NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

THE EXECUTIVE

16 December 2025

Proposals for revised school organisation arrangements requested by federated governing boards of primary schools in North Yorkshire

Report by the Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report details the outcomes arising from public consultation exercises that have been undertaken by the council at the request of the following federated governing boards about proposals to change their school organisation arrangements: -

- BAWB (Bainbridge, Askrigg and West Burton) Federation
- Reeth and Gunnerside Schools Federation
- The Federation of Middleham (VA) & Spennithorne (VC) CE Primary Schools; and
- The Synergy Schools Federation.

1.2 The report recommends that the Executive authorises the publication of statutory notices in respect of each of the proposals and to schedule taking final decisions about the proposals on 17 March 2026.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 On 11 September 2025, the Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills gave approval for consultation exercises to be undertaken about the school organisation proposals received from the federated governing boards identified at 1.1 above.

2.2 A copy of the report that was considered by the Executive Member is attached at Appendix 1. That report provides detailed information about the background to each of the proposals made by the federated governing boards.

2.3 This report is supported by the following appendices:

Appendix 1: Report of Corporate Director Meeting with Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills – 11 September 2025
Appendix 2: Published consultation documents
Appendix 3: A list of the consultees for each consultation exercise
Appendix 4: Notes of each of the public meetings
Appendix 5: Consultation responses
Appendix 6: Equality Impact Assessment
Appendix 7: Climate Change Impact Assessment
Appendix 8: Statutory Proposals and Statutory Notices

3.0 PROPOSALS

3.1 The Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills gave approval to consult on the following proposals:

BAWB (Bainbridge, Askrigg and West Burton) Federation

- That the age range of Bainbridge Church of England Primary should be changed from 3-11 to 3-7 such that it should become Bainbridge Church of England Infant and Nursery School
- That the age range of Askrigg Voluntary Controlled Primary School should be changed from 4-11 to 7-11, such that it should become Askrigg Voluntary Controlled Junior School
- That West Burton Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School should be closed; and
- That the two remaining schools should have a shared catchment area that comprises an amalgamation of the current catchment areas of the three schools.
- The PAN will be 15 at each school, to reflect the pupil forecast.

Reeth and Gunnerside Schools Federation:

- That the age range of Reeth Community Primary School is changed from 3-11 to 3-7, such that the school becomes Reeth Community Infant School
- That the age range Gunnerside Methodist (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School is changed from 4-11 to 7-11, such that the school becomes Gunnerside Methodist (Voluntary Controlled) Junior School
- That the schools would have a shared catchment area, comprising an amalgamation of the existing schools' current catchment areas
- The Local Authority approves through its discretion a 'nearest gate in the federation' policy for home school transport, which would be conditional upon the federation continuing to provide support with inter-school transport where that is required.
- The PAN will be 15 at each school, to reflect the combined pupil forecast.

The Federation of Middleham (VA) & Spennithorne (VC) CE Primary Schools:

- That the age range of Spennithorne Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School be changed from 4-11 to 4-7 such that the school becomes Spennithorne Church of England Infant School
- That the age range of Middleham Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School be changed from 4-11 to 7-11 such that the school becomes Middleham Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Junior School
- That the schools would have a shared catchment area, comprising an amalgamation of the existing schools' current catchment areas
- The PAN will be increased to 20 places at each school
- That the status of Spennithorne Church of England School is changed from Voluntary Controlled to Voluntary Aided.

The Synergy Federation:

- That Aiskew Leeming Bar Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School and Leeming and Londonderry Community Primary School amalgamate with effect from 13 April 2026
- That this would be achieved through the technical closure of Leeming and Londonderry Community Primary School and the expansion of Aiskew Leeming Bar Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School onto an additional site (the Leeming and Londonderry school site)
- That the schools would have a shared catchment area, comprising an amalgamation of the existing schools' current catchment areas
- The PAN for the school will be 15.

