

**THE HENRY PRINCE CE (C) FIRST SCHOOL, MAYFIELD**

**Statutory proposal to close The Henry Prince CE (C) First School, Mayfield  
on 31 August 2019**

**Representation Period – 20 March to 16 April 2019**

Version 1.1 (3 April 2019)  
See addendum at Appendix 3

## **Statutory proposal for the closure of The Henry Prince CE (C) First School, Mayfield**

Notice is given in accordance with section 15(2) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that the governing body of The Henry Prince CE (C) First School proposes to discontinue The Henry Prince CE (C) First School, Main Road, Mayfield, Ashbourne, Derbyshire, DE6 2LB with effect from 31 August 2019.

The Henry Prince is a co-educational, voluntary controlled school with an age range from 3 to 9. The school currently has 24 compulsory school age pupils on roll and capacity for 75 pupils, with a Published Admission Number of 15. In addition, four 3-year olds and three 4-year olds attend the nursery. There are no pupils on roll with an Education, Health and Care Plan. There are no specialist facilities reserved for children with special educational needs.

### **REASON FOR CLOSURE PROPOSAL**

It is with regret that the governing body has published this closure proposal but it has concluded that there is no financially viable alternative. The key issues facing the school are low pupil numbers and its finances. The school was judged “good” by Ofsted, for a second time in October 2017, however too few local parents are choosing The Henry Prince for their children. Low pupil numbers result in lower funding, which means that the school has built up a large financial deficit, cannot set a balanced budget and cannot afford to maintain a good quality of education for the pupils in its care.

### **BACKGROUND**

#### **Initial consultation in 2017**

For the second time in two years, the governing body has had to consult formally on the future of The Henry Prince School. Following the initial consultation, over 12 months ago, the governing Body and Staffordshire County Council agreed a way forward for The Henry Prince. After listening to the local community, a set of actions were identified as a way forward to give the opportunity for the school to increase pupil numbers and work towards sustaining the future of The Henry Prince, including.

- Trialing wrap-around care;
- Converting to primary status;
- Liaising with QEGS with regard to becoming part of their pyramid;
- Designing a new website;
- Marketing of the school within the available resources;
- Specifically, with regard to marketing, the school has advertised in the local press, local papers and on-line;
- On more than one occasion, placed leaflets in all papers delivered locally, and;
- Placed posters around the local area as well as placing information in the parish magazine.

## **Second consultation period in 2018**

At the point the above actions were agreed there were 35 full time pupils on roll. The school currently have 30. The ambitious proposal agreed with county projected 49 pupils for September 2019. On admissions closing for September 2019, the expected numbers are 29 full time pupils. This leaves the school 20 pupils short resulting in a £70,000 addition to the established deficit. So, therefore, the school cannot purchase necessary resources or essential training for staff which is vital for educating pupils to high standard and with the planned increase of year groups. With reducing pupil numbers and finances, in October 2018, the governing body were again forced to consult on a proposed closure.

Paragraphs 15 to 27 of the appended consultation document explains the background to the consultation as at January 2019 and notes that it is not possible to set a balanced budget to sustain the high quality of education at The Henry Prince. Since January, during the second period of consultation, the number of pupils (excluding nursery) has fallen from 30 to 24, which means an even worse financial position. There are also an additional 5 pupils who will be leaving The Henry Prince shortly. The forecast deficit for the end of 2019/2020 is now £314,000 and is forecast to rise to £440,000 in 2021/22 and to continue to rise: this is clearly untenable. As noted, an additional ten pupils would only increase the school budget by around £35,000 per year; even with continued budget reduction by the governing body, to balance the budget for the current financial year would have required an additional £74,000.

Governors considered three written responses received during the recent consultation period, between 23 January to 5 March 2019, and the range of views expressed during consultation meetings with staff, parents and the community. After due consideration, governors could not identify anything that could be taken to the county council which would address the current deficit as well as the on-going deficit. The governing board, therefore concluded that there was no way forward other than to serve this notice.

