



# ***Consultation Document***

**Proposal to close Burnt Yates Church of England**

**Voluntary Aided Primary School**

**from 31 August 2018**

# **Burnt Yates Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

January 2018

This paper sets out details of a proposal to close Burnt Yates CE VA Primary School with effect from 31 August 2018. It gives the background to the proposal. There will be a public meeting on:

**Monday 15 January 2018 at 6.30 pm**

**at Burnt Yates CE VA Primary School, Burnt Yates, Harrogate, HG3 3EJ**

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## **The Current Position**

Following discussion with the Regional School's Commissioner (RSC), and working closely with the Diocese of Leeds, North Yorkshire County Council is consulting on a proposal to close the school.

It is considered that the closure is necessary to secure the interests of current and future pupils from the school because of concerns about standards of teaching and learning and related concerns about low pupil numbers and the school's financial position.

This decision has not been reached lightly, and not before alternatives have been considered, such as collaborating and amalgamating with other schools to make sure that good standards of teaching and learning will be available for all pupils.

## **Background**

In December 2016 the school was judged by Ofsted as Inadequate and became subject to Special Measures.

In January 2017 the RSC issued a directive academy order. The Diocese attempted to find a suitable academy trust that might sponsor the school to become an academy. No multi-academy trust could be found for the school. Following this, the Diocese approached the RSC to propose an amalgamation solution involving the technical closure of the School.

The RSC then considered the financial position of the school combined with the falling pupil numbers (as reported by NYCC officers) and concluded that the school is no longer viable. The RSC therefore revoked the Academy Order for Burnt Yates CE VA Primary School and advised that the expectation is that the Local Authority would take steps to close the school following the statutory process to close a maintained 'rural school'. This would allow the Local Authority to consult on closing the school in order to either amalgamate the school, or close the school outright.

The County Council and the Diocese supported Burnt Yates CE VA Primary School and Ripley Endowed CE Primary School to explore the potential for amalgamation. This would have involved Burnt Yates CE VA Primary School closing but education continuing on the premises as part of a split school site. Having gathered the relevant evidence from both the school and County Council and undertaken a due diligence process the Ripley Governing Body had a number of concerns surrounding the financial sustainability of the amalgamated school on two sites. This resulted in their decision not to proceed to the consultation on amalgamation. It is now thought unlikely that an amalgamation with an alternative school could proceed.

The remaining option therefore is to proceed with this statutory consultation on closure where the NYCC Executive is the decision making body.

Where a school like Burnt Yates is in Special Measures, the Secretary of State can also order that the school is closed. The Regional School's Commissioner has advised that if, following the statutory closure process, the County Council decided to keep the school open then they would need to consult with the Secretary of State to see whether she wanted to use her powers to direct closure for this school.

### **Standards of teaching and learning**

The school has been trying to improve standards following the Ofsted inspections, and has received extensive support from the Local

Authority, but the low pupil numbers will lead to a need to further reduce staff which compromises any further attempts the school might need to make to deliver an acceptable quality of education.

Burnt Yates CE VA Primary School have collaborated with Ripley Endowed CE Primary School for over 3 years and shared a Headteacher throughout that time. There is currently a temporary Executive Headteacher in post shared across both schools sites. Given the very low number of pupils entering the school it is considered that an attempt to recruit a substantive Headteacher with the calibre to make the necessary improvements is unlikely to be successful. The current temporary arrangements cannot continue into the future. Without secure leadership the quality of teaching at the school is at further risk.

### **Pupil Numbers**

The number of children at Burnt Yates CE VA Primary School has been falling over the past few years. In December 2017 there were only 16 children on roll in the school and these are projected to fall to just 14 in September 2018. The school is designed to accommodate up to 53 pupils if all spaces are in use. Forecasts indicate that these numbers will not recover significantly in the longer term and may reduce still further.

In these circumstances, it is difficult to deliver and sustain quality education.

Any change in pupil numbers will be reported at the public meeting on 15 January.

## **The Financial Position**

Pupil numbers determine the school budget. With these low numbers, and a reduced budget, the school will have to reduce staff. The school is projecting deficits in year of £78.5k in 2018/19 and £76.9k in 2019/20, and cumulative deficit of £155.2k in 2018/19 and £232.0k in 2019/20. These are based on pupil number assumptions of 18 in 2018/19 and 19 in 2019/20, and the position will be worse if pupil numbers fall further. There appears to be no reasonable prospect of recovery.

## **The Proposal**

For the reasons above it is proposed that Burnt Yates CE VA Primary School should close with effect from 31 August 2018.

