



Complete Proposal
to Discontinue
Brocklesby Park Primary School

MATTERS TO BE SPECIFIED IN SECTION 15 OF THE EDUCATION AND
INSPECTIONS ACT 2006

PROPOSALS TO DISCONTINUE A SCHOOL

24 April 2015

Contact details

This proposal is issued to replace the Complete Proposal published on 10 April 2015. It has been published by Lincolnshire County Council (LCC), County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YQ regarding the potential closure of Brocklesby Park Primary School, Great Limber, Grimsby DN37 8JS. The school is a Community school maintained by the Local Authority (LA).

Implementation

The proposal is to discontinue Brocklesby Park Primary School with effect from 31 August 2015. There is also an option being explored for Brocklesby Park Primary School to convert to an Academy. If the conversion of the school to academy status goes ahead then this discontinuance proposal will be withdrawn and the closure process would end. The school would then continue as an Academy if a Funding Agreement were entered into with the Department for Education (DfE).

Objectives and reason for closure

The proposal detailed in this document is to discontinue Brocklesby Park Primary School with effect from 31 August 2015 and is not related to any other school organisation proposal. LAs are under a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in their area, promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunity and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential whilst at the same time meeting the aim of enabling children to take up a school place within their local community. To help the LA meet these duties and restructure local provision they have the power to close all categories of maintained schools. The objective of this proposal is to safeguard and protect the standard of provision of primary education for pupils currently attending Brocklesby Park Primary School and for children in the area. This proposal considers the discontinuance of the school to be in the best interests of local children and educational provision in the area. It reinforces the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan and supports the Council's aim of ensuring that as many children as possible can reach their full potential.

Following careful consideration of how to secure a viable future for the school, the Governing Body of Brocklesby Park Primary School made the difficult decision to request that the LA start the consultation process on the proposal to close the school. The decision of the Governing Body to request that the LA consult on closure has been taken in the context of concern over the long term sustainability of the school in relation to being able to continue to offer quality education to pupils with the resources available. Low pupil numbers in the local area and the extremely low current and projected numbers on roll do not allow the Governing Body to set a balanced budget that can continue to provide the breadth and quality of provision that children are entitled to.

The Statutory Notice has been published to propose the discontinuance of Brocklesby Park Primary School for the following reasons:-

- To comply with the wishes of the Governing Body in exploring the options for the future of the school.

- A changing age profile of the rural population in recent years resulting in a trend towards lower numbers of families with primary age pupils choosing to live in small rural communities. There are no longer sufficient pupil numbers in the immediate area for a viable school to remain educationally and financially sustainable.
- To reduce any detrimental effect on educational standards that can potentially occur at schools with very low numbers on roll. To keep the school open would mean children continuing to attend a very small school and consequently place greater demands on a small number of staff to adequately deliver the full curriculum entitlement. The staffing structure would have to reduce further to stand a chance of setting a balanced budget with the current number of children on roll. Continued low pupil numbers will mean that the school would be unlikely to be able to generate the budget to maintain the high standard of education that all pupils are entitled to. It would be difficult to provide a wide and diverse curriculum and would limit the range of opportunities available for all pupils both for their academic and social development. The LA cannot financially support the school outside of the funding formula applied to all schools.
- To enable pupils to receive a more rounded education in a larger school offering greater social interaction.
- To reduce the incidence of teaching several year groups in one class and in groups that involve teaching across more than one Key Stage. To keep the school open, the low numbers on roll may require a school organisation based on teaching all 7 year groups within one class in the future, which is not considered to be in the best interests of the children.
- To reduce surplus capacity in the area but still provide sufficient places to meet local needs and parental preference. This decrease in surplus capacity contributes to ensuring the provision of sustainable schools across the county allowing future investment to be used more effectively to support schools in raising standards. If the school were to remain open there would be an unacceptable level of surplus places which is currently over 70% and may possibly increase in September.
- To enhance the future sustainability of the remaining primary schools in the local area. Ensuring sustainability is vital in that it has an impact on recruiting and retaining staff of a high calibre in the area and also attracting future investment.
- To improve value for money delivered by larger schools. Very small schools require a disproportionate amount of funding. The sparsely populated county of Lincolnshire makes it necessary to sustain smaller schools to meet the needs of local communities across wide rural areas, and the LA's funding formula supports this. However, when numbers fall as low as they are at Brocklesby Park the situation becomes unsustainable for a stand-alone school of this size. The school is not financially viable in the short or long term. Schools are not legally allowed to set a deficit budget without a realistic evidence based medium term plan showing how the deficit will be turned around.

- To enable the process to continue to the next stage and allow a further opportunity for people and organisations to express their views about the proposal and ensure that they will be taken into account by the Executive Councillor prior to the final decision being taken. This continuation of the process will allow more time for all potential alternatives to closure to be fully and robustly explored.
- To enable the statutory and legal processes to proceed in accordance with DfE guidelines.

Pupil numbers and admissions

This proposal is written in the context of concern over the long term sustainability of the school. Despite the hard work of Governors to market the school the numbers have remained low. The number of children who live local to the school is not sufficient to support a sustainable stand-alone primary school.

To remain viable the school needs to increase the number on roll by attracting pupils from further away than what would be considered the 'natural catchment' area. There are currently 14 pupils on roll at the School which has a potential capacity for 56 leaving 75% surplus capacity. There is also some surplus capacity at neighbouring schools where there are spaces available to accommodate the children from Brocklesby Park were the school to close. The admissions process for the September 2015 Reception intake has received only 1 first preference application and therefore the expected number on roll at September 2015 is 13. The latest LA projections (May 2014) estimated that potentially 15 pupils would be on roll for the 2015/16 academic year. The same projections indicate up to only 13 pupils on roll for the 2017/18 academic year.