Home to school travel discretionary arrangements

That the Council provides discretionary travel for children, already assessed as eligible for travel *and* on roll at schools on 1 September 2026, within the BAWB (Bainbridge, Askrigg and West Burton) Federation, Reeth and Gunnerside Schools Federation and The Federation of Middleham (VA) & Spennithorne (VC) CE schools for the duration of their education at the schools within the federation, subject to there being no change in their circumstances.

4.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES

4.1 The consultation papers setting out the proposals were sent to parents, staff, governors, local schools, local elected members, town and parish councils, MPs and other stakeholders and were also published for six weeks on NYC's website. A copy of each of the consultation papers are attached as Appendix 2, and lists of the consultees for each consultation are at Appendix 3.

4.2 In accordance with the requirements of the Department for Education's (DfE's) Statutory Guidance (Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools, August 2025) the consultation exercises were undertaken during a period incorporating 6 term-time weeks and ran from 22 September 2025 to 7 November 2025. The council held public meetings on each the four proposals on 2, 8, 14 and 15 October. These were attended by officers of the Council, diocesan representatives, governors, a number of parents, members of the local community and other local stakeholders. A record of each public meeting is attached as Appendix 4. In addition, the federated governing board of the BAWB federation held a public meeting at West Burton at which all of their proposals were discussed.

4.3 A total of 18 written responses were received which included:

Federation	No of Responses
BAWB (Bainbridge, Askrigg and West Burton) Federation	2
Reeth and Gunnerside Schools Federation	7
The Federation of Middleham (VA) & Spennithorne (VC) CE Primary Schools	6
The Synergy Schools Federation.	3

The consultation responses are shown at Appendix 5.

4.4 The following section of the report summarises the main issues raised in both the written responses to the consultation exercises, and at the public meetings that were held and provides a response to each.

5.0 ISSUES RAISED AND RESPONSES

BAWB (Bainbridge, Askrigg and West Burton) Federation

Analysis of responses

5.1 2 individuals (1 parent from West Burton, 1 parent from Bainbridge) responded during the consultation period.

5.2 Both respondents supported the proposal to change the age ranges of the schools at Askrigg and Bainbridge.

Issues Raised

5.3 The proposed closure of West Burton CE Primary School

Whilst respondents noted their sadness at the proposed closure of West Burton CE Primary School, they acknowledged that the school is not viable. Several contributions made during the two public meetings expressed the view that the school was no longer viable due to the small number of pupils currently in attendance. Others stated that the relatively large element of the BAWB federation's revenue budget that is spent on transporting pupils to and from the school, needed to be reprioritised to funding education in the other two schools.

Response

The federated governing board's proposal has arisen from the low number of pupils who are currently registered at the school. This impacts upon the level of funding received by the school, and also the school's ability to deliver the whole curriculum effectively.

5.4 Importance of the school to the community

While recognising the lack of viability, respondents were saddened by the potential loss of the school to the village community. One respondent asked for a celebration assembly to acknowledge the special place and role that West Burton CE Primary School has held in the community for such a long time and said closing the school would be a big loss to the village.

Response

The request has been passed to the federated governing board.

5.5 Demographics

One respondent said that the federation, the local authority and the government had all done little to support young families to settle in the Upper Dales and how this had impacted on school numbers.

Response

The demographic trend in the Dales is creating a fall in pupil numbers. The Council and the federation have worked together to establish local collaborative organisational arrangements to secure the more efficient use of resources to maintain the viability of education in the Upper Dales.

5.6 Changes to the Uniform

One consultee asked, during the public meeting, if school uniform would remain the same, while another was worried about the cost of purchasing a new school uniform.

Response

Decisions about school uniforms are delegated to governing boards.

The Chair of the federated governing board was in attendance at the public meeting and advised that the board view the proposed changes as an exciting opportunity for a 'fresh start' including a potential change of uniform. However, the federated governing board also confirmed that they would consult with parents/ carers before making any changes to the name or to the existing uniform and would aim to keep the overall cost of a uniform low.