The catchment area of another local school would be extended to include the current school catchment area with effect from September 2018. The County Council would welcome consultees' views on which School should have its catchment area extended.

For children currently at Burnt Yates CE VA Primary School, North Yorkshire County Council will work with each family to try to meet their individual preferences for other schools regardless of the catchment area defined. Staff and governors at Burnt Yates CE VA Primary School are also committed to supporting families in their choice of school and in making a smooth transition.

Other primary schools in the local area are:

Birstwith Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School, Wreaks Road, Birstwith, Harrogate, HG3 2NJ.

Bishop Thornton Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School, Colber Lane, Bishop Thornton, Harrogate, HG3 3JR.

Hampsthwaite Church of England Primary School (Academy), Church Lane, Hampsthwaite, Harrogate, HG3 2EZ.

Ripley Endowed Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School, Main Street, Ripley, Harrogate, HG3 3AY.

Summerbridge Community Primary School, Main Street, Summerbridge Harrogate, HG3 4JN.

Darley Community Primary School, Darley, Harrogate, HG3 2PZ.

Killinghall Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School, Otley Road, Killinghall, Harrogate, HG3 2DW.

Markington Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School, High Street, Markington, HG3 3NR.

Kettlesing Felliscliffe Community Primary School, Kettlesing, Harrogate, HG3 2LB.

All these schools were judged Good or Outstanding in their last Ofsted inspections, apart from Ripley CE which was judged to Require Improvement.

Some schools may be able to admit over their published admission numbers for some year groups.

Eligibility for home-to-school transport will be determined in line with the County Council's current home-to-school transport policy and procedures, based on travel distances from each child's home address and individual circumstances.

Parents have a right to express a preference for any school and, in the case of community and voluntary controlled schools, the Local Authority is the admissions authority and will meet that preference, provided there are vacant places or the school is happy to admit above the published admission number. In the case of Voluntary Aided schools, the governing body decides the conditions for admission to their particular school. Where a child attends a school, which is not their normal school or nearest school, parents are normally responsible for making transport arrangements.

North Yorkshire County Council's Admissions Team is always happy to give advice to parents – please contact Jill Wilson on 01609 534825 or Lisa Herdman on 01609 534953.

### **Staff**

A separate consultation process, including a staff meeting, is running in parallel with the consultation on the closure proposal.

### **The Building**

The school building and site is not owned by the County Council.

Decisions about the future use of the school site and buildings will be taken by the owners after the closure proposal has been determined.

### **What Happens Next?**

Your views about this proposal are welcomed. You can either complete and return the attached response sheet, or submit an online response

Paper responses should be returned to North Yorkshire County Council at the address below:

FREEPOST RTKE-RKAY-CUJS  
Burnt Yates  
Strategic Planning  
North Yorkshire County Council  
County Hall  
NORTHALLERTON  
DL7 8AE

Online responses may be submitted by following this link:

<https://consult.northyorks.gov.uk/snap/webhost/s.asp?k=151332878443>

**The closing date for responses is  
27 February 2018**

All responses to the consultation received by this date will be considered by the County Council's Executive on 13 March 2018.

If the County Council's Executive decides to proceed with the closure proposal, then statutory notices would be published in the local press on 22 March 2018. These notices provide a further four weeks for representations to be made. A final decision would then be made by North Yorkshire County Council's Executive in May 2018. If agreed the school would close on 31 August 2018.

### **Anticipated Key Dates**

All dates are subject to approvals at each stage.

Consultation opens	9 January 2018
Public meeting at the school	15 January 2018 at 6.30pm
Consultation closes	27 February 2018
County Council's Executive considers consultation response	13 March 2018
Statutory Notices published (4 weeks for representations to be made)	22 March to 19 April 2018
Final decision by County Council's Executive	22 May 2018
Proposed school closure date	31 August 2018

**Burnt Yates CE VA Primary School**  
**A consultation on whether the school should be closed**

Observations and/or suggestions:

Interest/Status .....

e.g. Parent/Governor/Teacher/Community

Name of School .....

Signed .....

Date: .....

Name (Block Capitals) .....

Address: .....

.....

.....

Postcode: .....

To help us assess whether we have provided clear information, please let us know whether you found this consultation easy to understand? YES/NO

Do you have any suggestions for improvement?

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**Under the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 2000, responses to the consultation may be published on the County Council's website where it may be accessed by members of the public.**

Please send this response sheet to the following "FREEPOST" address. You do not need to use a postage stamp.

FREEPOST RTKE-RKAY-CUJS

Burnt Yates

Strategic Planning

North Yorkshire County Council

County Hall

NORTHALLERTON

DL7 8AE

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and submit your response there

**To be received by no later than 27 February 2018**