

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

17 NOVEMBER 2021

STATEMENT OF EDUCATION & SKILLS PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Changes to Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Provision

Work continues to keep our SEND provision requirements under review. Beginning in October, and through to December, the Council are consulting with stakeholders on proposals to adapt the residential provision at Welburn Hall School. The proposals would see the school continue to operate within their current designation; however, the residential offer would broaden its age range and cater for children with an assessed need for 38 week residential provision. Following the close of the consultation full consideration will be given to feedback before any decisions are taken in the New Year.

Overdale Primary School, Scarborough

The relocation and expansion of Overdale Community Primary School has been completed and the new school site opened in September 2021. The newly constructed facility will provide places for up to 420 children plus a nursery and community facilities to provide for the anticipated growth from the Middle Deepdale housing development.

Sherburn Hungate Primary School

A significant refurbishment and extension project at Sherburn Hungate Primary School in Sherburn in Elmet is now complete. The scheme has doubled the size of the School, providing space for up to 420 pupils, plus a nursery to meet the educational needs of the growing community. The scheme was delivered in partnership with the STAR multi-academy trust.

Baldersby St James CE Primary School

The School is an academy and is subject to a closure process managed by Hope Sentamu Learning Trust and the DfE for school closure in August 2022. On 12 October 2021 the Executive were asked to formally approve the Council's response to the proposal during the 'Listening Period'. The Executive recommended that the Secretary of State and the Regional Schools Commissioner consider deferring closure of Baldersby St James Primary School for a period of 12 months for further engagement between the community and Hope Sentamu Learning Trust to see if a credible business plan can be created.

Woodfield and Grove Road Community Primary Schools, Harrogate

A proposal that the two schools should amalgamate with effect from September 2022 has been developed by members of the school governing bodies and LA officers. The proposed amalgamation would be achieved through the technical closure of Woodfield School, and the enlargement of Grove Road CP School through future use of the Woodfield site.

The two governing bodies carefully considered the proposals before half term, and both agreed to ask the County Council to start a consultation. The Executive Member for Schools will be asked to approve consultation on 23 November 2021. If approved, public consultation would then be held during December and January.

Weaverthorpe CE (VC) Primary School

The School is subject to a Directive Academy Order following an 'Inadequate' Ofsted judgement but no academy sponsor has been identified due to viability concerns.

LA officers, together with the Church of England Diocese, have explored opportunities for collaboration with other schools but no acceptable proposal has been identified. As a result the Executive Member for Schools will be asked to approve consultation on a school closure proposal on 7 December 2021. If approved, public consultation would then commence in January 2022.

New Schools

The target opening dates for the proposed new schools in Knaresborough and Northallerton have both been revised to September 2024 as a result of issues which have delayed the land transfers. The latest data indicates that growth in the numbers of both school age and pre-school age children has not been at the expected rate. It is therefore considered that local school place sufficiency will not be impacted by this one year delay, but this will be kept under review.

North Yorkshire Coast Opportunities Area

The North Yorkshire Coast Opportunity Area Programme is a scheme funded by the Department for Education and focused on improving social mobility in Scarborough, Whitby and Filey. Funding has been provided to continue the programme until August 2022 – there is no commitment of future funding beyond this date.

The programme has continued to provide support for schools and young people in different areas during the last academic year and will continue this work this year. This will focus on embedding change in priority areas: these include teacher recruitment, the reduction in exclusions, and better outcomes in early years education. The programme has contributed to improvements in outcomes for children since 2016, particularly in attainment in the early years through to the end of primary school. Our work on teacher recruitment and in the early years have featured in Insight Guides that the DfE have produced to promote the achievement of the Opportunity Area programme. The programme has also responded to the challenges that the pandemic has created for schools by providing additional funding to support good mental health and to help students to catch-up on their studies. The programme will also continue to work closely with initiatives and strategies that are being implemented by the authority to support the continuation of projects that are making a positive difference. This will include Locality Boards and the ongoing work of the Childhood Futures programme.

School funding

Indicative funding allocations from the national funding formula for the financial year 2022-23 have been published which indicate mandatory minimum per pupil levels of £4,265 per pupil for primary schools and £5,525 per pupil for secondary schools. Changes to sparsity funding, including changes to actual road distance rather than "as the crow flies", a new sparsity distance taper and an increase to the maximum sparsity allocation are expected to benefit schools in North Yorkshire. This is particularly welcome for small primary schools. Local consultation has been undertaken with schools and academies in North Yorkshire to determine the level of the minimum funding guarantee for 2022-23.

Throughout the school summer holiday period, we rolled out our FEAST programme of holiday activities providing enriching activities (including some face-to-face), nutritional advice, digital resources and food. Working in conjunction with our partner organisations, including North Yorkshire Together, over 6,000 children and young people accessed provision.

COUNTY COUNCILLOR PATRICK MULLIGAN