufficient work I energy been put into finding a partner school? The Parish Council suggested that a pyramid arrangement could be put into place with Norton College, but this was not even considered because Norton is not a "faith" school. However the Wolds and Vale Federation is a partnership between Luttons School and Sherburn School, only one of which is a faith school, can this suggestion be fully investigated?</li> <li>• We do not agree with the Council's view that the route to Luttons School is considered to be a safe route. Part of that walk, between Helperthorpe and East Lutton,is along a stretch of road that has no defined pavement. Walking on this</li> </ul>				

stretch of road is very dangerous. Weaverthorpe Parish Council has a Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) on the Main Road through the village. The same traffic that passes through Weaverthorpe will use that stretch of road. Our VAS, In it's first two months of operation has recorded an 85th Percentile Speed of 36.3 mph, in a 30mph limit. The section of road between Helperthorpe and East Lutton is a national speed limit i.e 60 mph, with no footpath. In the first two months of operation 102,162 vehicles passed through Weaverthorpe. The main valley road is a busy road and not suitable for traffic sharing the road with young children. We do therefore welcome your plan to provide transport from Weaverthorpe to Luttons School. However, there will be siblings of the children that would have to transfer, in the event of a school closure, so would it not be sensible for any new admissions from Weaverthorpe, be given the same access to transport over a set period of time? The safety recommendation made by the local authority does clearly not allow for the parents and children to have to cross the road twice between Weaverthorpe and Helperthorpe, because the footpath is located on one side of the road only. We would welcome the opportunity to walk the route with your safety officer to demonstrate why this route is not suitable for parents with young children and possibly push chairs as well.

- When the previous Head Teacher left the school in 2020, why was a new Head Teacher not sought on a permanent basis? The school cannot now recruit a new Head teacher with the threat of closure hanging over the School. From the time that the Regional Schools Weaverthorpe School closure consultation- submission by Weaverthorpe Parish Council Commissioner put the Academisation Order on the school, the school was heading for closure.
- It is evident that once the Regional School Commissioner has issued an Academisation Order on a school that if a suitable "partner" cannot be found, then that school is on a path to closure as any improvement that is made in the school cannot officially be recognised, because the system does not allow Ofsted to revisit the school to record any improvements that have been achieved. This certainly the case for Weaverthorpe, where the IEB have recorded that significant improvements have been achieved.
- It is generally thought that lower pupil numbers can result in better achievements.
- LEA have failed the school by not ensuring the quality of education is maintained.
- Numbers of pupils are cyclical. One third of the village housing is social housing where the residents change more than the private sector. Pupil numbers were high a few years ago, what happens when this cycle repeats in future years?
- We would have commented on the Warning notice which was issued by the local authority in January 2020, but a freedom of information request for a copy of this letter, has been made, but the copy not received. We therefore will comment on this at a later date.
- The rules established by the DFE for make up of a board of Governors states that an LEA appointed Governor is appointed to represent the views of the LEA at Governor's meetings. Looking back at the minutes of the Governors meetings, demonstrate that this post was not filled from September 2017 (the oldest set of minutes on the website)
- The day the consultation began the Northern Echo ran an article on NYCC additional funding for rural schools in sparsely populated areas, such a grant for Weaverthorpe school would be the lifeline it requires.

- The DFE website states that Governors meeting minutes should reflect what is actually happening and the only subjects that should be classed as confidential are those relating to discussions that are of a personal nature to do with individuals. From the time that the IEB was established there are references to meetings with potential collaborations with other schools but they are all noted as confidential. All that has been said by the LEA is that meetings have been held with potential partners but were not successful, no details have been given which is contrary to the openness that should be demonstrated.
- At the consultation meeting on 20th January 2022, no detail of the discussions with Wetwang and Sledmere schools were available. The LEA stated that they would be published but nothing has happened.
- Cumulative deficit £9K by the end of 22/23, but a further £10k is coming from HMG and £50k could wipe out deficit.
- No minutes taken from previous consultation meetings have been issued.
- The Diocese have been taking part in the process to date, but we have had no indication of where they stand in this whole process.
- If it is considered that the school has some viability, could a retired person be recruited as the Head Teacher, which may result in getting the expertise at a more affordable level.

Weaverthorpe Parish Council facilitated the production of a survey which was distributed to all households in the school catchment area, in December 2021. Following is a summary of the comments made on the completed questionnaires: All respondents live in Weaverthorpe, Helperthorpe or Butterwick. All respondents said they supported keeping the school open.

