

## **Consultation on a proposal to close Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary School and extend the catchment area of Hempnall Primary School**

### **What is the proposal?**

The proposal is to close Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary School with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019 and to extend the catchment area of Hempnall Primary School (Community), to accommodate the change.

Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary school is a primary school taking pupils from the age of 4 years to 11 years and is designated as a rural school (rural hamlet with isolated dwellings) by the Department for Education, 2017.

### **Why is Norfolk County Council proposing closure?**

The consultation on the proposed closure of Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary School was brought forward as a request from the Governing Board of the school on 19 May 2019. The governors reluctantly requested the Council to consult on closure of the school as;

- There will not be any pupils at the school from 1 September 2019

There are a number of aspects that the Norfolk County Council as the Decision-Maker must take into account when considering the organisation of schools to ensure it is in the best interest of children's education and achievement. These include school leadership, performance, impact on the community, diversity of provision, need for places, travel, early years provision and special education provision.

The proposal to close Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary School is based on;

- There will not be any pupils at the school from 1 September 2019.

Therefore it is difficult to deliver and sustain quality education for children now and in the future.

### Low pupil numbers

The school has been a small rural school for many years. Recently pupil numbers have declined. Many pupils attend the school from out of the school catchment area. Forecasts for future children, show a continued trend of low numbers, within the Shelton with Hardwick catchment area. The School wrote to parents in April 2019, to outline changes to the staffing structure from September. As a result all the parents have requested to move their children to other schools from September 2019.

### No sustainable budget

Pupil numbers determine the school budget. All schools receive a lump sum as part of their annual funding budget from the Department for Education, which is added to, with funding based on the number of pupils on roll. The predicted pupil numbers for the next few years are very low, making the school financially un-sustainable.

### **Why are we consulting on a change of catchment area?**

The proposal to close Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary School has an impact on the catchment area for children from the area. Norfolk County Council is proposing to extend the Hempnall catchment area to include Shelton with Hardwick.

A catchment area is a defined geographical area that serves a particular school. In most cases, the area is used to provide priority for admission to a particular school. In planning the layout of a catchment area, the Admissions Authority, in this case, Norfolk County Council, should try to ensure that the parent would have reasonable expectation for priority to that school.

### **If this proposal goes ahead where will school places for children who currently attend Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary School be available?**

Parents have indicated that all the children will have moved to a different school by 1 September 2019.

However, if this is not the case, Norfolk County Council's admission arrangements allow parents to state up to 3 preferences and parents are encouraged to include their catchment school as one of these preferences as most schools prioritise catchment children. As required by law, there can be no guarantee that a place will be offered at the catchment school. However there are sufficient places in neighbouring schools to accommodate children from Shelton with Hardwick, if the proposal was agreed.

For children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan or Statement of Special Educational Needs, Norfolk County Council will undertake a review to determine the appropriate new placement in conjunction with the family. Every child with an EHC Plan has an allocated EHC Plan Co-ordinator who is responsible for this.

### **Why is Norfolk County Council consulting on this proposal and not the Governing Body?**

The Chair of Governors for the Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary & Hempnall Primary Schools contacted Norfolk County Council with the request to consult on closing Shelton with Hardwick school. The Department for Education guidance on opening and closing maintained schools, states that it is the responsibility of the local authority, (Norfolk County Council) under Section 15, Education & Inspection Act 2006, to propose the closure a community school.

### **Who will be consulted?**

Under section 16 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, the Local Authority as the proposer of the closure of a rural primary school must consult;

- Parents of pupils at Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary & Hempnall Primary schools
- The local district or parish council, where the school is situated

In addition, this document will be provided to people and organisations that may have an interest in this proposal including;

- Governing Body of Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary & Hempnall Primary schools
- All staff at Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary & Hempnall Primary schools
- Pupils at Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary & Hempnall Primary schools
- The governing bodies and staff of any other school in the Long Stratton Cluster
- Parents of any pupils at other schools who may be affected by the proposal
- Trade unions who represent staff at Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary & Hempnall Primary schools
- The Diocesan Boards of Education
- Local County Councillors and MP
- Early Years providers.

### **Who will make the final decision and when could the change happen?**

After this consultation ends on 16<sup>th</sup> July, Norfolk County Council will review the results of the consultation and present the findings to the Executive Director of Children's Services who will decide whether to proceed with the proposal.

If they decide to go ahead, by law we have to publish a statutory notice to close Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary School and change the catchment area for Hempnall Primary School. People would then have 4 weeks to write to us either supporting or opposing the proposal. The final decision is made by the Executive Director of Children's Services, Norfolk County Council as the Decision-Maker.

If at the end of the consultation process, the proposal does not go forward, then the school would remain as it is.

### **How can I learn more about this proposal and have my say?**

Come and talk to us - There will be a meeting for parents/carers and other interested members of the community:

- 6.30pm, Thursday 13 June, at Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary School
- 6.30pm, Friday 14 June, at Hempnall Primary School
- 6.30pm, Thursday 4 July, at Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary School

Tell us your views by;

- completing the online survey on <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/shelton-with-hardwick>
- completing the attached form and handing it into the school office
- Emailing us at [schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk)
- Write to School Organisation Team, FREEPOST IH 2076, Floor 8 Bay 29, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich NR1 2DL

**We need all responses by 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019.**

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## Consultation on a proposal to close Shelton with Hardwick Community Primary School and extend the catchment area of Hempnall Primary School

Let us know what you think of our proposal.

How far do you agree or disagree with our proposal to close Shelton with Hardwick Primary School, from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019? Please tick one box.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree or disagree    Disagree

Strongly Disagree    Don't know

Please give your main reasons for your answer.

How far do you agree or disagree with our proposal to extend the catchment area of Hempnall Primary School from 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019? Please tick one box.

Strongly Agree    Agree    Neither agree or disagree    Disagree

Strongly Disagree    Don't know

Please give your main reasons for your answer.

We would like to hear from many different people as your views help us to decide whether or not we make these changes.

We will process your personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations, which means that we will not give your personal data to any third parties.

Your comments will be anonymous - your name or anything that could identify you will not be included in any report. However, we cannot guarantee that this information will be withheld if it is requested under the Freedom of Information Act.

Please tell us who you are:

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> School governor       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent / Guardian                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Local resident        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Parent Teacher Association | <input type="checkbox"/> Local business        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member of staff                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Local sports group    |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> Local community group |

Other (please specify): \_\_\_\_\_

At which school? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your name? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your postcode? \_\_\_\_\_

**The earliest this change could take place would be 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019.**

You can tell us your views by returning your completed form;

- By completing the online survey on <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/shelton-with-hardwick>
- By post to School Organisation Team, FREEPOST IH 2076, Floor 8 Bay 29, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich NR1 2DL
- By completing the attached form and handing it into the school office
- Emailing us at [schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk)

**This consultation ends on 16<sup>th</sup> July 2019**