

Staff consultation collective response from Lowick and Holy Island CE First School staff

February 2023

Staff have a mixed point of view with regard to Model A and Model B.

On one hand we appreciate that middle schools are a valuable stepping stone between small first schools and a large high school. We recognise their pastoral care for year 5s and helping children develop ahead of mixing into the high school. We appreciate and respect the good work done by our middle schools.

On the other hand, we also recognise that, as small schools, we know our children extremely well and can tailor our curriculum to their educational needs. We feel that we could develop this well into upper key stage 2 in our context.

An advantage for Holy Island children is that they would not need to board away from home until they were older (year 7). On the other hand, boarding from year 5 means that the Holy Island children are able to make new friends and integrate into the junior part of Longridge with less anxiety. By the time children reach age 9 they are ready to move on for the next big adventure (a "big fish in a little pond" scenario). If they are staying here till 11 it may be that any problems and anxieties will have increased. There is no doubt that school is more than capable of first class teaching till the age of 11 but the emotional impact needs to be addressed.

Staff feel that parental choice should still be valued in either model.

SEND

We strongly support a new building for the Grove School for SEND. We feel, as educational experts who work with SEND children, that we should defer to the expertise of the Grove staff who believe that the suggested mix of two different kinds of SEND in the Grove would not work. We believe that the Grove should keep their current area of expertise with relation to SEND but be relocated into a larger, purpose-built school.

We believe that this could easily be needed for up to 100 children over time and should be future proofed by ensuring there are enough spaces so that children in the Berwick partnership area can attend special school in their local area. The Grove is also a strong support for all the other schools in the partnership.

We believe that this should happen with whichever model is adopted and is of vital and urgent importance to our community.

Post 16 and Post 18 provision

We believe that there should be more choice for children post 16 and onwards. Children in our partnership area have limited options post 16 and need to travel long distances to find post 16 and post 18 courses.

Early Years

We agree that Early Years provision in the Berwick partnership area is sufficient to the best of our knowledge.