

Determination Report from the Executive Director of Children's Services

I have considered the proposal:

- To change the age range of Swaffham CofE VC Infant School to the full primary age range, 2 – 11 years, from 1 September 2020,
- To change the name of the school to Heartwood CofE Primary School

Background to the proposal

Norfolk County Council has a duty to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of school places to respond to housing growth and other demographic changes. This proposal is in response to the planned housing – at least 1000 new homes, in Swaffham, by changing the way the primary phase schools are organised in the area.

With the support of the governing bodies of Swaffham Church of England VC Infant School and Swaffham Church of England Junior Academy, the Diocese of Norwich and the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT), it is proposed that both schools change their age range, so that both schools become primary schools, with early years provision, for pupils aged 2 – 11 years.

Swaffham Church of England Junior Academy and Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) have consulted on their proposed change, at the same time as the consultation on the changes proposed to Swaffham Church of England VC Infant School.

What we are proposing

At the moment Swaffham children start their statutory education in Year R at the Infant School and then transfer to the Junior School after three years. We are proposing to change this pattern so that all children in Swaffham can attend one of two all-through primary schools (from Reception to the end of Year 6, with early years provision). We will do this by;

- Extending the age range of Swaffham Church of England VC Infant School, to become an all-through Primary school for up to 210 children (30 pupils in each year group). Provision for pre-school children will be included. It is proposed that this school will be known as Heartwood Church of England Primary School. An investment will be made by Norfolk County Council to support the expansion of the school to a primary school.

Consultation

The Governing body of Swaffham CofE VC Infant School, with the Diocese of Norwich and Norfolk County Council put forward the proposal for this change. Proposers of prescribed alterations for changes to maintained schools must consult

organisations, groups and individuals they feel to be appropriate and must include certain information which is published in the Prescribed Information document. See Appendix 1 for the initial consultation document, Appendix 2 for the report on the consultation, Appendix 3 for the Public Notice and Appendix 4 for the Prescribed Information.

The initial consultation period ran from 1 November to 13 December 2018 July. Following this period, the governing body of Swaffham CofE VC Infant School agreed to proceed to statutory Public Notice (Stage 1). This was published on 27 February 2019. The four week representation period (Stage 2) ended on Wednesday 27 March.

One response was received in the formal representation period (Stage 2), from the Diocese of Norwich, who support the proposal.

In coming to a decision on school organisation proposals, I am required to address the following factors:

1. Consideration of consultation and representation period
2. Education standards and diversity of provision
3. Demand v. need
4. School size
5. Proposed admission arrangements
6. National Curriculum
7. Equal opportunity issues
8. Community cohesion
9. Travel and accessibility
10. Funding
11. School premises and playing fields

This report, to be read in conjunction with the prescribed information will address each factor in turn.

Consideration of consultation and representation period

All statutory requirements in relation to the statutory consultation, publication and decision-making were complied with. Copies of the consultation document were sent to all parents, the local County Councillor, the Parish Council, CE and RC Dioceses, staff, governors and other stakeholders as outlined in the school organisation guidance.

Informal consultation;

- Two stakeholder meetings were held on 7 November and 22 November. 7 attended the first meeting and 5 attended the second.
- 23 responses were received. 17 strongly agreed or agreed to the proposal.

Statutory public notice;

- Copies of the public notice was published in the Watton & Swaffham Times and were displayed at the school gates, in line with regulations.
- **1 response was received.** This was from the Diocese of Norwich and states their support for the proposal and the general principle of all through primary schools. They did set out concerns about the impact of a current proposal for a new VA primary school in Swaffham which they feel risks destabilising all the schools. They also acknowledged the proposal by DNEAT to change the Junior Academy to a primary school and seek reassurances that both these proposals are linked and there is a joined-up plan between the schools, Diocese, DNEAT and the local authority.

Education standards and diversity of provision

The most recent inspection by Ofsted in February 2018 judged the school as Good.

Swaffham Infant school is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school. The Junior School is an Academy, run by Diocese of Norwich Education & Academies Trust (DNEAT).