5.7 A safe walking route

At the public meeting a Councillor and a parent asked whether the route between Askrigg and Bainbridge schools had been classed as an unsafe walking route.

Response

A safe route assessment of the route between the primary schools at Askrigg and Bainbridge (as a proxy for the routes that pupils will take) has been undertaken, and the outcome will be applied to all applications for assistance with home to school travel.

5.8 Start and finish times for the school day

A parent said that they had two children and due to their ages, one would be attending the infant school while the other would be attending the junior school. They asked whether there would be any provision for dropping both children off at the same school and of the federation providing their transport between the schools.

Response

The executive headteacher of the BAWB federation of schools has responded that, while funding a minibus from the federation's budget for education would not be practical, the governing board and school leadership had been looking at the possibility of staggered start and finish times for the two schools so that different drop-off and picking up times could be accommodated.

Reeth and Gunnerside Schools Federation

Analysis of responses

5.9 7 respondents (4 parents, 1 community member, 1 staff member and the governing board) replied during the consultation period.

5.10 7 respondents are strongly in favour of the proposals. 4 are in favour of the PAN proposals, while 3 did not respond. 6 respondents are in favour of a single catchment area and 1 did not respond.

5.11 Regulations

One respondent said that, while the proposals are the best solution for the situation faced by Reeth and Gunnerside, they felt it unfortunate that the current arrangements had fallen foul of the 'one-size-fits-all' regulations put in place for all sizes of schools and locations.

Response

The regulations which govern the arrangements for school admissions and registration (the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024) apply to all schools and, therefore, compliance is required to be achieved.

5.12 Catchment Proposals

Several respondents said that combining the catchment areas was essential for unifying families of the dales. One respondent said it unifies primary education in Swaledale and Arkengarthdale and "strengthens the unity of the people of the dales". The governing board stated that maintaining community cohesion and serving the needs of pupils and families in their federation, has been a key consideration for governors, and combining the two catchment areas will help to achieve this.

Response
The proposal would combine the existing admissions catchment areas.

5.13 Home to School Travel
At the public meeting, and also online, parents responded that they supported the infant and junior proposals as their earlier concerns over home to school transport were resolved. They said that the adoption of 'closest gate in the federation' criteria for determining eligibility for assistance with home to school travel, combined with use of the school bus for transferring between sites, was the best option available. The governing board noted that the schools have funded inter-site transport for over a decade and they are therefore confident that this arrangement offers a financially sustainable solution.

Response
The support for this proposal is noted.

The Federation of Middleham (VA) & Spennithorne (VC) CE Primary Schools

Analysis of responses
5.14 6 individual respondents (4 parents and 2 parish/town councils) replied during the consultation period.

5.15 2 of these respondents are in favour of the proposals, while 1 is not in favour and 3 did not say. 1 respondent is in favour of the PAN proposal, while 1 disagrees and 4 did not comment. 1 respondent is in favour of the single catchment proposal, while 1 disagrees and 4 did not know or did not comment. While 2 respondents are in favour of the proposal to change the category of Spennithorne from Voluntary Controlled to Voluntary Aided, one thought it would only make a limited difference, 4 did not comment.

5.16 Home to School Travel
A parent, who noted that their child in Year 1 was first transported to Middleham School by NYC and then subsequently transported to Spennithorne School on the school minibus, asked whether this dual transport arrangement would continue under the proposals. Middleham Town Council expressed concerns about how the proposal would affect home to school transport.

Response
Should the proposals be agreed then eligible pupils would be provided with assistance with transport to the school at which they are registered.

5.17 Hidden agenda
A parent governor said that sometimes in these situations people were suspicious about whether council had a hidden agenda, and asked for assurance that the council did not intend to close either school.