## **CLOSURE PROPOSAL: SCHOOL ADMISSIONS**

### **Admission arrangements**

It is proposed that the catchment area of Dove CE (VC) First School would be expanded to accommodate the area currently served by The Henry Prince. Other than this amendment, the oversubscription criteria for Dove would be unchanged. Places for all children in current Reception to Year 3 classes would be available at Dove First. Dove First has 97 pupils on roll and capacity for 150 pupils with a Published Admission Number of 30.

Ryecroft Middle School, near Uttoxeter would continue to be the catchment area middle school for children presently residing within The Henry Prince catchment area in Year 5 to Year 8. The admission arrangements for Thomas Alleyne's High would also remain unchanged.

## **Admissions to Reception for September 2019**

Parents who have expressed a preference for The Henry Prince have been contacted and invited to make new preferences that will be considered if the decision is taken to close the school. This process is being centrally managed by the county council's School Admissions Service.

### **Current Pupils (Reception – Year 4)**

It is important to state that no final decision on the future of The Henry Prince has been made and there is no need for parents to apply to move their children from the school at this time.

If the school closed, places for all children in current Reception to Year 3 classes will be available at Dove First from September 2019 for all families that want a place at the proposed catchment area school.

The Headteacher has contacted parents to discuss their likely preference for an alternative school if the decision is taken to close the school. The Headteacher will continue to work with parents and offer advice and support.

In some cases, parents have already followed the mid-year admissions process and have either moved, or plan to move, their children before the end of the school year. Local schools have met some parents and/or arranged open events; in all cases local Headteacher's have kept staff at The Henry Prince informed.

If the decision is made to close the school, parents do not need to move their children before the end of the school year: The Henry Prince remains committed to maintaining a good education for all pupils in its care. If the county council decides to approve the closure, the Headteacher would continue to work with existing parents to ensure arrangements are made for all pupils from September 2019.

As usual, children within current Year 4 will also be able to be admitted to Ryecroft Middle where this is the parent's preferred school.

### **Nursery Provision from September 2019**

If, after the 15 May the decision is taken to close the school, parents of children eligible for nursery-funding will need to apply direct to a childcare provider. Families can find local childcare provision offering funded places for 3 and 4 year old children via the county council's website at <http://staffs.fsd.org.uk>. For further information or support on looking for childcare please email [fis@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fis@staffordshire.gov.uk). The Derbyshire Family Information Service to look for childcare is:

<https://apps.derbyshire.gov.uk/applications/family-information-directory/>.

Within a 3-mile radius of the school there is one day-nursery registered to provide funded childcare. Within a 3 to 5-mile radius there are three day-nurseries, one pre-school provider and one childminder. Based upon Staffordshire County Council data, there were sufficient childcare places available to meet the current level of demand.

## **CLOSURE PROPOSAL: HOME-TO-SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY**

The county council's current transport policy provides free transport to the catchment area or nearest school where a pupil's home is over a set walking distance. The county council's home to school transport policy can be viewed at [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport).

This entitlement would continue to apply to Dove First School for those children who either live within The Henry Prince catchment area or for whom Dove First is the nearest school, and it is over two miles away from their home. Until the number of children transferring to Dove First is known it is difficult to estimate the cost of transport however it is likely that the cost would not exceed £20,000 p.a. (The average cost of school transport per pupil across Staffordshire is less than £900.)

Staffordshire-resident pupils who live outside The Henry Prince First School current catchment area would be entitled to free transport to either their catchment area school or their nearest school (including schools outside Staffordshire) if it is over two miles walking distance from home.

The closure of The Henry Prince would increase car use, as many local children would be unable to walk to school. County council officers have advised that due to the small number of families affected the impact of increased car use would be small and there would be no significant overall impact. Ultimately it is for parents to decide which school their children would attend, however, the county council would provide free shared transport to all eligible children who attend Dove First, which is approximately 5½ miles by road from The Henry Prince.