1. Thank you for your survey I would like to respond as a grandparent of two children who attend the school and feel it will be a massive blow to their ongoing education and also to the community of Weaverthorpe and surrounding villages. I have made a few points which I consider important when debating the closure of the school.
  - The school is well run and children are doing extremely well after a poor Ofsted report
  - Why should the children suffer when the school had been under performing which is a punishment to the pupils.
  - After a long period of home school we are now disrupting pupils more by making them move schools.
  - All other schools are not in walking distance. Some parents have no transport or can't drive therefore how will they get children to the school of their choice?
  - I believe a large fact surrounding the closure is cost and running a school which is not profitable although some schools will be in this category others will not. Could we not look at changing this with a shared head.
  - The village will be come a 'ghost village' with no children mixing (due to pupils going to lots of other schools), the church will suffer also.
  - The house prices will suffer in the village as it is a great selling point when purchasing a family home.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I believe there are a lot of measures which would help to improve the number of children attending the school but while we have this amount of uncertainty it will be hard to encourage a new generation of pupils.</li> <li>• I believe a current Ofsted report should be carried out to lift the SM on the school or is this brushed under the carpet as the local authority would prefer to close the school and sell the land for housing!</li> <li>2. I feel so disappointed that this is even a debate we are having during in such uncertain times.</li> <li>3. I would be very sad to see the school close, it is the hub of our community, it will have an effect on young families moving to Weaverthorpe. It will also affect my childminding business; I have offered a before and after school service for 12 years. It will have an effect on my business going forward.</li> <li>4. If the school is closed it does not encourage families to move into the village. Just because our school was mismanaged 2 years ago it not apply today. Luttons School have the same amount of children as here, we have to try to keep Weaverthorpe open.</li> <li>5. My child did extremely well at Weaverthorpe School and now runs his own business. With adequate funding and with excellent management, governance, and leadership this school would once again be an excellent educational facility, a hub of the community and a huge asset to the area.</li> <li>6. I am very proud of the early education my family has received at Weaverthorpe School. My husband attended 80 years ago. Our daughter went on to read medicine and is now a Consultant Physician at York Hospital. Our elder son had a successful career in the Police Force and our younger son runs the family farm and lectures at local Agricultural Colleges. One granddaughter is currently reading law at Durham University and our youngest granddaughter is at Norton College in her GCSE year and is hopefully predicted excellent grades. I feel, as a family, we have much to thank Weaverthorpe School for. It has given a good grounding in early years education. It is a great asset to the local community</li> <li>7. It is very sad that something more could not have been sooner i.e. sharing a headteacher. The school is totally different to when it was given a bad Ofsted.</li> <li>8. I have no young children but would always support local schooling in a village such as Weaverthorpe. The school is the gell that keeps the Community bound together. The teaching is far more individual partly because of lower numbers the children grow and bond together which is really important for the continuation and being part of the village which in turn gives a greater empathy to do your part in supporting the village in later life.</li> <li>9. I do not have children but I think it is very important that the school stays open for the good of the whole village and its future.</li> <li>10. My family are 50 and 52 years of age. My granddaughter goes to this school and will be very upset if it closes. She has had an excellent education.</li> <li>11. My children are older than primary age. I feel that the Local Education authority has let the school down and need to be held accountable for allowing it to fall into inadequate. I wrote a letter to the school when my children were there, expressing my concerns and I was ignored basically. I will be extremely interested in helping the school stay open.</li> <li>12. I am a resident of Weaverthorpe and I do like to see the school open although are children are all grown up now.</li> </ul>	
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<p>13. Would like school to continue but with strong links to W Lutton. Greater nos. would help all the children in every aspect of their school life. Taking children out of their community would be detriment at emotionally and socially.</p> <p>14. Due to working at another Primary School logistics meant they went there.</p> <p>15. As part of the village community if no school less likelihood of families moving into the village.</p> <p>16. It would seem NYCC have neglected their duty to ensure that the quality of education is maintained as prescribed by DFE. Ref: DFE Statutory Guidance Template for Directors of Child Services.</p> <p>17. If the school had 10-20 more pupils and had breakfast/after school provision then I may have considered it.</p> <p>18. The school is the hub of the village if it closes the village will die slowly. It must be kept open at all costs.</p>	
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## **Weaverthorpe School - Closure Proposal**

### **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) (last update 31 January 2022)**

#### **1. Current Situation FAQs**

##### **1.1 What is the purpose of the proposed consultation on Weaverthorpe CE VC School?**

The consultation is to seek the views of parents and other stakeholders on the proposal that Weaverthorpe CE VC School be closed from 31 August 2021.

##### **1.2 Why are the Local Authority consulting on a proposal to close the school?**

The Ofsted inspection in January 2020 found Weaverthorpe Church of England VC Primary School to have serious weaknesses and to be 'inadequate' overall. Following publication of the inspection report the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) issued a directive academy order (DAO) in July 2020 as the school was eligible for intervention under the Education and Inspections Act 2006.

An acting headteacher (Mrs Ray) took over the leadership of the school in September 2020 and at the same time the previous governing body was replaced by an Interim Executive Board (IEB).

In the period of time since the directive academy order was issued the Department for Education has been unable to identify a Multi Academy Trust (MAT) to sponsor the school due to viability concerns.

Although no potential sponsor academy trust could be secured it was considered important to explore if a formal partnership with another local maintained school could be an option to sustain Weaverthorpe School. The Local Authority and the Diocese of York worked together to discuss the situation with the potential partner schools in the local area. None of those discussions resulted in an acceptable partnership proposal for Weaverthorpe.

It is considered highly unlikely that a partnership arrangement with another local school, such as federation or amalgamation, can now be identified. Therefore the school remains vulnerable as a stand-alone school due to the uncertain nature of leadership beyond the current leadership and governance arrangements which end in July 2022.

In the absence of any proposal to sustain the school, it was therefore felt appropriate to seek a consultation on its future.

##### **1.3 What other options were considered before approving this consultation?**

In addition to making the improvements set out in the Ofsted report, Weaverthorpe has two other critical problems: it has a growing financial deficit (which reflects the low current and prospective pupil numbers) and an absence of stable and permanent leadership and governance to be able to continue the school's improvement.