In the surrounding area, there are 6 rural primary schools offering a mix of maintained and academy schools, although many are Church of England schools.

The diversity of provision in the area is not changed by this proposal.

Demand

Swaffham has several allocated housing sites with permission. Some have been built on the Brandon Road development and a large development known as Swan's Nest is now commencing its 3rd phase. Some developments, particularly on Sporle Road and over 300 dwellings in total, have had their permission lapsed. However, I note that these have recently re-applied for pre-applications.

There are still around 500 dwellings with permission to build out in Swaffham and Breckland Council are currently working on their new Local Plan which will cover the period up to 2036. It is expected that, as a good size market town, Swaffham could possibly receive a further allocation of housing, but this is not known at this time.

Norfolk County Council set out in their Local Growth & Investment Plan (March 2019), that pressure for primary places is evident due to housing growth and pupil forecasts indicate that an extra one form of entry (30 children) will be needed within the town and surrounding area, in the future. However, this does not take into account children currently attending an independent school, proposed to close as part of a proposal for a new Catholic VA Primary School in Swaffham.

Forecasts for Swaffham schools are fairly stable and sit around just over 80 children per year group. This number is above the admission number of the Infant and Junior schools (60 pupils). However a considerable number of children in the catchment area choose to attend other schools on the outskirts of Swaffham, therefore the admission number of 60 has been sufficient for the past few years.

It is forecast that 500 new dwellings will generate around 140 additional primary phase children; 60 at infant school age and 80 at junior school age. Therefore, with further housing in the future, Norfolk County Council is looking at an additional form of entry (30 pupils) to the existing 2 forms of entry (60 pupils) at the infant and junior schools, which will 'future proof' the Swaffham Town schools for the next 10 years.

Existing plans for school re-organisation of the Infant and Junior Schools to increase places to 90 pupils per year group across both schools, caters for most, not all of the pupils that are likely to live in Swaffham catchment in the future.

I am aware of a proposal from the Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia to establish a new primary voluntary aided school on the site of the Sacred Heart School. This will be a new maintained school for 210 pupils for children aged 3 – 11 years, from 1 September 2020. This proposal has been approved and the determination report is available on <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/sacred-heart> .

School size

This proposal is to extend the age range at Swaffham CofE VC Infant School and is linked to a proposal by DNEAT to extend the age range at Swaffham CofE Junior Academy. Both schools will become primary schools; Swaffham CofE VC Infant School will have a maximum of 210 pupils (30 children in each year group).

Proposed admission arrangements

The admission number for the school on the opening date will be 30 pupils and will be expected to follow the Local Authority's standard policy for pupil admissions.

National Curriculum

All local authority maintained schools must follow the National Curriculum.

Equal Opportunity issues

Equal opportunities have been considered as part of this proposal and did not identify any impact.

Community cohesion

Schools have a part to play in providing opportunities for young people from different backgrounds to learn with, from and about each other. The proposed changes will not have an impact on the good work already carried out by the school.

Travel and Accessibility

Norfolk County Council will continue to provide transport to those eligible under their statutory requirements.

Funding

Capital funding, from Norfolk County Council has been committed to ensure that appropriate accommodation is available to support the change in age range.

School premises and playing fields

Suitable outdoor space will be available as previously, to enable children to play safely outside.

My conclusion and recommendation – Stage 3

This proposal supports the County Council's policy preference for primary schools, where possible, as children's education benefits from the seamless transition between Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

I therefore conclude that the proposal to extend the age range of Swaffham CofE VC Infant School to the full primary age range, 2 – 11 years, with an admission number of 30 (main school and nursery) and a capacity of 210 pupils, from 1 September 2019, should proceed. The School will change the name to Heartwood CofE Primary School.

As this proposal is linked to a DNEAT proposal to the Regional School's Commissioner for Swaffham CofE Junior Academy to become a primary school, I am aware that both schools must have approval to proceed to primary to sustain the primary education offer in Swaffham.

