

**Mileham Primary School**  
**Statutory Proposal to cease to maintain the above school**

**1. LA details**

Norfolk County Council  
County Hall  
Martineau Lane  
Norwich  
NR1 2DL

**2. School details**

Mileham Primary School  
Litcham Road  
Mileham  
King's Lynn  
PE32 2RD

**3. Implementation**

The proposal is to close Mileham Primary School with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> August 2015.

**4. Objectives and reasons**

Norfolk has set out clearly in its strategy “A Good School for Every Norfolk Learner”, its plan for ensuring rapid school improvement across the county of Norfolk. In June 2014, our support for school improvement was judged effective by Ofsted, but we know that we still have some way to go to ensure that all learners in Norfolk go to a good or outstanding school. Ofsted told us that we should:

*“Work to increase the proportion of good or better schools still further, with a sharper focus on secondary schools and the smallest primary schools.”*

Mileham Primary School caters for pupils from the age of 4 through to 11. It is designated by the Department for Education as a rural school serving a village. The school has been undersubscribed for some years and the total number on roll at the start of any academic year has not exceeded 30 since September 2009. In September 2014, there were 27 pupils on roll, of whom only 14 live within the designated catchment area of the school. A further 31 children eligible to attend the school are choosing to go to schools elsewhere. Taking into account parental preference, pupil numbers are predicted to remain below 25 for the next ten years.

The substantive headteacher left the school at the end of the summer term 2014. The school was not in a position to afford a high quality leader and the prospect of recruitment being successful was limited. Litcham School Governors agreed to enter into a temporary partnership for one year, whilst options for the future

were assessed. Litcham School also brokered for their primary phase leader to be the acting head teacher of Mileham School.

On taking up his post in September 2014, the acting headteacher raised a number of concerns with the Local Authority, as a result of which, the Education Intervention and Inspection Service conducted an audit of the school, which judged the school inadequate in all aspects.

Following this audit, a Warning Notice under Section 60 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 was issued in October 2014, stating that:

*“The standards of performance of pupils in the school are unacceptably low”.  
“There is variability in the school’s performance over time and whilst groups of children are small, there is evidence of underperformance over a number of years.”*

Analysis of the last three years, shows that only 4 of the 11 pupils who have taken the Key Stage Two tests, achieved the national benchmark of Level 4 in Reading, Writing and Mathematics.

The warning notice included local authority powers to “require the governing body to enter into an arrangement with another school”. At a meeting on 16 December 2014, the governors of Litcham School were asked to consider formal federation with Mileham Primary, but voted instead to consider amalgamation.

The budgeted cost of running the school for the current academic year 2014-2015 is £9,895 per pupil, which is significantly higher than the county average cost of approximately £4,500 per pupil.

For the above objectives and reasons, the Local Authority took the decision to consult with parents and other stakeholders on a proposal to cease to maintain the school.

## **5. Pupil numbers and admissions**

The school has 7 places available in each year group, but is regularly undersubscribed. In September 2014, there were 27 pupils on roll, of whom only 14 live within the designated catchment area of the school. Only 1 child from the catchment area has applied for a reception place for September 2015.

## **6. Displaced pupils**

Parents will be able to express preferences for alternative schools for their children and the Local Authority will work with parents to ensure that all children transfer in September 2015 to local schools with available places. The designated catchment school will be Litcham School which is already the preferred school for many in the Mileham catchment area.

## **7. Impact on the community**

Two petitions were submitted by the community containing a total of 365 signatures in support of the request by parents and friends of Mileham Primary School, to keep the school open. Signatures were provided by residents of village and from surrounding villages, with some much further afield. A number of those who attended the public meetings had attended the school themselves and were grandparents of current pupils.

Whilst it is clear that the majority of the present generation of parents in the village have chosen to send their children to larger schools in the vicinity, the community views the school as of vital importance to the village.

The site belongs to Norfolk County Council.

## **8. Balance of denominational provision**

Mileham Primary School is a Community School so closure would not affect the balance of denominational provision. Litcham School is also a Community School.

## **9. Rural primary schools**

The school is a rural primary school designated by the Department for Education as a school serving a village. The Local Authority is aware that, before final determination of the proposal, it needs to give consideration to

- The likely effect of closure of the school on the local community
- The availability and likely cost to the Local Authority of transport to other schools
- Any increase in the use of motor vehicles and the likely effects of any such increase
- Any alternatives to the closure of the school

## **10. Special educational needs provision**

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, it will be essential to review the provision required for those pupils with a statement of SEN and, following consultation with individual parents, an alternative school where provision would be made available for their child will be named.

## **11. Travel**

As stated above, Litcham School will be the designated school for pupils living in the Mileham catchment area. Transport will be provided for 4-8 year olds who live in Mileham because the distance is more than 2 miles. For 8-11 years olds who live in Mileham, transport will be provided because, although the distance is not more than 3 miles, there is no suitable footpath.

## **12. Consultation**

A seven week statutory consultation took place which ended on Friday 20 March. All statutory requirements in relation to the statutory consultation, publication and decision-making were complied with. A list of those to whom the consultation document was sent can be found on the website.

[https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/milehamprimaryschool/consult\\_view](https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/milehamprimaryschool/consult_view)

Minutes of the public meeting held at the school and a copy of a report which was discussed at the Children's Services Committee meeting on 10 March, can also be viewed on the website.

## **13. Procedure for making representations**

Any person may object to, express support for, or make comments on the proposals by emailing us at [schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk) or by writing to us at:

Mileham Primary Proposal, FREEPOST, 1H2076, Bay 9/10, Floor 8, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2BR. You don't need a stamp.