

### Skelton School Consultation

Do you have any comments?

- Newby Hall Estate have provided this facility for the village and local community since 1856, at a very low rent, as part of its pastoral role for the parishes of Newby with Mulwith and Skelton.
- The school is a little gem with playground, playing field, outdoor space in a very secure, pleasant rural location close by to the major conurbations of Ripon and Boroughbridge.
- Over the past few years numbers at the school have fallen, due partially to identifying it to provide education for children with special needs, which has then limited its attraction to the wider community and losing its unique identity by being “federised” with Sharow School.
- Until the consultation process was publicly announced there had been very limited, if no interaction with the Parish Council or community, advising them of the worsening situation, which may have opened up the opportunity to turn the situation around.
- It would seem that the Chairman of Governors has pursued very few, if no marketing initiatives since his appointment in September 2022 in order to rectify the falling numbers and retrieve the situation.
- We have been told that other similar schools in the locality have capacity for extra pupils yet parents have repeatedly said that they continue to have trouble securing places for their children at these schools.
- Presumably this can only get worse as the new housing developments in the catchment areas for these schools continue to be occupied.
- It would seem that the chart showing future population expansion is only limited to Langthorpe. Surely expansion in all the local parishes must be taken into account in order to provide a true picture.
- It would seem that very little effort or thought has gone into considering how Skelton School could complement the other local primary schools (not just Sharow), which all come under the same Education Authority. Big is not always beautiful.
- Surely it will be more expensive in the future to have to expand and enhance the other local schools rather than maintain Skelton School and promote it as an existing facility.
- Has the cost of providing transport for existing pupils having to move schools been taken into account in the forward budgets – to credit against the costs of Skelton School presumably.

- Trying to comment constructively on the impending closure at this point has been made much more difficult by the lack of background statistics, lack of well-argued reasoning, lack of much needed earlier interaction with the local community and lack of open discussion.
- I think I speak for everybody by saying that this is already a “done deal”, a “foregone conclusion”, whatever you want to call it, that could have been prevented with more forethought and vision for the future.