

COMPLETE PROPOSAL

SECTION 1: DISCONTINUANCE OF WHITGREAVE INFANT SCHOOL

Community School and Local Authority Details

School Details: Whitgreave Infant School, Low Hill Crescent, Low Hill, Wolverhampton, WV10 9HS

LA Details: City of Wolverhampton Council
(Contact: School Organisation Team, 1st Floor, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1RL).

Reason for Closure

Strategic policy regarding the organisation of primary school provision in the City is outlined within the Council's Primary School Organisation Strategy 2016-2018. The Strategy recommends that, "... the Council invites responsible bodies (e.g. Governing Bodies or Trusts) to consider the merger or amalgamation of infant and junior schools whenever the Headship of a school becomes vacant. For mergers to be considered, the leadership of the establishment that is proposed for expansion must be at least 'Good'."

The 'merger' of infant and junior schools is the process of joining the schools together by discontinuing one establishment and expanding and altering the age range of the other.

Individual school performance is independently assessed by Ofsted. Whitgreave Infant School was inspected and judged to be 'Good' by Ofsted in June 2014. Whitgreave Junior School was judged 'Outstanding' by Ofsted in November 2015.

In January 2017, the Headteacher of Whitgreave Infant School formally announced her intention to retire at the end of the academic year 2016-17. The governing boards of both Whitgreave Infant School and Whitgreave Junior School agreed to appoint the headteacher of the junior school as the acting headteacher of the infant school with effect from 1 September 2017.

In Spring 2017, in line with strategic policy, the Council invited the governing boards of the two schools to consider the future organisation of their school; the recommendation from both schools was to merge to create a primary school. During Summer Term 2017, the governing boards federated (a federation is where one governing board governs two or more schools).

The proposal to discontinue Whitgreave Infant School has related proposals as detailed within this complete proposal which are interdependent and should not be considered in isolation of one another. Whitgreave Infant School is co-located on the same site as Whitgreave Junior School but their facilities are separated by a playing field. The related proposals are to lower the age range and increase the capacity of Whitgreave Junior School, to create a primary school for pupils aged between 3 and 11 years, in order to accommodate pupils currently attending Whitgreave Infant School (please see Section 2). The primary school would occupy the existing buildings of both schools.

Pupil Numbers and Admissions

Whitgreave Infant School is a mixed Community school that caters for children aged between 3 and 7 years. There are no boarding arrangements at the School.

Gender of Pupils (Reception to Year 2):

Male – 94 (51.9%)

Female – 87 – (48.1%)

Year Group	Compulsory/Non-Compulsory	Current Admission Limits	Current Number on Roll (as at 02.01.18)
Nursery	Non - compulsory	60	39
Reception	Compulsory	60	60
Year 1		60	60
Year 2		60	61

Displaced pupils

Whitgreave Infant school is located in the Bushbury South and Low Hill Ward; the proposal does not affect the number of places in this Ward. The closure of the infant school is to enable the junior and infant school to merge to create a primary school. All pupils on roll at Whitgreave Infant School on 31 August 2018 would automatically transfer to the primary school on 1 September 2018 and therefore there would be no displacement of pupils. However, should any pupil not wish to take up a place at the primary school they would have the opportunity to apply for a place at other schools where places are available.

Impact on the community

Bringing infant and junior schools together offers a number of advantages, including:

- Reducing the number of major transitions that pupils face
- Reducing the likelihood of lost learning at the beginning of Key Stage 2
- Increasing the opportunity for specialist teachers to work with a wider range of pupils
- Providing the opportunity for a consistent approach to the curriculum to be adopted
- Ensuring the continuity of teaching, learning and achievement
- Cost savings through economies of scale.

It is not envisaged that there would be any adverse impact on the community as the number of school places in the area will not be reduced and the primary school would continue to serve the local community as the separate infant and junior schools currently do.

Travel

All pupils at Whitgreave Infant School would automatically transfer to the newly created primary school so no pupils will be displaced as part of the proposal. The infant and junior

schools are co-located on the same site and will still occupy both school buildings and therefore journeys and travel time of pupils will not be affected.

Implementation

The proposed date of closure is 31 August 2018.

Consultation Responses

Formal Consultation (Representation) commenced on 4 January 2018 and ends on 31 January 2018.

