



Consultation Document

Proposal to close
Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School
from 31 August 2023

Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School

January 2023

This paper sets out details of a proposal to close Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School with effect from 31 August 2023. It gives the background to the proposal. There will be a public meeting at Skelton Reading Room, Main Street, Skelton on Ure, Ripon, HG4 5AJ on Tuesday 17 January at 6pm.

Background

Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School, Ripon is located in the rural village of Skelton on Ure. The school is currently federated with Sharow CE VC Primary School, an arrangement that has been in place since 2012. Both schools share the same Executive Headteacher. The federation maximises available opportunities to bring together pupils to share activities and learning opportunities.

Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted in March 2020, when there were 20 pupils on roll. The overall effectiveness was judged to be 'Requires Improvement' as were the four key judgements on the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development and leadership and management. The arrangements for safeguarding were judged to be effective.

The number of children at Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School has been falling over the past few years. At the beginning of September 2021, there were 15 pupils on roll in the school plus two children in the nursery. This was well below the capacity of the school which could accommodate around 52 pupils. Since then there has been a further fall in numbers and the school currently has nine statutory aged pupils and one nursery child remaining on roll. Due to low numbers Key stage 2 teaching is currently taking place at Sharow Primary School. The Governing Body have been active in their collective efforts to raise numbers at the school through many initiatives over recent years including the introduction of nursery provision in September 2019, which has attracted some children to the school, although numbers have been small. Marketing of the school has been a collective effort by governors, staff and parents though this has not had a long-term result.

At a recent Federation governing body meeting, governors agreed unanimously, with regret, to ask the County Council to consult on closure proposals for Skelton Newby Hall CE Primary School. This decision was not taken lightly by the governing body.

The main factors prompting the request were considerations around being able to provide such a small number of pupils with the rounded education that they deserve, together with little prospect of future improvement in pupil numbers.

Factors Affecting the School's Viability

Pupil Numbers

Skelton Newby Hall is a 3-11 Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School and currently has nine children on roll and one child in nursery. The school is located in a rural area of Ripon, serving families living in and near the village of Skelton on Ure and the surrounding area. The number of children at Skelton Newby Hall Primary School has been falling over the past few years:

2016/17 – 50
2017/18 – 36
2018/19 – 22
2019/20 – 16
2020/21 – 15
2021/22 – 15
2022/23 – 9 (plus 1 nursery pupil)

Four of the nine children currently on roll in Reception to Year 6 reside in the catchment for Skelton Newby Hall Primary, the remaining five children attend the School from another catchment area.

The School has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of seven pupils per year group. The School has capacity to accommodate around 52 pupils if all spaces are in use, and therefore has the potential to contribute 52 places in the local area.

School Leadership and Standards

The most recent full Ofsted inspection for Skelton Newby Hall CE VC was in March 2020. At that time there were 20 pupils on roll. The overall effectiveness was judged to be 'Requires Improvement' as were the four key judgements on the quality of education, behaviour and attitudes, personal development and leadership and management. The arrangements for safeguarding were judged to be effective. In September 2022, there were nine pupils registered at the school and one nursery pupil.

Leaders and Governors have worked collectively to mitigate the impact of low numbers at Skelton Newby Hall and have maximized the range of shared experiences with Sharow CE VC School. However, low pupil numbers mean that even with the best endeavours of the School it is difficult to provide education of a high quality for all year groups, and to meet the expectations of the 2019 Ofsted Education Inspection Framework that places significant weight on curriculum provision. Delivering a curriculum that has 'breadth and ambition' is a particular challenge for a very small school.

Sharow Primary School was last subject to a full Ofsted inspection in 2016 and judged to be 'Good' overall. A monitoring (section 8) inspection took place in January 2022.

The Financial Position

Pupil numbers determine the funding for a school budget. The Federation of Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School and Sharow CE VC Primary School operate separate budgets for the two schools within the Federation.

The latest financial forecast submitted to the LA for Skelton Newby Hall CE Primary School indicates that the school will have an accumulated budget surplus position of £109.2k at the end of the 2022/23 financial year, £94.1k at the end of the 2023/24 financial year and £55.6k at the end of the 2024/25 financial year. The forecast is based on 15 pupils in October 2021, 9 pupils in October 2022 and 11 pupils in October 2023 as the basis for the funding calculation.