Transport entitlement to Ryecroft Middle School and Thomas Alleyne's High School would be unchanged.

### **Impact on the community**

The closure of The Henry Prince School will have an impact on the community as parents and children form relationships around the school and without this, the opportunity for making friends and good neighbours, who mutually support each other, will be lost.

Since early 2019, the school re-started a paid weekly lunch offer for senior citizens and also themed lunches for family members to join their children. Typically around 6 senior citizens attend the lunches though numbers have varied between 2 and 12.

The school holds golden worship weekly for parents and relatives to celebrate the children's achievements. The school has open days for the wider community to visit. A summer fair is held in the school grounds, where the whole village is welcome. There is an annual sports day picnic where parents join their children for a lunch after sports day. At Easter, the local clergy holds a service in school for parents and pupils. The children lead a class worship where the community is invited.

The Memorial Hall is used weekly for PE in the winter months. The annual Christmas Fair is held there too. The children perform a Christmas play over two days each year which the whole community can attend. There is an active PTFA that raises funds for the school, and has held Easter Bingo in the hall, although it will be held in the school this year.

The school visits the church for Harvest each year. At Christmas, the whole school breaks up from church after the community Christingle Service. The children are invited by the clergy to take part in a special Communion before Confirmation course, ending with a communion for those children in Church.

On the whole, the majority of events are well supported by our parents and some of the local community.

The school has been a part of the village for many years and it is with sadness that a limited number of local pupils has reduced the resources available, which has forced governors to publish this notice. Governors will work with the county council to ensure that as much of the school's history and historical records can be retained as possible.

### **Rural primary schools**

The school is designated as a rural primary school and Section 15(4) has been considered. Although many local children attend different schools, closure would impact our parents and children who form friendships around the school. The school also takes part in community events. If the village loses its school fewer families could be attracted to live in Mayfield.

The school is a "good" school and the governing body and staff have worked to provide the best possible education to its children and has worked to increase numbers to sustain the quality of education. The governing body have continued to look at sharing headteacher costs with other local schools, including through a federation or sharing a headteacher across more than one school, but these have been unsuccessful. The Governing Board have continued to attempt a federation of the school with another school but again this has proved unsuccessful and governors have exhausted all other options available to them to secure the future of the school.

The parish council will gain added importance as a focal point for village life. The Memorial Hall is at the heart of the community and is used for family and community events. If the decision to close the school is taken, governors will work with the community to mark and celebrate the history of the school with what may be our final cohort of children.

The parish church contributes on many levels to Mayfield community life, and is endeavouring to further increase its involvement with young families and children in several ways, in order to provide continuing opportunities for children and parents to form friendships - in the absence of school-based contact. These include:

- more accessible Sunday worship events, for children and young families, enriched by their active participation; this will help to make good opportunities no longer present in the form of school services;

- more investment in the church-based Toddler Group which meets on a weekday morning;
- continued and increased church representation and involvement in the community group, MARNA (Rocester & Mayfield Neighbourhood Association), with a view to promoting young families' welfare and inter-generational friendships in Mayfield.

## PROVISION OF SCHOOL PLACES

Dove was identified by the county council as the proposed catchment school as it would have sufficient capacity to absorb the pattern of demand for places from parents in The Henry Prince catchment area. Places are available for all children in current Reception to Year 3 classes at Dove First from September 2019.

If the school is closed, the county council considers that there is sufficient capacity for children within existing schools. The county council is aware that there is an allocation of 20 new dwellings for Mayfield in the East Staffordshire Borough Council Local Plan that could generate around 4 additional primary-aged pupils. The status of Mayfield in the Local Plan may be affected by the loss of the school: the policy and any changes in provision would be determined by the borough council.