In the absence of a MAT sponsor the best possibility of addressing these issues would be by collaborating with another maintained school which would give opportunities to share costs and expertise. Despite the LA and Diocese of York asking a number of nearby schools to consider collaboration, no suitable proposal has emerged.

#### **1.4 What had/has the LA done to address issues as the school?**

The school had been judged to be 'Good' by the previous Ofsted inspection in 2010 and by a monitoring inspection in April 2016 which meant the LA had a lighter touch approach to monitoring school improvement. However, LA involvement with the school had highlighted some of the issues Ofsted subsequently raised for attention, but school leaders and governors had not made sufficient progress to address them before the Ofsted inspection in January 2020.

To ensure the improvements were prioritised the LA asked Langton School's governors to agree to Mrs Ray taking the role of acting Headteacher in addition to her Langton responsibilities for a temporary period. The LA applied to the RSC to request an IEB, recommending new and experienced governors, education specialists and local representation to replace the former Governing Body. The role of the IEB is two-fold, in part to address the school improvement issues and at the same time to support the school to be sponsored by a MAT, in line with the academy order. It is normally expected this process is achieved within about a year.

The LA School Improvement Team have worked alongside Mrs Ray and the IEB as they have continued to take effective action to improve the situation in school; this has been reflected in the Ofsted monitoring inspection report.

As a result of the 'Inadequate' judgement the school was, by law, subject to an Academy Order. This requires the Regional Schools' Council (RSC) to identify a MAT willing to take responsibility for the School. The RSC did nominate a MAT to consider sponsoring the school in 2020 but, following a due diligence exercise, the MAT decided that it could not sponsor the school. No other option has been offered by the RSC.

#### **1.5 What is the current financial position of the school?**

Based on the start budget submitted in May 2021 the school had a budget surplus of £36.7k at the end of the 2020/21 financial year; the funding for the 2020/21 financial year was based on 39 pupils. However, the school is projecting in-year budget deficits of £48.8k in 2021/22 and £26.9k in 2022/23 and an overall cumulative budget deficit of £39k at the end of 2022/23. The budget projections are based on pupil assumptions of 25 in 2021/22 and 21 in 2022/23, so the position will deteriorate further if pupil numbers fall below that level.

In January 2022 it was confirmed that the school would receive additional sparsity funding from April 2022 of £10k p.a. as the result of a change in the methodology applied by central government.

Based on the revised budget, which takes account of this additional income and other changes, the school had a budget surplus of £36.7k at the end of the 2020/21 financial year; the funding for the 2020/21 financial year was based on 39 pupils. However, the school is projecting in-year budget deficits of £42.8k in 2021/22 and £12.5k in 2022/23 and an overall cumulative budget deficit of £18.6k at the end of 2022/23. The budget projections are based on pupil assumptions of 25 in 2021/22 and 22 in 2022/23, so the position will deteriorate further if pupil numbers fall below that level.

Both of these budget projections already reflect a notional reduction in staffing from 3.2 FTE to 2.5 FTE in September 2022.

#### **1.6 Why was the statement of action from the LA judged as not fit for purpose by Ofsted?**

This was referred to during the recent monitoring visit in June 2020. The statement of action (SoA) was written and was in use in the timescales required. It had been shared with the school leaders

and governors and was shared with Ofsted during the visit. However, due to an admin error it was not sent to Ofsted in the required time period and, due to this, the inspector was not able to say it was fit for purpose.

This would have no impact on the original judgement of 'Inadequate' (as the SoA is only required after the inadequate judgement is published) nor does it affect the academy order.

### **1.7 Which maintained schools have been approached by the LA with regards to partnership with Weaverthorpe?**

Several North Yorkshire maintained schools were approached in the summer term 2021 to establish whether they would be interested in a partnership with Weaverthorpe. The Wolds and Vale Federation made up of Sherburn CE and Luttons Community Primary, Hertford Vale and West Heselton schools all confirmed that they were unable to explore such a partnership at this time.

The York Diocese approached the Federation of Sledmere and Wetwang Schools about the potential for collaboration with Weaverthorpe in the summer term 2021. This approach was made by the Diocese as the federation is within the East Riding, but it was supported by NYCC and the IEB. There were further discussions and assessments undertaken in confidence, given the sensitivity of the proposition, which continued into the Autumn term. Ultimately, this work concluded in October 2021 and did not result in an acceptable proposal for the future of the school.

Wold Newton is a Primary School in the East Riding. It was not among the group of schools initially contacted to establish if they had interest in collaborating with Weaverthorpe School. However, the Governing Body of Wold Newton Foundation School considered the position of Weaverthorpe School at their meeting on 2 December and confirmed that it would not be feasible for them to form a collaboration at this time.

Should any options emerge, either before the consultation or during it, that could potentially place the school on a sustainable footing, then they will be explored.

### **1.8 Why can't pupil numbers be increased, there are a lot in the area that go elsewhere?**

Children attending a school other than their local school is common and this is a factor which impacts on the numbers at Weaverthorpe School. Over time it might be possible to build the numbers on roll at Weaverthorpe, although this would mean attracting children from other local school areas. This is considered unlikely to happen until the school has achieved 'Good'. The short-term financial situation and the presence of the academy order does not allow leaders and governors the time to develop the school in this way.

