

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

18 October 2022

Hovingham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek Executive Member approval to consult on a proposal that the County Council should close Hovingham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School from 31 March 2023.

2.0 BACKGROUND AND SUMMARY

- 2.1 At a recent governing body meeting of the Federation of Hovingham CE Primary School and St Hilda's CE Primary School it was resolved, with regret and reluctance, to ask the County Council to consult on closure proposals for Hovingham CE Primary School.
- 2.2 The Federated Governing Body of Hovingham CE Primary School and St Hilda's CE Primary School, have not reached this decision lightly and have already worked to support the School through the Federation with St Hilda's CE VC Primary School, Ampleforth which has been in place since 2016.
- 2.3 The main factor prompting the request is there are currently no pupils on roll at Hovingham. The School has operated with 40 pupils or below for the last decade. Since the 2017/18 academic year there has been a downward trend of pupil numbers and pupils numbers fell from 33 in May 2020 to 24 in May 2021. This trend accelerated across the 2021/22 academic year with the school having 20 pupils on roll in October, 16 in January and only 7 in May 2022 (all of whom were in key stage 2). Between May 2022 and the start of the new term in September 2022 all remaining pupils departed and no new starters commenced the term in September.
- 2.4 Finance is also a key concern. The pupil numbers for the October 2022 census form the basis of a schools' funding for the 2023/24 financial year. The Department for Education (DfE) have confirmed that where a school has no pupils in the October census they will not allocate any funding for that school in the schools block element of Dedicated School Grant (DSG) funding that a local authority receives to fund schools and academies located within the local authority area.
- 2.5 In the event of the school remaining open, the local authority would need to determine whether the school should continue to be funded through the school funding formula. If this were agreed, the school would receive the formula lump sum funding (2023/24 indicative value £128k) and the school rates funding (£2.5k). Any 2023/24 formula funding allocation for Hovingham CE Primary would need to be funded from the DSG funding allocations provided for other schools and academies within North Yorkshire.
- 2.6 If the school closure were to go ahead, the individual school budgets would need to be separated out from the current amalgamated Federation budget. Initial work has been undertaken on this process; the indicative position as at 31 March 2022 is a cumulative revenue budget deficit of £5.2k for Hovingham CE Primary School. Work is currently

being undertaken with the Federation leadership on forecasting the budget position to the end of the current financial year.

- 2.7 In addition, the permanent Headteacher post became vacant on 31 August 2022 and from September 2022 temporary leadership has been in place. This is provided by the Executive Headteacher of Foston, Terrington and Stillington schools, and covers both Hovingham and their Federated School, St Hilda's CE VC Primary School in Ampleforth. The Federation Governing Body will require clarity over the future of Hovingham School to allow them to make permanent arrangements for future leadership.

3.0 HOVINGHAM CE VC PRIMARY

Pupil numbers

- 3.1 Hovingham is a 4-11 CE VC Primary School and currently has no children on roll. The school is located in a rural area of Ryedale, serving families living in and near the village of Hovingham, and the surrounding area. The number of children at Hovingham CE VC Primary School has been falling over the past few years:

2014/15 – 35
2015/16 – 36
2016/17 – 37
2017/18 – 37
2018/19 – 29
2019/20 – 33
2020/21 – 24
2021/22 – 7 (May 2022 Census)
2022/23 – 0

- 3.2 The School has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 8 pupils per year group. The School has capacity to accommodate up to 60 pupils if all spaces are in use, and therefore has the potential to contribute 60 places in the local area

Finance

- 3.3 Pupil numbers determine the funding for a school budget. The DfE have confirmed that in the exceptional situation where a school has no pupils, no funding would be provided to the local authority for that school through the DfE DSG schools block funding; this is the grant funding used to fund school delegated budgets. North Yorkshire County Council will not receive a school funding allocation for Hovingham CE Primary in the 2023/24 financial year as no pupils will be recorded on the DfE October 2022 school census. In the event of the school remaining open, the local authority would need to determine whether the school should continue to be funded through the school funding formula. If this were agreed, the school would receive the formula lump sum funding (2023/24 indicative value £128k) and the school rates funding (£2.5k). Any 2023/24 formula funding allocation for Hovingham CE Primary would need to be funded from the DSG funding allocations provided for other schools and academies within North Yorkshire.
- 3.4 The Federation of Hovingham CE Primary School and St Hilda's CE Primary School operate an amalgamated budget for the two schools within the Federation. The balance on the Federation amalgamated revenue budget as at 31 March 2022 was an overall budget surplus of £90.1k. The indicative position of the individual schools is a budget deficit of £5.2k for Hovingham and a budget surplus of £95.3k for St Hilda's.

