



Equality impact assessment

Proposed closure of Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Key findings:

The proposal is to close Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School with effect from 31st august 2016. The school is regularly undersubscribed and has been unable to secure sustainable leadership arrangements. Following discussions with the school's governors and the Diocese of Norwich, the Local Authority is consulting on a proposal to close Brockdish CE VC Primary School.

Because of the declining roll and the lack of sustainable leadership, Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a school of concern for the Local Authority.

Directorate:	Children's Services
Review officer/s:	Judith Elliott-Hunter (Senior Partnership Adviser), Janine Birt (School Organisation Officer), Neil Howard (Equalities and Cohesion Officer), James Joyce (Committee Chairman), Michael Rosen (Executive Director of Children's Services)
Date completed:	2016
Action required:	Yes

1. Overview of activity or proposal

The proposal is to close Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School with effect from 31st August 2016.

The Public Notice proposed a formal closure date of 31 August 2016. From September 2016, the usual transport rules will apply, providing free transport to Harleston CE Voluntary Aided Primary School for all pupils who live in the Brockdish catchment area.

A six week statutory consultation was carried out which resulted in the decision to proceed to public notice. The four week representation period following publication of the public notice to close Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School ends on 7 April 2016 and a determination for or against the proposal will be made by the Executive Director of Children's Services.

2. Who is affected?

Where this proposal may be relevant to people with a protected characteristic (i.e. they might potentially use the service as a Norfolk resident or visitor) please indicate here:

Age (people of different age groups; older & younger etc)	YES
Disability (people who are wheelchair or cane users; blind, deaf, visually or hearing impaired; can't stand for a long time; have a long-term illness i.e. HIV or a neurological condition such as dyslexia; learning difficulties; mental health etc)	YES
Gender reassignment (people who identify as transgender)	NO
Marriage/civil partnerships	NO
Pregnancy & Maternity	NO
Race (different ethnic groups, including Gypsies & Travellers)	NO
Religion/belief (different faiths, including people with no religion or belief)	NO
Sex (i.e. men/women)	NO
Sexual orientation (all, including lesbian, gay & bisexual people)	NO

3. Context to the proposal

Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is in Cluster 33 which covers Archbishop Sancroft High (Harleston) cluster area which has a usual resident population of 9,282 people. The electoral division of Diss and Roydon, in which some of the schools in this cluster sit, has a population older than the Norfolk average. The proportion of people in this electoral division which consider their health to be good or very good is better than the county average but deprivation is above the county average.

Changing child population in the area

A key characteristic of the area is the changing child population, and to provide a picture of how this may affect the school population and needs, we have looked at the age groups of children and young people in the Cluster catchment area.

The following Table and Chart show how population has changed within the cluster area over the last ten years, and shows the falling number of young children in the 5-10 age group, which will start to impact on secondary school place demands in the next few years. There are also increases in the numbers of children in the 0-4 age group which will have an impact on demand for early years education.

	2001	2011	2001%	2011%	change	% change
0 to 4	439	506	0.24	0.28	67	15.4
5 to 10	585	527	0.31	0.29	-58	-9.9
11 to 16	605	552	0.32	0.30	-53	-8.7
17 to 19	235	255	0.13	0.14	20	8.3
0 to 19	1864	1840			-24	-1.3

- During the Spring term 2013, 3% of the school population had Special Educational Needs (0% Statement, 3% School Action Plus, 0% School Action) (Update – 5.3% in 2015, equating to the same number of students).
- 78.8% of the pupils were reported to have English as their first language. For the remaining 21.2% the information was not obtained, or refused to answer. (Update -100% English as first language in 2015).

4. Potential impact

If this proposal is implemented, all the children currently attending the school will be displaced. The designated catchment school for those living in the Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School catchment area will be Harleston Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School.

The designated school for children who currently live in the Brockdish catchment area is likely to be Harleston Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School.

The proposed catchment area for Harleston Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School will be permanently extended to include that part of the current catchment area for the Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School.

Pupils currently attending Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, living in the catchment area and beyond the statutory school transport distance to Harleston Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School will be entitled to free transport to Harleston from September 2016. Where a parent's preference(s) cannot be met Norfolk County Council will offer the nearest school with places available and offer the right of appeal. Transport will also be offered to an alternative school where this is beyond the statutory transport distance and is the nearest school with places.

We recognise that the closure of this small school will impact especially upon those children with Special Educational Needs, whose families have chosen Brockdish Church of England

Voluntary Controlled Primary School, because of its intimate size. Norfolk County Council is committed to ensuring that the needs of all children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) will be met. If the closure of this school is approved, the provision required for those pupils with a statement of SEN will be reviewed and, following consultation with individual parents, an alternative school offering suitable provision will be made available for their child.

Brockdish Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled School in the Diocese of Norwich. All schools within the Harleston Cluster are Church of England schools.

As stated in section 3 there are no identified pupils who do not have English as being their first language, and there are unlikely to be any potential impacts for any families due to their ethnicity, language or culture.

There is a potential impact on staff employed at Brockdish CE Voluntary Controlled Primary School. Work has been undertaken by HR to identify those staff who would be displaced by the implementation of this proposal and support will be given in seeking redeployment in line with the Code of Practice.

5. Actions

Describe any actions to be carried out to address any potential adverse impact identified above.

Action/s	Lead	Date
1 Individual reviews for children with statements	Additional Needs Coordinator	Spring/summer terms 2016
2 Work with displaced staff	Rachel Williams - HR Consultant	Spring/summer terms 2016

6. Completion & further information

To support you in your decision making please sign off your form with Neil Howard, Equality & Cohesion Officer, Planning, Performance & Partnerships team.

For questions and guidance about equality issues and help completing this assessment, please contact Neil Howard directly:

Telephone: 01603 224196

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Signed: Neil Howard

Date: 6 April 2016