### **1.9 What is the capacity of other local schools? Have these assessments taken into account plans for new houses in Sherburn?**

At present there is a surplus of 70 primary school places across the five most local North Yorkshire schools including Weaverthorpe. If Weaverthorpe School were to close and all the school's pupils were to attend one of those schools this would still leave a surplus of 21 places across the area.

Across the same area there is projected to be an impact of 28 additional pupils as the potential yield from housing developments, but this is uncertain.

All known housing sites with planning permission or identified in the Ryedale Local Plan, such as the application for new dwellings at Manor Farm, Sherburn have been taken into account when projecting the available capacity.

The more specific position for the Luttons and Weaverthorpe areas is set out the NYCC report to Executive Members for the meeting on 7 December 2021, which can be viewed on the School's website. Luttons School has the capacity to take any additional pupils as a result of the proposed closure, and has indicated a willingness to do so. Luttons School has further indicated that it has capacity to increase its admission number and LA officers will review that position with Luttons if necessary.

## **2. Process and Timescale FAQs**

### **2.1 Who makes the decisions about the future of the school?**

The decision on whether to proceed with the consultation will be a decision for the Executive Member for Education and Skills.

Latter stages of the process are determined by the Executive Member or by the Full Executive Committee of the County Council.

### **2.2 What are the different steps and timescales of the process?**

This is a Statutory Process and therefore there are number of prescribed stages that need to be followed.

On 7 December, the Executive Member for Education and Skills took the decision to approve the consultation.

Due to the Christmas break the consultation period will commence on 7 January 2022. During the following six-week period all stakeholders including parents and staff will have access to a consultation document and be able to attend a consultation meeting to get further information on the proposal. Stakeholders will also be able to submit comments on the proposal and they would be taken into consideration by the decision makers.

The consultation period will end on 18 February and then on 22 March the NYCC Executive will consider a report that would include all of the comments submitted during the consultation period. The decision for the Executive would be whether or not to approve the publication of Statutory Proposals, which would set out the proposal in a formal sense and notify the public of the intention to close the school.

If approved the Statutory Proposals would be published on 1 April and a further period of four weeks would be observed where stakeholders would once again have an opportunity to comment on the proposal before a final decision was taken by the Executive in May. If this decision were to approve the proposal, then the School would close on 31 August 2022.

### **2.3 Is the closure the only possible outcome?**

No, although at this stage it is considered the LA, Diocese and IEB have collectively explored all of the realistic possibilities to sustain the school, and it is on that basis that we consider it necessary to now consult on the future of the school.

Should any options emerge, either before the consultation or during it, that could potentially place the school on a sustainable footing then they will be explored, and presented to the Executive who would then have the option not to proceed with the proposal.

#### **2.4 Will the local authority continue to consider other options put forward throughout the consultation process?**

Yes. Although the LA has now reached the position where we cannot see any short-term prospect of a sponsoring MAT being put forward by the RSC or a suitable collaborative arrangement with a maintained school. Currently the school is not financially viable on a stand-alone basis and for it to continue the IEB would have to find a permanent leadership team that could continue with the school improvement at the pace required, whilst also working to address the financial situation.

Should any options emerge, either before the consultation or during it, that could potentially place the school on a sustainable footing then they will be explored, and presented to the Executive who would then have the option not to proceed with the proposal.

#### **2.5 Why is the consultation not starting until January but a parents meeting was held in November?**

The IEB had invited LA and Diocesan officers to the meeting on Wednesday 10 November because the IEB members (and LA officers) wanted to be transparent and to ensure families understood the process as early as possible. Due to the decision about the approval to consult not being considered until December, and the consultation not taking place until January, the IEB wanted to fill the time void and ensure that parents were as fully informed as possible.

The full timescales are set out above.

#### **2.6 Does the parents meeting in November mean that the decision has already been taken?**

No. LA Officers attended the meeting, at the invitation of the IEB, in order to support families to understand the process that may take place in relation to the school. Officers made it clear that the meeting was not part of any consultation process, and that the LA would expect to repeat much of the information again at the formal public meeting that is proposed for January 2022.

#### **2.7 Do rural schools have to be given two years notice of closure?**

No. There is however the presumption against the closure of rural schools which states that:

*Proposers should be aware that the Department expects all decision-makers to adopt a presumption against the closure of rural schools. This doesn't mean that a rural school will never close, but that the case for closure should be strong and clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area.*

### **3. Admissions FAQs**

#### **3.1 How is the LA assisting parents with their consideration of alternative schools?**

The LA has communicated via the School with all parents about how the preference exercise for alternative school places will be managed in December and January and what advice and assistance will be available in that period. Information on the size of other local schools has been provided.

#### **3.2 When will the admissions process be decided?**

The intention is that provisional school allocations (that would apply for September 2022 subject to closure) will be notified to parents in late January 2022.

### **3.3 Does the assistance being given with the admissions process mean that the decision has already been taken?**

No. From an LA perspective it is not ideal to undertake a preference exercise for alternative schools until much later in the process, where possible this would preferably take place after the end of the consultation period. This would allow for the catchment areas to be confirmed. These have implications for school transport and may be a factor in some parents' choices.

However, the LA always hopes to be responsive and supportive to the reaction and needs of parents in relation to admissions. The purpose of the preference exercise is to ensure fair opportunity for all parents and avoid a first-come first-served scenario.