There appears to be no reasonable long-term prospect of recovery for the Hovingham budget given there will be no DfE funding allocation for the school for the 2023/24 financial year.

- 3.5 The 2022/23 Start Budget submitted to the Local Authority for the Federation in May 2022 forecasts an accumulated revenue budget surplus at the end of the 2022/23 financial year of £27.5k. The budget forecasts that the Federation will have an accumulated revenue budget deficit of £71.8k at the end of the 2023/24 financial year and £196.5k accumulated revenue budget deficit at the end of the 2024/25 financial year. The financial forecast is based the following pupil number assumptions for Hovingham: October 2021 – 20 pupils, October 2022 – 8 pupils and October 2023 – 5 pupils.
- 3.6 In the event of Hovingham CE Primary closing on 31 March 2023, any legacy costs associated with the operation of the school incurred in the 2023/24 financial year would need to continue to be charged to the school budget. Any final deficit on the school budget, after all costs have been accounted for, would need to be met from local authority funds.

School Leadership

- 3.7 As stated above there is no permanent leadership in place for the school due to the Headteacher post becoming vacant during the summer holiday period of 2022. Temporary leadership is currently provided by the Executive Headteacher of Foston, Terrington and Stillington schools, and covers both Hovingham School and St Hilda's CE VC Primary School in Ampleforth. Given both the practical and financial difficulties presented by Hovingham having no pupils it would not be possible to engage a permanent Headteacher to cover St Hilda's and Hovingham on the existing shared cost arrangements. The Federation Governing Body will require clarity over the future of Hovingham School to allow them to make permanent arrangements for future leadership.

Standards and Curriculum

- 3.8 The most recent full Ofsted inspection for Hovingham School was in October 2017. At that time there were 39 pupils on roll. Ofsted judged the school to be 'Good'. However, pupil numbers at Hovingham have fallen rapidly. As numbers fall, it is increasingly difficult to provide the remaining pupils with access to the full range of experiences and the quality of education they require. At present, if any pupils were to apply to join Hovingham School there is no realistic prospect of them being able to get a full and balanced school experience in the absence of any peers.
- 3.9 The last Ofsted inspection report for St Hilda's Primary School, Ampleforth related to an inspection in March 2020, and the overall effectiveness of the school was judged to be 'Good'.
- 3.10 Both of the above Ofsted inspections took place under the previous substantive headteacher. From September 2022 the leadership at Hovingham and St Hilda's has been provided by the current Executive Headteacher of Foston, Terrington and Stillington Primary Schools. The most recent Ofsted inspections at each of those three schools have taken place under her leadership.

Foston Primary School was subject to a short inspection in January 2020 that confirmed that the school continued to be judged 'Good'.

Terrington Primary School was subject to a short inspection in June 2018 that confirmed the School continued to be judged 'Good'.

The Executive Headteacher of Foston and Terrington began to provide leadership at Stillington in August 2020, the School having been judged 'Inadequate' since 2016. Stillington was last subject to full inspection in June 2021 when Ofsted recognised the progress at the School. The overall inspection outcome was 'Requires Improvement' and leadership and management were judged to be 'Good'.

4.0 PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES IN THE LOCAL AREA

- 4.1 There are currently no pupils on roll at Hovingham CE so there will be no immediate requirement to assist parents with seeking alternative places in the event of closure. However, it is important to ensure that there are sufficient school places in the local area. In October 2021 there were 31 pupils living in Hovingham's discrete catchment area and attending a North Yorkshire school, and a further 11 living in the catchment area that Hovingham shares with St Hilda's. Appendix 1 shows the schools that were attended by those 42 pupils in October 2021. At that time 14 of them were attending Hovingham and 28 were going to a total of nine alternative schools.
- 4.2 There are four other neighbouring primary schools within c.7 miles of Hovingham CE VC Primary School (listed in Appendix 2). Across the area there are places available in all year groups at various schools (Appendix 3).
- 4.3 The nearest school to Hovingham is Slingsby CP which is currently operating over their net capacity of 77. Their facilities offer some ability to operate over net capacity but limits them from having a planned admission number higher than 11.

