

Proposal to amalgamate Caedmon College Whitby and Eskdale School

Frequently Asked Questions

Release 6 March 2023

A. Process and timescales

A1. Who makes the decisions about this proposal?

The decisions will be taken by the Full Executive Committee of the Council.

A2. What are the different steps and timescales of the process?

This is a Statutory Process and therefore there are number of prescribed stages that need to be followed.

On 7 February, the Executive Member for Education, Learning and Skills approved consultation which began after the half-term break on 20 February. During the following six-week consultation period stakeholders including parents and staff will have access to a consultation document and be able to attend a consultation meeting to get further information on the proposal. Stakeholders will also be able to submit comments on the proposal, which will be included in the report to the Executive, to be taken into consideration by the decision makers.

The consultation period will end on 31 March and then on 18 April the Council's Executive will consider a report that would include all of the comments submitted during the consultation period. The decision for the Executive on 18 April will be whether or not to approve the publication of Statutory Proposals. The Statutory Proposals would set out the proposal in a formal sense and notify the public of the intention to amalgamate the schools through the proposed technical closure of Eskdale School and the Eskdale site, and an increase in the planned admission number of Caedmon College Whitby as the amalgamated school.

If approved, the Statutory Proposals are published on 27 April and a further period of four weeks would be observed where stakeholders would once again have an opportunity to comment on the proposal before a final decision will be taken by the Executive on 20 June 2023. If this decision were to approve the proposal, then Eskdale School would technically close on 31 August 2024 and the newly named amalgamated school would begin to operate from 1 September 2024.

A3. Will the Council continue to consider other options put forward throughout the consultation process?

Should any options emerge during the consultation that could potentially place the schools on a sustainable footing then they will be explored, and presented to the Executive who would then have the option not to proceed with the amalgamation proposal. The Executive could decide to approve the proposal, reject it, or approve it with amendments. Any significant amendments may require additional consultation.

A4. What alternatives did the Governing Board explore, and why wouldn't they work?

The Governing Board did explore alternatives, including keeping the status quo and remaining as two separate schools but this would mean ultimately a decline in the provision that could be offered within the individual schools. The school numbers and finances do not allow for a high quality curriculum to be offered with a depth of choice to educate students for future challenges and opportunities.

The Governing Board have already formed a Federation and although this has provided some opportunities for partnership working and an attempt to make cost savings the short term benefits do not match the long term aims or needs of the students. The ongoing costs of the maintenance and upkeep of the school site is diverting money away from the resources required in the classroom to support and develop learning.

The Governing Board discussed the Sixth Form and moving the provision to the Normanby site or closing the provision, however there was an overwhelming feeling that the need to keep a post 16 provision in Whitby was essential. As well as this, a closure of the sixth form site (Scoresby) would not make any financial difference to Eskdale School and would not, on its own, be a solution to the school's deficit.

Governors also considered academisation to work with a multi academy trust, however when discussions took place with the regional director's office it was clear the financial situation in the schools needed to be resolved before this could be considered.

B. Curriculum

B1. How would this proposal benefit the curriculum?

Part of the Governing Board's rationale for the proposal is that they wish to provide a broader curriculum offer with wider opportunities and development of skills to meet the needs of students and the local community. Continuing to spend on premises costs across three sites diverts budget away from delivering high-quality education.

Utilising the subject specialisms of staff, the Governing Board believes that they can design a curriculum that is fit for the future and will offer students more choices and provide pathways to meet students' interests and abilities. The curriculum design for the newly amalgamated school would offer a broader range of subjects – greater choice in the arts, technologies both practically and digitally, sport and health related subjects.

By offering a broader range of subjects, school leaders can work to develop a curriculum that will provide students with greater choices and allow them to study subjects they are interested in and find challenging. As part of schools leaders' plans to develop a 7-year curriculum from Year 7 to Year 13, the Governing Board will ensure lines of progression through the curriculum and enabling students to study subjects at KS4 which they want to develop further into KS5. This will also promote the growth of a high quality sixth form provision offering a more diverse curriculum offer.

