



Mr B Hulbert
Headteacher (NPQH)

Tweedmouth Community Middle School
Billendean Terrace
Spittal
Berwick-upon-Tweed
TD15 2DJ
☎ (01289) 307480

e-mail: Admin@tweedmiddle.co.uk

Deborah Anderson
Project Support Officer
School Organisation and Resources
Wellbeing and Community Health Services Group
Northumberland County Council
County Hall
Morpeth
Northumberland
NE61 2EF

2nd March 2023

Ref: CONSULTATION ABOUT EDUCATION IN THE BERWICK PARTNERSHIP – Phase 2 response TCMS

GOVERNING BODY RESPONSE

We are in complete and UNANIMOUS agreement with Model A (Revised 3-tier System of Schools in Berwick).

As Governing Body of Tweedmouth Community Middle School, we are passionate about the existing 3-tier system of education in the Berwick Partnership. It is the very best system to deliver high quality outcomes to the pupils of the Berwick catchment and support our young people through education and into a successful adult life where they can thrive.

We have completed the 'Have your say' questionnaire, but feel that we need to add extra weight to the argument. As Middle School leaders, we know full well the role that Middle Schools can and will play in driving continual improvement within the partnership, and our parents have told us that from the start of the consultation. They have also asked Middle School Leaders to find an alternative option.

The Berwick Partnership is in a unique situation and, while other parts of the County/Country have changed to a 2-tier system – with questionable results – the Berwick Partnership continues to provide the pastoral and educational support which inevitably will lead to excellent outcomes for all pupils within a system that supports high quality learning across all phases. A 2-tier system of education is not, and never will be a 'fits all' solution, and we are extremely concerned that the spending to be allocated purely on the restructure of the entire Partnership will never represent value for money and nor would it be "Underpinning best value for NCC capital Investment".

A lot of school estate in the Partnership requires rebuilding or significant refurbishment, but an improvement in buildings alone will not bring about the positive change that is required in schools which are less than good.

Therefore, in supporting Model A (Revised 3-tier) we also support 'Option C' which has been proposed jointly by Berwick and Tweedmouth Middle Schools and which has significant backing from other school leaders within the Partnership. More importantly, it already has significant backing from Community Leaders and business leaders who see its potential in addressing future employment needs. This support alone will be of significant benefit to the entire Community.

When you consider the 'Vision for Change' criteria that were set with the agreement of NCC and Partnership Heads, **only** this proposal fully addresses **all** of these important statements. It is a supportive model which will benefit all

schools in the Partnership and promotes successful collaboration across all phases of education. The restructuring of Middle Schools demonstrates the extent to which our school leaders (including Governors) will go to bring about continuous improvement in the Berwick Partnership.

The collaboration detailed within Option C – An Inclusive Model - is what will bring about the positive change that our children deserve.

Option C – An Inclusive Model (Summary)

An inclusive and transformative model to support all schools and all pupils locally

An inclusive model



An inclusive and transformative model to support all schools and all pupils locally

Berwick Middle School and Tweedmouth Community Middle School will undergo a major restructure and will merge to form a single Middle School.

Analysis of past school improvement partner visits to both schools demonstrate that leaders are already moving each school towards Ofsted 'outstanding' ratings, with an emerging picture that there are already areas of outstanding (Personal development/Behaviour and attitudes) in both schools.

We will continue this impetus in the short-medium term to create one Middle School in the Berwick Partnership, and achieve Ofsted 'outstanding', while Berwick Academy continues to grow and their outcomes improve.

Furthermore, we will seek Teaching School status to potentially support all North Northumberland schools.

"With the creation of one large Middle School comes significant responsibility" ...

With the significant savings that restructuring all departments will bring, we will act as a Teaching/Learning and Support Hub for other Partnership schools:

- An all inclusive site/Campus will host a new/refurbished Academy and merged Middle School on the current TMS site and potentially a newly built Grove School to allow partial-integration within all phases.
- Middle School will adopt a peripatetic approach, providing specialist teacher provision to all First Schools in Art, Computing, Languages, Technology, Science, Music and P.E. allowing all schools to broaden curriculum, access specialist support and enable them to focus on their own specialisms without employing extra staff.
- Middle School will retain capacity in our financial management team to be available to support all First Schools with managing their budgets and cost saving.
- Middle School will retain Leadership and have capacity to support First Schools when and where necessary - absence, illness, job moves.
- Local specialised services for the **whole community** to access - parent support hub, citizens advice (Community Connector), adult learning classes - a significant opportunity for up-skilling and community education .
- All stakeholders represented on the multi-agency board which oversee the running of the campus.



An inclusive model



Engaging the Community

Use the trusted reputation of the Middle schools to engage the community in the process and drive forward the change in Berwick. There has been a concerted push from the community for Middle Schools to come up with a solution.

More new specialist buildings for the town - alongside Sports Centre and new Hospital. Berwick a 'jewel in the crown' for Northumberland in terms of public facilities and upgrades.

Significant interest already after preliminary conversations from large local employers around offering additional vocational options and even sponsored funding for degrees etc and further education.

Sustainability long term

A strong model which will retain pupil numbers across all key stages.

Model in place for long term planning potentially around academisation with other excellent 3-tier trusts in Northumberland or a purpose created Berwick MAT.

Ensure schools work together

A real chance to move things forward and progress. A prime opportunity to create long lasting working relationships at close quarters and hold a vast array of expert knowledge - in a campus environment but to be utilised in individual settings.

Multi-agency board will be able to hold schools to account to ensure they are working together for the best interests of all pupils.

Underpin best value for capital investment

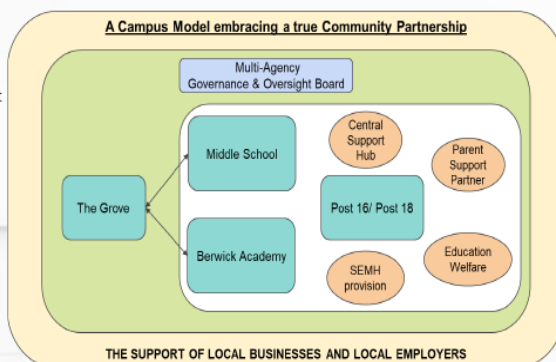
3 new school buildings instead of 1 - securing those schools buildings for many years to come.

A new LA maintained Grove School - a primary need for the Berwick partnership.

A new Academy building - much needed.

A new LA maintained Middle school building - much needed.

Specialist SEMH provision - a significant County & local need and especially in Berwick due to travel.





Mr B Hulbert
Headteacher (NPQH)

Tweedmouth Community Middle School
Billendean Terrace
Spittal
Berwick-upon-Tweed
TD15 2DJ
☎ (01289) 307480

e-mail: Admin@tweedmiddle.co.uk

The Governing Body, having met on Thursday 2nd March 2023, are in full agreement with **Model A (Revised 3-tier System of Schools in Berwick)**.

We are also in agreement that the revision which is necessary can be effectively and efficiently brought about through **Option C – An Inclusive Model** and therefore give this our full backing.

We therefore ask that this letter is presented to Cabinet along with all materials gathered over the consultation, and that receipt of this letter is confirmed.

With kind regards,

Gavin Wilson

Gavin Wilson
Co-Chair of Governors
Tweedmouth Community Middle School

Rikki Renner

Rikki Renner
Co-Chair of Governors
Tweedmouth Community Middle School