The school has undertaken their own survey with current parents to assess potential sibling and first child intakes for future Reception intakes as follows:-

2015 = 2 (Total NOR = 15)
 2016 = 6 (Total NOR = 18)
 2017 = 7 (Total NOR = 21)
 2018 = 4 (Total NOR = 22)
 2019 = 3 (Total NOR = 23)

These figures are more positive, but are still too low to demonstrate a sustainable number on roll in the long term. Further data from the Office of National Statistics (ONS) birth data and LA projections (using birth data, GP registrations and historic pupil movement in and out of the area) indicate continued low numbers in future years emphasising the need to attract pupils from outside of the local area to sustainable viable pupil numbers for a stand-alone primary school.

Displaced pupils

Neighbouring schools in the area have available spaces so offer the opportunity for parental choice. If the closure goes ahead the LA will offer all displaced pupils a place at the nearest neighboring school, Keelby Primary School, Manor Street, Keelby Grimsby DN41 8EF. There is sufficient capacity at Keelby Primary School for all displaced pupils and there will be no requirement to increase the number of

school places available as a consequence of the proposed discontinuance of Brocklesby Park.

Impact on the community

There would be the inevitable disruption for pupils, parents and staff if this proposal proceeds, but this would be short term. This proposal would address the issues surrounding a declining primary school population in an area where there are other appropriate schools in more densely populated areas with sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils. The County Council believes that this proposal provides the best solution to addressing and meeting the long term educational and social needs of the children in the area if it is not possible to sustain a viable school in Brocklesby Park.

An educational site would no longer provide services for children and young people. The LA understands that the school is an important part of the community, not just as a school but as a facility used by other members of the public. The County Council would work with the local community to try to ensure that the impact of this proposal would be mitigated.

Alternative community uses for the school building would be considered prior to any decision being made about the future of the premises.

The small size of the school limits its ability to offer a wide range of extended services which are likely to be more readily and widely available at neighbouring schools with a larger number on roll. Extended services currently provided at Brocklesby Park Primary School are already in existence at other neighbouring schools.

The LA has a good track record of redeployment of staff and will always seek to avoid redundancy not only to mitigate costs but also to reduce the human costs of redundancy.

The LA does not consider that there are any sex, race or disability discrimination issues that will arise if the school closes. The LA continues to be committed to provide access to a range of opportunities which reflect the ethnic and cultural mix of the area and aims to ensure that such opportunities are open to all believing that this will be met by the remaining schools in the area.

Balance of denominational provision

Brocklesby Park Primary School is a community school with no designated religious character and therefore the proposed closure will not have any impact on the balance of denominational provision and associated parental choice in the area.

Rural primary schools

Under current DfE guidance there is a presumption against the closure of rural schools. This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but that the case should be strong and a proposal clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area. In order to consider the proposal to close the school the LA has paid particular attention to the following points:-

- The likely effect of the closure of the school on the local community:

The school currently provides places for only 4 pupils from the local community. The school is not in the centre of the village it serves (Great Limber). It is located 0.7 miles out of the village which is a 10-15 minute walk. The LA understands that the school is regarded by the local community as an important facility and members of the local community believe it would have a negative impact if the school were to close. The LA would work with the local community to try to ensure that any negative impact on the community from the loss of the school would be mitigated through partnership working with other services and schools in the area and reduce any negative impact on community cohesion were the school to close.

- Educational standards at the school and the likely effect on standards at neighbouring schools:

The closure of a school can potentially reduce extended services on offer. However, in this case, the small size of the school limits its ability to offer a wide range of extended services which are likely to be more readily and widely available at neighbouring schools with a larger number on roll. It is also challenging to demonstrate the impact on educational standards with such a small cohort. In their current school pupils are required to mix across multiple year groups. Neighbouring schools are regarded by Ofsted and the LA as being of an equal or higher standard. Standards at neighbouring schools would not be expected to be negatively affected by taking on pupils from Brocklesby Park.

The LA has carefully considered the impact on educational standards and believes that the closure of the school has the potential to protect and improve educational standards. To keep the school open may have a detrimental effect in that it would mean children continuing to attend a very small school and consequently placing greater demands on a small number of staff to adequately deliver the full curriculum entitlement. To keep the school open, the low numbers on roll may require a school organisation based on teaching all 7 year groups within one class, which is not considered to be in the best interests of the children. Provision at neighbouring schools is rated by Ofsted more highly than that at Brocklesby Park with the two closest Lincolnshire schools being rated as "Good" at their last inspections.

- The availability, and likely cost to the LA, of transport to other schools and any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the closure of the school, and the likely effect of any such increase:

The LA has considered the impact on transporting pupils to other schools should Brocklesby Park close. Many of the pupils who currently attend Brocklesby Park live closer to other local schools and it is not expected that the closure would significantly increase the number of car journeys to transport children to and from school. If all pupils currently on roll at Brocklesby Park went to their nearest local school then the combined distance of all pupils would be nearly half of what it is now. Were the school to close then transport would be offered according to LCC's school transport

policy taking advantage of the established routes already in use in the area. It is not expected that costs would increase significantly even if all parents chose to take up the transport offer.

- Any alternatives to the closure of the school:

The Governing Body, supported by the LA, has pursued potential alternatives to closure in recent years but despite the hard work to market the school the numbers have remained low. Following the request of the Governing Body to commence the closure process and comments raised during consultation the LA has given further consideration to all potential alternatives to closure. The three main alternatives which are continuing to be pursued in parallel with the closure process are the possibility of federation with another school, academisation within a Multi-Academy Trust or the introduction of Early Years provision at the school which are all discussed more fully below in the Consultation section.

Special educational needs (SEN) provision

The proportion of children at the school with special educational needs (SEN) is very high (65% in January 2014). Should the school close this would be an opportunity for improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision. Places for all displaced pupils would be available at the 2 closest Lincolnshire schools whose proportion of pupils with SEN at the same date was 18% and 13%. This proposal would therefore likely lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of the education provision for children currently at the school through ensuring a more balanced proportion of pupils with SEN integrated in mainstream schools with specialist facilities to help ensure all pupils have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

Consideration of pupils with SEN will take place and the LA will continue to look to make improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of the education provision for children with SEN.