Response
The council has worked with the federated governing board to support its decision making in identifying the most suitable solution for achieving compliance with the regulations whilst ensuring the federated schools remain viable. These proposals remain as described within this report and there are no further proposals in respect of either school.

5.18 Change of category to voluntary aided

A parent wondered whether the proposal to change the category of Spennithorne from voluntary controlled to voluntary aided would make any real difference.

Response

The federated governing board's rationale for wanting to change the category of Spennithorne to be the same voluntary category as Middleham is to give the governing board and the diocese the same increased responsibilities for the school. At the public meeting, the Assistant Director of Education in the Church of England Diocese of Leeds, agreed with this point about the advantage of similar involvement of the diocese and governing board.

5.19 Stipulating a feeder school in the admissions policy

The executive headteacher has responded that parents who attend from out of catchment and secure a place in the infant school, might be concerned about securing a place in the junior school. She suggested stipulating that the infant school is a feeder to the junior school in the admissions criteria for allocation of places.

Response

The 2021 Admissions Code does provide for the naming of feeder schools, and additionally, as voluntary aided schools (should the proposal proceed), the federated governing board would be responsible for the determination of the admissions arrangements of the two schools. As such, it will be possible for the board to agree a policy naming a feeder school.

However, admissions policies are required to be agreed and published prior to February, which falls prior to the proposed date upon which the Executive are scheduled to determine the proposals. Therefore, the federated governing board could not agree such a policy for either next year, or 2027-28.

However, the governing board can announce an intention to develop and implement such a policy if / when the proposals are implemented and offer reassurance that the capacities of the two schools remain sufficient to accommodate all pupils that are currently forecast to be attending.

5.20 Wrap around provision

One respondent said at present *Kids Day* nursery serves as the breakfast club and uses transport to get the children to the correct school. "If this is not going to be available then consideration needs to be given to those parents who have to start work before 9. …. Parents will not do 2 school drop offs for their children and will need the ability for wrap around care."

Response

The federated governing board have stated that the wrap around and nursery provision would continue, and they have budgeted for the school minibus to continue to transport pupils, so parents would not be required to make two school drop offs, if they are using the wrap around care provision.

5.21 School names

A single catchment area links both Spennithorne and Middleham and respondents felt this geographical link should be reflected in the infant and junior school names.

Response
The federated governing board, following consultation with the Diocese of Leeds, are proposing that the school names reflect both geographical areas and are called Spennithorne and Middleham CE Infant School and Spennithorne and Middleham CE Junior School.

5.22 School uniform costs
A parent expressed concern over the cost of replacing a school uniform.

Response
The federated governing board made clear, in response at the public meeting, that there are no proposals currently to change the school uniform.

The Proposal to Amalgamate Aiskew, Leeming Bar Church of England Primary and Leeming and Londonderry Community Primary Schools

Analysis of responses

5.23 3 individual respondents (2 parents and a parish councillor) replied during the consultation period.

5.24 2 respondents are generally in favour of the proposals, while 1 did not know. 1 is in favour of the PAN proposal while 2 did not comment. 1 respondent is in favour of the single catchment proposal while 2 did not comment.

5.25 A need to re-apply
One consultee asked if existing pupils at either school would need to reapply for a place at the single primary school, if the proposals to amalgamate the two schools went ahead.

Response
Existing pupils at both schools would automatically be placed on roll at the amalgamated school.

5.26 Housing
A parish councillor referred to the local plan, and to the significant number of houses proposed in the Leeming area. He questioned whether the Leeming schools had capacity to accommodate the additional pupils generated, should all local plan housing be built out.

Response
The local plan proposes two significant developments in the Leeming vicinity, one for 105 houses and another near one school for 25 houses. These include affordable homes which increase a prospect of generating additional pupils. Using the standard pupil yield generated by new housing which is applied across the county, if the proposed developments in the local plan receive planning approval and are constructed, there is the potential for 38 additional children from the houses in the local plan and these could be accommodated in the existing buildings.

