Appendix 7: Climate change impact assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision making process and should be written in Plain English.

If you have any additional queries which are not covered by the guidance please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Version 2: amended 11 August 2021

Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:
Planning Permission
Environmental Impact Assessment
Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk for advice.

Title of proposal	School Organisation
Brief description of proposal	**Proposals for revised school organisation arrangements requested by federated governing boards of primary schools in North Yorkshire**
Directorate	Children and Young Peoples' Service
Service area	Strategic Planning
Lead officer	Jon Holden, Strategic Planning Manager
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Mark Ashton, Strategic Planning Officer
Date impact assessment started	20/8/2025

Options appraisal **Were any other options considered in trying to achieve the aim of this project? If so, please give brief details and explain why alternative options were not progressed.**

A number of small schools and federations have secured their financial viability through the establishment of class and key stage structures such that children in year group or key stages from across their federations were educated at single sites irrespective of the schools at which individual pupils were registered. In some instances, has required that schools transport some pupils between sites within the school day and has thus had an impact upon curriculum delivery time. A number of federated schools have maintained these bespoke teaching arrangements over several years and they have locally arranged transport to 'move' children from school to school each day.

However, conversations have commenced with some schools undertaking this way of working about the temporary nature of the school organisation element of their arrangements and the requirement for formal longer-term solutions. Officers have supported the federated governing boards through the identification of a number of organisational models, each with different financial implications and which require to be considered in detail by the governing boards prior to the formal development of proposals that are compliant with legislation on the registration of pupils. These options include, but are not limited to, reverting to the provision of teaching at all school sites, to amalgamating as a single school and to utilising a single site.

A variety of alternative options to the proposals have been considered. The table in Section 4 of the Executive Member report of 9 September 2025, sets out what these options were. The table in the report gives reasons why certain options would not both address the issue and at the same time be sustainable or financially viable or because of its negative impact on performance which, under the current Ofsted framework, is a critical factor.

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

The implications for capital and revenue are set out in the report to Executive Members.

Capital Position

No capital works are needed for this proposal.

Revenue Position

School budgets are funded largely by pupil numbers so the proposals would not lead to an increase in revenue funding.

If an amalgamation is proposed, one school's lump sum would cease. If re-organising into infant and junior schools is proposed by a Federated Governing Board, both lump sums are retained. If a school closure forms part of a proposal, any savings to the Dedicated Schools Grant arising from the closure would remain within the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant as part of the funding for all schools.

Federated Governing Boards can combine their school funds. Since the Federations would continue, combined revenue funding would continue to be an option under the proposals.

Based on the proposal taking effect on after the next financial year, and other things being equal, the Governing Boards of the Federations have established the most secure position, based on best estimates of revenue for each financial year beyond 2026/27.

How will this proposal impact on the environment? **N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.**		**Positive impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**No impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Negative impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?** **Where possible/relevant please include:** • **Changes over and above business as usual** • **Evidence or measurement of effect** • **Figures for CO_2e** • **Links to relevant documents**	**Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.**	**Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.**
Minimise **greenhouse gas emissions** e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.	Emissions from travel		X		The proposals will take place across the existing school buildings. However, travel for pupils will not in all instances follow similar/ same patterns to the existing pattern. Some pupils will no longer be transported between schools, which will reduce travel distances and increase time in school. However, some pupils may be transported to different schools than currently. There has been a reduction in pupils in recent years and there is forecast to be a further reduction in pupils, so this might effect minor savings on greenhouse gas emissions from travel since there will be slightly less pupils travelling to schools in the proposal. The issue of school transport is difficult to analyse as parental preference, and parental behaviour plays a large role in the level of	Where possible Integrated Passenger transport will choose vehicles and routes to minimise traffic. The amalgamated school will be encouraged and supported to develop a sustainable travel plan.	Schools will continue to encourage sustainable methods of transport where they are safe and possible. For example, by encouraging lift sharing, walking to school as part of developing their travel plans.