Travel

Only 4 of the current pupils attending Brocklesby Park Primary live within walking distance of the school. These children would have to travel further than at present, potentially increasing transport costs, although this effect is expected to be minimal in the long term due to the small number of children. Some local children already choose to travel to alternative schools, and some children not local to the school choose to travel from outside of the village.

For these pupils and those who are currently not within walking distance, most journeys to alternative schools would not be lengthy and well within the County Council's guidelines for maximum journey times for primary age pupils of 45 minutes. In many cases there are alternative schools with places available that would result in shorter distances travelled than at present.

The County Council home-to-school transport policy will continue to apply - this provides free home-to-school transport for pupils to their nearest or designated school (if it is more than 2 miles away for primary age pupils). In addition, arrangements will be made to allow displaced children whose parents select the

receiving school named above, and who live within the current designated transport area for Brocklesby Park Primary School, to have free transport to Keelby Primary School if the school is more than 2 miles from the family's home.

Pupils travelling over 2 miles and meeting the free transport criteria would be provided with transport by means of local bus services or contracted vehicles, which is considered to be the safest and most environmentally cost-effective method of transportation over medium distances. This will make use of the established routes already in use in the area and it is not expected that costs would increase significantly even if all parents choose to take up the transport offer. Many of the pupils who currently attend Brocklesby Park live closer to other local schools and it is not expected that the closure would significantly increase the number of car journeys to transport children to and from school.

Consultation

In order for the school to close the LA must follow the necessary statutory legal processes as required by the Secretary of State in accordance with the EIA 2006, the Education Act 2011 and the guidance of the DfE regarding expansion

Under these guidelines the LA must ensure that sufficient time and information are provided for people to understand and form a view on the proposal and make a response. Under the DfE guidelines which came into effect in January 2014 it is no longer prescribed how statutory consultation is carried out. There is no longer a prescribed consultation period for proposed school closures although a minimum of 6 weeks is recommended which should also avoid school holidays. To comply with this the LA has conducted an eight week period of consultation. Any documentation issued must set out the problem that is being addressed and invite comment on one or more solutions. The LA must explain the decision making process and take all reasonable steps to draw the proposal to the attention of all those who might be interested and take into account their views. All applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposal have been complied with.

The guidance issued by the DfE in January 2014 states that in the case of the closure of a rural primary school the parents of current pupils and the local district and parish councils where the school is situated **must** be consulted. The guidance also lists who should be consulted in connection with all proposed school closures. The list of interested parties was therefore compiled according to these principles comprising as wide a range of consultees as practicable to ensure that all interested parties were included and incorporated parents of current pupils and the Chief Executive of the District Council as well as individual County, District and Parish Councillors as appropriate.

Guidance also requires current pupils to be consulted and all of the children on roll were given the opportunity to discuss the potential closure of their school. The children were encouraged to consider the things they love about their school, and the things they would miss if the school closed. The overall view expressed by the children was one of sadness at the thought of the closure of the school and, for the majority, what would be missed would be their friends.

A letter incorporating relevant information and reasons for the proposal was sent out to interested parties on 19 November 2014 to commence an eight week period

of consultation. A public meeting was held at Great Limber Village Hall on 2 December to provide more detail about the proposal and enable parents and all interested parties to ask questions and raise concerns. Notes were taken at this meeting and are attached as Appendix A. There was the opportunity to provide a response to the consultation by letter, email or by returning the response form attached to the consultation document by 16 January 2015. Copies of the letter commencing consultation and the response form were also published on the County Council website under the webpage "Current Consultations" on www.Lincolnshire.gov.uk/schoolorganisation

All written responses received during consultation have been provided to the Executive Councillor for consideration and further details are confirmed in Appendix B. To briefly summarise, however, there were 67 valid responses in total with 2 in favour, 62 against the proposal and a further 3 responses which were neither for nor against the proposal but incorporated comments for consideration. Responses were received from 12 parents of current pupils with 11 of these being against the proposal. The largest number of responses was received from local residents with 29 of these being against the proposal. Many of the responses against the proposal supported the unique small size of the school believing this benefitted the children by providing a low staff to pupil ratio, friendly atmosphere and excellent support both educationally and emotionally.

The letter giving details of the consultation process incorporated the following details of the anticipated timeline:-

STAGE 1	STAGE 2*	STAGE 3*	STAGE 4*	STAGE 5*
Consultation 8 Weeks	Publication of Statutory Notice	Representation Period 4 Weeks	Final LA Decision	Implementation
19 th November – 16 th January	February 2015	February – March 2015	May 2015	31 August 2015

However, following the written responses received in the consultation period and the questions and comments raised at the public meeting the LA extended the timescales for stages 2 and 3 as above by approximately 7 weeks to allow more time for the Governing Body and the LA to ensure all alternatives to closure have been considered prior to progressing to the next stage. The process is now continuing through stages 2 and 3 with the Statutory Notice (Stage 2) being published on 24 April and the final decision (Stage 4) likely to be taken in June 2015 but no later than the end of the school term in July.

This extension of the process has enabled the following options to be explored in greater detail:-

1. LA officers have contacted all schools and academies in Lincolnshire and also a number of schools and academies that are in neighbouring authorities but within a reasonable travelling distance to consider the option of federation. Despite some early enquiries which didn't progress, to date there has not been any serious interest expressed in a school federating with Brocklesby Park Primary School.
2. LA officers have also contacted every Trust on the list of DfE approved sponsors to explore the possibility of Brocklesby Park becoming an academy within a Multi-Academy or Umbrella Trust. This has resulted in a

Multi-Academy Trust expressing an interest in the school joining their Trust. An initial application has been made to the DfE for the school to convert to an academy and join a Multi-Academy Trust. The LA will continue to facilitate discussions between the school and potential sponsors and pursue this option in parallel to the closure process.

