

Complete Proposal

**To amend the age ranges of
Grainthorpe Primary School and Marshchapel
Primary School**

MATTERS TO BE SPECIFIED IN SECTION 19 OF THE EDUCATION AND
INSPECTIONS ACT 2006

PROPOSALS TO MAKE A PRESCRIBED ALTERATION TO A SCHOOL

03 January 2018

Contact details

This proposal has been published by Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YQ regarding the change of age ranges of Grainthorpe Primary School, Fen Lane, Grainthorpe, Louth, LN11 7JY and Marshchapel Primary School, Sea Dyke Way, Marshchapel, Grimsby, DN36 5SX

Implementation

The proposal is to change Marshchapel Primary School from an age range of 4 to 11 to an infant school with an age range of 3 to 7 (to formally include Early Years provision). The proposal for Grainthorpe Primary School is to permanently change it from an age range of 4 to 11 to a junior school with an age range of 7 to 11. The proposed implementation date is September 1st 2018.

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, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YQ or by emailing schoolorganisation@lincolnshire.gov.uk to be received by the deadline of 31 January 2018.

Alteration Description

The proposal under consideration would require that from 1st September 2018 children in the junior cohorts (Y3 to Y6) at both schools will be placed on roll and educated at Grainthorpe and all infant cohorts (Reception to Y2) at both schools will be placed on roll and educated at Marshchapel. The early years provision (pre-school age) would remain as it is on site at Marshchapel. The two schools would remain separate schools but in a hard federation with one Governing Body and one executive Head. North Cotes CE Primary School is currently also part of the Fenlands Federation with Marshchapel and Grainthorpe. North Cotes will remain as a 4 to 11 school and is not part of this proposal. The Local Authority believes that this proposal is the best available option to address the expected and existing low pupil numbers across the area to ensure that both schools have a sustainable future and to enable high quality teaching and learning to take place.

School Capacity and Site

The current capacity at each school is 56 at Marshchapel with a Published Admission Number (PAN/Intake) of 8, and 70 at Grainthorpe with a PAN of 10. The Marshchapel site is quite restricted, with the playing field being detached from the main school site, but has good indoor facilities suitable for Infant aged children. Grainthorpe has a large outdoor area making it ideal for Junior age children. The new model would see a PAN of 15 adopted at each school with Marshchapel having an age 4-7 capacity of 45 (plus Early Years) and Grainthorpe with an age 7-11 capacity of 60. There would be some minor internal alterations made on the Marshchapel site to make it suitable for younger children with appropriate toilet facilities. And minor external upgrades at Grainthorpe for outdoor play for Junior age pupils.

Objectives

The proposal detailed in this document is to change the age ranges of Grainthorpe Primary School and Marshchapel Primary School.

The LA considers this to be the most appropriate solution to address the expected and existing low pupil numbers across the area and to secure the future of both schools. The LA believes the proposal to be in the best interests of local children and local parents as well as educational provision in the area and it reinforces the priorities in the Joint Strategic Needs Analysis (JSNA) and the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (JHWS).

The proposal will ensure that the provision of school places is planned so as to promote high educational standards, enable fair access to educational opportunity for every child and promote the fulfilment of each child's potential. This proposal will both enhance the quality of provision and sustain local provision and at the same time it will assist in meeting parental preference. It is also an opportunity to address some related suitability and condition issues (such as the outdoor play equipment at Grainthorpe Primary School, and the installation of new toilets at Marshchapel Primary School).

The LA believes this proposal to be in the best interests of local children and parents, as well as educational provision in the area. The LA also believes it supports the council's aim of ensuring that as many children as possible can reach their full potential. It also enables the LA to fulfil its statutory duty of providing sufficient places to accommodate all pupils of statutory school age in Lincolnshire. It is recommended that the proposal is agreed to ensure the best educational opportunities for the children living within the Grainthorpe and Marshchapel area.

Consultation

In order for the school to change the age ranges of Grainthorpe Primary School and Marshchapel Primary School the LA must follow the necessary statutory legal processes as required by the Secretary of State in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act (EIA) 2006 and updated by the Education Act 2011 together with the guidance of the Department for Education (DfE) regarding expansion. The relevant DfE guidance was updated in April 2016. Under this guidance there is no longer a requirement for a prescribed consultation period prior to the publication of the Statutory Notice and Complete Proposal. However, the DfE still has a strong expectation that LAs will consult interested parties in developing their proposal. To fulfil this expectation the LA undertook a fair and open consultation to ensure all views were considered.

Consultation originally began on 25 September 2017 with a letter, incorporating relevant information and reasons for the proposal, sent to all parents of pupils attending the school informing them of the proposal. Interested parties were also informed as required by guidelines issued by the DfE. In addition, on 09 October 2017, individual drop in sessions were offered to parents to discuss the proposal further with an LA officer. These meetings were offered to allow those having an interest in this proposal to be able to gather information, ask questions and get involved in the debate.

All parents/carers and other interested parties were given the opportunity to respond as part of the consultation process by 06 November 2017. 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/parents/schools/for-schools/school-organisation-planning-team/current-consultations/

All written responses received during consultation have been provided to the Executive Councillor for consideration in the decision making process. To briefly summarise there were five valid responses in total with four in favour and one neither for nor against.

Under current legislation the LA is the decision maker for the proposal and is co-ordinating the statutory process before making a final decision in March 2018. The LA, as decision maker, must be able to show that all relevant issues raised are taken into consideration in the decision making process.

Project Costs

There are no significant financial implications arising from the recommendation in this report, i.e. to change the age ranges of Grainthorpe Primary School and Marshchapel Primary School from 1 September 2018. The changes for both of the schools will allow them to become more financially sustainable compared to the current arrangements. The schools will continue to be funded through the schools funding formula with delegated budgets from the Dedicated Schools Grant to fund the running of the schools.

Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision

A positive impact with regards to SEND provision is that children with additional needs may have the opportunity to be educated in small breakout groups more often if there are a greater number of pupils of a similar age and/or comparable needs.

Need for places

A changing age profile of the rural population in recent years has resulted 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 two viable primary schools to remain educationally and financially sustainable. The table below shows the potential reception numbers for Marshchapel and Grainthorpe. Also included is their PAN (Published Admission Number) for comparison.

The 'voronoi' referred to is the natural catchment area of the school by straight line distance if all pupils went to their closest school.

Lincolnshire Community Health Service Birth Data 2017 by Reception Intake Year				
Voronoi	PAN	R2020	R2019	R2018
Grainthorpe School	10	7	6	4
Marshchapel Primary School	8	7	6	2
Totals	18	14	12	6

January 2017 Number on Roll Census Data (rolled on a year)						
R2017	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
9	5	11	3	5	12	8
6	6	3	10	5	10	11
15	11	14	13	10	22	19

Both primary schools were rated as "Good" at their last Ofsted inspections. The schools are popular with local parents and children but there are insufficient pupil numbers to sustain two primary schools in this area.

Related Proposals

The prescribed alterations being consulted on are related to each other. One cannot be implemented without the other.

What will happen now?

Any person may object to or make comments on this 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

At the close of the 4 week representation period (statutory formal consultation) on 31 January 2018 responses will be collated and analysed and a further report will be presented to the Executive Councillor for a final decision in March 2018 on the expansion of the school. 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.

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