

A CONSULTATION DOCUMENT ON

**The proposal to close Holbeach George
Farmer Technology and Language College
and Crowland The St Guthlac School to
enable the formation of a new Academy**

26 JANUARY 2011

**Please read this document along with the consultation documentation
being published by the sponsors of the proposed Academy,
The University of Lincoln**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document has been produced by Lincolnshire County Council as the first part of the consultation process with parents, the local community and other interested parties. The Council considers that the proposal is in the best interests of children, parents and staff at the two schools and the local communities around these schools. The proposal has the support of the Department for Education (DfE) and the Governing Body of the federation of the two schools.
- 1.2 The proposal is to close the following schools with effect from 31 August 2011:-

George Farmer Technology and Language College, Holbeach
The St Guthlac School, Crowland

on the condition that they are replaced on 1 September 2011 with a new co-educational Academy sponsored by the University of Lincoln.

This proposal will retain the number of school places in the secondary sector whilst at the same time improving educational standards and opportunities for the young people in the area.

Details of the potential Academy model are being consulted on through a separate process led by the sponsor and the governing body of both schools which will run alongside this consultation process being carried out by the Local Authority.

2. Why is this proposal being made?

- 2.1 In order to provide the best quality of education for children in this area and find a solution to the problems detailed later in this document George Farmer Technology and Language College and The St Guthlac School have been working together for a number of years which led to the two schools becoming hard federated in September 2007. The schools have worked very hard and progress has been made but a long term sustainable solution is required. The formation of an Academy is the next logical step in this process.
- 2.2 This proposal is being made to ensure the delivery of the highest quality of teaching and learning so giving students the opportunity to reach their full potential. The Academy will be able to provide a full range of courses to meet students' academic and vocational needs. The Academy will provide significant stability to the education of children in the local area and will ensure that secondary provision in the area remains sustainable for the future.
- 2.3 This proposal will be able to take advantage of capital funding in excess of £8 million which will not otherwise be available. This will enable investment in the facilities and help to address existing shortfalls. It will provide a single Academy based across the two sites in September 2011 and the sponsor will carry out consultation on these aspects and the future potential Academy model.
- 2.4 The Academy will benefit from the expertise and leadership of a Headteacher who has successfully managed a popular and oversubscribed school which has demonstrated over time the capacity for sustainable improvement through a balanced curriculum, consistently good quality teaching and learning, high quality extended provision and excellent leadership.

2.5 The Academy will benefit from extensive links with the lead Sponsor, the University of Lincoln, which will be further enhanced through the support of key business partners who are major sector employers in the area. The Sponsors' vision is the creation of an integrated education hub, with the Academy working in a dynamic partnership with the University's National Food Manufacturing Centre which is already situated adjacent to the Holbeach site on the University's Holbeach Campus. Over time, the University will also seek to develop a national centre for agro-science and agro-engineering provision within the Campus and locally. The evolving partnership between the Academy and the University's National Centre will play a major role in raising aspirations, widening curriculum opportunities and strengthening progression opportunities for students at the Academy.

3.0 Educational challenges faced in the area

The educational challenges faced by The St Guthlac School as a stand alone school, detailed below, are not temporary in nature; they are features of the size and nature of the school and the context within which it operates:-

Number on roll

The number on roll is falling with recent figures indicating that there are 339 pupils on roll which represents an average of 68 per year group with the Published Admission Number (PAN) standing at 80. The number on roll in the current years 7 and 8 is well below PAN and there are 37 first preferences for admission into the September 2011 intake. Based on these figures the total number on roll would fall below 300 in the next Academic Year. Under DfE guidance the recommended number on roll for a secondary school to be educationally and financially viable is 600 or more. Only 43% of pupils living in the natural catchment area of the school currently attend.

