

Consultation on the closure of Hendon Brook Short Stay School, Townhouse Road, Nelson, BB9 8BP



September 2019

A consultation event in connection with this proposal will be held on Wednesday 25th September 2019 at the school. Further information is provided inside.

Produced by
Lancashire County Council

Consultation Document

What are we proposing to do?

This consultation document is about the future of Hendon Brook Short Stay School, Nelson, including its proposed closure, with effect from 31 August 2020.

This document outlines the main reasons for proposing the closure. This is due to a range of factors, including continuing low standards of education at the school and the development of alternative education settings to meet the needs of children in the area.

Foreword

Lancashire County Council has a statutory duty to provide alternative provision for every child who has been permanently excluded from primary or secondary schools. In achieving this, like many other authorities, there are challenges. Changing education policy and demographic factors mean that we must constantly review the number and location of the school places we provide and ensure that schools meet the needs of children in the county.

Lancashire is a large, diverse county served by some superb schools and we are committed to building on this to raise standards and opportunities for all children and young people.

The county council and schools work together with parents and other service providers to help our children to be safe, to enjoy and to achieve. We want all children and their parents to have pride in their school and cultivate an appetite for lifelong learning.

Lancashire County Council aims to provide schools that meet the needs of our communities wherever possible, and in this instance it is our belief that educational needs can be better met elsewhere, which means we must propose a school closure.

We hope that you will take the opportunity during this consultation period to let us know your views on what Lancashire County Council are proposing to do. The views you share with us about any possible alternative options for the school are important to us and will be used to shape the decisions that need to be taken.



County Councillor Phillipa Williamson
Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools

PART ONE

Our vision and what we would like to achieve

Education is a powerful means of transforming and enriching lives and communities. Future success and well-being depends on strong creative partnerships, new ways of working, high expectations and a belief that we all have a part to play and can make a difference together.

Lancashire County Council is committed to improving the quality of educational provision to help raise standards for all learners.

We know that schools can face challenges in meeting pupils' needs, and that in some cases changes to the pattern of school organisation in an area can help improve opportunities and raise standards.

On the 13th June 2019, the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Schools approved the formal consultation on a proposal to close Hendon Brook Short Stay School with effect from 31 August 2020.

If the proposal is approved, existing pupils will be assisted to find places at alternative education provision.

PART TWO

Proposal

The proposal is to close Hendon Brook Short Stay School in Nelson, with effect from 31 August 2020.

Ofsted inspection

The most recent Ofsted inspection of the school took place in April 2017, rating the school as inadequate and in need of special measures in order to improve. A monitoring visit was undertaken by Ofsted in January 2019, which concluded the school was not taking sufficient action to remove the need for special measures.

Conversion to an alternative provision (AP) academy

As a result of the inspection judgment and in line with national policy, attempts were made to convert the school to an alternative provision academy, as part of a multi-academy trust (MAT). Despite extensive discussions, this proved unsuccessful, and there is now little prospect of a MAT being willing to take over the school.

Pupil numbers

The school has capacity for 34 pupils, aged 4 to 11, who have been permanently excluded from other schools or who are at risk of exclusion. Owing to the continuing low standards at the school, the local authority has decided to restrict the number of new admissions, which means that there are currently only 17 pupils on roll.

The impact of this is that the school's costs are much higher than its income. By law, schools have to set a balanced budget, which the school is not able to do, which means it is no longer financially viable.

Leadership and teaching

Since October 2018, the school has not had a permanent headteacher and has had to rely on a number of consultant part-time heads. The school has also struggled to recruit and retain good staff and has had to rely on temporary supply staff to plug gaps. This has an impact on the quality of teaching, pupil behaviour and the results achieved by pupils.

The school building

The school building is not well designed for its current purpose and it would be very expensive to modernise. It is on a shared site, where access can be difficult.

Alternative Provision

A vitally important feature of any consultation on the closure of a maintained school is the availability of alternative provision for the pupils should the school close. Consideration must be given to the types of alternative provision available, the distances that pupils will need to travel and the standards of provision offered.

Lancashire's commissioner of alternative provision has identified a number of providers who will be able to offer places to meet the local authority's statutory duty of providing for pupils who are permanently excluded from primary schools. Hendon Brook currently provides for pupils from the four districts of Pendle, Burnley, Hyndburn and Rossendale and it is unlikely that the total distances travelled by pupils will be substantially greater than they are now, if the school were to close. As part of the commissioning process, consideration will be given to ensuring places are identified as close to pupils' home districts as possible.

School Management Committee Members

In recent months, local authority officers have been in discussion with school management committee members over the future of the school. After considering all options, the management committee members agreed to proceed with a proposal to close the school.

Closure of Schools and the School Organisation and Governance Regulations

There is a defined statutory process in the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 which must be followed before making a decision on the closure of a maintained school. This is supplemented by further guidance on the process published by the Department for Education.

There are 5 stages to the statutory process which must be followed:

Consultation

The issue of this document marks a period of consultation during which the views of any interested parties are sought and which will be considered before any move to the more formal stages of the process.

Publication

Dependent upon the outcome of the consultation, a decision to proceed to issue a statutory notice must be made by the Cabinet Member for Children and Schools.

Representation

Statutory notices for school closure define a minimum 4 week period for anyone to submit their written comments on the proposals. This enables people to express their views in the form of supporting or objecting to the proposals.