Appendix 1 – initial Consultation Document



Swaffham Church of England
VC Infant School

Consultation on proposed changes to Swaffham Church of England VC Infant School

Pupil number growth in Swaffham

Norfolk County Council has a duty to ensure that there is a sufficient supply of school places to respond to housing growth and other demographic changes. We are responding to the planned housing – at least 1000 new homes, in Swaffham, by proposing a major change to the way the primary phase schools are organised in the area.

It is proposed that both Swaffham Church of England VC Infant School and Swaffham Church of England Junior Academy change their age range, so that both schools become primary schools, with early years provision, for pupils aged 2 – 11 years.

The Headteachers and Chair of Governors of the two schools involved, along with representatives from the Diocese of Norwich and Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT), have been part of the discussions with us about the future provision of school places in the area.

Swaffham Church of England Junior Academy and Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) are consulting on their proposed change, at the same time as this consultation on the changes proposed to Swaffham Church of England VC Infant School.

It is now time to seek a wider range of views, which is why we are holding this consultation.

What we are proposing

At the moment Swaffham children start their statutory education in Year R at the Infant School and then transfer to the Junior School after three years. We are proposing to change this pattern so that all children in Swaffham can attend one of two all-through primary schools (from Reception to the end of Year 6, with early years provision). We will do this by;

- Extending the age range of Swaffham Church of England VC Infant School, to become an all-through Primary school for up to 210 children (30 pupils in

each year group). Provision for pre-school children will be included. It is proposed that this school will be known as Heartwood Church of England Primary School. An investment will be made by Norfolk County Council to support the expansion of the school to a primary school.

DNEAT is also undertaking a consultation on a proposal to change the age range of Swaffham Church of England Junior Academy, to become an all through primary school for 420 children (60 children in a year group). Details of this consultation can be found on this link; <http://www.dneat.org/news>

Why we feel the changes are needed

The Governors, the Diocese of Norwich, DNEAT and Norfolk County Council believe the changes would benefit all children and young people in Swaffham because;

- They will provide sufficient places to meet future demand due to housing and population growth
- Norfolk County Council's policy on school organisation is to favour all through primary schools where these are achievable.

There are a number of considerations that Norfolk County Council take into account when considering changes to organisations of schools. These include school leadership, performance, impact on the community, diversity of provision, need for places, travel, early years provision and special education provision. The overall driving force is to ensure any change is in the best interest of children's education and achievement.

The earliest the change could happen is 1 September 2020.

We will be holding drop-in events where you can come and find out more about these proposals, by attending any of the dates below:

- Wednesday 7 November, 2 – 3pm, at Swaffham Church of England VC Infant School
- Friday 9 November, 9 – 10am, at Swaffham Church of England Junior Academy
- Wednesday 21 November, 6 – 7pm, at Swaffham Church of England Junior Academy
- Thursday 22 November, 6 – 7pm, at Swaffham Church of England VC Infant School

If you are unable to attend these events but would like to comment on our reorganisation proposals please:

- complete the attached form and hand it to the school office

May 2019

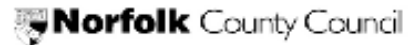
- or write to School Organisation Team, FREEPOST IH 2076, Floor 8 (Bay 29), County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2BR,
- or email schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk
- or access our online survey: <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/swaffham>

We need all responses by 13 December 2018.