Although Slingsby has typically been oversubscribed in recent years this is predominantly due to local popularity rather than an 'in area' need for places. In October 2021 there were 94 pupils on roll at Slingsby. However, only 28 of these were pupils living within the Slingsby catchment area. The rest of the breakdown of pupils attending Slingsby School at that time is included as Appendix 4. Significant numbers of pupils currently attend Slingsby from the catchment areas of Nawton CP, Amotherby CP and St Hilda's CE.

At October 2021 there were 48 children of primary school age registered with a GP practice where their home address was recorded as being within Slingsby's catchment area. However, only 39 of these pupils attended state schools in North Yorkshire. A number of pupils locally attend Independent schools. Therefore, the data clearly shows that Slingsby School is a significant 'net importer' of pupils due to popularity and does have sufficient capacity to accommodate children from its own catchment area.

If Hovingham were to close and Slingsby were to experience more 'in area' demand for places from an enlarged catchment area then applicants from that catchment area would receive priority for Reception places at the expense of 'out area' applicants. For example, in Reception during October 2021, five of the 11 pupils were attending from outside the catchment area and going forward with an enlarged catchment area we would expect that proportion could reduce.

- 4.4 There is currently capacity in all year groups at Terrington CE VA Primary School, which is the next nearest school. There are also places available in all year groups at St Hilda's CE Primary School. Both of these schools have adjacent catchment areas to that of Hovingham CE Primary School and a Church of England designation.

- 4.5 Appendix 2 provides projected numbers based on forecast birth rates, with potential additional pupils from outstanding housing permissions and proposed housing allocations. The County Council is aware of some potential proposals for additional housing in rural areas of Ryedale including the Slingsby area. However, these are considered to be at such an early stage that they cannot be a material factor when considering the immediate future of Hovingham School given the unprecedented prevailing circumstances.

5.0 IMPACT ON FEDERATION

- 5.1 The Federation between Hovingham and St Hilda's Primary Schools has been in place since 2016. The schools have operated an Executive Headteacher arrangement with leadership costs apportioned between each school, as is typical of federations. The potential closure of Hovingham School would result in the existing Federation being dissolved. In that event there would need to be permanent future leadership and governance arrangements established for St Hilda's. This would be expected, given the size of the school, to once again include an Executive Headteacher model with leadership shared with another school(s), and the potential for this arrangement to extend to federated governance across a group of schools. The Federation Governing Body will be exploring the future options for St Hilda's over the coming months, and in parallel with the Hovingham closure proposal should that proceed.

6.0 CATCHMENT AREA PROPOSALS

- 6.1 As set out in section 4 and Appendices 2 and 3 there is available capacity in the local area to ensure sufficiency of school places. Parents of future children living in the current Hovingham catchment area will be able to express a preference for school places at any school. However, residents are entitled to have a local school which their address gives them priority to attend in the event of oversubscription. Therefore, the current Hovingham catchment area will need to be subsumed into the catchment area for one or more of the surrounding schools.

- 6.2 Council Officers, having consulted with Diocesan representatives, have identified two options which seem to offer sensible catchment schools to the residents of the current catchment area. The current catchment and possible options are shown on maps within Appendix 5. At present, there is a discrete catchment area solely for Hovingham, and a second area which is a shared area between Hovingham and St Hilda's, Ampleforth.

Option 1: Hovingham CE discrete catchment area (comprising the parishes of Hovingham, Scackleton, Stonegrave and most of Coulton) to become part of the catchment area for Slingsby CP. The area currently shared between Hovingham CE and St Hilda's to become part of St Hilda's catchment area.

Option 2: Hovingham parish to become part of the Slingsby CP catchment area. The area currently shared between Hovingham CE and St Hilda's and the parish of Stonegrave to become part of St Hilda's catchment area. Parishes of Coulton and Scackleton to become part of the catchment area for Terrington CE School.

- 6.3 As part of the consultation process the Local Authority will ask for views on the future catchment boundaries from stakeholders. The consultation document will also outline the part that schools' catchments play in determining the eligibility for home to school transport.