Any person may object to, support or comment on the proposal by writing to:

Mr Bill Hague
Head of School Planning and Resources
City of Wolverhampton Council
1st Floor Civic Centre
St Peter's Square
Wolverhampton
WV1 1RL

Or email: school.organisation@wolverhampton.gov.uk

The closing date for responses is 31 January 2018.

SECTION 2: PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS TO WHITGREAVE JUNIOR SCHOOL

Community School and Local Authority Details

School Details: Whitgreave Junior School, Goodyear Avenue, Low Hill, Wolverhampton, WV10 9JP

LA Details: City of Wolverhampton Council
(Contact: School Organisation Team, 1st Floor, Civic Centre, St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton, WV1 1RL).

Description of Alteration and Evidence of Demand

The prescribed alterations are as follows:

- Lower the age range of Whitgreave Junior School from 7-11 years to 3–11 years
- To enlarge the premises of Whitgreave Junior School to accommodate infant pupils.

The proposals to lower the age range and increase the capacity of Whitgreave Junior School to create a primary school are related to the aforementioned closure of Whitgreave Infant School and are interdependent and should not be considered in isolation of one another. Whitgreave Junior School is co-located on the same site as Whitgreave Infant School. The related proposal is to discontinue Whitgreave Infant School and transfer the pupils to the

proposed primary school (please see Section 1). The proposal does not affect the number of places available. Figure 1 summarises the proposed changes.

Figure 1: Proposed Changes

Current Age Range	Proposed Age Range	Current Net Capacity	Proposed Net Capacity*	Current Admission Limit	Proposed Admission Limit
7-11	3-11	240	431	60	60

* Please note the proposed net capacity is based on the current individual assessments of Whitgreave Infant School (191 net capacity) and Whitgreave Junior School (240 net capacity). Subject to approval of the proposal to merge the schools the net capacity of the primary school would be assessed.

Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice)

The objectives of the proposal are to both modify the age range of Whitgreave Junior School from 7-11 to 3-11 and to enlarge the premises to accommodate pupils currently attending Whitgreave Infant School. The merger of Whitgreave Infant School with Whitgreave Junior School would create a primary school which will be located on the current sites of the two schools and will utilise the existing school buildings.

Bringing infant and junior schools together offers a number of advantages, including:

- Reducing the number of major transitions that pupils face
- Reducing the likelihood of lost learning at the beginning of Key Stage 2
- Increasing the opportunity for specialist teachers to work with a wider range of pupils
- Providing the opportunity for a consistent approach to the curriculum to be adopted
- Ensuring the continuity of teaching, learning and achievement
- Cost savings through economies of scale.

The City of Wolverhampton Council is confident that the merger of Whitgreave Infant School with Whitgreave Junior School would raise educational standards for pupils in all key stages as the Whitgreave Junior School Leadership Team have demonstrated they have the capacity, skills and expertise to bring about rapid improvement. The School Leadership Team have experience of successfully supporting other schools to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching and learning.

The number of school places available in the area is not being reduced as part of the proposal therefore parental choice for a school place will not be affected, however, there will be a reduction in the number of infant schools across the City.

The effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area

There will be no impact on educational establishments within the area as the number of school places available is not being changed as part of the proposal.

Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved

The proposed merger of the schools would provide opportunities for efficiency savings and maximise the use of school resources.

The Local Authority schools funding formula includes a lump sum payment of £125,000 per school so the proposed merger would eventually release £125,000 of the Dedicated Schools Grant which would be available for allocation across the remaining schools in the city. In the year of conversion, the primary school would retain the full allocations originally made to the separate schools. A transitional year then follows, where the primary school would receive a proportion of the lump sum that would equate to £87,500, in addition to its own £125,000 lump sum.

It is recognised that there would be a need to invest in ICT to consolidate the infrastructure between the two sites and to merge the School Information Management System (SIMS) databases from Whitgreave Infant School and Whitgreave Junior Schools into one database.

It is anticipated that this cost would need to be met by the primary school utilising a proportion of the aforementioned lump sum allocation.

Whilst the schools are co-located on the same site with their facilities separated by a playing field, a path is required to support the transition to one school; facilitating movement of employees and equipment between the sites. Estimated costs of this work are between £75,000 to £125,000. A contribution towards this cost will be sought from the school.

Implementation

The proposed date for implementation is 1 September 2018.

Consultation Responses

Formal Consultation (Representation) commenced on 4 January 2018 and ends on 31 January 2018

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Mr Bill Hague
Head of School Planning and Resources
City of Wolverhampton Council
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