3. The Governing Body has researched the feasibility of offering Early Years provision at the school and has produced an initial business case predicated both on increased income from this provision and also a projected consequent increase in the number on roll at the school which may potentially produce a surplus budget for the first time in 2018/2019. As a stand-alone school, LA and School Improvement officers have some concerns over assumptions made in this initial business case. In order that it can be demonstrated to be viable and realistic, further work and a more robust evidence based plan would be required to enable the LA to support it prior to the final decision being made on the future of the school.
4. The Executive Councillor has taken the decision to proceed to Statutory Notice therefore initiating a 4 week Representation Period. This will give more time for the above 3 options to continue to be explored and also be a further opportunity for people and organisations to express their views and ensure that they are taken into account when the final decision is taken by the Executive Councillor later this year. It is essential however that the statutory process continues in parallel with the pursuit of these options. In the event that none of the above three options result in a viable alternative to closure there should be no undue delay in the closure process in order to avoid as far as possible further negative impact on the pupils, their families and the local community.

Under current legislation the LA is the decision maker for the proposal and is co-ordinating the statutory process before making the final decision. The LA, as decision maker, must be able to show that all relevant issues raised are taken into consideration in the decision making process. Points raised can be considered unpersuasive but must not be ignored altogether.

Objections and Comments

Any person or organisation may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to the School Organisation Planning Team, Children's Services, Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices, 51 Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YQ or by emailing schoolorganisation@lincolnshire.gov.uk to be received by the deadline of 22 May 2015.

At the close of the 4 week representation period (statutory formal consultation) on 22 May 2015 responses will be collated and analysed and a further report will be presented to the Executive Councillor for a final decision on the discontinuance of the school. This decision is likely to be taken in June 2015 but will be no later than the end of the term in July 2015. The representation period is the final opportunity for people and organisations to express their views about the proposal and ensure that they will be taken into account by the decision maker.

Appendix A

**Brocklesby Park Primary School Public Consultation Meeting
Great Limber Village Hall
6.30-8.00pm on 2 December 2014**

In attendance from the Local Authority (LA), CfBT and the school:-

Debbie Barnes: LA - Director of Children's Services (Chair)

Mrs P Bradwell: Executive Councillor for Adult Care and Health Services, Children's Services

Steve Tinegate: Chair of Governors

Jo Spriggs: Head Teacher

Gill Curtis: CfBT School Improvement Service

Matt Clayton: School Organisation Planning Manager

35 parents, staff, governors and members of the local community attended

- *Introduction from Debbie Barnes as to how the meeting would proceed together with an outline of the consultation process.*
- *Introductions from each member of the panel.*
- *Introduction from Chair of Governors, Steve Tinegate, including reasons for proposing closure, in that there are not enough pupils to make the school viable and the consequent inability to set a balanced budget. This led to the Governing Body taking the difficult decision to ask the LA to commence consultation on closure.*

Where appropriate, further details have been added to the following answers to clarify any uncertainty. This document will be updated should further questions be received during the consultation period. All questions and comments will be considered along with all response forms received during the 8 week consultation period which closes on 16 January 2015.

Q & A

Q Regarding the budget, please clarify what you mean by medium term and long term

A Here the Governing Body (GB) is viewing the medium term as the financial year 2015/2016 and the long term 2016/17/18

Q If the numbers at the school for the academic year were up to 27 would this 100% guarantee the school would stay open?

A There would not be 100% guarantee.

Q If not 100%, then what sort of percentage would you think?

A The GB cannot give percentage guarantees but if the numbers were up to 27 this might buy time for the school to stay open for another academic year which could potentially offer more of a chance of staying open in the long term.

Q What is a "balanced budget"?

- A** A balanced budget is one in which income exceeds expenditure whereas a deficit budget is one in which expenditure exceeds income
- Q** Can we reduce expenditure at the school eg reduce the staffing costs to balance the fall in pupil numbers?
- A** To reduce the staffing further would not be acceptable to Ofsted and would likely lead to the children not receiving the standard of education they deserve
- Q** Please confirm the numbers of staff employed at the school
- A** 8 teaching and non-teaching staff but not all full time. The teaching staff comprises 1 full-time and 1 part-time member with the Headteacher also teaching part-time. To reduce the staffing level so that all the children would have to be taught in one class (Reception through to Y6) would present significant difficulties in both meeting the needs of all the children and offering the full curriculum. This would likely compromise the children's education and progress that they should make.
- Q** The numbers have been low for some time – what have the GB done to plan for this?
- A** The GB has tried to market the school and employed a professional service to assist. Conversion to Academy status, either alone or as part of a Trust, has been explored. The school has joined a collaborative partnership with other local schools for support and to help reduce costs.
- Q** Parents have been unaware of all this – what did you discover and what was discussed?
- A** The school is too small to convert to Academy status and needs the support of the LA. We are also too small for Multi Academy Trusts to be interested in us being sponsored by them. Similarly other local schools were not interested in federating in the light of our low numbers. Demographic information does not suggest any increase in numbers.
- Q** Should we not explore these options fully?
- A** The LA will look at all possibilities during the consultation period and would want to fully explore Academy and federation options, but agree that Academy sponsors are unlikely to be interested with such low pupil numbers. Matt Clayton confirmed that NHS GP registration data and ONS birth data for the local area has been provided to the GB. Also the Headteacher has researched further information from parents (both current and future) regarding siblings and potential applicants for Reception to obtain a clearer picture but the numbers still look to remain low through to 2017/8 and are unlikely to get above the low twenties
- Q** The trend seems to be to close small schools and if this trend continues will we not be left with a small number of large schools? These do not suit all children – will there be a choice for a parent looking for a small school?
- A** The rural nature of Lincolnshire means that it is important to support small schools. The DfE considers a primary school to be sustainable when it has more than 100 pupils. In Lincolnshire we have over 100 schools with less than 100 pupils. In 2011 the government made changes to school funding leaving the LA with very little

discretion. The financial model that Lincolnshire operates does support small schools but even with this support the numbers at Brocklesby Park have dipped so low that they are below what is viable and demographics indicate that future school numbers will continue to be very low. Viability must also include educational as well as financial sustainability.