7.0 CONSULTATION PROCESS AND TIMESCALE

- 7.1 Should a decision be made to initiate a consultation on the proposed closure of Hovingham CE VC Primary School, a period of four consultation weeks is to be observed. This is less than the normal six weeks in recognition of the unprecedented situation of the School, the need to provide clarity to staff, governors and the community of the Federation at the earliest date, and in order to provide opportunity to conclude the process by the end of the school's financial year in light of the financial issues set out in section 3. An indicative timetable is set out below. A consultation document is currently being drafted.
- 7.2 A separate staff consultation process, including a meeting for staff and their professional associations and unions, would run in parallel with the consultation on the closure proposal.
- 7.3 The final decision on closure would be taken by the Executive (or by the Executive Member for Schools if there are no objections during the representation period).
- 7.4 Suggested key dates are shown below:

Approval to Consult by Executive Members	18 October 2022
Consultation opens (4 weeks)	31 October 2022
Public meeting	9 November 2022 - tbc
Consultation closes	28 November 2022
County Council's Executive considers consultation response	13 December 2022
Executive decision to publish statutory notices	13 December 2022
Publication of statutory notices	6 January 2023
Representation period starts (4 weeks)	6 January 2023
Representation period ends	3 February 2023
Final decision by County Council's Executive	21 February 2023
Proposed school closure date	31 March 2023

8 THE SCHOOL SITE

- 8.1 The school building is not owned by the County Council. Decisions about the future use of the school building will be taken by the owners after the closure proposal has been determined.

9 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 The Executive Member for Schools is recommended to provide approval to consult on a proposal to close Hovingham CE VC Primary School with effect from 31 March 2023.

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

Report prepared by Matt George, Strategic Planning Officer

Action AgreedExecutive Member
Date:

Action RequestedCorporate Director
Date:

List of Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Hovingham CE VC Primary Pupil Breakdown as at October 2021

Appendix 2 – Local Schools

Appendix 3 – Indicative Table of Places Available in Local Schools

Appendix 4 – Slingsby CP Primary Pupil Breakdown as at October 2021

Appendix 5 – Maps showing Current Catchment areas and Local Schools as well as potential future catchment proposals.

Appendix 1 - Hovingham CE VC Primary Pupil Breakdown as at October 2021

School Name: Hovingham CE VC Primary School

Pupils attending the above named school as at October 2021 Census

DfE No.	School	N	R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total inc. nursery pupils	% roll	Total exc. nursery pupils	% roll
3054	Hovingham CE VC Primary School		1	2	1		3	3	3	13	65.00	13	65.00
3005 & 3054	St Hilda's Ampleforth CE VC Primary School & Hovingham CE VC Primary School							1		1	5.00	1	5.00
2075	Newton CP School								1	1	5.00	1	5.00
2132	Slingsby CP School					1			1	2	10.00	2	10.00
2408	Norton CP School			1						1	5.00	1	5.00
3331	Terrington CE VA Primary School						1	1		2	10.00	2	10.00
	Unknown postcode									0	0.00	0	0.00
Total pupils attending as at October 2021		0	1	3	1	1	4	5	5	20	100	20	100

Defined catchment area for : Hovingham CE VC Primary School pupils attending North Yorkshire schools as at October 2021

DfE No.	School	N	R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total inc. nursery pupils	% of total pupils attending from within catchment area	Total exc. nursery pupils	% roll
3054	Hovingham CE VC Primary School	0	1	2	1	0	3	3	3	13	41.94	13	41.94
2075	Newton CP School		1	1		1				3	9.68	3	9.68
2132	Slingsby CP School			1	1	2				4	12.90	4	12.90
2186	Sheriff Hutton Primary School				1					1	3.23	1	3.23
2236	Helmley CP School			1			3	1		5	16.13	5	16.13
3113	Sutton on the Forest CE VC Primary School			1	1					2	6.45	2	6.45
3331	Terrington CE VA Primary School						1			1	3.23	1	3.23
3600	St Benedict's Catholic Primary School - a Catholic voluntary academy				1	1				2	6.45	2	6.45
Total pupils attending as at October 2021		0	2	6	5	4	7	4	3	31	100.00	31	100

Defined catchment area for : St Hilda's Ampleforth CE VC Primary School & Hovingham CE VC Primary School shared area pupils attending North Yorkshire schools as at October 2021