B2. What is proposed for the Sixth Form in future?

The Whitby Secondary Partnership has produced a Vision for the newly amalgamated school - A Quality First Education for Whitby. This includes the following regarding Sixth Form provision:

The proposed amalgamated school will provide greater opportunities for curriculum development with a broader, more relevant curriculum being available to our students especially when making their choices at KS4 and KS5 [Sixth Form]. As a new school we will be better able to ensure that our students will be taught by experienced subject specialist staff who can share and grow their passion and enthusiasm for their subject.. It would be a key priority of the newly amalgamated school to deliver curriculum pathways that will enable students to continue study through year 7 to year 13. Already in planning stages for the curriculum offered in 2023/2024 we can move to a range of 23 subjects being offered to students rather than the current 16 based on current staffing and curriculum time. We intend to broaden and grow our offer at KS5 by establishing a clearer progression route from options at KS4 to KS5 and to retain significantly more students into the sixth form, offering competitive and relevant subjects with links to not only higher education but also to apprenticeships and local business providers.

B3. What provision will be made to ensure all children feel included within the amalgamated school, particularly those with Special Educational Needs?

As is the case for all schools, the amalgamated school would be required to follow the statutory requirements set out in the 2014 SEND code of practice. The Whitby Secondary Partnership has produced a Vision for the newly amalgamated school - A Quality First Education for Whitby. This includes the following regarding Inclusion - SEND/Pastoral:

It is essential that within a larger school environment we do our best to make each student feel a part of the school community and we will provide a high quality pastoral structure to support our students and maintain relationships with parents/carers. We will continue to dedicate time to developing an inclusive approach to education for our students, providing space, staff and resources for students who require additional support using the expanded resources that will be available through the proposed amalgamation.

The pastoral and inclusion structure of the newly amalgamated school will provide a larger team for students to be able to access dedicated members of staff who are responsible for student welfare. It is our aim to establish a student centred inclusive school, where students are individuals and as a school community we all take the time and effort to work together and get to know each other ultimately as one quality first provision. The launch of the Targeted Mainstream Provision in January 2023 will be a significant part of our whole school inclusion approach and will provide significant support for students as well as training for our staff.

The Targeted Mainstream Provision or TMP was launched at Caedmon College Whitby in January 2023. The focus of the TMP is to work with students with significant communication and interaction needs. The appointment of a TMP Lead was conducted in the autumn term of 2022 and the member of staff is due to take up post in April 2023. The provision is currently being overseen by the Caedmon College Whitby Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and her team.

The TMP is a dedicated space established to provide an inclusive bespoke education for up to 8 students to enable them to meet their own academic and social potential. Students accessing the TMP will have their own bespoke timetable and in some cases will be a mix of mainstream education and TMP provision.

The TMP is based within the SEND department which currently occupies the top floor of the Learning Resource centre at Caedmon College and is at the centre of the school. The TMP does not replace the SEND base or intervention spaces, but it enhances the provision that

can be offered. It is proposed as part of the newly amalgamated school vision to develop an inclusive approach to education and to explore establishing an Inclusion Centre which will house the SEND base and Intervention rooms, the TMP and alternative provision.

The Local Authority is responsible for allocating places within the TMP and this would usually occur as part of the annual review for a student already with an Education Health and Care Plan or as part of the statutory Education, Health and Care Assessment Request process.

B.4. What is the pastoral structure going to be like?

The Governing Board want the pastoral structure to be a significant part of the newly amalgamated school, and part of their inclusive approach to education. It needs to provide care and guidance to students as well as building relationships with parents/carers.

The Governing Board intend each student is allocated to a tutor group with a designated tutor. The priority is for a pastoral structure that supports students in year group arrangements.

The Governing Board have not yet consulted with staff about the roles in the structure and will not do this until a decision is made about the futures of the two schools. Therefore, at this stage no staff have been appointed to any roles for the proposed newly amalgamated school and this is planned to take place during the 23-24 academic year.