### Denominational provision

The county council and diocese are satisfied that there would be sufficient Church of England provision available. Within a 6-mile radius of The Henry Prince, five of the six closest Staffordshire first and primary schools are Church of England schools. (There are also Church of England schools in Derbyshire.) The table below illustrates the availability of places across the wider area by comparing each Staffordshire school's published admission number (PAN) with the numbers of pupils on roll at the time of the most recent Annual School Census in January 2019.

School Name	PAN	Rec	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	Total	Straight-line distance
Ilam CE (VA) Primary School	15	2	7	8	3	7	8	9	44	3.7 miles
Dove CE (VC) First School	30	20	22	16	19	19	n/a	n/a	96	4.5 miles
All Saints CE(VC) First, Denstone	15	12	9	8	19	19	n/a	n/a	67	4.6 miles
St. Peter's CE (A) First School, Alton	13	5	15	8	11	7	n/a	n/a	46	5.4 miles
Waterhouses CE (VC) Primary	20	16	15	16	18	11	7	10	93	5.8 miles
The Faber Catholic Primary	10	12	8	6	9	11	11	9	66	5.7 miles
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>n/a</b>	<b>n/a</b>		<b>n/a</b>
The Henry Prince CE(C) First	15	2	5	9	6	8	n/a	n/a	30	n/a

Table showing the six closest Staffordshire schools and The Henry Prince. Source: January 2019 Annual School Census (NB some cohort total will have changed since the census)

## **School Places in Derbyshire**

The county council have advised that they are aware of Derbyshire's primary school strategy in Ashbourne, involving changes that established three primary schools - Ashbourne Primary, Hill Top Primary and Nursery and St Oswald's CE (VC) Primary - and plans to increase places from 575 to 735 to mitigate the impact of new housing planned over the next 20 years.

As with all school place planning, the county council has explained that their pupil projections allow for the fact that admissions legislation supports parental preference, which means that many children attend schools in different catchment areas and across local authority administrative boundaries. As at Reception intake 2018, six children from The Henry Prince catchment currently attend primary schools in Derbyshire. The county council expects that some parents will continue to look for a school place in Derbyshire, with or without the closure of The Henry Prince. It is the case that if this long-standing trend changed and more parents opted for a Staffordshire school that, even with the closure as proposed, there is sufficient local capacity to meet the future demand.

### **CLOSURE PROPOSAL: STAFF**

In the event of school closure, staff will be supported in accordance with the school's Redundancy and Reorganisation Policy. The Policy provides an open and transparent process, with a focus on supporting and providing the necessary assistance to employees during a period of change. Governors will ensure that staff are fully consulted, with the school's HR Advisor available to provide support and advice as needed. Unions and professional associations can advise and support their members. Staff have been formally consulted, with unions and professional associations represented.

### **CLOSURE PROPOSAL: LAND AND BUILDINGS**

The original buildings are owned by trustees for the foundation charity of the school. The playing field and newer buildings are owned by Staffordshire County Council. It would be for each party to determine the future use of the buildings and land they hold.

### **REPRESENTATION PERIOD**

Within four weeks from the date of publication, by 5.00pm on Tuesday 16 April 2019, any person can send objections or comment on the proposals to Staffordshire County Council, School Organisation Team, Staffordshire Place 1, Tipping Street, Stafford ST16 2DH or email [school.organisation@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:school.organisation@staffordshire.gov.uk).

### **TIMESCALE**

The timetable for the proposed school closure is shown below. We are in the "representation" stage, which is the third of five statutory stages that must be completed.

<b>Statutory Stages</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Dates</b>
1. Consultation	6-week formal consultation period	23 January to 5 March 2019
2. Publication	Publication of a statutory notice	20 March
3. Representation	4-week formal representation period for the receipt of comments and objections	20 March to 16 April
4. Decision	The County Council's Cabinet is the decision-maker	15 May
5. Implementation	Proposed closure date	31 August 2019

The final decision on this proposal will be taken by the county council's Cabinet on 15 May 2019, in accordance with relevant legislation. In reaching a decision, Cabinet would consider the Department for Education's guidance to local authorities, which states that "Decision-makers should adopt a presumption against the closure of rural schools. This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but the case for closure should be strong and a proposal must be clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area".

