

## Appendix 'A'

### MATTERS TO BE SPECIFIED IN SECTION 15 PROPOSALS TO DISCONTINUE A SCHOOL

#### **Extract of Schedule 4 to The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended):**

##### **Contact details**

1. The name of the LA or governing body publishing the proposals, and a contact address, and the name of the school it is proposed that should be discontinued.

The proposal to discontinue Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School, Crook Gate Lane, Out Rawcliffe, Preston, PR3 6BH is published by Lancashire County Council, the relevant local authority. The authority can be contacted at the following address: Directorate for Children and Young People, Provision Planning Team, PO Box 61, County Hall, Preston, PR1 8RJ, Lancashire.

##### **Implementation**

2. The date when it is planned that the proposals will be implemented, or, where the proposals are to be implemented in stages, information about each stage and the date on which each stage is planned to be implemented.

31 August 2013.

##### **Consultation**

3. A statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposals were complied with.

The statutory consultation requirements, as prescribed by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended, have been complied with.

4. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including:

- a) a list of persons and/or parties who were consulted;
- b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
- c) the views of the persons consulted; and
- d) copies of all consultation documents and a statement of how these were made available.

The authority issued a consultation document on 14 May 2012 and the consultation period ran from that date to 20 July 2012.

The main consultees that consultation documents were sent to included governors, staff, pupils and parents/guardians at Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School ; Headteachers and Governing Bodies of other primary and nursery schools within a five mile radius of Out Rawcliffe in the Wyre and Fylde areas; Blackpool Unitary Authority and Wyre and Fylde Borough Councils. A complete list of consultees is included at page 14 of the consultation document, which can be viewed at the link below.

The consultation documents were distributed in hard copy and electronically and were also published on the Internet at

[www.lancashire.gov.uk/schoolorganisationreviews](http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/schoolorganisationreviews)

The consultation document forms an integral element of these complete proposals. Copies of the complete proposals can be inspected at Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School, the Area Education Office (North) at the White Cross Education Centre, Quarry Road, Lancaster, LA1 3SQ, Lancaster City Hall, Wyre and Fylde Councils and local libraries. Hard copies of the complete proposal documentation will be made available on request and can be obtained from the Directorate for Children and Young People, Provision and Planning Team, PO Box 61, County Hall, Preston, PR1 8RJ. They will also be available on the above website.

As part of the consultations, meetings were held with a range of people including members of the governing body and staff employed at Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School. An appointment led event, rather than a public meeting was held between 3.00pm and 8.00pm on Thursday 24 May 2012 at Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School. This format of meeting is preferred as it allows the local authority to manage the process effectively, minimise waiting times and ensure that appropriate officers are available to offer any interested parties, either individually or in small groups, advice and guidance to enable them to gain a better understanding on all of the aspects of the proposals.

A school closure consultation was held on June 11<sup>th</sup> 2012 for the pupils of Out Rawcliffe CE Primary School. The whole school, 12 pupils of mixed age and sex, took part in the consultation which was facilitated by a LCC non school employee with a teaching assistant supporting the session. Activities were undertaken to explore how the children felt and enable them to express their opinions. The pupils were unanimous in that they did not want the school to close and they explored the reasons for this during the activities.

The views from the meetings and the 396 written responses to the consultations are detailed and analysed in the report to the Cabinet Member

for Children and Schools that was considered on 27 September 2012 and forms an integral element to these complete proposals. The responses in support of the proposal were from governors and teachers at another school and a parent/guardian of a future pupil of Out Rawcliffe School. The respondents who neither agreed nor disagreed with the proposal were from interested members of the local community. 97% of respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the proposal to close the school. 79% of these responses were from interested members of the local community. Those that responded as 'interested members of the local community' consisted of people living in Out Rawcliffe, Great Eccleston and Little Eccleston in the main, with some respondents from more outlying areas. In addition there was opposition from parents, staff and some individual governors of Out Rawcliffe CE School; the local MP; Parish and Borough Councillors; a school governor and members of staff at other schools; and former staff, parents or pupils of Out Rawcliffe CE School.

All relevant statutory requirements regarding consultation on these proposals were complied with.

## **Objectives**

5. The objectives of the proposal.

The objective of the proposal is to close Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School with effect from 31 August 2013.