C. Finance

C1. Why have premises costs been included in the proposal? What do premises costs have to do with running a school?

Under Local Management of Schools the costs of operating a school are borne by the school from a delegated budget. Premises costs would include things such as energy costs, servicing equipment, maintenance works and decorating etc.

The premises costs are one part of the revenue budget managed by the school, along with for example, staffing and resources costs. Therefore school leaders when seeking to appropriately allocate resources would always consider costs savings from across the full range of their expenditure including, for this federation, the relatively high premises costs. In this instance the Governing Body have proposed that in order to best use the financial resources at their disposal they would seek to cease the use of one site (Eskdale).

C2. When the federation was formed an attempt was made to make cost savings. Why didn't these work?

The Governing Board have already formed a Federation and although this has provided some opportunities for partnership working and an attempt to make cost savings, the short term benefits do not match the long term aims or needs of the students. The ongoing costs of the maintenance and upkeep of multiple school sites is diverting money away from the resources required in the classroom to support and develop learning.

D. School Admissions

D1. Do parents/carers with a child in Year 6 in 2022/23 need to do anything at the current time?

No. The closing date for applications for entry to secondary school in September 2023 was 31 October 2022 and the allocation of places will be confirmed on 1 March 2023, which is the national offer day. *However, if any parent or carer is still to make an application they should contact the School Admissions Team as soon as possible at schooladmissions@northyorks.gov.uk*. Teaching of Year 7 students during the 2023/24 academic year will take place at both Caedmon and Eskdale Schools.

D2. Do parents/carers with a child in Year 5 in 2022/23 need to do anything at the current time?

No. The outcome of this process will be known by the end of this academic year. Parents/carers will therefore know whether or not the amalgamation has been approved before the autumn 2023 admissions process for secondary school entry in September 2024 gets underway. If parents/carers wish to visit a school before the autumn, please contact the school office to arrange an appointment.

D3. What advice is there for any parent/carer considering a school transfer for their child?

It is the right of a parent/carer to seek an in-year school transfer for their child at any time. However, if any parent or carer is considering a school transfer for their child as a direct result of this current consultation then they should speak to their school in the normal way, before making any decisions. See also question D5 below.

D4. Would the schools' catchment area change?

No. The existing shared catchment area of Caedmon College and Eskdale School would continue to be used for the amalgamated school. It can be viewed here: [Spectrum Spatial Analyst \(northyorks.gov.uk\)](#)

D5. If the amalgamation process is approved would parents or carers be required to make school transfer applications for September 2024?

No. Existing pupils at both schools would automatically be placed on roll at the amalgamated school for the 2024/25 academic year.

D6. Why can I find more information about school admissions?

More information on the admissions process for Year 7 entry, and also for in-year transfers, can be found here [School admissions | North Yorkshire County Council](#). In addition the Council's Admissions Team is always happy to give advice to parents – please contact schooladmissions@northyorks.gov.uk

D7. What about parental choice?

Parental choice – as interpreted by the admissions code remains unchanged. The school's vision is to offer a wider curriculum increasing the choices for students and preparing them to progress to a range of outcomes at 16+ and 19+. The amalgamated school would be able to provide a wider curriculum offer.

E. Premises

E1. How many surplus places are there?

Caedmon College Whitby has a net capacity of 1530 and Eskdale School of 550, so there are 2080 places across the two schools. There are currently 783 pupils at Caedmon and 406 pupils at Eskdale, a total of 1,189 pupils, with 891 places surplus. That is a surplus of over 40% of places across the two secondary schools in Whitby.

E2. Will all the pupils fit on the Caedmon College site?

Given current forecasts, including the likely demand from new housing, there would be sufficient places in the amalgamated 11-18 school, and sufficient places to accommodate all 11-16 pupils on the Normanby site, and all post 16 pupils on the Scoresby site.

E3. What about pupils from future housing?