### **Statutory proposal for the closure of The Henry Prince CE (C) First School, Mayfield**

NOTICE is given in accordance with section 15(2) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that the governing body of The Henry Prince CE (C) First School proposes to discontinue The Henry Prince CE (C) First School, Main Road, Mayfield, Ashbourne, Derbyshire, DE6 2LB with effect from 31 August 2019.

The Henry Prince is a co-educational, voluntary controlled school with an age range from 3 to 9. The school currently has 24 compulsory school age pupils on roll and capacity for 75 pupils. In addition, four 3-year olds and three 4-year olds attend the nursery. There are no pupils on roll with an Education, Health and Care Plan. There are no specialist facilities reserved for children with special educational needs.

Places for all children in current Reception to Year 3 classes would be available at Dove CE (VC) First School, which would replace The Henry Prince as the catchment area school. Dove First has 97 pupils on roll and capacity for 150 pupils. There are also places available in neighbouring schools. If the school closed, the county council and diocese are satisfied that there would remain sufficient denominational provision across the area.

The county council's current transport policy would apply: [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport). Free transport would be given to Dove First and to the nearest primary school, where it is over two miles from home. Dove is 5.7 miles from The Henry Prince.

The school is designated as a rural primary school and Section 15(4) has been considered. Although many local children attend different schools, closure would impact our parents and children who form friendships around the school. The school also takes part in community events. If the village loses its school fewer families could be attracted to live in Mayfield.

Within a 3-mile radius of the school there is one day nursery registered to provide funded childcare. Within a 3 to 5-mile radius there are three day nurseries, one pre-school provider and one childminder. Based upon Staffordshire County Council data, there were sufficient childcare places available to meet the current level of demand.

This notice is an extract from the full proposal document. The document will be published on the school's website within one week of the date of publication of this proposal and can be requested via the school office. Within four weeks from the date of publication, by 5.00pm on Tuesday 16 April 2019, any person can send objections to or comment on the proposals to Staffordshire County Council, School Organisation Team, Staffordshire Place 1, Tipping Street, Stafford ST16 2DH or email [school.organisation@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:school.organisation@staffordshire.gov.uk).

Date of publication: 20 March 2019

#### **Additional information**

It is with regret that the governing body has published this notice but it has concluded that there is no financially viable alternative. The key issues facing the school are low pupil numbers and its finances. The school is judged "good" by Ofsted however too few local parents are choosing The Henry Prince for their children. Low pupil numbers result in lower funding, which means that the school has built up a large financial

deficit, cannot set a balanced budget and cannot afford to maintain a good quality of education for the pupils in its care. The final decision on this proposal will be taken by the county council's Cabinet on 15 May 2019, in accordance with relevant legislation.

**THE HENRY PRINCE CE (C) FIRST SCHOOL, MAYFIELD**

**Proposal to close The Henry Prince CE (C) First School, Mayfield  
on 31 August 2019**

**Formal Consultation – 23 January to 5 March 2019**

**PURPOSE OF THE CONSULTATION**

1. The governing body of The Henry Prince CE (C) First School has approved a period of statutory consultation on a proposal to close the school on 31 August 2019.
2. The purpose of this consultation is to make you aware of the key issues and to seek your views on the proposed closure. This document and any further information will be published at [www.henryprince.org](http://www.henryprince.org).
3. The county council and the Lichfield Diocesan Board of Education support the proposal.
4. As yet, no final decisions have been made so it is vital that you make your views known to the governing body by 5pm on 5 March 2019.