Q Has the GB considered offering a pre-school? The Little Brocks toddler group has 6/8 children regularly attending.

A The GB has not explored this option, but is open to the idea.

Q If we can fundraise and subsidise the school's income, would this help?

A If we had another income stream this may help but how can this extra income be generated and sustained? The GB needs your ideas.

Q As parents we wish that you had told us of the position 2 years ago rather than at the last minute.

A Noted.

Q The school is part of the estate heritage. What is the Estate's involvement?

A Lord Yarborough and Kit Read are both on the GB and are aware of the situation. They have been fully involved with the GB's activities.

Q I understand that they are aware but what is the Estate's input?

A Both Lord Yarborough and Kit Read share the parents' concerns and are keen for the school to continue. They are interested in hearing ideas from parents and would welcome the setting up of a working group and also new members to fill the vacancies on the GB.

Q There are no easy solutions – Great Limber has an ageing population.

A Noted.

Q What will happen to the land and buildings if the school closes?

A The playing fields are estate land and would therefore revert to the estate. The LA has the freehold on the remaining land and buildings which would revert to the LA in the event of closure.

Q We appreciate that the numbers are low but as parents we were shocked to learn of the proposal to close the school. Many parents want to be involved and do have ideas eg federation, setting up a pre-school/out of school provision such as a breakfast club but are concerned that there will not be enough time to implement these ideas. We need to know exactly what has been done and who will process these ideas – can it be us as parents? The school may not be financially attractive but has so much to offer – history, heritage, buildings, nurturing environment.

A Working with other schools has been explored and many benefits have been gained from entering into the collaborative partnership eg mentoring, support, sharing good practice and resources. With regard to saving specific costs following

federation – even if 1 head teacher is shared the savings would not be significant and there would still be the running costs of each school.

Q How much money do we actually need?

A The following figures are based on the number on roll continuing on the existing basis:-

- We will enter the 2015/16 financial year with a £10k surplus which will be a £16k deficit by the end of the year
- Deficit at the end of the financial year 2016/2017 of £46k
- Deficit at the end of the financial year 2017/2018 of £83k

Q My 4 children have all attended the school during which time the numbers have fluctuated considerably – even as low as now. The listed building status has sometimes hampered improvements. It is a small school but with big support. It has a very supportive and nurturing environment which is of particular benefit to SEND children.

A Noted. We have a record of the numbers on roll back to 1975 which do not show numbers as low as now – but these figures are as recorded on the census day each year and do not represent all the fluctuations within an academic year.

Q Can we view this as an opportunity ie save the school from closure and use it as a test case of how to protect rural schools?

A This would have to be funded somehow.

Q We have all chosen this school for our children and just want the opportunity to raise funds. We believe there is the potential here but are concerned that there will not be enough time to implement our ideas.

A Noted.

Q What costs are involved in closing a school – could these costs be used to subsidise the school budget?

A As previously advised schools funding is prescribed by the government and the LA has limited discretion. If redundancies were involved there would obviously be costs but we cannot give a figure at this stage. The LA has a good track record of redeployment and will always seek to avoid redundancy not only to mitigate costs but also to reduce the human costs of redundancy. Other closure costs will include security and maintenance of the buildings while empty but the LA would not want the buildings to remain empty for long so disposal options would be looked at as quickly as possible and such costs would come out of the county budget and not the schools budget.

Q Are there any covenants on the buildings or land?

A At this initial stage we are not aware of any covenants but we will look into this fully should the closure proposal be pursued.

Q Failing businesses usually either diversify or specialise. Could we consider specialising eg concentrate on special needs? Do SEND pupils bring with them a

pupil premium? There is a trend towards inclusion but mainstream schools are often unwilling to offer special needs places.

A Lincolnshire places very few SEND pupils out of county and there is not an issue in placing SEND pupils. All schools are expected to meet SEND requirements of their pupils. There is a good special school in Brigg but we are not aware of the details of SEND places in North Lincs and North East Lincs. There are specialist costs associated with SEND pupils eg 1:2:1s etc and specialising in SEND provision would be likely to increase the school's costs and therefore not help in trying to balance the budget.

Q I chose this school as it is small and as a whole provides a nurturing environment. Bigger schools have to create a special group within their school to provide nurturing support. Why spend money on creating such groups when our school already provides a nurturing environment?

A All schools seek to provide nurturing support particularly for vulnerable children and it is one of the factors that Ofsted look for in their inspections.

Q The crux of the problem is the low numbers and if we could get 6 or 7 more children this would buy us time but we need another year to get the numbers up and look at the ideas already suggested such as a nursery so that the school would benefit from rent paid by the nursery provider and the children would flow up to the main school.

A Noted. With regard to the idea of running a nursery there would have to be evidence of demand to attract a private provider. The Birth to Five Service at the council would be able to advise and assist in preparing a business case.

Q Referring to a previous question – I disagree that all schools are nurturing. My son has attended 3 different schools with very varied support and it is only at this school that he has thrived. The nurture and support at this school is one of its strengths.

A Noted

Q I would be interested to hear what the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher think is actually going to happen.

A It is encouraging that every parent is being positive. We need your ideas and input. This may result in bringing up the numbers – but it is all about the low numbers at the school

Q Do we want to carry on – is it worth it?

A All parents – Yes

Q If the school closes can you please clarify transport issues and the offer of a guaranteed school place. The letter contained a lot of detail which is difficult to take in.