The forecasts include the likely pupils generated from all outstanding housing permissions and existing Local Plan housing allocations within the school catchment area. These are based on a standard pupil yield factor (a calculation of approximately how many school age children would reside in planned new housing) applied for all North Yorkshire schools.

E4. Why has the Normanby Site been chosen for the amalgamated school?

Based on projected pupil numbers the school leadership envisages a pupil roll of approximately 1050 11-16 pupils in the short term. This is projected to decrease to approximately 950 based on the number of current primary pupils. School leaders' vision, should the amalgamation proceed, is that ideally all 11-16 pupils would be educated on the same site. This would support high quality education provision and efficient use of resources, which could be easily accessed by all pupils.

The only one of the three sites which offers an opportunity to accommodate all 11-16 pupils on one site is the Normanby (part of Caedmon College Whitby, and formerly Whitby Community College) site. The buildings on the site have capacity for 1125 pupils and as such would not have space to accommodate the current Sixth Form numbers in addition to the current 11-16 cohort. Moreover, the Governors intend to develop the Sixth Form and increase the number of pupils.

E5. Why has the Scoresby Site been chosen for the amalgamated school?

The Governors believe that the best choice for accommodating the Sixth Form and providing efficient access to sports fields for 11-16 students is to locate the Sixth Form on the Scoresby (part of Caedmon College Whitby and formerly Caedmon School) site. The use of this site for the Sixth Form and sports fields rather than the Eskdale site has clear benefits:

1. It is currently operating as the Sixth Form College and the facilities have been adapted specifically for that purpose.
2. The Normanby and Scoresby sites are only 0.3 miles apart whereas the Eskdale site is 1 mile from Scoresby and 1.3 miles from the Normanby site. This makes the playing fields

and all weather pitch at the Scoresby site much more accessible to pupils being educated on the Normanby site. In addition, for staff moving between the sites the travel time would be kept to a minimum.

3. The Scoresby site is located in the centre of the town it is approximately 1.5 miles walking distance from furthest housing to the North-west of Whitby on Mulgrave Road and approximately 1.1 miles from the furthest housing to the South-east on Stainsacre Lane, whereas the Eskdale site is very close the housing on Stainsacre Lane but 2.4 miles from that on Mulgrave Road.

E6. As there are proposals to create a Maritime Academy using Town Deal funding are in progress, how is it envisaged that might fit with the selection of school sites and school building use?

The business case for the Maritime Academy sets out that it would be for a wide age range and include commercial maritime activity which would benefit from the Harbourside location. In addition the business case includes for use as Harbourmaster's Office and Tourist Information Centre due to the central location of the hub and adjacency to Harbour. The Towns Deal funding has been allocated on the basis of this business case. Although there will be opportunities for the schools to forge links with the hub, it would not be located on a school site.

E7. What are the market values of the three school sites?

The Council does not hold any information about the market value of any of the three sites. This is because they are currently operational school sites, and the Council does not routinely seek market valuations for properties that are not currently being considered for disposal. In the event that educational provision is to be discontinued at any of the sites, then the Council has a detailed process to consider alternative uses for the site or whether the site is to be disposed of. Any disposal would require the permission of the Secretary of State for Education. Therefore the value of sites are not considered in the decision making for this amalgamation proposal.

E8. What would happen to the 3G pitch at Eskdale?

Decisions about the future use of the Eskdale site would be taken after the determination of the amalgamation proposal. However the council will work with all groups using the pitch to ensure all information is taken into account when considering the future use of the site and specifically the pitch.

E9. Has the Eskdale School site already been earmarked for housing?

No decisions have been made about the future use of the Eskdale site.

E10. Would the closure of Eskdale School have an impact on green spaces and playing pitches in Whitby?

This would depend on the future use of the site, which would be determined at a later date.

E.11 What about the sustainability of these proposals?

A Climate Change Impact Assessment will be included in the report presented to the Executive on 18 April.

E.12 Is there a plan for secondary school rebuilding in Whitby, and if so, where would be the most suitable site?

There is no funding available for rebuilding at the present time on any site. Should funding become available in the future, a decision would need to be taken, given the circumstances at the time, about which was the most suitable site.

