

Consultation on a proposal to close Winterton Primary School, Winterton and extend the catchment area of Hemsby Primary School

What is the proposal?

The proposal is to close Winterton Primary & Nursery School (Foundation), with effect from 31st December 2018 and to extend the catchment area of Hemsby Primary School (Community), to accommodate the change.

Winterton Primary school is a primary school taking pupils from the age of 3 years to 11 years and is designated as a rural school by the Department for Education, 2017.

Why is Norfolk County Council proposing closure?

The consultation on the proposed closure of Winterton Primary School was brought forward as a request from the Interim Executive Board of the school on 16th May 2018. The Board reluctantly requested the Council to consult on closure of the school as;

- A route for the school has been rigorously explored by the Local Authority and the Department for Education, involving discussions with a number of Multi Academy Trusts and local schools. However, no practical outcome has been secured.
- The numbers of pupils at the school will not provide sufficient funding for the school to unilaterally provide a sustainable and acceptable level of education for the pupils.

There are a number of aspects that the 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 Winterton Primary School is based on;

- There is no sustainable governance model, including no viable Multi-Academy Trust solution
- There is no sustainable leadership
- There is no sustainable budget, due to the pupil numbers at the school.

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

No sustainable governance model, including no viable Multi-Academy Trust solution

Since November 2016, options of Federation with other schools or joining a Multi-Academy Trust have been explored. However, it has not been possible to secure any long term governance solution, to take Winterton forward. This also means that a sustainable shared leadership arrangement could not be found.

No sustainable leadership

The school has been unable to secure sustainable leadership arrangements, which will ensure high standards of education for children. Since the headteacher left the school in December 2016, there have been a number of interim arrangements put in place to support the school leadership, but a permanent solution has not been possible. The inconsistencies in senior leadership and

governance were recognised by Ofsted which judged the school as Requires Improvement in January 2018 in all areas; leadership and management, quality of teaching, outcomes for pupils and early years provision.

As a shared leadership solution has not been secured, Winterton would need to employ a Headteacher with a teaching commitment. It is recognised that recruiting a teaching headteacher can be difficult to achieve.

The lack of sustainable leadership means the school is at risk.

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. As there has not been any success in finding an Academy Sponsor, the school budget now needs to include the costs of a Headteacher, with teaching commitment.

The school is projecting deficits of £16,979 in 2019/20 and £72,370 in 2020/21. In order to address this deficit, there will be a need to reduce staff costs, resulting in a move to only two classes in the school and the closure of the Nursery. The move to two classes compromises any further attempts the school might need to make to deliver an acceptable quality of education.

There appears to be no reasonable prospect to recovery of the budget, without a detrimental impact on the education of the children.

Why are we consulting on a change of catchment area?

The proposal to close Winterton Primary School has an impact on the catchment area for children from the Winterton area. Norfolk County Council is proposing to extend the Hemsby catchment area to include Winterton.

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 Winterton be available?

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 Winterton, if the proposal was agreed.

For children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHP) 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 EHP has an allocated EHP Co-ordinator who is responsible for this.

School transport will be provided free of charge by Norfolk County Council for those pupils who transfer to their nearest or catchment school (in this case, it is proposed to be Hemsby Primary

School), where this is beyond the qualifying distance (over 2 miles for under 8's and over 3 miles for older children), as set out in our School Transport Policy.

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

Following the issuing of a Warning Notice to the school, the Local Authority (Norfolk County Council) consulted to remove the governing body and establish an Interim Executive Board. This was agreed by the Department for Education. At a subsequent Ofsted inspection the school was graded as requiring improvement, January 2018. The Interim Executive Board cannot itself publish proposals for closure, but may recommend to a local authority that a maintained school should be closed. A Foundation School is a maintained 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 Winterton and Hemsby 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;

- The Governing Bodies of Winterton and Hemsby schools
- All staff at Winterton and Hemsby schools
- Pupils at Winterton and Hemsby schools
- The governing bodies and staff of any other school in the Caister and Flegg Cluster
- Parents of any pupils at other schools who may be affected by the proposal
- Trade unions who represent staff at Winterton and Hemsby schools
- The Diocesan Boards of Education
- Local County Councillors and MP
- Early Years providers.

If this proposal goes ahead what would happen to the Winterton Primary School site?

The Norwich Diocese Board of Finance lease the original school buildings to the Governing Board. The playing field is owned by the School Governing Board. The existence of an Interim Executive Board doesn't affect these arrangements. If the proposal for closure is agreed, negotiations will need to take place on the ownership of the building and associated land.

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

After this consultation ends on 24th 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 Winterton Primary School, Winterton and change the catchment area for Hemsby Primary School, Hemsby. 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:

2.15 – 3.15pm Friday 15th June, at Winterton Primary School

6.00 – 7.00pm, Tuesday 26th June, at Winterton Primary School

Tell us your views by;

- completing the online survey on <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/winterton-and-hemsby>
- completing the attached form and handing it into the school office
- Emailing us at 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 24th July 2018.

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Let us know what you think of our proposal.

Do you agree or disagree with our proposal to close Winterton Primary School, Winterton, from 31st December 2018?

Agree

Disagree

Do you agree or disagree with our proposal to extend the catchment area of Hemsby Primary School from 31st December 2018?

Agree

Disagree

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.

June 2018

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 31st December 2018.

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

- By completing the online survey on <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/winterton-and-hemsby>
- 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
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This consultation ends on 24th July 2018