5.27 Funding
A concern was expressed about loss of funding under the proposals.

Response

There would be transitional protection arrangements for the loss of the lump sum for the Leeming and Londonderry school building for two financial years. Subsequently, it is likely there would be split site funding provided.

5.28 Viability of Leeming and Londonderry site

A parent asked what the position would be if there was a very low intake one year. Would the position of Leeming and Londonderry still be viable, they asked, or would pupils be moved to the Aiskew Leeming Bar site?

Response

The federated governing body have delegated responsibility for the teaching arrangements at the school, including the teaching arrangements that are established.

5.29 Parking and congestion

A parish councillor responded that residents are annoyed by parking, and particularly of parents while waiting in their cars to pick up their children.

Response

Unfortunately, there is no car park at Leeming and Londonderry and at Aiskew, Leeming Bar, the car park holds 4 vehicles. With the minibus parked in the car park, 3 staff vehicles is just possible. Between the two schools, there are on average 11 members of staff, so staff cars have to park on the roadside every day as there is no other option.

Both schools have made a significant impact on improving the situation with parking over the last 12 months. Since the wraparound care has been started, between 5-10 children in the morning have arrived early. After school, between 20-30 children have stayed to take part in an after-school club. This has lowered the number of cars and pedestrians picking up and dropping off children at the peak times.

The gate into Freeman's Way is not being used currently. This is due to safeguarding reasons. The school does not have enough staff to be able to monitor pupils arriving/leaving from two separate gates. However, if these proposals go ahead, there will be an increase in the number of staff working from September and it is expected that this gate will be re-opened.

5.30 SEND provision

A respondent said that while bigger classes might help improve social and academic opportunities, they may also reduce the individual attention that some children require.

Response

The proposal does not mean that the class sizes would become large. From the federation's modelling, they expect that class sizes would be between 20-25 pupils. This is well below the national average of 27 (Key Stage 1) and 29 (Key Stage 2). Currently, one class at Aiskew, Leeming Bar has 31 pupils.

There would be little change to SEN provision with these proposals.

6.0 PROPOSALS

6.1 The proposed full statutory proposals are set out in Appendix 8.

6.2 The proposed timetable would be:

12 January 2026	Publication of Statutory Proposals and Notices
6 February 2026	Closing date for representations (4 weeks as prescribed in regulations and cannot be shortened or lengthened)
17 March 2026	Final decision by the Council's Executive
31 March 2026	Proposed date when West Burton Church of England VC Primary School would close. The school building will revert to its owners, a charitable trust.
13 April 2026	Proposed date from which Aiskew Leeming Bar Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School and Leeming and Londonderry Community Primary School would amalgamate
1 September 2026	Proposed date from which the proposals for the change of age ranges of the federated primary schools would begin to operate

7.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

7.1 By ensuring communities collaborate closely by working in federations, the proposals contribute to the 'Maximise the potential' ambition in the Council Plan. By supporting pupils' quality of life, they contribute to the 'Healthy and living well' ambition.

8.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 The alternative proposals that have been appraised in depth by the federated governing boards are outlined in the report attached as Appendix 1.

8.2 Having undertaken their appraisals of alternative options, federated governing boards informed their parents and communities about their proposals for the future organisational arrangements of each school.

9.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

9.1 The proposed closure of West Burton CE Primary School will result in the disposal of the school building to its owners, which is a charitable trust.

9.2 There are no further implications for other services or organisations.

10.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Capital Position

10.1 Capital investment is not included within the proposal.

Revenue Position

10.2 School budgets are funded largely by pupil numbers so the proposal would not lead to an increase in revenue funding. The school organisation proposal of infant and junior schools provides the same level of funding across the federation as that currently received by the separate schools with the lump sum funding retained for each school. In an amalgamation of two schools, one school's lump sum would cease and whilst an amalgamated school across two sites may receive split site funding, this would be a reduced funding amount compared to the lump sum funding for the two schools. Under the BAWB proposal all funding for West Burton CE VC Primary School would cease.