## **Standards and Diversity**

6. A statement and supporting evidence indicating how the proposals will impact on the standards, diversity and quality of education in the area.

The county council is committed to improving the quality of educational provision to help raise standards for all learners so that every child has the opportunity to receive an excellent education whatever their background and wherever they live. The authority wants to provide excellence for all children in Lancashire.

Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School is a small, voluntary aided rural primary school within the Diocese of Blackburn. Pupil numbers have been falling over the past four years: at January 2008 52 pupils were on roll, which has reduced year by year to 16 pupils at January 2012.

The school was inspected in January 2012 and was judged to be satisfactory in all areas (achievement of pupils, quality of teaching and leadership and management) apart from one area (behaviour and safety of pupils) which was judged to be good. The school's overall effectiveness rating was satisfactory. A satisfactory judgement means that features are of

a reasonable quality and the school is providing adequately for its pupils.

In recent months, Local Authority Officers and officers representing Blackburn Diocese have been in discussion with school governors over the future of the school. After considering the feasibility of continuing as at present; collaborating or federating with another school; or consulting on the future of the school, on 22 March 2012 the governors agreed to pursue the latter option.

Schools that experience declining numbers of pupils on roll are adversely affected in budgetary terms making it increasingly difficult to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and there is concern about the future financial viability of the school.

The diversity of school provision is illustrated in the table showing the availability of places at primary schools in the Out Rawcliffe area on page 8 of the consultation document. There is one community school, one Church of England school, one Catholic school and an Academy school within 4 miles of Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School.

The standards of education offered by neighbouring schools, as judged by the most recent Ofsted reports are as follows: Great Eccleston Copp CE and St Mary's Catholic – Good; and Nateby Primary and Hambleton Primary Academy – outstanding.

### **Provision for 16-19 year olds**

7. Where the school proposed to be discontinued provides sixth form education, how the proposals will impact on:

- a) the educational or training achievements;
- b) participation in education or training; and
- c) the range of educational or training opportunities,

for 16-19 year olds in the area.

N/A

### **Need for places**

8. A statement and supporting evidence about the need for places in the area including whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

There are sufficient places in all of the year groups at neighbouring schools to admit pupils from Out Rawcliffe CE. Great Eccleston Copp is a voluntary aided Church of England school and places are currently available in each of its year groups for any children that wish to continue with a Church of England education.

The Pupil Numbers and Forecasts section in the consultation document on pages 6 to 8 details the availability of places at other schools as at January 2012, including a table showing the numbers on roll in each year group in the two closest schools to Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School.

The birth rate in the area is steady and there are currently no plans for a significant amount of new housing. No external factors have been identified that would cause the school's roll to increase in the short to medium term.

9. Where the school has a religious character, a statement about the impact of the proposed closure on the balance of denominational provision in the area and the impact on parental choice.

There are sufficient places in all of the year groups at neighbouring schools to admit pupils from Out Rawcliffe CE. Great Eccleston Copp is a voluntary aided Church of England school and places are currently available in each of its year groups for any children that wish to continue with a Church of England education.

If Out Rawcliffe CE closes, parents will be assisted to find a place for their child in another local school and they will be able to express a preference for their preferred alternative school.

The standards of education offered by neighbouring schools, as judged by the most recent Ofsted reports are as follows: Great Eccleston Copp CE and St Mary's Catholic – Good; and Nateby Primary and Hambleton Primary Academy – outstanding.

In recent months, Local Authority Officers and officers representing Blackburn Diocese have been in discussion with school governors over the future of the school. After considering the feasibility of continuing as at present; collaborating or federating with another school; or consulting on the future of the school, on 22 March 2012 the governors agreed to pursue the latter option.

### **Current School Information**

10. Information as to the numbers, age range, sex and special educational needs of pupils (distinguishing between boarding and day pupils) for whom provision is made at the school.

Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School is a co-educational day primary school providing for pupils of all abilities. At the January 2012 termly school census there were 7 male and 9 female pupils aged between 3 and 11 on roll.

Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School does not have a designated special educational needs facility or reserved places for pupils with special educational needs. The school does provide for pupils with

statements of special educational needs.

### **Displaced Pupils**

11. Details of the schools or FE colleges which pupils at the school for whom provision is to be discontinued will be offered places, including:

- a) any interim arrangements;
- b) where the school included provision that is recognised by the LA as reserved for children with special educational needs, the alternative provision to be made for pupils in the school's reserved provision; and
- c) in the case of special schools, alternative provision made by LAs other than the authority which maintains the school.