The LA emphasised during the 10 November meeting at the School that any alternative school allocations would be made provisionally and would be subject to a closure decision, unless otherwise requested by individual families. The LA is expressly not encouraging applications for transfer sooner than September 2022 (the school will be open and operating in line with current arrangements until July 2022 come what may), but parents have the right to request early transfer if they wish.

### **3.4 What if parents apply to move their children earlier than September 2022?**

Parents have the right to request early transfer if they wish and the LA is obliged to respond. All applications to transfer at any point between now and September 2022 will be considered together through a managed and co-ordinated process to ensure fairness for all.

### **3.5 Can parents with children due to start school in September 2022 still apply for a place at Weaverthorpe School?**

Yes they can as no decision about closure has been taken. However, as with all applications in any part of the County, the LA always strongly recommends that at least two school preferences are made.

Applications for reception admissions should be submitted by the deadline on 15 January 2022.

### **3.6 I have already nominated Weaverthorpe as a preference for my child for Reception entry in September 2022, what do I do?**

It is recommended that a second preference (at least) be added as this would be considered if a decision is made to close Weaverthorpe. Parents who have already submitted their application should contact [schooladmissions@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@northyorks.gov.uk) if they wish to change their application or add to it.

### **3.7 Won't school places for Reception entry in September 2022 have been allocated before we know the school is closing?**

The indicative timetable shows that the Executive decision to proceed to the final stage of the closure process would be taken in March, which is prior to the national offer day on 19 April 2022. The LA admissions team will monitor this situation closely and during March would be in direct contact with any parents who may have applied for Weaverthorpe as their first preference school to discuss the options for their application.

It is correct that the final stage of the decision making process would be in late May and so after the national offer date in April. The LA admissions team would seek, through their conversations in March, to avoid any implications for parents.

### **3.8 What is the position for Secondary School transfers?**

Children in Year 6 will transfer to secondary schools as normal in September 2022. There will be no change to the catchment area for secondary schools.

### **3.9 If I want my child to go to another Church of England school can I do this?**

Yes. You can apply to another CE school and the LA will do its best to comply with your preference through the co-ordinated preference exercise.

### **3.10 Can I apply for a school in the East Riding?**

Yes. The LA has agreed with East Riding County Council that any applications for schools in their area will be managed through the co-ordinated preference exercise.

### **3.11 What will be the future catchment area arrangements?**

The proposal, subject to consultation, is that should Weaverthorpe School close then the following catchment areas would apply from September 2022:

- The stand-alone part of the existing Weaverthorpe catchment area would transfer to Luttons School
- The shared area (Butterwick) would become solely attached to Hertford Vale CE School

The LA would welcome any feedback during the consultation period on these proposals and any alternatives to them.

### **3.12 What is the NYCC Policy on School Transport?**

Free transport is provided to the catchment school, or nearest school to the home address, subject to qualifying distance:

- two miles for children under eight years of age;
- three miles for children aged over eight; or
- where the route to the catchment or nearest school is not safe to walk accompanied by a responsible adult.

#### ***Low income***

Additional children from low income families are eligible for free home to school transport including;

Children aged eight, but under the age of 11 who are attending their catchment or nearest school and the distance to that school is more than two miles.

A low income family is where children are entitled to free school meals or whose parent are in receipt of the maximum level of working tax credit.

#### ***Transport to Luttons Community Primary School***

The following section only applies in the event that Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School does proceed to closure in August 2022, and that Luttons CP School becomes a catchment School for the Weaverthorpe area from September 2022.

The LA Road Safety team have assessed the route between Weaverthorpe village and Luttons CP School and it is considered to be a safe walking route (child accompanied as necessary) based on the standard criteria applied to all assessments. However, having considered the matter the County Council is minded to apply discretion as allowed under the Home to School Transport policy in the circumstances of a school closure.

It is proposed that all existing Weaverthorpe School pupils who live in the School's existing catchment area and beyond 2 miles from Luttons CP School would be deemed to be eligible for free home to school transport to Luttons CP School on their transfer in September 2022. This proposed approach would also apply to any new starters in the Reception year at Luttons CP School in September 2022 who meet the same distance and residency criteria. This would provide support to the small number of families who are affected by the closure and who would otherwise not be eligible for transport assistance to Luttons CP School based on the criteria set out above. Eligibility would continue for the length of the child's attendance at Luttons CP School, unless there were to be a future change of address for the family that meant the distance and residency criteria were no longer satisfied.

Arrangements for home to school transport will be confirmed at the end of the statutory process following consultation.

#### **4. Other Options FAQs**

##### **4.1 Can the current leadership and governance just be made permanent?**

Langton School Governing Board were generous in offering support for leadership at Weaverthorpe by offering expertise and capacity through Mrs Ray, other members of school staff and two of their governors to support the IEB; in addition they agreed to extend their stay for a second year. However, these staff and governors now need to return full time to their substantive posts to focus exclusively on Langton School.

##### **4.2 Now improvements have been made can the school be inspected and judged good?**

Ofsted will continue to make monitoring visits to Weaverthorpe to assess its progress towards the removal of the inadequate judgement and this could result in a new judgement. However, to be assessed as 'Good', Ofsted would need to see that this performance has been sustained over a reasonable period and be confident that it can continue. At present, the improvements in provision and specifically, the quality of education, are not yet sufficiently well embedded to ensure all children, from their different starting points, achieve success. Additional capacity has been added this year with a remit to improve curriculum planning which remains at the early stages of its development. Leaders have planned and invested in resources to support the curriculum, but the impact of this is yet to be seen in outcomes for pupils. Further improvements remain a challenge due to the uncertain nature of leadership beyond the current temporary arrangements.