Standards of pupil attainment

There has been a trend of improvement in standards achieved following the support of George Farmer, however, in 2010, 44% of St Guthlac's pupils achieved the measurement of 5 A*-C including English and maths (5ACEM). This is still below the average for all schools and should be compared with an average of 54% for all schools in England and 59% for all Lincolnshire schools. In considering the school's capacity to reach government floor standards in the future it is important to consider the general nature of the school roll. There is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and this together with a low level of attainment of the cohort on entry in Year 7 mean that the school will find it increasingly difficult to reach rising floor standards and in particular standards based on the new English Baccalaureate (EBac).

Breadth of curriculum

The PAN for the St Guthlac School is 80, giving an expected 400 on roll for this 11 – 16 school whereas the actual number at October 2010 was 339. In the government's planning terms, the smallest viable secondary school is one with an annual intake of between 120 and 150 pupils. This enables a school to provide the minimum number of curriculum options to meet pupil aspirations and provide viable group sizes to stimulate learning through social interaction to promote the sharing of ideas, information and experiences as well as enabling pupils to participate meaningfully in team games, sports and other community activities.

The secondary curriculum is increasingly broad and complex, and is largely structured around subject families, making it difficult to compare schools offering different subjects and different number of options. This is very challenging for any small school as the options available may not provide the breadth of choice within subject families which may be enjoyed by pupils at other schools. Furthermore the recent DfE White Paper encourages schools to offer a broader set of academic subjects to age 16.

Crowland The St Guthlac School is finding it increasingly difficult to provide an appropriate range of viable option choices for Y10 and Y11 and is now very heavily dependent on KS4 provision at George Farmer with more than 50% of Year 10 and 11 currently following options at the site. Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) was not offered in 2009/10 and only 5 students are currently study MFL in 2010/11. This is uneconomic and can not be maintained with current funding within the existing model.

The school cannot offer a broad, balanced curriculum which is either suitable for the needs and aspirations of students or fit for purpose in terms of the new EBac proposals. A secondary school with a projected annual intake of 80 pupils will face an increasing challenge in providing a staffing structure able to deliver an appropriately broad and balanced curriculum, even in collaboration with other educational institutions.

Current provision at The St Guthlac School is often via single person departments and so teaching and leadership is often vulnerable and has no capacity to absorb illness or absence.

Recruitment of teaching staff

Most secondary schools on or near to Lincolnshire's east coast experience difficulties from time to time in recruiting qualified teaching staff with appropriate subject specialisms. The St Guthlac School has had recruitment problems leading to staffing difficulties for many years including the appointment of Headteachers. The small size of St Guthlac is reflected in the small size of subject departments. Many subjects are single person departments and there are thus fewer departmental role models for emergent leaders. This seriously limits the opportunity for professional dialogue and the scope for career development. Whilst there is a high degree of loyalty to the school qualified teachers who wish to further their careers may need to look for posts elsewhere.

Financial sustainability

The school budget for The St Guthlac School is in significant deficit. The school has been in receipt of a range of additional government funding, some of which is due to terminate in the near future, placing increasing pressure on the school budget. This deficit is estimated to increase markedly year on year with an anticipated deficit of £1.3 million in 2012/2013. Furthermore, as the rest of this report demonstrates, current levels of spending in the school have not been sufficient to offer a broad curriculum and to ensure that the percentage of 5ACEM is at an appropriate level. There is therefore a strong financial case for change and the longer it takes to implement the change the bigger the deficit will be.

4. What are the advantages of this proposal?

- 4.1 The Council would not be actively participating in this process if it did not see significant advantages for children and young people, their parents/carers and the local communities in the Crowland and Holbeach area. The proposal sustains provision in the area and will enhance the quality of provision.

- 4.2 There are many advantages to this proposal and these are summarised as:-
- Greater curriculum choice including wider access to specialist vocational facilities creating a broad and rich opportunity for young people in the area to achieve their maximum potential.
 - Wider access to a range of extended services.
 - Access to a comprehensive menu of study support activities throughout the year.
 - Improved opportunities for community and family learning supporting the LA's Children's Services vision and the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP).
 - Providing long term, sustainable, high quality secondary education for the young people of Crowland and Holbeach.
 - Wider development opportunities for all staff to help maintain stability and provision of high quality teaching and learning whilst securing the quality of staffing.
 - Greater focus on the development for senior and middle leadership models so increasing leadership capacity.
 - Gaining new funding from the DfE to improve facilities within the secondary sector
 - If the Academy goes ahead, other educational opportunities may arise for Crowland.