DfE No.	School	N	R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total inc. nursery pupils	% of total pupils attending from within catchment area	Total exc. nursery pupils	% roll
3054	Hovingham CE VC Primary School							1		1	8.33	1	9.09
3005	St Hilda's Ampleforth CE VC Primary School			1						1	8.33	1	9.09
3331	Terrington CE VA Primary School	1			1					2	16.67	1	9.09
3600	St Benedict's Catholic Primary School - a Catholic voluntary academy			1			1	2		4	33.33	4	36.36
3021	Crayke CE VC Primary School			1		1		1		3	25.00	3	27.27
2132	Slingsby CP School						1			1	8.33	1	9.09
										0	0.00	0	0.00
Total pupils attending as at October 2021		1	0	3	1	1	2	4	0	12	100.00	11	100

Registered with GP as at October 2021 living within catchment inc shared area

Appendix 2 Local Schools

	Hovingham CE VC Primary School	St Hilda's Ampleforth CE VC Primary School	St Benedict's Catholic Primary School – a Catholic voluntary academy	Terrington CE VA Primary School	Slingsby Community Primary School	Total
Distance from Hovingham CE VC Primary School by road		7.2	6.9	4.6	2.2	
Last Ofsted Inspection	Good	Good	Good*	Good	Good	
Net Capacity (places available at the school)	56	49	105	63	77	350
Current pupil roll	0	27	72	26	91	216
Current capacity -/+	56	22	33	37	-14	134
Pupil roll 2023/24	0	28	71	29	91	219
Pupil roll 2024/25	0	26	73	29	91	219
Pupil roll 2025/26	0	27	69	30	88	214
Pupil roll 2026/27	0	27	69	26	84	206
Pupil roll 2027/28	0	27	67	29	83	206
Potential additional pupils from housing						
Pupils from outstanding permissions by 2027/28**	0	1	0	1	11	13
Potential pupils from future housing – Local Plan (over 15 years)	0	0	0	0	0	0

*Inspection date prior to academy conversion

**Based on 1 primary-aged pupil from every 4 new houses

Appendix 3 Indicative Table of Places Available in Local Schools

School	Distance from Hovingham CE School	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total on roll	Net Capacity
Hovingham CE	NA	Places	Places	Places	Places	Places	Places	Places	0	56
Slingsby CP	2.2	PAN	PAN	PAN	PAN	PAN	PAN	PAN	91	77
Terrington CE	4.6	Places	Places	Places	PAN	Places	Places	Places	26	63
St Benedict's RC, Ampleforth	6.9	Places	Place	Places	Places	Places	Places	Places	72	105
St Hilda's CE, Ampleforth	7.2	Places	Places	Places	Places	Places	Places	Places	27	49

PAN = School is at planned admission number, all applications will be dealt with on an individual basis and Admissions Team will have discussions with appropriate Headteacher to see if the school are in a position to take additional pupils in that year group.