No interim arrangements are proposed.

Out Rawcliffe CE is located in a sparsely populated area and some of the pupils already receive assistance with school transport. The closest alternative schools are St Mary's Catholic, Great Eccleston at 2.28 miles away and Great Eccleston Copp CE 2.77 miles away; Hambleton Academy and Nateby Primary are within 4 miles. Some Out Rawcliffe pupils live closer to alternative schools than they do to Out Rawcliffe CE.

There are sufficient places at neighbouring schools to admit pupils from Out Rawcliffe CE. Great Eccleston Copp is a voluntary aided Church of England school and places are currently available in each of its year groups for any children that wish to continue with a Church of England education.

If Out Rawcliffe CE closes, parents will be assisted to find a place for their child in another local school and they will be able to express a preference for their preferred alternative school.

The local authority does not have provision that is reserved for pupils with special educational needs at Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School. Future special educational needs provision will be reviewed in consultation with pupils, parents and possible alternative schools.

12. Details of any other measures proposed to be taken to increase the number of school or FE college places available in consequence of the proposed discontinuance.

The Need for Places section above confirms that there are sufficient places at neighbouring schools to admit pupils from Out Rawcliffe CE.

### **Impact on the Community**

13. A statement and supporting evidence about the impact on the community and any measures proposed to mitigate any adverse impact.

Out Rawcliffe CE is located in a sparsely populated area and some of the pupils already receive assistance with school transport. The closest alternative schools are St Mary's Catholic, Great Eccleston at 2.28 miles away and Great Eccleston Copp CE 2.77 miles away; and Hambleton Academy, and Nateby Primary are within 4 miles. Some Out Rawcliffe pupils live closer to alternative schools than they do to Out Rawcliffe CE. Given the pattern of alternative school places, and dependent on choices made by parents, it is possible for pupils to attend schools close to their existing communities.

Pupils and families could continue to access community services and facilities near to their homes.

The school site is not owned by the local authority and is subject to a reverter clause requiring it to revert to the trustees (or their descendents) should it no longer be used for a school providing for statutory school age children.

14. Details of extended services the school offered and what it is proposed for these services once the school has discontinued.

Whilst, during the consultation exercise, a number of respondents stated that the school has been / is the focal point for the community, no evidence has been provided as to what activities the school actually provides for the local community.

Since the stage 1 consultation process, the school has been arranging a 'Forest School' which runs in the wood on the school site. This is outdoor based teaching and can run as required from early morning until parents finish work in the evening. The service could also be offered during the school holidays as and when required.

## **Travel**

15. Details of the length and journeys to alternative provision.

The authority's aim is that primary aged pupils' journeys should not take more than three quarters of an hour and ideally should be within a two mile radius of the school they attend. However, Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School is located in a sparsely populated area with some of the pupils already receiving assistance with school transport.

The closest alternative schools measured by walking distance are: St Mary's Catholic, Great Eccleston (2.28 miles away) and Great Eccleston Copp CE (2.77 miles away). Hambleton Academy and Nateby Primary are within 4 miles.

Some Out Rawcliffe pupils live closer to alternative schools than they do to Out Rawcliffe CE.

16. The proposed arrangements for travel of displaced pupils to other schools including how they will help to work against increased car use.

A number of pupils attending Out Rawcliffe CE currently receive assistance with home to school transport. It is not possible to estimate whether this proposal will lead to an increased use of transport as it depends on the alternative provision chosen by parents.

It is the policy of the authority to provide assistance with home to school transport for pupils under eight years of age if the school that the pupil attends is the nearest suitable school and it is two miles or more from the pupil's home. The qualifying distance extends to three miles for pupils of eight years of age and over.

For pupils on free school meals or parents receiving the maximum amount of working tax credit (low income families) the qualifying distance remains at two miles when the child reaches eight years of age.

For pupils that do qualify for home to school transport the local authority will assess the most cost effective and reasonable way to do this. Due to the rurality of the area, this may involve the use of taxis.