Decision

Within 2 months after the statutory notice period ends, the authority must make a decision on the proposal.

Implementation

If the proposal is approved, Hendon Brook Short Stay School will close with effect from 31 August 2020.

PART THREE

The consultation and decision making process

Timescales

9 September 2019 to 18 October 2019	Consultation
December 2019	Cabinet Member decision making session to consider the results of the consultation and decide whether to publish a Statutory Notice of the proposal
January 2020	Publication of Statutory Notice
January/February 2020	Representation (6 weeks)
April 2020	Final decision by Cabinet Member

Consultation Event

You are invited to express your views on the proposal at an event organised at Hendon Brook Short Stay School on

Wednesday 25th September 2019 from 3.00pm to 8.00pm.

Please note that this will be an appointment led event, requiring interested parties to make a booking prior to the event. This will allow us to manage the process effectively, minimise waiting times and ensure that appropriate officers are available to offer advice and guidance relating to specific matters of interest.

Bookings can be made by telephone or email by contacting the School Improvement Service on 01772 531284 or Email Heather.Warburton@lancashire.gov.uk

The closing date for booking an appointment is Friday 20 September at 5pm.

Who we will consult

This consultation document will be provided to people and organisations who may have an interest in these proposals. These include the following:

- Staff, parents/carers, management committee members and pupils of Hendon Brook Short Stay School (The views of the pupils will be sought through the school)
- Headteachers and chairs of governors of Pendle, Burnley, Hyndburn and Rossendale primary schools
- Members of Pendle Borough Council
- Members of the Education Scrutiny Committee at Lancashire County Council
- Lancashire County Councillors – Pendle, Burnley, Hyndburn and Rossendale
- Local Members of Parliament
- Trade Unions and Associations
- Lancashire Association of School Governing Bodies
- Department for Education: Regional Schools Commissioner
- Ofsted: Her Majesty's Inspector for the area
- The wider community – through local libraries.

This document is available on the county website at www.lancashire.gov.uk/schoolorganisationreviews but we can also provide copies of the consultation document to members of the local community on request.

How to share your views

We welcome your views and all comments will be considered very carefully before any decision is made to progress any further with this proposal.

The consultation runs until 18th October 2019 and you can respond by completing the questionnaire in this document or writing separately:

Post to:

Business Intelligence, Lancashire County Council, PO Box 100, County Hall, Preston PR1 0LD

Email to:

haveyoursay@lancashire.gov.uk

Online at:

(Use the link below to complete the questionnaire contained in this document on-line)

www.lancashire.gov.uk/schoolorganisationreviews

A hard copy can be returned to the office at Hendon Brook Short Stay School. This will be forwarded to Lancashire County Council on your behalf.

This document can also be accessed through:

www.lancashire.gov.uk/schoolorganisationreviews

Please submit just one response per person to this consultation

This consultation is stage 1 of the process required in order to close a school. The information provided in this booklet and at the consultation sessions is intended to be sufficient in order for people to form a view on the proposal. The council will consider views and concerns arising from the consultation process to contribute to the detailed proposal supplied later in the process.

We are sorry that, due to the volume of responses we receive when consulting on proposals for schools, we will not be able to acknowledge written responses nor enter into correspondence with interested parties during or after the consultation period. It is important to attend the relevant consultation event if you require clarification or more information on the proposal.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Who should complete this questionnaire?

- Staff, management committee members, current parents/guardians of pupils at Hendon Brook Short Stay School
- Any other interested member of the community

NB: Please complete just one form per person

We are proposing to close Hendon Brook Short Stay School. How strongly do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

Please tick one option only

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Why do you say this?

Please write in below



And if Hendon Brook Short Stay School was to close, how would this affect you?

Please write in below

Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

Please write in below

About you

This final section is about you. It's a little more personal, but is really useful to us. By answering these questions you will help us to understand the views of different groups of people. If there are any questions that you'd rather not answer, please tick 'prefer not to say', or leave it blank and go on to the next question.

Are you responding to this proposal as...?

Please tick as many as apply and where appropriate write in the name of the school

- A parent/carer of a pupil currently at: _____
- A parent/carer of a future pupil at: _____
- A member of staff at: _____
- A school governor at: _____
- Other: _____



What was your age on your last birthday?

Please tick one option only

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Under 16 | <input type="checkbox"/> 50-64 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 16-19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 65+ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20-34 | <input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 35-49 | |



Are you...?

Please tick one option only

Male

Other

Female

Prefer not to say

Are you a deaf person or do you have a disability?

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Please tick as many as apply

Yes, learning disability

Yes, other disability

Yes, physical disability

No

Yes, sensory disability

Prefer not to say

Yes, mental health condition

Are there any children or young people in your household aged under 18?

Please tick as many as apply

No, but expecting

Yes, aged under 5

Yes, aged 5-11

Yes, aged 12-15

Yes, aged 16-17

No children aged under 18

Prefer not to say

Which of the following best describes your ethnic background?

Please tick one option only

White

Black or black British

Asian or Asian British

Mixed ethnic background

Any other ethnic background

Prefer not to say

What is your home postcode?

Please write in below

Important Information

Lancashire County Council may be required to publish consultation responses as part of the reports for consideration by its cabinet either as appendices to those reports or as part of the background papers referred to in those reports and available on request. Please be aware that your responses to this consultation may be made available on the county council's website as part of this process.