Appendix 2 – Report on Consultation

Swaffham CofE VC Infant School Summary analysis of responses									
Total number of responses = 23									
Method of response									
Online			Letter				Email		
22			0				1		
Respondent									
*Please note respondents could tick all categories that apply - % of all respondents									
Pupil	Parent/ Guardian	Member PTA	Staff	Governor	Local resident	Local business	Local sports group	Local community group	Other
0	12 (55%)	1 (5%)	4 (18%)	3 (14%)	5 (23%)	5 (23%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)	1 (5%)
How far do you agree or disagree with our proposal to change the age range at Swaffham CofE VC Infant School, to become a primary school? (please note respondents tick all categories that apply)									
			Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know	
Total			46% (10)	32% (7)	14% (3)	0%	4% (1)	4% (1)	
Pupil									
Parent/Guardian			5	4	2			1	
Member of the PTA			1						
Member of Staff			2	1	1				
Governor			2	1					
Local resident			2	3					
Local business			1	3			1		
Local sports group				1					
Local community group				1					
Other			1						
Why do you say this? 19 respondents									
Better for children to be in a primary school, reduces the need for transition								11/19	
Increase in the Swaffham population so will need more school places								5/19	
Easier for parents to have children at one school								2/19	
Don't think it will have much impact on the children								1/19	
School environment is not a place for 2 year olds, impacts on emotional and social well being								1/19	
Class size concerns								1/19	
Impact on staff dedicated to teaching a certain age range								1/19	
Inclusion of 2 year old provision is welcome, but will it be funded?								1/19	
Comments by key themes - 10 respondents									
Look at impact on infrastructure e.g. parking, traffic, accommodation in classrooms, options for sharing facilities between the two schools								4/10	
Provision for 2 year olds; this could have an impact on my own provision as a childcare provider, it could be a viable place for me to expand my childcare business, there are spaces locally for 2 year old funded children								3/10	
Admissions process; how will children be prioritised for which school, will consideration be given to where people live								2/10	
Clarity on class sizes								1/10	
Extended hours; after school childcare will make life easier for working parents as there is a lack of childcare in Swaffham as a whole								1/10	

Appendix 3 – Public Notice



School Organisation in Swaffham

Proposal to change the age range of Swaffham CofE VC Infant School to admit pupils from 2 up to the age of 11 years, from 1 September 2020.

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that the Governing Body of Swaffham CofE VC Infant School, White Cross Road, Swaffham, Norfolk PR37 7RF, intends to make a prescribed alteration to change the age range of the school from 3 – 7 years to 2 – 11 years from 1 September 2020.

Swaffham CofE VC Infant School will change its name to Heartwood CofE Primary School.

The current capacity of the school is 180 and the proposed capacity will be 210. The Nursery will have 30 full time places for 2, 3 and 4 year olds. The current admission number for the school is 60 pupils and the proposed admission number will be 30 pupils. The current number on roll at the school is approximately 177.

The Governing Body of the school will implement this proposal.

This proposal could help reduce the volume of traffic in Swaffham as parents with more than one child would need only to drop their children off at one site instead of the current two schools; Infant and Junior.

All statutory consultation requirements relating to this proposal have been complied with.

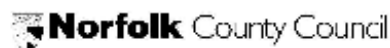
This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/swaffham-1> or by contacting the School Organisation Team (Bay 34), Floor 8, FREEPOST IH2076, Norfolk County Council, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to the School Organisation Team (Bay 34), Floor 8, FREEPOST IH2076, Norfolk County Council, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH or by email to schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk

Signed: Clare Hedges, Chair of Governors, Swaffham CofE VC Infant School

Publication Date: 27 February 2019

Appendix 4 – Prescribed Information



Swaffham Church of England Voluntary Controlled Infant School Statutory Proposal to change the Age Range to admit pupils from the age of 2 – 11 years from 1 September 2020.

1. School details

Name	Swaffham CofE VC Infant School
Type	Community
Address	White Cross Road, Swaffham, Norfolk PR37 7RF
Age Range	3 – 7 years
Capacity	180 pupils; Numbers on roll January 2019 = 177
Ofsted	Last Ofsted; 28 February 2017 Rating; Good

The school currently has an admission number of 60 places offered at Year Reception (YR). Pupils transfer to a Junior School at the end of Year 2.

2. Local Authority details

Norfolk County Council, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DL

3. What changes are proposed?

The Governors, the Diocese of Norwich and Norfolk County Council are proposing the following changes to Swaffham CofE VC Infant School;

- Change the age range of from 3-7 years to 2 – 11 years, from 1st September 2020. The school will be for pupils from Year Reception through to Year 6.
- Swaffham CofE VC Infant School to become a primary school, called Heartwood CofE Primary School.
- The Nursery will have 30 full time places for 2, 3, and 4 year olds.
- The admission number at the school will be 30, with a capacity of 210 pupils.

