

**NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL**

**PEOPLE CABINET MEMBER**

**GRANGE LANE INFANT SCHOOL AND GRANGE LANE JUNIOR SCHOOL  
AMALGAMATION PROPOSAL**

**1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT**

- 1.1 To update the Cabinet Member on feedback from the public consultation regarding the proposal to merge Grange Lane Infant School and Grange Lane Junior School.
- 1.2 To seek the Cabinet Member's approval to proceed to the next stage of the amalgamation process and publish a 'public notice'.

**2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 2.1 Grange Lane Infant School and Grange Lane Junior School are separate schools and each have a governing body and head teacher. They are situated on separate sites.
- 2.2 In October 2011 North Lincolnshire Council successfully applied to the Department for Education (DfE) for funding to create a new-build primary school to replace Grange Lane Infant School and Grange Lane Junior School. This funding was part of the DfE's national 'Priority School Building programme' (PSBP) initiative. The DfE estimates the new build will be completed by 2016.
- 2.3 To seek stakeholders' views about amalgamation, the LA undertook a formal consultation from 20 May 2012 to 1 July 2012. The consultation feedback is presented in this report (appendix 2) for consideration. A decision is now required as to whether the amalgamation process should proceed to the next stage and publish a public notice to outline the proposals for amalgamation or formally withdraw the proposal.

**3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION**

- 3.1 There are two options for consideration:

**3.1.1 Option 1:** To proceed to the next stage of the amalgamation process and publish a public notice which outlines the proposal to merge Grange Lane Infant School and Grange Lane Junior School.

**3.1.2 Option 2:** To withdraw amalgamation proposal.

#### **4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS**

##### **4.1 Option 1:**

4.1.1 This option allows the amalgamation to proceed to the next stage of the process as determined by the statutory guidance. If approved, the LA will publish a public notice describing the technical arrangements of the amalgamation.

4.1.2 The outcome of the consultation shows that there is support for the amalgamation proposals.

4.1.2 The public notice would confirm the amalgamation of Grange Lane Infant School and Grange Lane Junior Schools, to commence with effect from 1 September 2014. This date has been recommended as it allows sufficient period of time, prior to the completion of the new-build, for the leadership team to be established.

4.1.3 The proposed timescale for implementation will allow sufficient time to establish a shadow governing body and for them to appoint the head teacher in advance of the merger date.

4.1.4 Following the publication of the public notice there is a six-week statutory representation period that provides a final opportunity for anyone to submit feedback on the proposal.

4.1.2 The final decision on approving the proposal will be made independently by the Schools' Adjudicator.

##### **4.2 Option 2:**

4.1.3 The proposal could be withdrawn at this stage. However, this option may not support the views of the majority of the consultees.

4.1.4 The approval for capital funding is based on a primary school. If the proposal to amalgamate is withdrawn this may impact on the new build project.

#### **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)**

##### **5.1 Finance:**

5.1.1 The costs associated with School Organisation are met from within existing budgets

## 5.2 **Staffing**

5.2.1 The governing body of the new primary school would approve the staffing arrangements for the amalgamated school. The council would offer professional advice and support to governors.

## 5.3 **Property:**

5.3.1 The new-build would be situated on Grange Lane Junior School site. Therefore, the infant school site would be vacated.

## 6. **OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)**

### 6.1 **Statutory**

6.1.1 The process for undertaking school mergers is governed by statutory processes and regulations. The procedures are established by The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) and The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended by The School Organisation and Governance (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2007 which came into force on 21 January 2008 and The School Organisation and Governance (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2009 which came into force on 1 September 2009).

## 7. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION**

7.1 The LA undertook a comprehensive consultation from 20 May 2012 to 1 July 2012.

7.2 The consultation concluded that 93% of the respondents wanted the amalgamation to proceed (see appendix 2 for further details).

