

Westmoor Primary School
Staff Consultation Session
Monday 3 February 2020, 4pm

Present: 7 staff members, 2 HR staff

Currently Reception is split into 2 classes, with mixed age classes in years 1 and 2. If the proposals are approved, Reception would remain split into 2 classes, and one more class base would be needed for years 1 and 2.

Q) Does Westmoor realistically expect to attract 90 pupils at key stage 2?

- *If St John's retain key stage 2 pupils, there is a risk that not all the 90 places would be filled. All parents can express a preference for another school for year 3 (Junior), but pupils in year 2 at an all through primary school would need to apply for this.*

Q) Is there a concern about staffing levels if Westmoor does not fill at key stage 2?

- *The proposals are for an increase in places, so it may be that more staff are required. If the key stage 2 places are not filled, it could affect staffing levels required at that key stage. Currently, there is no unmet demand in the community for basic need places. There is likely to be pressures in the future in the adjacent areas of Dewsbury South in relation to the Dewsbury Riverside strategic site under the Local Plan. We don't know just when this will occur, but the first pressure will be for places at key stage 2.*

Q) Are there new schools proposed for Dewsbury Riverside?

- *Land has been set aside for this for the future. But we understand that introducing new places too soon can destabilise surrounding schools. We would want to ensure the existing provision was full first to ensure this does not happen.*

Q) If numbers decline at Westmoor, would there be any funding protection?

- *This is a schools led and funded proposal. There are protection mechanisms in the school funding formula but cannot cover every risk. The LA does not have finances to put into these proposals.*

Q) What's in it for Westmoor?

- *The proposal is to increase in size. This is places and actual pupils might be different but any change would be over time. Reducing transition points is believed to have a positive effect on pupils. Several options were considered, and this was deemed the best for helping St John's realise their aspiration to be a through primary, and at the same time protect Westmoor's position.*

Extracts of the governing body meeting of Westmoor Primary School

Minutes of a special meeting of the Governing Body held at 6.00 pm at the School on Thursday 13 February 2020

56 **NON-STATUTORY CONSULTATION**

Governors confirmed that they were aware of the non-statutory Consultation on the Potential Re-organisation of School Places at St John's CE(VC) Infant School and Westmoor Primary School.

Meetings to discuss this proposal had been held on Monday 3 February 2020, although only one governor had been able to attend.

Responses to the proposal were required by Monday 24 February 2020

Copies of the content of the consultation document were tabled and scrutinised. All aspects of the consultation document were discussed thoroughly and the predicted Published Admission Numbers (PANs) provided in the document were considered in detail. Governors expressed serious concerns that simply increasing the school's PAN, does not create additional children to fill these places. The possible financial implications were outlined by the School Business Manager in a detailed analysis which highlighted the financial losses which could be incurred by the school, should the places not be filled. These losses (in excess of approx. £600,000 over 3 years) were felt to be too great a risk to the financial stability of the school.

Although Governors had wished to be supportive of St John's School's ambition to become a through primary school: having had sight of the consultation document and the opportunity to scrutinise it and ask different questions, **they unanimously (including Mr X by email) agreed that they were strongly opposed to the current proposal.**

Governors would welcome the opportunity for further dialogue between the schools in the best interest of families.

RESOLVED: That Governors strongly oppose the current proposal to potentially re-organise school places at St John's CE(VC) Infant School and Westmoor Primary School.

St John's CE(VC) Infant School
Staff Consultation Session
Tuesday 11 February 2020 3:30pm

Present: 13 staff, 3 Local Authority (LA) representatives

LA officer outlined the proposal.

Q) When will we know if this will happen?

- The timeline in the document was shared. The LA are undertaking a non-statutory four-week consultation to seek views from key stakeholders. The LA will produce an outcome report with recommendations for Cabinet. The next stage of the process would be the Governing Body of St John's CE(VC) Infant School to publish statutory proposals/notices which would lead into a representation period sometimes referred to as a formal consultation. Publication of the statutory notices would be the responsibility of the Governing Body and the Diocese; the decision maker is Kirklees Cabinet. This is where the Governing Body of the school would make prescribed alterations to increase the age range of the school and reduce its PAN. It is anticipated that a final decision report would be taken to Cabinet in June where Kirklees Cabinet would make a final decision. There would then need to be an application to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator to reduce the PAN from September 2021.

Q) Would the Schools Adjudicator agree to this?

- The outcome cannot be guaranteed.

Q) Parents have said that they would send their children if this was a through primary school. If this school does become an all through primary school there is concern that parents would start to admit their children in other year groups where the PAN is 60.

- This is possible. It would be something that could be looked at when submitting the report to the Office of the Schools Adjudicator, there may be an option to reduce the PAN in all the year groups.

The process to increase the age range is a long process which is set by the Department for Education.

Q) What about staffing at the school?

This is for the school and Governing Body to consider. There would appear to be opportunities for staff.

Statement from The Governing Body regarding the re-organisation of school places at Westmoor Primary and St John's CE(VC) Infant Schools

Monday 24th February 2020.

Parents, staff and Governors have been asking for a long time “*Why doesn't St John's take children through to the end of KS2?*” Parents in particular have been keen to see this happen as they, as well as other stakeholders, believe that it will have a more positive impact on their children's learning. Becoming a through school would mean that there is no need to make a transition to a different school at the end of KS1, thus providing stability and continuity of care and support for the children. In addition, a child remaining at one school until the end of KS2 would help the school to build better relationships with parents. In the same way, staff and the school get to establish a more stable relationship with the children as they progress through their time in KS1 and KS2.

Our numbers have fallen significantly over the last few years, with parental and community surveys strongly suggesting this is mainly down to parents choosing a primary school rather than an infant school to avoid a transition point at the end of year 2. Many parents and carers have said that they would love their children to attend St John's if it were a primary school. If this decline in numbers was to continue, we believe over time our school would become financially unviable. As a Governing Body we feel it is vital that families in our local community have the option of either a large primary school or a small faith based primary school, as this gives a greater depth of choice to parents and carers. As a school we have a lot to offer our young children and families. We know that we have the skills, enthusiasm and expertise to extend to a primary school as well as having sufficient funds to make the change.

In conclusion we feel that the changes made to both schools will have a positive impact for our community and give our children the best start to education, meaning they can aim high and reach their full potential in life.

The Governing Body

St John's C E (C) Infant School.