Norfolk County Council has a duty to ensure a sufficient supply of school places to respond to housing growth and other demographic changes. This proposal is responding to the major housing allocation of at least 1000 new homes in Swaffham by proposing a significant change to the way the primary phase of schooling is organised in the area to provide the extra places from the new homes. Currently across the Infant and Junior School, there are 60 places per year group (2 classes of 30 children). The planned growth in Swaffham shows that in the future, we will need 90 primary phase places in Swaffham (3 classes of 30 children).

At the moment, Swaffham children start their statutory education in Year R at the Infant School and then transfer to the Junior Academy after three years. We are proposing to change this pattern so that all children in Swaffham can attend one of two all-through primary schools (from Reception to the end of Year 6, including early years provision). This proposal is linked to a similar proposal for Swaffham CofE Junior Academy to become a primary school at the same time.

Swaffham CofE VC Infant School currently has 60 children (2 classes of 30 children) in each year group. If this proposal is approved, the Infant School will gradually become a primary school, with 30 children in each year group.

The intake year will be Reception. However, during the transition to primary school, children at Year 3 will have the opportunity to apply to remain at the Infant School until Year 6, or transfer to Swaffham CofE Junior Academy, which is also undertaking a proposal to change to a primary school. The table below details how the transition is proposed to take place.

Proposed reconfiguration of Swaffham CofE VC Infant School to primary school

	YR	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	TOTALS
2020	30	60*	60	30#				180
2021	30	30	60*	30#	30#			180
2022	30	30	30	30#	30#	30#		180
2023	30	30	30	30	30#	30#	30#	210
2024	30	30	30	30	30	30#	30#	210
2025	30	30	30	30	30	30	30#	210
2026	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	210
2027	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	210

* = assumed intake from September 2019

= where applications to Y3 are managed through the admissions process, assumed an equal split
From 2020 assume a maximum intake of 30 pupils at Reception (YR)

Actual 2018 intake (Year 2 in September 2020).

4. Why do we want to do this?

The Governors and the Diocese of Norwich have wanted to expand into a primary school for some time, due to the educational benefits for the children. The opportunity of additional housing planned for Swaffham has meant this can now be progressed.

Norfolk County Council's policy is to expand schools that are rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted. Swaffham CE VC Infant School was inspected in 2017 and rated Good.

Norfolk County Council's policy on school organisation is to favour all-through primary schools, where this is achievable. As Governors, we feel our proposal to become a primary school has many benefits;

- Creation of a seamless transition from key-stage 1 (infants) to key-stage 2 (juniors), as children stay in the same school
- Children will benefit from the potential of a wider range of resources and improved staff development.

- Greater opportunity for relationships between pupils, parents and the school to build over a longer period of time, allowing the school to understand better the needs of each pupil.
- Greater scope to create a single and continuous approach to the curriculum, with as single policies for handwriting, reading, maths and behaviour etc.
- Greater capacity to track pupil progress between key stages
- More development opportunities for the staff, such as shared training and the chance to work more closely across the curriculum and gain experience and understanding of all key stages.

This proposal, along with the linked proposal for Swaffham CofE Junior Academy, offers parents the choice of two primary schools in the Swaffham area.

5. When will the changes happen?

If the proposal is agreed by the local authority decision maker, the Executive Director of Children's Services, Norfolk County Council (following full consultation), it is intended that the change in age range will be implemented on 1 September 2020.

6. Will there be any effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area?

Yes. Swaffham CofE Junior Academy currently takes children from Swaffham CofE VC Infant School at Year 3. This proposal is linked to a similar proposal by the Diocese of Norwich Education and Academies Trust (DNEAT) to change the age range to 2 – 11 years and become a primary school called Swaffham CofE Primary Academy. There will be places for pupils from Reception through to Year 6. The admission number will be 60, with capacity for 420 pupils. If their proposal is approved, the school will also grow gradually into a primary school and the intake year will be Year Reception (YR). During the transition period upto September 2021, children at Year 3 will have the opportunity to apply to remain at the Infant School until Year 6, or transfer to Swaffham CofE Primary Academy.