7.3 After the formal consultation process had been concluded, the LA held additional meetings with both governing bodies to review the feedback and seek their final recommendation. In conclusion both governing bodies supported the proposal, but one governing body suggested an earlier date for implementation.

## 8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That the Cabinet Member approves option 1 and publishes a public notice that outlines the proposals to merge Grange Lane Infant School and Grange Lane Junior School to create a new Primary school with effect from 1 September 2014.

## **DIRECTOR OF PEOPLE**

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Date: 14 November 2012

### **Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:**

School Organisation Consultation Feedback Summary:

## The Consultation Process

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The LA consulted the following people / stakeholder groups:

**Stakeholder Group 1:** Hard copy questionnaires were sent to:

- Grange Lane Infant School – All staff, pupils, parents & governors
- Grange Lane Junior School – All staff, pupils, parents & governors

**Stakeholder Group 2:** Email questionnaires were sent to:

- All unions (as per the standard consultation list)
- Local MP
- Joint Consultative Committee members (teaching Staff)
- Joint Consultative Committee members (Non-teaching Staff)
- Conservative Group Office
- Labour Group Office
- Early Years Representative
- Diocese – Nottingham, Sheffield and Lincoln

**Any other Consultees:** In addition to the targeted consultees identified above, the council website was also used to host an online questionnaire, which was available to any potential respondent.

**Staff Meetings:** Staff meetings were held at the Infant School and the Junior School to discuss the proposal. Trade Unions were invited to attend the meeting.

**Public Meeting:** A public meeting was held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2012 at Grange Lane Junior School.

**Drop-in Sessions:** Informal drop in sessions were held on 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> July 2012. These events were timed to coincide with other parent events, which were taking place in the school (eg parents' day). This was to maximise the possibility of involving parents in informal discussion.

**Pupil Consultation:** Consultation was held with pupils from both Grange Lane Infant School and Grange Lane Junior School.

### The Consultation Feedback, Regarding support for the proposal to amalgamate

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#### Who responded to the questionnaire?

The table below shows that 176 questionnaires were returned. However many of the respondents represented multiple groups. For example a respondent could be a governor and a parent (ie two responses for one person). Therefore, looking at the overall picture, it has been identified that in total, 231 representative views were received.

	Infant	Junior	Cross-School	Total
Parent/Carer	67	118	-	185
Member of staff	8	25	-	33
Governor	3	7	-	10
Other	0	0	3	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>231</b>

Of the 176 questionnaires completed, 166 (94%) were submitted using paper questionnaires and 10 (6%) were submitted online.

#### Feedback Regarding the LA's Proposal to Amalgamate

	Response	Response %
<b>Option 1 (The proposal):</b>		
I support the council's proposal to merge the schools together to create a through-primary school	163	93%
<b>Option 2 (Do nothing)</b>		
I do not support the council's proposal to merge the schools together	10	6%
No Response	3	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Feedback Regarding the LA's Proposal to Amalgamate Analysis by key stakeholder groups

<b>Parents' Responses</b>	<b>Infant</b>		<b>Junior</b>		<b>Total</b>	
Option 1 (The proposal)	62	93%	115	97%	117	96%
Option 2 (Do nothing)	2	3%	2	2%	4	2%
No Response	3	4%	1	1%	4	2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Staff Responses:</b>	<b>Infant</b>		<b>Junior</b>		<b>Total</b>	
Option 1 (The proposal)	5	63%	24	69%	29	88%
Option 2 (Do nothing)	3	37%	1	4%	4	12%
No Response	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Governors Responses:</b>	<b>Infant</b>		<b>Junior</b>		<b>Total</b>	
Option 1 (The proposal)	1	33%	7	100%	8	80%
Option 2 (Do nothing)	2	67%	0	0%	2	20%
No Response	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100%</b>

<b>Other Response:</b>	<b>Other</b>		<b>Total</b>	
Option 1 (The proposal)	3	100%	3	80%
Option 2 (Do nothing)	-	-	-	-
No Response	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100%</b>