A If the process proceeds to a Representation Period a Statutory Notice will be published which will name a school or schools where a place is guaranteed for all the children on roll. The named school has not been decided at this stage and transport will be provided according to the LA's policy, but it may apply to all

children on roll whether they live in or out of county. It is not possible to confirm details at this stage as further consultation with parents will be required if the process proceeds to the next stage and the circumstances for each family would then be carefully considered on a case by case basis.

Q How much will this cost eg the provision of additional transport?

A It is impossible to quantify at this point but it will be fully looked into – there are only 4 children out of the 15 on roll for whom Brocklesby Park is their nearest school.

Q It is a parent's right to choose a school for their child – by only offering transport to a named school are you not restricting this right?

A It is difficult to comment on individual circumstances and we will have a clearer idea following discussions with parents.

Q Where do we go from here? Where do we take our ideas?

A To the GB.

Q Is the GB full? Is there a parental support group?

A There are 3 vacancies on the GB – please speak to Claire as the clerk to governors. There is a 'Friends of the School' association which organises fund raising activities.

Q We understand that the issue is low numbers. The idea of a pre-school is a good one. Are there any issues with having a nursery and mainstream school on the same premises?

A There are many models operating in Lincolnshire eg LCC maintained nursery school/ mainstream school with LCC nursery class/ nursery provision provided by a private provider on the premises of a mainstream school. There are registration requirements and Ofsted requirements which may involve physical alterations eg separate playgrounds. The LA's Birth to Five Service would be happy to advise.

Q Would the council implement this nursery provision?

A We have found that the most successful model is one that is run by a separate management committee which has the advantage of the expertise of the provider together with potential transition benefits. The nursery can operate as a separate entity and not compromise the efficient running of the school.

Q But this will all take time - do we have to have this setup before the Representation Period or just come up with the plan? And who will fund the setting up?

A The Birth to Five Service will advise and assist without any charge. Please put forward your ideas and any viable option will be given consideration.

Q There must be lots of children in this rural area that require transport to school. Could we offer to transport children to our school eg from the village of Habrough?

A A number of schools do offer to transport pupils although these are usually secondary schools/academies. The LA could not fund this – as the LA must seek to

treat all schools the same and could not offer additional funding not available to all schools.

Q Could we use the £10 k surplus? Could we get a sponsored vehicle or look into a lease vehicle?

A The LA would not object to the school looking into this.

Q We have ideas and want to fund raise but can we have another year?

A The GB will look into all ideas. A school can operate with a deficit budget for one year under exceptional circumstances but there must be a demonstrable sustainable plan to move to a balanced budget at the end of the year.

Q Could we share a minibus with one that already provides transport in the area?

A As above, the LA would not object to the school looking into this.

Q We have only just become aware of the difficulties at the school. Can the discussions be more open and transparent so that as parents we can help?

A The minutes of GB meetings are available to parents at the school office. The questions and answers raised at this meeting will be published on the LCC website and updated as and when any further questions are submitted. (Follow the link to [Current Consultations](#))

Q There is a 50 plus seat bus that provides school transport for only 2 children at the school. Can we get rid of this bus and save money?

A School transport is provided and organised by PC Coaches and this would not save any money. PC Coaches usually co-ordinate provision to operate on a dual basis covering secondary provision after primary in the same locality. We will take this back to colleagues in Transport for consideration.

Summary at the end of meeting which closed at 7.50pm

Debbie Barnes thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for the many positive contributions.

The consultation period ends on 16th January and we would encourage you to submit a response form. All responses will be considered when the decision is taken as to whether to proceed to the next stage of the process. If the process continues to the next stage there will be a 4 week Representation Period commencing with the publication of a Statutory Notice.

If there are further questions please contact either the school, the GB or the LA.

Contact details for the LA

Email: schoolorganisation@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Via Post: School Organisation Planning Team, Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YQ

Tel: Matt Clayton 01522 553535
Linda Duffield 01522 553392

APPENDIX B

Written Responses in the Consultation Period on the proposed closure of Brocklesby Park Primary School

Point of View	Supports Proposal	Against Proposal	Not For or Against	Other comments/Notes
Resident		Y		All communities need schools. Ours is a small close knit community and would suffer greatly if school is lost
Parent/Carer		Y		
Resident		Y		It would be a terrible loss to the village
Resident		Y		All our children loved the school and it formed an important part of the village and surrounding villages' social life
Resident		Y		Eldest child has just left this school. It's a great school and it will be huge loss to the village if this school closes. Would be interested in pre-school if it opened
Parent/Carer		Y		I have been to this school to support events like the Autumn fair. My family attend at pupils and do incredibly well. It is such a shame to see such a lovely place struggling. I think there could be more done to children to go - knock on doors, promote it. There is talk of setting up a nursery and this would be a good idea It would be such a big loss to the area if such a historical place didn't survive. The closure proposal is a surprise. Parents and friends of the school could have been involved much earlier - why weren't they told how serious the situation was?
Employer/Business		Y		
Parent/Carer		Y		My daughter went to the school and I feel it is beneficial to the community
Resident		Y		The school has been part of the village for over one hundred years. This continuity is important for village life.
Resident		Y		
Resident			Y	I was educated in a village primary school when it was closed due to lack of pupils. The village lost its heart and there was no reason for young families to live in the village. Relying on purely older people to populate rural areas is anti-social and short sighted for rural prosperity
Teacher/School Staff		Y		BPPS is the heart of the village. Our school is a facility and has been for generations...there exists an inexplicable harmony between the teachers and the pupils that allows education to occur on all levels. Closure would leave pupils with no place to call their own. There are huge benefits to our small village school - larger schools may lead to them (pupils) feeling insecure and lost.
		Y		
Resident		Y		We would like to see the school remain open for future generations

