



Norfolk County Council at your service

Equality impact assessment

Proposed closure of Mileham Primary School

Key findings:

The proposal is to close Mileham Primary School with effect from 31st August 2015. The school has not been able to secure sustainable leadership arrangements which ensure high standards of education for the children. Since the Headteacher left his post last summer, a number of schools have been approached, by the Local Authority and by the school with a view to formal collaboration, but it has not been possible to find a suitable partner.

We recognise that the closure of this small school will impact especially upon those children with Special Educational Needs, whose families have chosen Mileham Primary School because of its intimate size.

Directorate: Children's Services

Review officer/s: Alison Cunningham (School Organisation Adviser), Janine Birt (School Organisation Officer), Neil Howard (Equalities and Cohesion Officer), James Joyce (Committee Chairman), Sheila Locke (Interim Director of Children's Services)

Date completed: April 2015

Action required: Yes

1. Overview of activity or proposal

The proposal is to close Mileham Primary School with effect from 31st August 2015.

In September 2014 when the Headteacher of Mileham Primary School left his post, Mileham and Litcham Schools entered into a temporary partnership for one year whilst the options for the future of Mileham Primary School were assessed. This partnership has been successful and the Litcham Governors are now wishing to legally combine the two schools into a single organisation, on the current two sites of Litcham School from 1 September 2015.

A six week statutory consultation was carried out which resulted in the decision to proceed to public notice. The four week representation period following publication of the public notice to close Mileham Primary School ends on 10th May 2015 and a determination for or against the proposal will be made by the Director of Children's Services.

2. Who is affected?

Where this proposal may be relevant to people with a protected characteristic (i.e. they might potentially use the service as a Norfolk resident or visitor) please indicate here:

Age (people of different age groups; older & younger etc)	YES
Disability (people who are wheelchair or cane users; blind, deaf, visually or hearing impaired; can't stand for a long time; have a long-term illness i.e. HIV or a neurological condition such as dyslexia; learning difficulties; mental health etc)	YES
Gender reassignment (people who identify as transgender)	NO
Marriage/civil partnerships	NO
Pregnancy & Maternity	NO
Race (different ethnic groups, including Gypsies & Travellers)	NO
Religion/belief (different faiths, including people with no religion or belief)	NO
Sex (i.e. men/women)	NO
Sexual orientation (all, including lesbian, gay & bisexual people)	NO

(Please see Appendix 1 for information on types of discrimination)

3. Context to the proposal

Mileham Primary School is in Cluster 21 which covers Litcham school cluster which has a usual resident population of 9,632 people. The proportion of people in the Necton and Launditch electoral division which consider their health to be good or very good is below the county average. Deprivation in this electoral division is below the county average and the population is older than the Norfolk average.

Changing child population in the area

A key characteristic of the area is the changing child population, and to provide a picture of how this may affect the school population and needs, we have looked at the age groups of children and young people in the Cluster catchment area.

The Chart shows how population has changed within the cluster area over the last ten years, and shows the falling number of young children in the 5-10 age group, which will start to impact on secondary school place demands in the next few years.

	2001	2011	2001%	2011%	change	% change
0 to 4	444	429	0.21	0.22	-15	-3.4
5 to 10	636	556	0.30	0.28	-80	-12.5
11 to 16	712	686	0.34	0.35	-26	-3.7
17 to 19	293	305	0.14	0.15	12	3.9
0 to 19	2085	1976			-109	-5.2

- During the Spring term 2013, 23.3% of the school population had Special Educational Needs (3.3% Statement, 6.7% School Action Plus, 13.3% School Action).
- All of the pupils were reported to have English as their first language.

4. Potential impact

If this proposal is implemented, all the children currently attending the school will be displaced. The designated catchment school for those living in the Mileham catchment area will be Litcham School. This is already the preferred school for many in the Mileham catchment area, with 11 of the 31 children of primary school age that choose to go to schools elsewhere, choosing to attend Litcham School. Of the 27 pupils on roll, only 14 live within the designated catchment area for the school. The pupils will already be known to the headteacher and staff of Litcham School.

We recognise that the closure of this small school will impact especially upon those children with Special Educational Needs, whose families have chosen Mileham Primary School, because of its intimate size.

Norfolk County Council is committed to ensuring that the needs of all children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN) will be met. If the closure of this school is approved, the provision required for those pupils with a statement of SEN will be reviewed and, following consultation with individual parents, an alternative school offering suitable provision will be made available for their child.

As stated in section 3 currently there are no pupils who do not have English as their first language, and there are unlikely to be any potential impacts for any families due to their ethnicity, language or culture.

There is a potential impact on staff employed at Mileham Primary School. Work has been undertaken by HR to identify those staff who would be displaced by the implementation of this proposal and support will be given in seeking redeployment in line with the Code of Practice.

5. Actions

Describe any actions to be carried out to address any potential adverse impact identified above.

Action/s	Lead	Date
1 Individual reviews for children with statements	Additional Needs Coordinator	Summer term 2015
2 Work with displaced staff	HR Consultant	Summer term 2015

6. Completion & further information

To support you in your decision making please sign off your form with Neil Howard, Equality & Cohesion Officer, Planning, Performance & Partnerships team.

For questions and guidance about equality issues and help completing this assessment, please contact Neil Howard directly:

Telephone: 01603 224196

Text: 07901517721

Email: neil.howard@norfolk.gov.uk

Minicom: 0344 800 8011

Fax: 01603 223096

Signed: Neil Howard

Date: 30 April 2015