The local authorities full home to school transport policy can be viewed at the link provided below:

[http://www3.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/atoz/a\\_to\\_z/service.asp?u\\_id=784&tab=20](http://www3.lancashire.gov.uk/corporate/atoz/a_to_z/service.asp?u_id=784&tab=20)

### **Related Proposals**

17. A statement as to whether in the opinion of the LA or governing body, the proposals are related to any other proposals which may have been, are, or are about to be published.

In the opinion of the local authority, the proposal is not related to other proposals which have been, are, or are about to be, published.

### **Rural Primary Schools**

18. Where proposals relate to a rural primary school designated as such by an order made for the purposes of section 15, a statement that the LA or the governing body (as the case may be) considered:

- a) the likely effect of discontinuance of the school on the local community;
- b) the availability, and likely cost to the LA, of transport to other schools;
- c) any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the discontinuance of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase;



and

d) any alternatives to the discontinuance of the school, as required by section 15(4)

Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary is a small, voluntary aided rural primary school within the Diocese of Blackburn. Pupil numbers have been falling over the past four years: at January 2008 52 pupils were on roll, which has reduced year by year to 16 pupils at January 2012. Births in the area are steady and there are currently no plans for significant amounts of new housing, therefore there no external pressures have been identified that would cause the school's roll to increase in the short to medium term. The admission number of the school is 10, the physical capacity is 70 and surplus places currently stand at 77%. Due to the high number of surplus places at the school the LA is required to explain reasons for the surplus and any action it intends to take to the Department for Education on an annual basis.

Given the pattern of alternative school places, and dependent on choices made by parents, it is possible for pupils to attend schools close to their existing communities. During the consultation exercise, no evidence was provided of community activities held at Out Rawcliffe CE and pupils and families could continue to access community services and facilities near to their homes.

The authority's aim is that primary aged pupils' journeys should not take more than three quarters of an hour and ideally should be no more than two miles. Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School is located in a sparsely populated area with some of the pupils already receiving assistance with school transport. The closest alternative schools measured by walking distance are: St Mary's Catholic, Great Eccleston (2.28 miles away) and Great Eccleston Copp CE (2.77 miles away). Hambleton Academy and Nateby Primary are within 4 miles. Some Out Rawcliffe pupils live closer to alternative schools than they do to Out Rawcliffe CE and it is not possible to say whether the proposal will lead to an increased use of transport as it depends on parental preferences for alternative provision. However, as the number of pupils is small, any increases travel costs to the LA will be small and more than offset by the amount of funding that has been provided to the school over the past three years in order for it to balance the budget.

Since the 2010/11 financial year, Out Rawcliffe CE has carried forward a deficit budget. The deficit has increased year on year and the school carried forward a deficit of around £29,500 to the 2012/13 financial year, representing around 14% of the Individual School Budget. The only sustainable option for Out Rawcliffe CE is for the school to have a part-time headteacher, or one shared with another school on a permanent basis. Even then, the budget would be extremely tight, leaving very little flexibility to make alternative arrangements for staff cover and other unplanned for events. The local authority has endeavoured to find a primary school that would agree to collaborate or federate with Out Rawcliffe CE and thus make

financial savings through the sharing of senior staff. This has not proved possible. Given this situation, on 22 March 2012, the governing body agreed to a consultation exercise on the closure of the school.

### **Maintained nursery schools**

19. Where proposals relate to the discontinuance of a maintained nursery school, a statement setting out:

- a) the consideration that has been given to developing the school into a children's centre and the grounds for not doing so;
- b) the LA's assessment of the quality and quantity of alternative provision compared to the school proposed to be discontinued and the proposed arrangements to ensure the expertise and specialism continues to be available; and
- c) the accessibility and convenience of replacement provision for local parents.

N/A

### **Special educational provision**

20. Where existing provision that is recognised by the LA as reserved for pupils with special educational needs is being discontinued, a statement as to how the LA or the governing body believes the proposal is likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of the educational provision for these children.

Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School does not have a designated special educational needs facility or reserved places for pupils with special educational needs (SEN). However, it provides support for pupils with SEN, including those with statements.

When discontinuation proposals are proposed it is important to review the needs of pupils with statements and, following consultations with them and their parents, to name for certain pupils the alternative school where provision would be made for them. Where pupils have special educational needs but are not statemented, action is taken to enable continuity of support to be provided. Out Rawcliffe Church of England Primary School does not currently have any statemented pupil on roll.