Parent/Carer	Y	It would be a great shame to lose such a wonderful school. It is precisely because the school is small and lessons and teaching can be tailored to each individual child's needs that my son has flourished here. I also believe the school provides a social situation not possible in larger schools. The teaching staff have always done their utmost to provide a diverse education with as many opportunities for trips, sporting events as possible. H would be sad to lose such a long-lived school without fully exploring preschool/outside nursery providers.
Parent/Carer	Y	All my children went to Brocklesby School. All did well and to have small numbers and your children do well is more beneficial than great numbers. It's the hub of the village.
Resident	Y	This school has always been and should continue to be part of the Great Limber community. Several of my children attended and benefitted from this school as I would like to think future generations may likewise.
Parent/Carer	Y	Very family orientated. I chose this school for my child because of the structure of the classes, the staff and because it is small. I propose sharing a head teacher with another small school to save costs and have a nursery so that children will move up from the nursery to the school.
Other	Y	A school is valuable to the community and important to the survival of any growing community
Teacher/School Staff	Y	Size of the school is unique and allows for excellent support for children educationally and emotionally. Wonderful positive atmosphere giving children confidence and stability and interaction with peers. Staff dedicated to getting most out of children and to reach their potential. Asset to the area and should be sustained.
Teacher/School Staff	Y	I have been a teacher since 1989. BPPS is the best school I have ever taught at. It is vital for the children's well being and education that this school remains open. It is part of the community and has been since 1852. This is a highly successful school, and closure would be detrimental to the children/staff/parents/community
Resident	Y	It is a good small school that local children can attend. An idea would be to provide nursery or out of school clubs to make it more attractive to working parents
Parish Councillor	Y	I would like to see shared head ship and preschool idea
Employer/Business	Y	Having been educated through the school I believe it has given me a good background in life skills. The school is a backbone of village like. I believe anything that can be done to keep the school in place must be considered. I think a pre-school is a good idea and I would support this to keep the school open
Former staff	Y	BPPS historically has always had fluctuating numbers. Due to the proximity of the school, students have come from quite a wide area because of the small numbers in the village. Perhaps a stronger leadership team and governing body could help raise numbers and standards. Whilst I was at the school we had a good Ofsted report under the previous head teacher and we were going from strength to strength. There has been a decline in numbers due to dissatisfaction and unrest with the leadership team. It would be a shame to completely write it off because of a dip.
Parish Councillor	Y	A good school and a required village asset
Employer/Business	y	Closure would harm local community. Please keep the school open but provide pre and post school facilities
Employer/Business	Y	Use money available to transport local children to another school to transport children to BPPS. Children in inner city schools often in classes over 30.
Resident	Y	How important a local school especially in rural communities
Resident	Y	Can give children such life lessons within a rural community that town schools

Governing Body	Y		Sorry, but understand the difficulties of maintaining viability. Not the nearest alternative school but do have capacity. No formal objection to the closure but sympathise with uncertainty it causes to staff, pupils and parents.
Grandparent		Y	There is a demand for good schools. BPPS is a brilliant school. We do not want to lose this facility. We are told more schools are needed, this school is an established building.
Former parent		Y	
Resident		Y	
Resident		Y	It's a shame to shut it after all these years
Teacher/School Staff		Y	This school provides a safe and fantastic education. Its history goes back many years and it should be given the chance to rebuild with a preschool for future generations to enjoy a fantastic education and learning environment.
Resident		Y	The school should not be closed for any future children that may come to live in the village
Resident		Y	
Resident		Y	It is an important part of the village. And lots of children have had a good education in the past years.
Resident		Y	Such a shame to lose the village school
Former parent & governor		Y	Unique school that offers quality care and strengthens community cohesion. Preschool provision would make school viable. Placing school under headship of Keelby with 2 full time teachers at Brocklesby Park would provide financial savings and enable quality education.
Resident		Y	I think village schools are a good thing because the children get more attention and good community spirit.
Parent/Carer		Y	Understand the school cannot financially stay open. More should have been done in last few years to boost pupil intake. Communication between school and parents is poor. Our son has flourished academically and we believe he has benefitted from quality teacher time that he may not have received in a larger school. However his social interaction has suffered from low pupil numbers. Closure would be sad - the school is part of area's heritage and the reason we moved to the village.
Resident		Y	Removing the school from the village may well be the beginning of the end what's next the shop/pub/hall
Neighbouring LA	Y		NELC supports LCC with regard to the proposal to close Brocklesby Park
Neighbouring LA		Y	North Lincs schools that serve the areas in which displaced pupils live have capacity to accept pupils and the council does not object to the proposal to close the school
Teacher/School Staff		Y	I have thoroughly enjoyed working with such dedicated and caring staff. All of my three daughters attended and I feel fortunate that they were taught in this small, wonderful school which is located in a lovely rural setting. To close this school would be upsetting for all the staff and parents and would deprive children of being taught in a caring family environment.
Parent/Carer		Y	
Parent/Carer		Y	My 3-year old attends 'Little Brocks' toddler group and attends to Montessori pre-school nearby as she is an only child and enjoys the personal family atmosphere. The physical surroundings of the school of a rural nature enhance this 'hidden gem'...I would very much like my daughter to remain part of this family throughout her primary education.
Resident		Y	
Resident		Y	