5. What are the potential issues arising from this proposal?

This consultation exercise will enable the local community to raise issues of interest and these will be added to the points summarised below:

- The closure of two existing secondary schools (although school places will be retained by the formation of a new academy).
- Potential impact on the relationship between the Academy and other LA schools.
- The potential impact on primary provision.
- For some pupils it is likely that this proposal will have the effect of increased travelling time and may lead to increased transport costs.

6. What will happen now?

6.1 The County Council consultation regarding the proposal to close Holbeach George Farmer Technology and Language College and Crowland The St Guthlac School with effect from 31 August 2011, to enable the formation of an Academy with effect from 1 September 2011, begins 26 January 2011. This process will run for 7 weeks until 16 March 2011 by which time all responses to the LA consultation must be received.

6.2 Public meetings will take place as follows to allow all those who have an interest in this proposal to be able to gather information, ask questions and get involved in the process.

- Wednesday 16 February at Crowland The St Guthlac School at 18.30 to 20.30
- Thursday 17 February at Holbeach George Farmer Technology and Language College at 18.30 to 20.30

A timeline for the consultation process is shown below. Following these public meetings a document recording the Question and Answers will be published on the website at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/provisionplanning under 'Current Consultations'.

- 26 January 2011 - Publication of LA documents commencing consultation.
- Wednesday 16 February 2011 - Consultation meeting with staff at Crowland The St Guthlac School
- Wednesday 16 February 2011 - Consultation meeting at 6.30pm with parents and the public at Crowland St Guthlac School

- Thursday 17 February 2011 - Consultation meeting with staff at Holbeach George Farmer Technology and Language College
- Thursday 17 February 2011 - Consultation meeting at 6.30pm with parents and the public at Holbeach George Farmer Technology and Language College
- 16 March 2011 - Local Authority 7 weeks public consultation on closure ends.

- 6.3 The questionnaire at the back of this document can be completed and returned by 16 March. All such responses will be collated and analysed and a report will be written and presented to the Children's Services Executive Councillor for a decision in April 2011.
- 6.4 If the Executive Councillor approves the decision to proceed to the publication of a Statutory Notice proposing the closure of Holbeach George Farmer Technology and Language College and Crowland The St Guthlac School to enable the formation of an Academy then a 6 week representation period would be expected to start in April 2011, during which time all interested parties will have an opportunity to comment on a complete proposal that will be published based on the developments resulting from the consultation.
- 6.5 At the close of the Statutory Notice period (6 weeks) responses will be collated and analysed and a second report will be presented to the Executive Council for a final decision in July 2011. If this process approves the decision to close Holbeach George Farmer Technology and Language College and Crowland The St Guthlac School then this will happen on 31 August 2011 and an Academy will open on 1 September 2011.

7. Data relating to this proposal

School Name	October 2010 School Census (10/11 Academic Year)														
	y7	y8	y9	y10	y11	y12	y13	y14	Oct 2010 NOR (exc 6th)	Oct 2010 NOR (inc 6th)*	Capacity	Surplus Places	Surplus Capacity	Natural NOR 2010†	NNOR Att School 2010
Crowland The St Guthlac School	63	59	79	54	84	-	-	-	339	339	414	75	18%	345	212
Deepings School	232	231	233	233	233	132	127	-	1162	1421	1446	25	2%	1200	1154
Holbeach The George Farmer Technology	148	146	158	145	148	151	88	15	745	999	700	0	0%	956	762
Long Sutton The Peele Community Colleg	146	134	134	130	129	-	-	-	673	673	650	0	0%	597	470
Spalding Glead Boys' School	119	141	128	123	127	-	-	-	638	638	718	80	11%	709	484
Spalding Grammar School	148	124	126	123	115	161	156	-	636	953	907	0	0%	863	332
Spalding High School	142	136	154	150	148	131	128	-	730	989	996	7	1%	1104	569
Spalding The Glead Girls' Technology Coll	143	148	161	144	161	83	52	-	757	892	893	1	0%	852	654