**WHAT IS THE PROPOSAL?**

5. It is proposed that The Henry Prince CE (C) First School, Mayfield closes on 31 August 2019.

**BACKGROUND**

6. Following continued reductions in pupil numbers and an increasing budget deficit, the governing body consulted on closure in 2017. During the consultation the school received positive support and a range of suggestions from parents and the local community. In response, **the governing body agreed a set of actions with the county council to help the school increase pupil numbers and become more financially sustainable**, including:
  - increasing the age range to be become a primary school;
  - introducing wraparound early years provision;
  - positive engagement with QEGS on their future admission arrangements;
  - further promotion of the school: issuing press releases, reception admissions flyers, advertising Year 5 open evenings, promoting nursery places, working with the local parish councillors and developing a new school website.

7. Excluding nursery pupils, there were 36 pupils attending the school at the time of the consultation in 2017 but that number has fallen to 30. The governing body's actions were intended to increase numbers every year: to almost 50 by September 2019 (and to 70 by 2024). **However, pupil numbers remain too low** as only 29 pupils are expected to be on roll at the school in September 2019.

## **WHAT ARE THE KEY ISSUES?**

8. **The key issues facing the school are low pupil numbers and the school's finances.**
9. The Henry Prince CE (C) First School is a small Church of England school in Mayfield, East Staffordshire and on the outskirts of Ashbourne. With a capacity of 75 places, **the school is less than half full**, with only 30 pupils currently on roll (excluding nursery).
10. Every school receives an amount of funding for each pupil at the school. As a small school with low pupil numbers, the financial burden on the headteacher and the governing body from extremely limited funding has meant that **governors are unable to set a balanced budget** for The Henry Price.
11. Based on the current number of pupils attending the school and the likelihood that this will not increase significantly in the future, budgeting models show that the school is likely to have a deficit of £199,000 by the end of 2019/2020. **The deficit is forecast to increase to £311,000 in 2020/21 and to £420,000 in 2021/22.** To put this into context, ten additional pupils would be needed to increase the school budget by £35,000 per year
12. **To be financially viable, The Henry Prince needs to grow significantly every year and become almost full.** Without rapid growth, the school cannot generate the funding necessary to meet its current operating costs, to fund another teacher for a future Year 5/6 class and to clear the large deficit over time,
13. However, **the school's budget position is worsening** because, as Table 1 below shows, the number of applications for a Reception place in 2019 remains low (with only 5 applications for the 15 places available) and the total number of pupils is not increasing (it is expected to fall to 29 pupils in September 2019).
14. The governing body have continued to look at sharing head teacher costs with other local schools, including through a federation or sharing a headteacher across more than one school, but these have been unsuccessful. They have continued to attempt a federation of the school with another school and again this has proved unsuccessful and **governors have exhausted all other options available to them to secure the future of the school.**
15. **The Henry Prince First School achieved a "good" judgment from Ofsted** in October 2017. However, the governing body, the county council and Diocesan Board are clear that the worsening financial position means that **the school is**

unable to sustain the high quality of education and, therefore, consultation on closure is appropriate.

## INTAKES AND NUMBER ON ROLL

### Numbers on roll at The Henry Prince

16. Table 1 sets out the numbers of pupils by year group (excluding nursery pupils). The vacancies shown are against a total capacity of 75 places.

School Year	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Total	Surplus Places
Historical and current numbers on roll									
2007/08	10	14	11	10	15	n/a		<b>60</b>	15
2008/09	8	9	16	10	11	n/a		<b>54</b>	21
2009/10	9	5	7	10	9	n/a		<b>40</b>	35
2010/11	8	8	5	5	8	n/a		<b>34</b>	41
2011/12	10	8	8	6	5	n/a		<b>37</b>	38
2012/13	4	11	8	8	5	n/a		<b>36</b>	39
2013/14	7	4	11	8	8	n/a		<b>38</b>	37
2014/15	9	6	4	12	9	n/a		<b>40</b>	35
2015/16	7	9	7	4	9	n/a		<b>36</b>	39
2016/17	9	7	9	5	4	n/a		<b>34</b>	41
2017/18	5	9	7	9	4	n/a		<b>34</b>	41
2018/19	2	5	9	6	8	n/a		<b>30</b>	45
Expected and projected numbers on roll									
2019/20	5	2	5	9	6	2	n/a	<b>29</b>	46
2020/21	5	5	2	5	9	3	2	<b>31</b>	44
2021/22	7	5	5	2	5	5	3	<b>32</b>	43
2022/23	5	7	5	5	2	3	5	<b>32</b>	43