Appendix 4 - Slingsby Community Primary Pupil Breakdown as at October 2021

School Name: Slingsby CP School

Pupils attending the above named school as at October 2021 Census

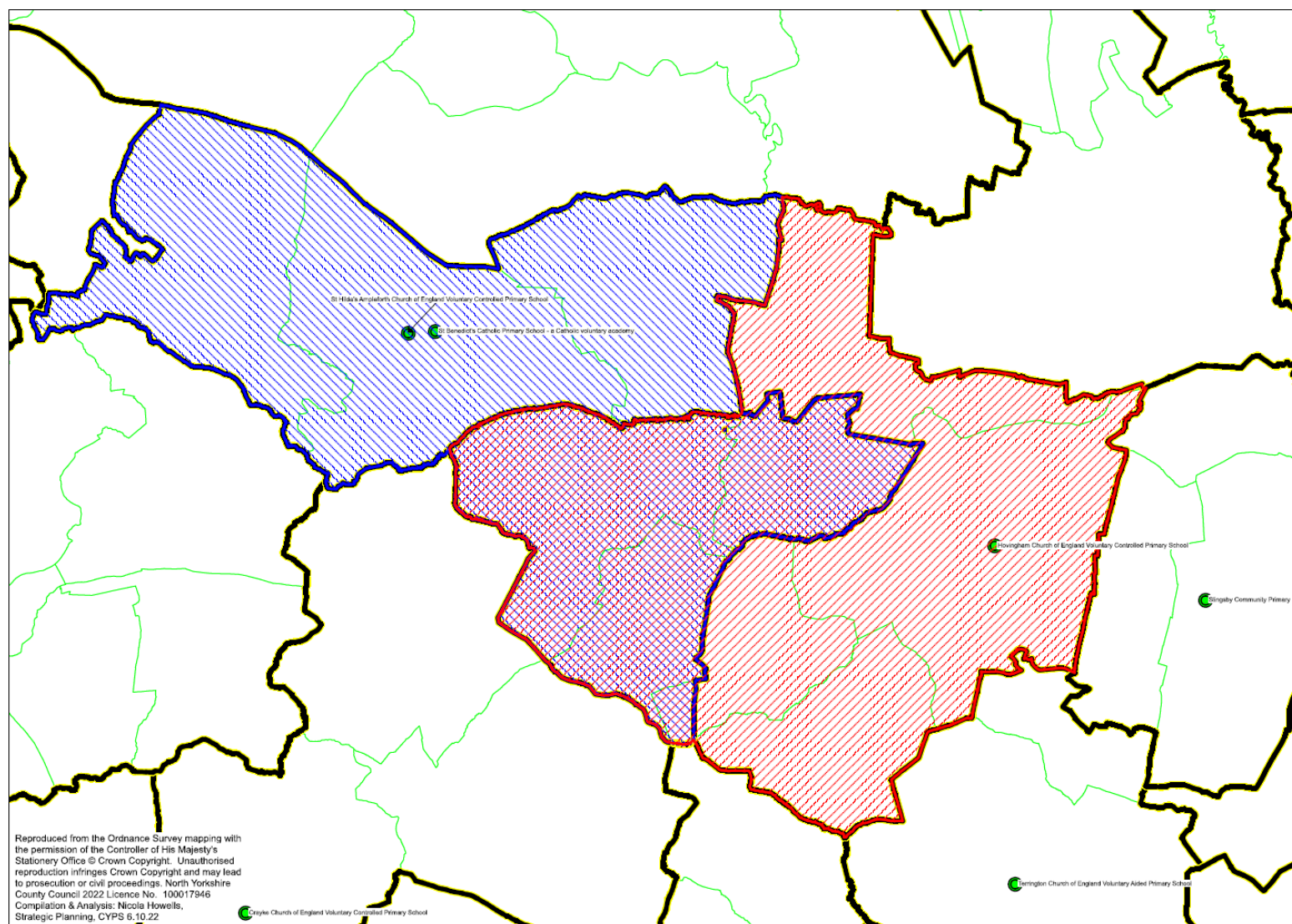
DfE No.	School	N	R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total inc. nursery pupils	% roll
2132	Slingsby CP School		5	3	7	1	3	3	6	28	29.79
2074	Malton CP School			2		4			1	7	7.45
2075	Nawton CP School		2	1	1	1	1	1	4	11	11.70
2151	Welbum CP School								1	1	1.06
2236	Helmsley CP School		1	2	1	2	2		1	9	9.57
2246	Amotherby CP School		1	1	4	3	4	3	4	20	21.28
3005	St Hilda's Ampleforth CE VC Primary School			2		4	1		1	8	8.51
3054	Hovingham CE VC Primary School			1	1	2				4	4.26
3331	Terrington CE VA Primary School		1	1	1			1		4	4.26
2222 & 2235	Pickering Community Junior School & Pickering Community Infant School		1	1						2	2.13
	Unknown postcode									0	0.00
Total pupils attending as at October 2021		0	11	14	15	17	11	8	18	94	100.00

Defined catchment area for : Slingsby CP School **pupils attending North Yorkshire schools as at October 2021**