Whilst in-year budget deficits are forecast of £15.2k for the 2023/24 financial year and £38.5k for the 2024/25 financial year, the school is currently forecast to remain in a cumulative budget surplus position over the three year period.

Schools are presently facing significant cost pressures and there is continued uncertainty as to the level of cost increases for 2023/24; this may impact on the financial forecast.

Primary School places in the local area

In October 2021 there were 27 children living in Skelton Newby Hall's discrete catchment area and attending a North Yorkshire primary school. Six of those attended Skelton Newby Hall Primary School at that time, with the remaining 21 attending a total of nine other primary schools in the local area.

There are five other neighbouring primary schools within 4.5 miles of Skelton Newby Hall Primary School. Across the area there are places available for all pupils currently at the School. Further details of school capacities and pupil forecasts are set out in an accompanying document.

The nearest school to Skelton Newby Hall CE VC is Kirby Hill CE VC where there are places available in all year groups.

Boroughbridge Community Primary School also has places available in all year groups.

Roecliffe CE Academy is operating at around capacity but has some places available in all year groups apart from year 3 and year 6.

Dishforth Airfield CP has places in all year groups.

Sharow CE VC (federated with Skelton Newby Hall CE VC) has reached PAN in all year groups, however, the facilities at Sharow offer some ability to operate over PAN in certain year groups.

The Proposal

For the reasons above it is proposed that Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School should close with effect from 31 August 2023.

It is also proposed that the catchment area of Kirby Hill CE VC Primary School should be extended to include the current Skelton Newby Hall catchment area. This is shown on maps accompanying this consultation document. The Leeds CE Diocese have indicated early stage support for this approach. These arrangements would be implemented from September 2023 only in the event of closure for Skelton Newby Hall CE School.

Kirby Hill CE VC Primary School is the nearest alternative school to Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School and there is currently space in all year groups.

The County Council would welcome views regarding the future catchment area proposal as part of this consultation.

Admissions and Transport

There is available capacity in the local area to ensure sufficiency of school places. Parents of future children living in the current Skelton Newby Hall Primary School catchment area will be able to express a preference for school places at any school.

Parents have a right to express a preference for any school. The Local Authority is the admissions authority for community and voluntary controlled schools and will meet that preference provided there are vacant places, or the school is happy to admit above the published number. In the case of Academy schools, the Multi Academy Trust decides the conditions for admission.

Free home to school transport would be provided for entitled pupils in accordance with the revised catchment area arrangements in accordance with the County Council's Home to School Transport Policy.

North Yorkshire County Council's Admissions Team is always happy to give advice to parents – please contact schooladmissions@northyorks.gov.uk

Staff

A separate staff consultation process, including a meeting for staff and their professional associations and unions, will run in parallel with this consultation on the closure proposal. Staff are also welcome to comment on the proposal as part of this consultation.

The School Site

The school building and site 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.

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> :

- Maps showing the current local catchment areas including the proposed extension of the catchment area for Kirby Hill Primary School should Skelton Newby Hall Primary School close
- Other schools – capacities and forecasts

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
Skelton Newby Hall
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=167093812603>

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 5pm on Friday 24 February 2023

All responses to the consultation received by this date will be considered by the County Council's Executive on 21 March 2023.

If the County Council's Executive decides to proceed with the closure proposal, then statutory notices would be published in the local press on 30 March 2023. These notices would 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 on 30 May 2023. If agreed, the school would close on 31 August 2023.

Anticipated Key Dates

All dates are subject to approvals at each stage.

Consultation opens	6 January 2023
Public meeting	17 January 2023 at 6pm
Consultation closes	24 February 2023
County Council's Executive considers consultation response	21 March 2023
Statutory Notices published (4 weeks for representations to be made)	30 March – 27 April 2023
Final decision by County Council's Executive	30 May 2023
Proposed school closure date	31 August 2023

Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School Consultation

This is a consultation on proposals to close Skelton Newby Hall CE VC Primary School from 31 August 2023.

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

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

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

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

Other (please state)

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Name of school:
(if applicable)

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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:

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Address:

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Postcode:

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

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Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

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

FREEPOST RTKE-RKAY-CUJS
Skelton Newby Hall
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=167093812603>

To be received by no later than 24 February 2023