Table 1: Historical and projected numbers on roll. NB The school also operates a nursery which currently has 6 pupils on roll (3 aged 4+ and 3 aged 3+).

17. Based upon parental preferences, Table 1 projects **that numbers on roll will remain in the low 30s and the school will stay less than half full**. To become financially viable, the school needs numbers to be growing towards 60 and beyond.
18. NHS data indicates that there was a cohort of 21 children in the catchment area who could have applied for a Reception place for 2019/20, however the expected Reception intake is 5 pupils, which is less than a quarter of 21. The projected Reception intakes for 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23 are based upon **future cohorts of 20, 25 and 17 children**, respectively. The Year 5 projected intakes in Table 1 assume that at least half of the Year 4 pupils stay on at The Henry Prince.
19. In the East Staffordshire Borough Council Local Plan, there is a “Tier 1 strategic village allocation” of **20 new dwellings for Mayfield that could generate around 4 additional primary-aged pupils**.

20. If The Henry Prince School closed, **the county council considers that there is sufficient capacity for children within existing schools.**

### **CLOSURE PROPOSAL: SCHOOL ADMISSIONS**

21. It is important to state that no final decision on the future of The Henry Prince has been made and there is no need for parents to apply to move their children from the school at this time.

#### **Catchment areas**

22. It is proposed that the catchment area of Dove CE (VC) First School will be expanded to accommodate the area currently served by The Henry Prince.
23. Ryecroft Middle School, near Uttoxeter will continue to be the catchment area middle school for children presently residing within The Henry Prince catchment area in Year 5 to Year 8.

#### **Admissions to Reception for September 2019**

24. Parents who have expressed a preference for The Henry Prince will be contacted between now and 1 February 2019 and invited to make new preferences that can be considered if the decision is taken to close the school. This process will be centrally managed by the county council's School Admissions Service.

#### **Current Pupils (Reception – Year 4)**

25. The headteacher will be in touch with parents between now and 1 February to discuss their likely preference for an alternative school if the decision is taken to close the school. There will also be the opportunity for parents to speak individually to the headteacher at the parents' evening on Wednesday 30th January should they wish to.
26. Places for children in current Reception to Year 3 classes will be available at Dove CE (VC) First School from September 2019 for all families that want a place at the proposed catchment area school. Children within current Year 4 will also be able to be admitted to Ryecroft Middle where this is the parent's preferred school.
27. If after the 15 May the decision is taken to close the school parents will be asked to complete a short application form for their preferred school. This process will be centrally managed by the county council's School Admissions Service.

#### **Nursery Provision from September 2019**

28. If after the 15 May the decision is taken to close the school, parents of nursery-aged children will need to apply direct to a childcare provider: Families can find local childcare provision offering funded places for 3 and 4 year old children via the

county council's website at <http://staffs.fsd.org.uk>. For further information or support on looking for childcare please email [fis@staffordshire.gov.uk](mailto:fis@staffordshire.gov.uk).

### **CLOSURE PROPOSAL: HOME-TO-SCHOOL TRANSPORT POLICY**

29. The county council's current transport policy provides free transport to the catchment area or nearest school where a pupil's home is over a set walking distance.
30. This entitlement would continue to Dove First School for those children who either live within The Henry Prince catchment area or for whom Dove First is the nearest school, and it is over two miles away from their home.
31. Pupils who live outside The Henry Prince First School current catchment area would be entitled to free transport to either their catchment area school or their nearest school (including schools outside Staffordshire) if it is over two miles walking distance from home.
32. Older pupils would continue to receive free transport to Ryecroft Middle School where they live within the catchment area, as they live over the walking distance to the school.
33. The county council's home to school transport policy can be viewed at [www.staffordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport](http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/schooltransport).