10.3 Federated governing boards can request to amalgamate their individual school budgets; these arrangements could continue under the infant and junior school proposals.

10.4 Based on the proposal taking effect at the start of or during the start of 2026/27 financial year, and other things being equal, the governing boards have determined the optimum funding position, based on best estimates of revenue funding for each financial year for the individual schools within the federations. Irrespective of this school organisation proposal, the federation governing boards are continuously required to oversee financial management, and this includes considering efficiency actions where improvements are identified as being necessary in the school financial forecast.

11.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 Legal advice has been provided to the federations by North Yorkshire Council that explains that the school that the child is admitted to, and is registered at, on their admission register, is required to educate the child, at that physical school. Whilst there are provisions that allow schools to educate a pupil offsite, the formal arrangements that the federations have been using go beyond the parliamentary intent. Furthermore, whilst the federation arrangements are in place for the governing board, the schools remain individual legal entities. Therefore, legally, statutory proposals would need to be agreed by the following bodies:

BAWB (Bainbridge, Askrigg and West Burton) Federation

i) North Yorkshire Council would publish proposals to close West Burton Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School.
ii) The federated governing board would publish proposals for of Bainbridge Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary and Nursery School to change the age range of the school to 3 to 7 years.
iii) The federated governing board would publish proposals for Askrigg Voluntary Controlled Primary School to change the age range of the school to 7 to 11 years.

Reeth and Gunnerside Schools Federation

i) North Yorkshire Council would publish proposals for Reeth Community Primary School to change the age range of the school to 3 to 7 years.
ii) The federated governing board would publish proposals for Gunnerside Methodist (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School to change the age range of the school to 7 to 11 years.

The Federation of Middleham (VA) & Spennithorne (VC) CE Primary Schools

i) The federated governing board would publish proposals for Spennithorne Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School to change the age range of the school to 4 to 7 years.

ii) The federated governing board would publish proposals for Middleham Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School to change the age range of the school to 7 to 11 years.
iii) The federated governing board would publish their proposal to change the status of Spennithorne from a Voluntary Controlled to a Voluntary Aided school

11.2 In accordance with the regulations governing changes to school organisation, the governing boards of Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary Aided schools are required to publish proposals in respect of changes to age range. Therefore, the governing boards of the following federations met on the dates indicated and have confirmed that (subject to the approval of the Council's Executive on 16 December) they will publish, jointly with the Council on 12 January 2026, the required statutory proposals and notices:

- BAWB (Bainbridge, Askrigg and West Burton) Federation, 12 November 2025
- The Federation of Middleham (VA) & Spennithorne (VC) CE Primary Schools, 2 December 2025
- Reeth and Gunnerside Schools Federation, 4 December 2025

11.3 In order that the proposal by the Synergy Federation can be progressed the following statutory proposal would need to be agreed:
North Yorkshire Council would publish proposals to amalgamate Aiskew Leeming Bar Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School and Leeming and Londonderry Community Primary School through the technical closure of Leeming and Londonderry Community Primary School and the expansion of Aiskew Leeming Bar Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School onto an additional site (the Leeming and Londonderry school site).

11.4 These proposals will follow the DfE's statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers. (DfE, 'Opening and closing maintained schools. Statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers' and 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools. Statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers'

12.0 HUMAN RIGHTS IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no Human Rights issues in relation to this decision.

13.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

13.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of these proposals and is attached (Appendix 6).

14.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

14.1 A Climate Change Impact Assessment has been undertaken in respect of these proposals and is attached (Appendix 7).

15.0 NEXT STEPS

15.1 It is proposed to publish proposals and statutory notices on 12 January 2026. A copy of the proposed proposals and statutory notices are provided at Appendix 8. The proposals would be published on the Council's website and the statutory notice would be published in a local newspaper and displayed at the main entrance to the school. These would provide four weeks representations to be made to the Local Authority, by 6 February 2026.

