



Broadway East First School Governing Body Decision Making Process Following Consultation on Relocation & Expansion

Introduction

Last term we undertook a consultation on proposals to relocate Broadway East First School to a new site at Newcastle Great Park in September 2020, and the expansion of the school from an intake of 45 to 90 pupils. Following the completion of this consultation, all feedback received (from parents, carers, staff, other schools and wider members of the community) was collated for consideration and discussion by the Governing Body. This information could then be used to help inform the Governing Body's decision-making about whether they were in agreement for the relocation and expansion of the school to proceed.

At their meeting on the Monday 17th July 2017, the Governing Body discussed the proposed expansion and relocation of the school in detail. As well as considering the current and future position of the school, all of the feedback from the stakeholder consultation was reviewed and discussed at length.

Following these deliberations, and weighing up all the information available to them, the Governing Body voted in favour of the proposal to relocate the school to the identified site on Newcastle Great Park and the associated expansion of the school from an intake of 45 to 90 pupils.

Criteria Used To Assist Decision Making

To help guide governors in their decision making, they referred to the 'Framework for Decision Making' (Education & Skills Funding Agency). This framework has been used to evaluate options in many different types of private and public sector decisions, and is based on a simple set of criteria:

- 1) Is the option suitable for the organisation
 - Does it take the organisation towards its strategic objectives?
 - Does it counter internal weaknesses and external threats?
 - Does it exploit internal strengths and external opportunities?
- 2) Is the option feasible for the organisation
 - Does the organisation have the resources needed to pursue the option?
 - If not, can it acquire the resources in a reasonable timescale
- 3) How acceptable is the option to the organisation's key stakeholders?
 - Which stakeholders support the option or are neutral
 - Are there any individual or groups who would lose out – and if so, can ways be found to eliminate these losses.

The Governing Body used the first two criteria to consider a number of potential options for the future of the school, and to filter these according to which were possible and appropriate to consider progressing. Options discussed included: the proposed relocation in September 2020, the potential to defer or phase the relocation; potential for merger with Gosforth Park First School; making no changes to the school.

These options were considered alongside the strategic objectives for the school:

- To raise attainment levels for pupils
- To ensure financial stability of the school.

Governors also considered the potential impact of each option in terms of:

- Impact on teaching and learning
- Outcomes for pupils
- Quality of the curriculum
- Financial viability and long term health of the school
- Short term impact on families in Gosforth
- Long term impact on families in Gosforth
- Impact on staff
- Provision of places across Gosforth
- Impact on other local schools, as well as those in Gosforth.

Governors then considered the specific feedback received from stakeholders, paying particular attention to comments made by those who would be most impacted by the changes if they were to proceed.

These discussions enabled the Governing Body to clarify the factors stakeholders were most concerned about overall, and to consider how some of these issues may be addressed.

There were three main areas about which parents/carers had queries or concerns, these were:

- ensuring sufficient local school places to meet need;
- future admission and feeder school arrangements; and
- travel to the new site.

The Governing Body then went on to discuss practical means by which these three factors might be mitigated - either reducing or eliminating their impact for those parents who were most concerned or might potentially be most impacted by proposals.

Outcome of Discussions & Next Steps

On the basis of these detailed discussions, the Governing Body concluded that the proposal to relocate the school to Newcastle Great Park in September 2020 was the best option for the school's future stability, the quality of education and for pupils' achievement. This approval was conditional on the school working with other Gosforth schools and Newcastle City Council to address some of the concerns raised by parents/carers.

The Governing Body have now asked the Local Authority to take the proposals of the two related changes to the next stage of the statutory process. The final decision on whether the relocation and expansion will proceed will be made by the Council's Cabinet (following completion of a 4 week statutory consultation period).

In line with this statutory process, proposals regarding school places at other Gosforth schools, and consideration of future feeder school arrangements cannot be made until the Cabinet has taken its decision. However, the Local Authority has already begun an exploration of possible travel and transport options which could help mitigate some of the concerns raised by parents/carers. In turn, specific questions raised relating to school places and admissions arrangements have been noted, and will form a central component of discussions across the Gosforth Schools' Trust and with Gosforth Federated Academies. Any changes that are subsequently proposed to admissions, will be considered by the respective Admissions Authority (within the regulations prescribed in the Admissions Code), and must themselves be consulted upon prior to any changes being made.

Throughout the statutory process; discussions with other schools; and the development of specific proposals to address issues raised, parents will be kept informed of progress and there will be further opportunities for them to input their ideas and any remaining concerns or queries. To aid this, a timeline of key decision points and next steps is being prepared, so that parents, carers and other stakeholders can see the process that will be followed should the decision be taken for the proposed relocation and expansion of Broadway East First School to go ahead.

The Governing Body September 2017