### **CLOSURE PROPOSAL: STAFF**

34. In the event of school closure, staff will be supported in accordance with the school's Redundancy and Reorganisation Policy. The Policy provides an open and transparent process, with a focus on supporting and providing the necessary assistance to employees during a period of change. Governors will ensure that staff are fully consulted, with the school's HR Advisor available to provide support and advice as needed. Unions and professional associations can advise and support their members.

### **CLOSURE PROPOSAL: LAND AND BUILDINGS**

35. The original buildings are owned by trustees for the foundation charity of the school. The playing field and newer buildings are owned by Staffordshire County Council. It would be for each party to determine the future use of the buildings and land they hold.

### **HOW CAN I MAKE MY VIEWS KNOWN?**

36. **Please send your views to the school's governing body by 5pm on Tuesday, 5 March 2019.** All the written views received will be considered by the governing body before a decision is taken on whether to continue with the closure proposal and to move to the "Representation" stage.

- Write to the school address or email your views to the Chair of Governors at [office@henryprince.staffs.sch.uk](mailto:office@henryprince.staffs.sch.uk).
- Meetings will be held at the school on Monday, 28 January 2019 (at 4.00 pm for staff and at 5.30 pm for parents).
- A further public meeting will be held in the Mayfield Memorial Hall on Tuesday, 12 February at 5.00 pm.

## WHAT IS THE TIMESCALE FOR CONSULTATION?

37. The timetable for the proposed school closure is shown below. We are in the “consultation” stage, which is the first of five statutory stages that must be completed.

38. Following the end of the consultation period, the governing body will consider the responses and decide whether to postpone or cease the closure proposal or whether to move to the “publication” and “representation” stages.

<b>Statutory Stages</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Provisional Dates</b>
1. Consultation	6-week formal consultation period	23 January to 5 March 2019
2. Publication	Publication of a statutory notice	18 March
3. Representation	Following publication, the representation period would allow a further 4 weeks for the receipt of comments and objections	18 March to 12 April
4. Decision	The County Council’s Cabinet is the decision-maker	15 May
5. Implementation	Proposed closure date	31 August 2019

39. A final decision on any recommendation to close the school would be taken by the county council’s Cabinet on 15 May 2019. In reaching a decision, Cabinet would consider the Department for Education’s guidance to local authorities, which states that “Decision-makers should adopt a presumption against the closure of rural schools. This does not mean that a rural school will never close, but the case for closure should be strong and a proposal must be clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area”.

## Addendum

Page	Changes to version 1.1
3	<p>At the point the above actions were agreed there were 35 full time pupils on roll. The school currently have 30. The ambitious proposal agreed with county projected 49 pupils for September 2019. On admissions closing for September 2019, the expected numbers are 29 full time pupils. This leaves the school 20 pupils short resulting in a £70,000 addition to the established deficit. So, therefore, the school cannot purchase necessary resources or essential training for staff which is vital for educating pupils to high standard and with the planned increase of year groups. With reducing pupil numbers and finances, in <b>January 2019</b> the governing body were again forced to consult on a proposed closure.</p> <p>Note: the second period of consultation began on 15 January 2019 not in October 2018.</p>
4	<p>If the county council decides to approve the closure, the Headteacher would continue to work with existing parents to ensure arrangements are made for all pupils from September <b>2019</b>.</p> <p>Note: September 2019, not 2018, is the start of the new school year.</p>
6 & 7	<p>Paragraph starting “The parish church contributes on many levels to Mayfield community life....”.</p> <p>Note: contribution added on behalf of St. John the Baptist: Mayfield Parish Church.</p>