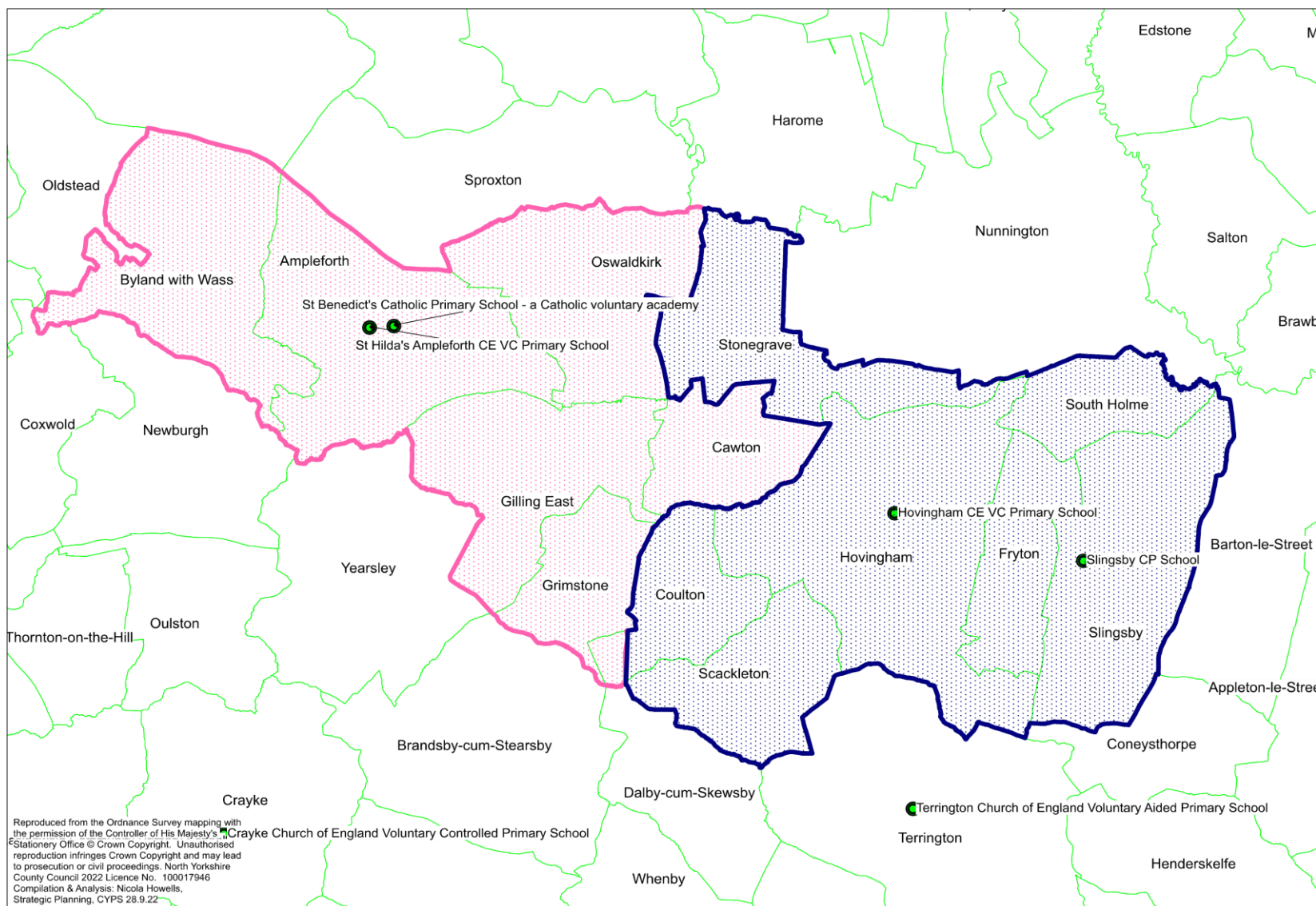
DfE No.	School	N	R	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total inc. nursery pupils	% of total pupils attending from within catchment area
2132	Slingsby CP School	0	5	3	7	1	3	3	6	28	71.79
2151	Welbum CP School				1			1	1	3	7.69
2186	Sheriff Hutton Primary School						1		1	2	5.13
2246	Amotherby CP School			1		1		2		4	10.26
3054	Hovingham CE VC Primary School					1			1	2	5.13
		0	5	4	8	3	4	6	9	39	100.00