Governors are aware of the Catholic Diocese of East Anglia proposal for a new non-fee paying Catholic Primary School in Swaffham, for 210 pupils, based on the Sacred Heart Convent School site, from 1st September 2019. This proposal is currently out for consultation and a decision has not been made.

7. How will this affect pupils at the school?

Pupils will notice some changes as the building will need to be adapted for Key Stage 2 children. Any building work will be managed with the school, so that it does not affect the education of pupils.

Swaffham Infant School and Swaffham Junior Academy support the proposals to become primary schools, as it will reduce the number of transitions for children. Whilst there has been a good partnership between the schools to

minimise the disruption during transition, it can for some children be a difficult and worrying time, resulting in taking longer for children to settle into their new school. The opportunity to remain in one school from Year Reception to year 6, means that staff can get to know the children better and can be more supportive to their individual needs. It also provides the opportunity for children's social development by taking on more responsibility within school.

Current pupils at the school may notice a change in the number of children in some year groups, as new intakes will reduce from 60 children to 30 children.

If the proposal is agreed, Norfolk County Council will contact parents of Year 2 pupils in November 2019, asking them to give their preferences for Year 3 places, from September 2020. Both Heartwood CofE Primary School and Swaffham CofE Primary Academy will be the catchment schools for families living in Swaffham.

In November 2020, Norfolk County Council will contact parents of Year 2 pupils, asking them to give their preferences for Year 3 places in September 2021.

The Year 2 pupils in September 2022 will remain at Heartwood CofE Primary School and will enter Year 3 automatically in September 2023. There will no longer be a need to apply for a junior place.

8. How will this affect staff?

It is hoped that the impact on staff will be limited. All staff have qualifications to teach at Key Stage 2 (Junior) as well as Key Stage 1 (Infants) and the proposal may offer staff the opportunity for career development to teach Key Stage 2 children.

The school will grow from 180 pupils to 210 pupils, by September 2023. The change in the number of children within some year groups, will be managed by the School Leadership Team.

9. Will there be changes to the school building?

Yes. Some refurbishment internally will be needed at the school to become a primary. The school currently have the correct number of classrooms (seven) for a primary school with 210 pupils, so there will be minimal disruption within the school itself.

One of the current reception classrooms will be remodelled to include en-suite toilets and some new furniture will be provided for other areas of the schools where their current use will change. It is proposed that there will be some external works to the front and rear of the school and this includes increased staff parking and an extended hard play area. Some of these will require a planning application – there will be an opportunity to view these plans prior to the planning application being submitted.

Norfolk County Council will lead the project, working with the school. The council have been working very closely with the school and NPS (property consultants) to develop a design that meets the necessary building requirements for a 210 pupil primary school.

As the school already have the number of classrooms required for a 210 pupil primary school, there will be sufficient space to accommodate the new Year 3 pupils in September 2020.

10. Will this definitely happen?

No, there is a statutory process we must follow to make this type of change to schools. We completed the pre-statutory consultation on the draft proposal, which took place from 1 November to 13 December 2018. The consultation report is available on <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/swaffham-1>

We are publishing this final proposal for parents, pupil, staff, governors and any other interested people to object to, comment on, or make representations, as part of the statutory process.

11. How can I make my views known?

Any person may object to, express support for, or make comments on the proposal;

- Online at <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/swaffham-1>
- Email us at schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk
- Write to us at: Swaffham Consultation, FREEPOST 1H 2076, Floor 8, Bay 34, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH. You don't need a stamp.

All comments must be received by 27 March 2019.

12. What happens next?

The following table sets out the key dates for the consultation and decision making. The Executive Director of Children's Services, Norfolk County Council is the decision maker.

At any point, the proposal may be withdrawn. The dates set out below meet the Department for Education requirements for consultation on school organisation proposals.

School organisation process	Date
Public Notice published	27 February 2019
Statutory consultation (representation stage)	27 February – 27 March 2019
Decision required no later than	27 May 2019
If approved, Swaffham Infant changes to primary school	1 st September 2020