*Note: Holbeach vocational sixth form excluded from capacity

*Note: Due to a change in legislation 6th form pupils who now attend consortia 6th forms must be recorded as a subsidiary pupil at the school they receive education at and as a Main(Dual registered) pupil with the school that holds their registration details

NOR = Number on Roll / NNOR = Natural Number On Roll (if all pupils went to their nearest school - measured on straight line distances)

† skewed by urban locations with selective education

School Name	2010 PAN	Max Projected Intakes (excluding new housing)									
		2011/12 1st Preferences*	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Crowland The St Guthlac School	80	37	63	48	51	53	63	64	60	56	61
Deepings School	232	211	211	216	201	208	209	196	207	241	235
Holbeach The George Farmer Technology and Language College	146	143	140	140	130	114	105	119	130	120	147
Long Sutton The Peele Community College	144	122	116	112	127	115	92	101	119	125	131
Spalding Glead Boys' School	134	92	113	112	108	110	109	109	119	125	135
Spalding Grammar School	120	170	122	113	114	114	108	113	119	119	133
Spalding High School	150	188	145	138	135	133	133	130	144	142	160
Spalding The Glead Girls' Technology College	162	107	147	144	141	146	142	140	154	161	172

*Preferences prior to allocations and verification of 11+ scores to determine grammar school places

School Name	Average 2010 Projections (inc pupil yield from new housing with planning permission)														
	2010/11 NOR	2011/12 NOR	2011/12 Surplus Cap	2012/13 NOR	2013/14 NOR	2013/14 Surplus Cap	2014/15 NOR	2015/16 NOR	2015/16 Surplus Cap	2016/17 NOR	2017/18 NOR	2017/18 Surplus Cap	2018/19 NOR	2019/20 NOR	2019/20 Surplus Cap
Crowland The St Guthlac School	328	315	24%	312	290	30%	285	282	32%	282	295	29%	299	307	26%
Deepings School	1469	1444	0%	1433	1404	3%	1379	1354	6%	1322	1302	10%	1334	1355	6%
Holbeach The George Farmer Technology	936	926	0%	929	907	0%	871	822	0%	796	781	0%	764	780	0%
Long Sutton The Peele Community Colleg	680	668	0%	650	639	2%	617	564	13%	549	554	15%	552	567	13%
Spalding Glead Boys' School	631	622	13%	616	606	16%	576	559	22%	553	558	22%	574	598	17%
Spalding Grammar School	933	914	0%	910	913	0%	903	888	2%	874	845	7%	840	859	5%
Spalding High School	1002	991	1%	981	966	3%	949	930	7%	926	927	7%	925	947	5%
Spalding The Glead Girls' Technology Coll	892	880	1%	878	858	4%	856	844	6%	833	839	6%	855	881	1%

Consultation Feedback Form on the Closure of Holbeach George Farmer Technology and Language College and Crowland The St Guthlac School to enable the formation of an Academy

Please note that if you do not provide your name and address your views will not be counted as legitimate responses to this consultation. Names and contact details will remain confidential.

Name:	Email (optional)
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Postal address:

Parent/Carer Teacher/Schools staff Governor Employer/Business

Other (please specify) :

Which school (if any) do you represent?

Having read the proposal please indicate your view below by ticking one of the boxes.

I am in favour of proposal I am against proposal I am neither for nor against the proposal

Why have you decided that is your view? Tell us about it below.

Is there anything else you want us to consider?

Please return the completed form by Wednesday 16th March 2011 to: Property & Technology Management, Children's Services, Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YQ or email provisionplanning@lincolnshire.gov.uk or fax 01522 553257