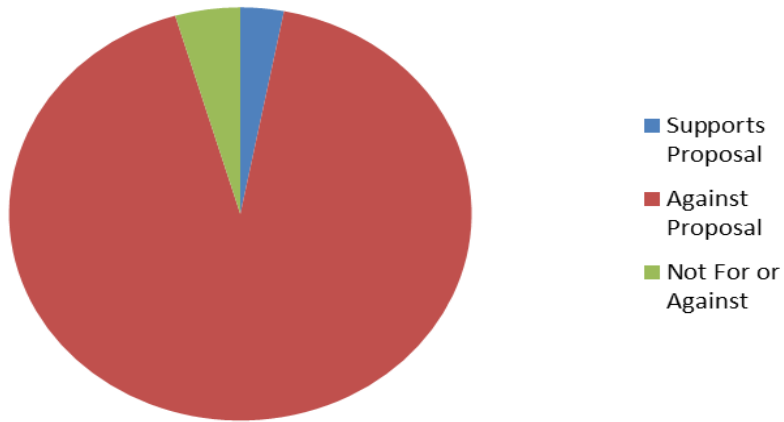
Resident	Y	I feel it would be nice to keep this small village school open as I have know many parents whose children have used this school and highly recommend it.
Teacher/School Staff	Y	School has always had a caring family feel. If transport was offered from nearby villages this might boost numbers
Resident	Y	
Resident	Y	
Parent/Carer	Y	We moved here so our children could go to this school. My child was getting lost at his last school and since they have been coming here they have come on leaps and bounds. The work my child provides is amazing and that is down to the teachers and the head at this school.
Parent/Carer	Y	My grandson started at this school and could not read or write. I have been so impressed with his progress and the care the staff take with children. Not all kids thrive in big schools. BPPS means so much to the people who know and recognise how special it is. This school has a big heart - parents are leaving kids who treat kids like their own. The problem lies in not enough people knowing about it. I think the governors have been weak and complacent and not explored every opportunity. HT is a lovely lady who has improved standards but the school needs a more dynamic manager. A pre-school would help the school build numbers. Join with another school of look at independence - to suit uniqueness
Resident	Y	
Resident	Y	
Resident	Y	I wouldn't like to see it closed
Resident	Y	From how my granddaughter was encouraged with her education. Coming from a school in Norfolk she was behind but soon improved with good teaching at BPPS
Grandparent	Y	school is hidden gem and closure would be a travesty. Hopefully a way can be found to increase pupil numbers. Having to bus pupils to another school would be expensive and outweigh benefits from the school's closure. Could sponsorship from the industrial Humber Bank companies be a possible option? My grandson has progressed extremely well at the school in a way which may not have been possible at a larger school. Pupils and staff all know each other - a very friendly family atmosphere.
Parent/Carer	Y	We chose the school because of its location, nurturing and friendly atmosphere. Children, parents and teachers are like family. The school is an important meeting place for parents. Numbers need to increase and one way of doing this would be to open a nursery. The school could be marketed better and most parents would be happy to help with this.
Governor	y	Unique family school. Management of the school has been weak and not enough has been done to build up the numbers. Nursery provision and out of hours care should be looked at. A business plan must be marketed. There needs to be closer federation with local schools e.g. head sharing. The school is in a fantastic position for parents from Brigg, Grimsby, Scunthorpe and Caistor and parents who work on Humber Bank.
Resident	Y	All my children went there and had a good education

Teacher/School Staff

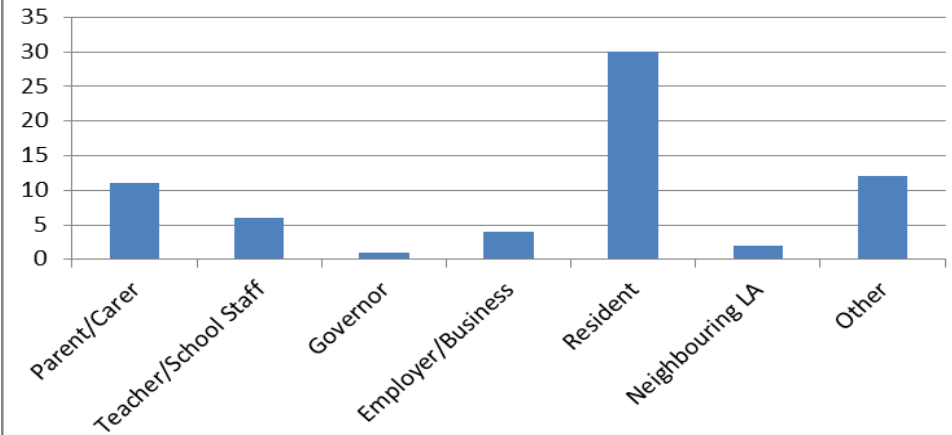
Y

For over 160 years this school has been a vital part of this community and the surrounding area. Pupils are taught in a unique environment and building which is very rare these days. Both children and adults are very supportive towards the school which is shown whenever fund raising and social event happen. The school has promising results with all the staff contributing to maintaining and raising standards, levels and results. To close the school would end years of learning traditions and values that once gone can never be reclaimed. It would be a travesty should it close for good, its loss would be irreplaceable.

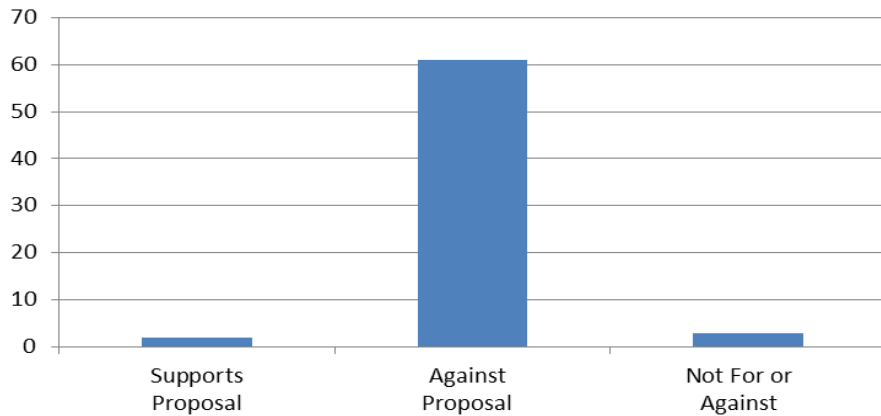
Consultation Responses Overview



Responding Consultees



Consultation Responses Overview



Key Noted Reasons Given