Registered with GP as at October 2021 living within catchment			8	6	11	3	5	8	7	48	
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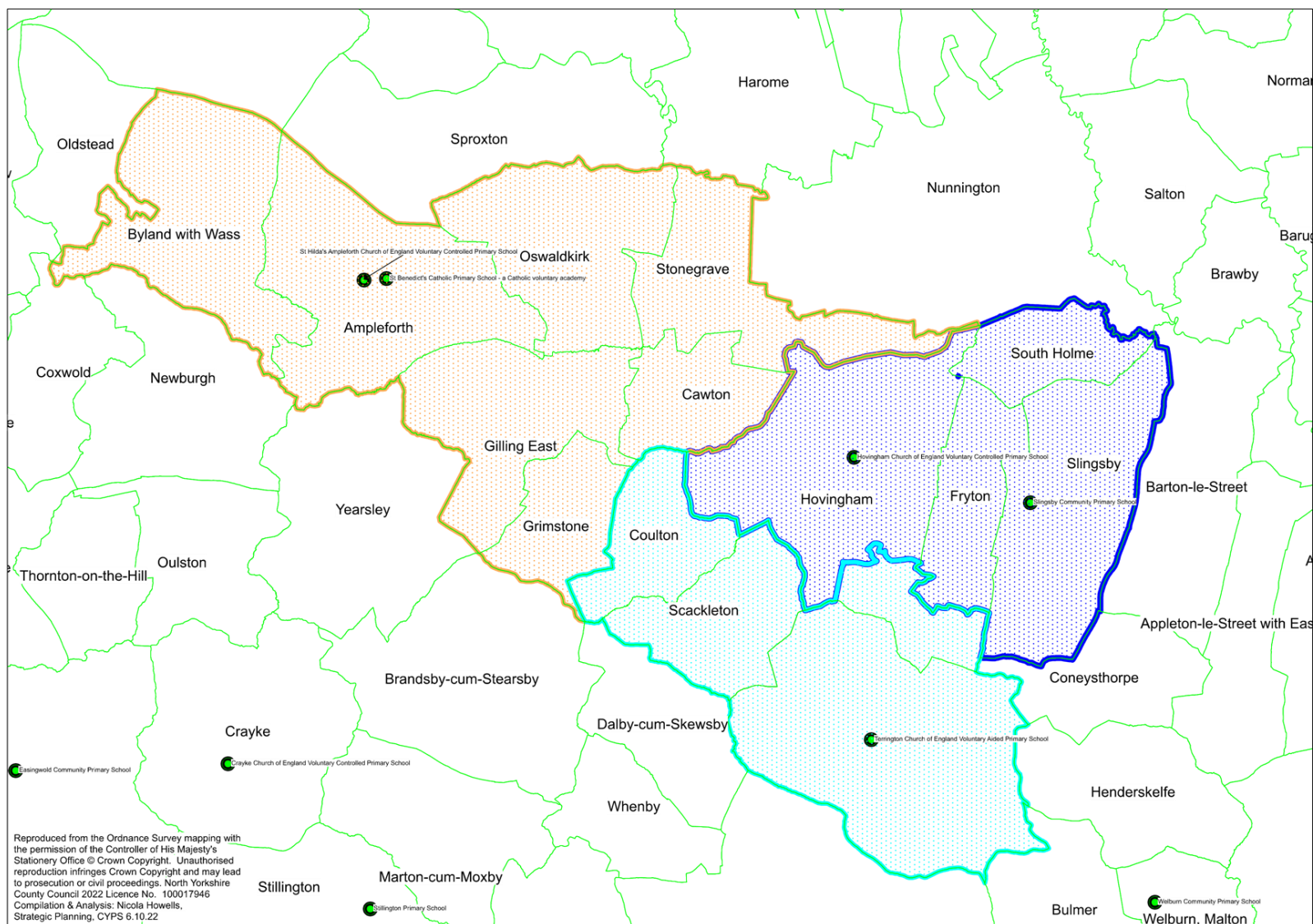
Appendix 5 - **Maps showing Current Catchment areas and Local Schools as well as potential future catchment proposals.**



Current Catchment Map: Red is Hovingham CE, Blue is St Hilda's CE and the central hatched area is shared between both schools.



Proposed option 1 - Hovingham CE discrete catchment area to become part of the catchment area for Slingsby CP. The area currently shared between Hovingham CE and St Hilda's to become part of St Hilda's catchment area.



Proposed option 2: Hovingham parish to become part of the Slingsby CP catchment area. The area currently shared between Hovingham CE and St Hilda's and the parish of Stonegrave to become part of St Hilda's catchment area. Parishes of Coulton and Scackleton to become part of the catchment area for Terrington CE School.