E.13 What is the condition of the buildings on the three sites?

The three sites are in good working condition but like many other school sites for schools of their age have maintenance requirements. The figures in the consultation document regarding the investment requirements are provided to explain that there is not a significant difference in the conditions of the buildings on the three sites.

F. School Transport

F1. How is eligibility for school transport decided ?

In accordance with Department for Education guidance the Council provide free school transport to the catchment school or nearest school to the child's home if it is over the following walking distances:

- two miles for children under eight years of age;
- **three miles for children aged over eight;** or
- where the route to the catchment or nearest school is not safe to walk accompanied by a responsible adult.

Free school transport is available to eligible pupils from the start of reception year until the end of year 11.

The following categories of children from low income families are eligible for free home to school transport:

- Children aged eight, but under the age of 11 who are attending their catchment or nearest school and the distance to that school is more than two miles;
- **Children in Years 7-11 who attend one of their three nearest secondary schools and the school is over two miles but less than six miles from where they live;**
- Children in Years 7-11 who attend the nearest denominational secondary school, where the distance is over two miles but less than 15 miles from home; or
- Children aged five to eleven who attend the nearest denominational primary school, where the distance is more than two miles but less than five miles from home.

A low income family is where children are entitled to free school meals or whose parent/carer are in receipt of the maximum level of working tax credit.

F2. Is transport assistance provided for sixth form study ?

The Council provide assistance with transport to sixth form (or college) to students who meet the eligibility criteria that can be found here: [Transport to sixth form or college | North Yorkshire County Council](#)

F3. If the amalgamation went ahead, would the transport eligibility for Eskdale pupils be reassessed?

Yes, for some pupils who could be affected. For example, if a child lives less than three miles from Eskdale, but more than three miles from the main Caedmon site. The eligibility for many pupils would be unaffected as they already live more than three miles from either school. The reassessment of eligibility would take place in summer 2024, after a decision on the amalgamation has been made, and as part of the preparations for implementation in September 2024, and be based on the criteria set out at question F1 above.

F4. Will the proposals lead to more vehicles on the Caedmon College site?

Only the most marginal increase could be expected. There are currently 11 home to school transport services that serve the two schools. Nine of these services are shared and serve both schools. The Council's current assessment is that the proposed amalgamation and technical closure of the Eskdale site would require 10 home to school transport services to serve the amalgamated school.

F4. Will the proposals risk the Esk Valley train line?

It is not proposed to alter the current transport arrangements for pupils as part of these proposals.

F5. Where can I find more information on school transport?

More information can be found here [School and college transport | North Yorkshire County Council](#)

G. Transition

How are you going to provide effective transition for students at the two schools?

Students moving into Year 11 will be able to finish their examination courses in their current school and face minimal disruption to their studies. The two schools have already aligned a number of curriculum areas and examination specifications to enable subject areas to work together so students will not experience a difference in curriculum delivery. This work will continue over the remainder of the academic year 2022-2023 and then into 2023-2024.

School leaders intend to schedule regular transition activities throughout the academic year 2023-2024. 'Drop down' days will be regularly calendared to allow year groups to work together and socialise together on the newly amalgamated school site with staff from across the two schools. Students with SEND and those who require additional support will be prioritised as part of any transition work, staff from both schools who know the students best will liaise with the student/parents/carers to plan the transition and move at a pace to suit students' needs. For students moving into Year 10 in Sept 23, school leaders have designed a curriculum that provides a broad offer of subjects that can be delivered across the partnership, they will start their studies on a parallel curriculum and with the same opportunities.

The Governing Board will consider, if the amalgamation is agreed by the NYCC Executive, moving the new Year 10 students to the current Normanby site to begin their studies to prevent disruption and take the 4 weeks at the end of the summer term in 2022/2023 to transition both sets of students in to their GCSE programmes.

Students will be involved in all aspects of this process, they will be asked for their thoughts and needs around making the transition a success and this will be factored into any transitional plans.