##### **4.3 Can the academy order be rescinded?**

Ofsted do not usually return to undertake a full inspection for two full years following an inadequate inspection outcome and due to the pandemic routine inspections have not taken place. The RSC has discretion to revoke academy orders in exceptional circumstances but this is not expected unless a school is judged to be 'Good' or 'Outstanding' following a full inspection. At that point, it would be a decision for the RSC whether or not to agree to a revocation of the DAO, and this is never guaranteed.



Although much work is being done to focus on securing the quality of education in school at the moment, this is temporary and may not be sustainable due to the interim leadership and governance.

#### **4.4 Would the Local Authority appoint new permanent leadership and governance?**

The LA's role was to secure short-term leadership and governance following the 'Inadequate' judgement. The appointment of a replacement permanent Headteacher is always the responsibility of the governing board (IEB in this case) and not the LA.

An IEB of a school with a DAO in place and a deficit budget position were right to fully consider the future of the school and its viability before considering a permanent leadership arrangement.

If an academy sponsorship had been agreed, many trusts would have brought in their own leadership arrangements alongside the change in governance.

#### **4.5 Can more schools, including those further away, be considered for collaboration?**

The same issues are likely to apply to all schools. We also know that successful collaborations typically involve schools that are close to each other so the benefits of the collaborative arrangements can be maximised. All schools within a reasonable distance will receive a copy of the consultation document.

#### **Has the new Luttons Headteacher been asked to reconsider collaboration?**

The decision on collaboration is made by the Governing Board. At present the governing board of the school/federation are making an arrangement with Snainton School which will preclude any other commitments.

#### **4.6 Could the LA just ask the other schools again?**

The schools will be part of the consultation and can respond how they see fit. However, the fundamental position on which they made their decisions is unlikely to have changed.

#### **4.7 Can the school just recruit a permanent headteacher of their own?**

No. Unless the school is a viable proposition, the IEB could not consider trying to employ a permanent Headteacher.

#### **4.8 Could community donations be used to address the financial issues at the school?**

Any financial contributions from the community to support the school budget must be voluntary. Therefore, no-one can be under any obligation to pay and any contributions must be unconditional and without undue influence on school management. This requirement places a significant level of uncertainty in respect of reliance on voluntary community funding for the financial sustainability of the school. In this regard, the Local Authority is unlikely to be able to take into account any voluntary contributions in assessing the financial viability of the school and the school finances should be secure without any reliance upon pledges or other voluntary support

## **5. Academy Options FAQs**

### **5.1 Could Norton Academy be used as a "pyramid" school for other primary schools to join?**

It is the responsibility of the RSC to identify any potential academy sponsors for the school. The RSC has advised the LA that Evolution School Learning Trust (Norton Academy) would not be considered

as a match for Weaverthorpe because it is not a faith trust. They would also expect a potential sponsor to be able to demonstrate in-house expertise and a successful track-record in primary phase school improvement, and to have good or outstanding primary schools already within the trust.

## **5.2 Have all MATs been approached?**

Choice of potential MAT sponsors is managed by the RSC and they will have looked at possible options for faith-based trusts given that Weaverthorpe is a Church of England school.

## **6. Further advice and assistance**

### **How can I get further information about any admissions queries?**

Email your query to: [schooladmissions@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:schooladmissions@northyorks.gov.uk)

### **How can I get further information about the process?**

Email your query to: [schoolorganisation@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation@northyorks.gov.uk)

## **7. Additional questions from the public meeting 20 January 2022**

### **7.1 How was the local authority involved in the school before, during and after the Ofsted inspection?**

The role of the LA in school improvement is to monitor the performance of schools and to provide, or signpost to, support for school leaders and governors to access. The LA also has a role to broker direct in-school support where schools require this.

Between the Ofsted inspection in 2016 and the inspection in January 2020, the LA school improvement team undertook regular monitoring visits to the school and each time provided feedback and recommendations to leaders and governors in line with their approach for 'good' schools. In 2019, the visits identified that issues were not being addressed at the pace required and as a result the LA wrote to the chair of the governing board, prior to the Ofsted inspection, in January 2020 to set out these concerns, and issue a warning that action must be taken by the school, otherwise formal powers of intervention may be invoked.

The Ofsted inspection took place shortly after this letter was issued and the judgement was that the school was inadequate, resulting in the issuing of a directive academy order. In the period since the inspection, the LA has used its powers to establish an IEB, to broker leadership cover and to provide additional support, working alongside the current leaders and governors.

### **7.2 Why was there a vacancy for the LA governor prior to the inspection in January 2020?**

When boards have a vacancy for a governor, they are responsible for filling this as soon as possible. If the vacancy applies to the LA governor, then the LA supports the recruitment activity. All applications are reviewed by an LA panel, and references obtained as part of a screening check. Ideally the school have identified the skill set they need so the panel can understand the board's requirements in order to identify and nominate suitable candidates. Candidates are identified by three main routes; 1) They are encouraged by the school to apply for the position and stipulate this on their application; 2) The candidate has applied independently and have confirmed the school is within the region from their home or work they are prepared to travel and is suited to their needs (i.e. primary/ secondary); 3) the candidate has been an LA Governor elsewhere. Where a match (or matches) are identified, the LA forward nominations to the school. The board must then decide

whether the LA nominee is accepted or rejected by the board. There were no appropriate speculative applications on the LA database in Autumn 2019, the board were reviewing any contacts and were in the process of seeking a nominee in their networks to recommend to the LA panel. The LA established an IEB during 2020 following the Ofsted inspection of Jan 2020 - as part of this, all board members were nominated by the LA, in conjunction with the Diocese of York.