How will this proposal impact on the environment? N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.		Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale? Where possible/relevant please include: • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO_2e • Links to relevant documents	Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.	Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.
					emissions from travel. For example, even schools with a very small catchment area would have a high carbon footprint if the majority of parents chose to drive their children to school either at their catchment school or by preference to another school further afield. Many schools operate travel plans which encourage low carbon transport options such as walking and cycling. Under the proposals catchment areas would be combined. Pupils living within the combined catchment may be living in houses within the statutory 2 mile walking distance for children under 8 years of age or the statutory 3 miles walking distance for children aged 8 years and over. This may not be the same as the status quo where some pupils living within the combined catchment would be within the		

How will this proposal impact on the environment? N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.		Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale? Where possible/relevant please include: • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO_2e • Links to relevant documents	Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.	Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.
					statutory walking distance for the nearest appropriate school. For pupils living beyond 3 miles home to school transport would be provided where appropriate in line with legislation. In the particular case of the proposed closure of West Burton CE VC School there will be a small number of pupils living in the West Burton area who are currently within a walking distance of the current school who will be eligible for transport to the next nearest school. Others who have previously walked may choose to drive to schools further afield. This would lead to an increase in vehicular travel.		
	Emissions from construction		X		N/A No capital works are needed for proposals. The existing school buildings are being used.	N/A	N/A

How will this proposal impact on the environment? **N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.**		**Positive impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**No impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Negative impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?** **Where possible/relevant please include:** • **Changes over and above business as usual** • **Evidence or measurement of effect** • **Figures for CO_2e** • **Links to relevant documents**	**Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.**	**Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.**
	Emissions from running of buildings		**X**		The proposals will take place across the existing school buildings. Even though there has been a reduction in pupils in recent years and there is forecast to be a further reduction in pupils, this will not effect savings on greenhouse gas emissions savings on the school buildings, since they will operate in a similar/ same way. The Council would cease to operate the West Burton CE VC School Premises, and the pupils would be accommodated at existing local establishments with no additional running costs.		
	Emissions from data storage		**X**		The proposals will take place across existing federated schools, which already share data storage across the federations in most cases. The data storage for these federated schools will be similar under the proposals going forward.		

How will this proposal impact on the environment? **N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.**	**Positive impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**No impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Negative impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?** **Where possible/relevant please include:** • **Changes over and above business as usual** • **Evidence or measurement of effect** • **Figures for CO_2e** • **Links to relevant documents**	**Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.**	**Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.**
Other						
Minimise **waste:** Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic		X		While recycling is already encouraged within schools and the reduction of waste is promoted and taught to pupils, the schools' consumption of resources will not cease. There will not be a general reduction in the use of resources in schools under the proposals.		
Reduce **water** consumption		X		The water consumption required to operate most schools would be similar and therefore would not be removed from the NYC carbon footprint. The water consumption required to operate West Burton CE VC Primary School as an establishment would no longer be required and is therefore removed from the NYC carbon footprint.		
Minimise **pollution** (including air, land, water, light and noise)		X		N/A		

How will this proposal impact on the environment? **N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.**	**Positive impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**No impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Negative impact** (Place a X in the box below where relevant)	**Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?** **Where possible/relevant please include:** • **Changes over and above business as usual** • **Evidence or measurement of effect** • **Figures for CO_2e** • **Links to relevant documents**	**Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.**	**Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.**
Ensure **resilience** to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers		X		N/A		
Enhance **conservation** and wildlife		X		N/A		
Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of **North Yorkshire's landscape**		X		N/A		
Other (please state below)						

Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal? If so, please detail how this proposal meets those standards.

N/A

Summary Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the 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:

This proposal has neither positive nor negative environmental impacts. The proposals are a strategic change across existing school buildings which will be used in a similar way to the way they are operated currently. The impacts in energy usage associated with two school establishments ceasing to be used to teach children of similar ages together and to become two separate schools would be negligible. Because it is a strategic rather than a building change, the proposal would not achieve significant reductions in heating, lighting and water usage. Equally, there is likely to be a neutral impact associated with use of vehicles to transport the pupils to and from school. Ultimately there is an overriding consideration in this proposal to provide the best legally compliant outcome for the education of children in the local area and the other options identified are not both educationally sustainable and legally compliant.

Sign off section

This climate change impact assessment was completed by: Mark Ashton

Name	Mark Ashton
Job title	Strategic Planning Officer
Service area	Strategic Planning
Directorate	CYPS
Signature	Mark Ashton
Completion date	22/8/2025

Authorised by relevant Assistant Director: Amanda Fielding

Date: 23/08/2025