15.2 The Executive agreed a model for decision-making on school organisation proposals on 25 September 2007. If approval is given to publish statutory proposals and notices, it is proposed that a final decision is taken by the Executive on 17 March 2026.

16.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

16.1 Separate staff consultation processes, including meetings for staff and their professional associations and unions, would run in parallel with these consultations.

17.0 CONCLUSIONS

17.1 The current school organisation arrangements that are being operated by the three federations identified above are not compliant with the regulations and action is required to implement revised, compliant and sustainable arrangements.

17.2 The proposals made by the Synergy Federation in respect of Aiskew, Leeming Bar CE Primary School and Leeming and Londonderry Community Primary School have been made to provide a sustainable basis for the future of educational provision in the locality.

17.3 This report has described the responses arising from the consultation exercises undertaken in respect of each proposal. Although only a limited number of responses were received, nearly all have recognised the basis upon which each proposal has been made and have demonstrated support.

18.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

18.1 To ensure that the school organisation arrangements operated by the above federated governing boards

1. Are compliant with the legislation and guidance that govern the arrangements for school admissions and registration, and:
2. Provide a sustainable basis for the continued provision of high quality education within their local communities.

19.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

19.1 The Executive is recommended to:

Give approval to publish statutory proposals and notices on 12 January 2026, jointly with the respective federated governing boards, for the following federated schools:

<u>BAWB (Bainbridge, Askrigg and West Burton) Federation</u>

i) to close West Burton Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School from 31 March 2026.

ii) to change the age range of Bainbridge Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary and Nursery School to 3 to 7 years from 1 September 2026

iii) to change the age range of Askrigg Voluntary Controlled Primary School to 7 to 11 years from 1 September 2026.

Reeth and Gunnerside Schools Federation

iv) to change the age range of Reeth Community Primary School to 3 to 7 years from 1 September 2026.

v) to change the age range of Gunnerside Methodist (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School to 7 to 11 years from 1 September 2026.

The Federation of Middleham (VA) & Spennithorne (VC) CE Primary Schools

vi) to change the age range of Spennithorne Church of England Primary School to 4 to 7 years from 1 September 2026.

vii) to change the age range of Middleham Church of England (Voluntary) Aided Primary School to 7 to 11 years from 1 September 2026.

viii) to change the category of Spennithorne Church of England School to Voluntary Aided from 1 September 2026.

The Synergy Schools Federation

ix) to discontinue Leeming and Londonderry Community Primary School from 13 April 2026

x) to enlarge Aiskew, Leeming Bar Church of England Primary School onto an additional site using the Leeming and Londonderry school site from 13 April 2026.

19.2 That the Executive schedule taking a final decision on these proposals on 17 March 2026.

19.3 That subject to the final approval of the proposals in paragraph 19.1 above, the following home to school travel discretionary arrangements be approved:

i) That the Council provides discretionary travel for children, already assessed as eligible for travel *and* on roll at schools on 1 September 2026, within the BAWB (Bainbridge, Askrigg and West Burton) Federation, Reeth and Gunnerside Schools Federation and The Federation of Middleham (VA) & Spennithorne (VC) CE schools for the duration of their education at the schools within the federation, subject to there being no change in their circumstances.

ii) That the Council approves through its discretion a 'nearest gate in the federation' policy for home school transport to Reeth and Gunnerside schools, which would be conditional upon the Reeth and Gunnerside Schools Federation continuing to provide support with inter-school transport where that is required.

Peter Thorpe
Interim Corporate Director – Children and Young People's Service

Report prepared by: Jon Holden, Head of Strategic Planning (CYPS), Mark Ashton, Strategic Planning Officer

LIST OF APPENDICES

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