# Equality impact assessment (EIA) form: evidencing paying due regard to protected characteristics

(Form updated April 2019)

## Proposal to close Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School from 31 August 2022

If you would like this information in another language or format such as Braille, large print or audio, please contact the Communications Unit on 01609 53 2013 or email [communications@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:communications@northyorks.gov.uk).



যদি আপনি এই ডকুমেন্ট অন্য ভাষায় বা ফরমেটে চান, তাহলে দয়া করে আমাদেরকে বলুন।

如欲索取以另一語文印製或另一格式製作的資料，請與我們聯絡。

اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔

**Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are public documents. EIAs accompanying reports going to County Councillors for decisions are published with the committee papers on our website and are available in hard copy at the relevant meeting. To help people to find completed EIAs we also publish them in the Equality and Diversity section of our website. This will help people to see for themselves how we have paid due regard in order to meet statutory requirements.**

Name of Directorate and Service Area	CYPS Strategic Planning Team
Lead Officer and contact details	Andrew Dixon, County Hall
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the EIA	Matt George, Strategic Planning Officer
How will you pay due regard? e.g. working group, individual officer	LA Officers and School Governing Body
When did the due regard process start?	Consultation started on 7 January 2022

**Section 1. Please describe briefly what this EIA is about.** (e.g. are you starting a new service, changing how you do something, stopping doing something?)

The proposal is to close Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School from 31 August 2022. A period of consultation with the community has been carried out, including written consultation and an online public meeting. A statutory representation period will follow.

**Section 2. Why is this being proposed? What are the aims? What does the authority hope to achieve by it?** (e.g. to save money, meet increased demand, do things in a better way.)

**Appendix 7: Equality Impact Assessment**

Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School, in the Ryedale area, was inspected by Ofsted in January 2020 and found to be 'Inadequate'. The inspection report was published by Ofsted in July 2020.

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 the 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.

Formal partnership with another local maintained school was explored as an option to sustain Weaverthorpe School both educationally and financially. Local Authority officers and the Diocese of York (the Church body with responsibility for the school) worked together to discuss the situation with the potential partner schools in the local area during the summer and autumn terms of 2021. None of those discussions resulted in an acceptable partnership proposal for the future of Weaverthorpe School.

It is considered highly unlikely that a partnership arrangement with another local school, such as federation or amalgamation, can now be identified. The school is in a vulnerable position for multiple reasons, not least because the temporary leadership arrangements cannot continue beyond the end of the current academic year. The interim executive board of Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School decided, with regret, that in line with the advice of local authority officers they would ask the County Council to consider a consultation on the future of the School.

**Section 3. What will change? What will be different for customers and/or staff?**

If this proposal went ahead, Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School would close with effect from 31 August 2022. It is proposed that the catchment area of Luttons Community Primary School is expanded to include the current Weaverthorpe School catchment area. There is an area of Weaverthorpe's catchment area that is currently shared with Hertford Vale CE Primary School and it is proposed that area (Butterwick) remains part of Hertford Vale's catchment area.

**Section 4. Involvement and consultation (What involvement and consultation has been done regarding the proposal and what are the results? What consultation will be needed and how will it be done?)**

The consultation period ran from 7 January 2022 to 18 February 2022. Consultation documents were distributed to a wide range of stakeholders, and two online public engagement meetings were held. The consultation document, responses, and notes of the public meetings are included in the report to the Executive on 22 March.

**Section 5. What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?**

Please explain briefly why this will be the result.

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

If the school closed, there could be a potential additional cost to the Local Authority in providing transport to other schools. Free home to school transport would be provided for entitled pupils

## Appendix 7: Equality Impact Assessment

in accordance with the revised catchment area arrangements in accordance with the County Council's Home to School transport policy and as set out in the report to Executive on 22 March 2022.

<b>Section 6. How will this proposal affect people with protected characteristics?</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>Make things better</b>	<b>Make things worse</b>	<b>Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.</b>
Age		x	x	<p>Currently there are only 21 pupils on roll and six of those are currently in Year 6 and will leave in summer 2022 to transition to secondary provision. If the decision is taken to close the school this adversely affects the current cohort.</p> <p>Moving to an alternative school will increase the opportunities for pupils to work and play with children their own age.</p>
Disability	x			<p>Pupils – The school is mainstream offering universal provision.</p> <p>Expertise will be utilised from the County Council to provide appropriate SEN support.</p> <p>Staff – As an organisation NYCC will continue to meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 which obligates us to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled individuals as employees or service users.</p>
Sex	x			No impact is anticipated.
Race	x			No impact is anticipated.
Gender reassignment	x			No impact is anticipated.
Sexual orientation	x			No impact is anticipated.
Religion or belief			x	If the decision is taken to close the School, this will adversely impact upon those pupils who wish to be educated in a Church of England School. Parents can apply to another CE school and the local authority will do its best to comply with their preference through the co-ordinated preference exercise.
Pregnancy or maternity	x			No impact is anticipated.
Marriage or civil partnership	x			No impact is anticipated.

## Appendix 7: Equality Impact Assessment

<b>Section 7. How will this proposal affect people who...</b>	<b>No impact</b>	<b>Make things better</b>	<b>Make things worse</b>	<b>Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.</b>
..live in a rural area?			x	<p>This proposal would have an adverse impact for those living within its catchment that attend the school as they would have to travel to alternative schools.</p> <p>The nearest school to Weaverthorpe, 2.5 miles from Weaverthorpe CE VC Primary School, is Luttons Community Primary School, which has places available in all year groups. This school has the capacity to take any additional pupils as a result of the proposed closure, and has indicated a willingness to do so.</p> <p>Free home to school transport would be provided for entitled pupils within the enlarged catchment area in accordance with the County Council's Home to School Transport policy. The County Council's Home to School transport policy sets out that free school transport will be provided to the catchment school or nearest school to a child's home address if it is over the statutory walking distances set out by law.</p> <p>The County Council is minded to apply discretion as allowed under the Home to School Transport policy in the circumstances of a school closure as set out in the report to Executive on 22 March 2022 and arrangements for home to school transport will be confirmed at the end of the statutory process following consultation.</p>
...have a low income?	x			There may be adverse impact on those families with low incomes by the proposed closure of the school. However, this would be mitigated by the LA provided transport assistance, in line with the Transport Policy.
...are carers (unpaid family or friend)?	x			No impact is anticipated.

**Section 8. Geographic impact – Please detail where the impact will be (please tick all that apply)**

North Yorkshire wide	
Craven district	

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Hambleton district	
Harrogate district	
Richmondshire district	
Ryedale district	x
Scarborough district	
Selby district	
<b>If you have ticked one or more districts, will specific town(s)/village(s) be particularly impacted? If so, please specify below.</b>	
Weaverthorpe and Butterwick	

**Section 9. Will the proposal affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics? (e.g. older women or young gay men) State what you think the effect may be and why, providing evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.**

All pupils and staff at the school would experience changes under these proposals that staff and governors would need to manage sensitively.

The County Council's Officers now feel that this decision is in the best interests of children and families served by the school.

Local authority officers have undertaken a managed and co-ordinated process for the allocation of alternative school places for September 2022, and for those allocations to be implemented in the event that the School does proceed to closure through the statutory process.

County Council is minded to apply discretion as allowed under the Home to School Transport policy in the circumstances of a school closure as set out in the report to Executive on 22 March 2022 and arrangements for home to school transport will be confirmed at the end of the statutory process following consultation.

<b>Section 10. Next steps to address the anticipated impact. Select one of the following options and explain why this has been chosen. (Remember: we have an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can access services and work for us)</b>	<b>Tick option chosen</b>
<b>1. No adverse impact - no major change needed to the proposal.</b> There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified.	
<b>2. Adverse impact - adjust the proposal -</b> The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We will change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or we will achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people.	
<b>3. Adverse impact - continue the proposal -</b> The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We cannot change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, nor can we achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people. (There must be compelling reasons for continuing with proposals which will have the most adverse impacts. Get advice from Legal Services)	<b>x</b>



## Appendix 7: Equality Impact Assessment

<p><b>4. Actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and remove the proposal</b> – The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It must be stopped.</p>	
<p>Explanation of why option has been chosen. (Include any advice given by Legal Services.)</p> <p>Weaverthorpe is designated as a rural school under the Designation of Rural Primary Schools (England) Order. The School Organisation regulations and guidance contain a presumption against closure of rural schools, and it is a requirement that proposers must consider the effect of the discontinuance of any rural primary school on the local community. The statutory guidance specifically states that 'This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but the case for closure should be strong and a proposal must be clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area.' Careful consideration to alternatives to closure of the school, including transport implications and the impact on local people and the wider community has been given. A detailed analysis of these issues is contained in the Statutory Proposals and the report to Executive. It is concluded that the case for closure is strong and in the best interests of educational provision in the area.</p>	

**Section 11. If the proposal is to be implemented how will you find out how it is really affecting people? (How will you monitor and review the changes?)**

Monitoring of standards will be carried out through the County Council's Education & Skills Team and through Ofsted inspections. Monitoring of sufficiency of school places in the area will be undertaken by the CYPS Strategic Planning Team.

**Section 12. Action plan.** List any actions you need to take which have been identified in this EIA, including post implementation review to find out how the outcomes have been achieved in practice and what impacts there have actually been on people with protected characteristics.

Action	Lead	By when	Progress	Monitoring arrangements
Not applicable				

**Section 13. Summary** Summarise the findings of your EIA, including impacts, recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

The purpose of the consultation and proposed decision is to ensure that the children are provided with the best education provision in the area in a sustainable, stable and effective manner. In order to achieve these aims the proposal to close Weaverthorpe School needs to be considered. Whilst it is recognised that there may be adverse impact upon those with protected characteristics of age and religion/belief, there are more positive impacts that will result if these proposals are implemented. As these proposals develop any adverse impacts will be carefully monitored, and all reasonable mitigations will be taken.

**Section 14. Sign off section**

This full EIA was completed by:

Name: M George  
Job title: Strategic Planning Officer  
Directorate: CYPS  
Completion date: 22/2/22

Appendix 7: Equality Impact Assessment

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director (signature): A Newbold  
Date: 3 March 2022