



Northumberland
County Council

CONSULTATION ABOUT SCHOOL STRUCTURES IN THE COQUET PARTNERSHIP JCSC Student Document



11 MAY – 29 JUNE 2022



Northumberland
County Council

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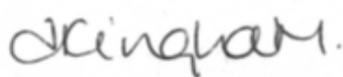
INTRODUCTION

Northumberland County Council has agreed to spend £25.5 million to refurbish school buildings in the Coquet Partnership to make them more suitable for pupils in which to learn.

£25.5 million is a lot of money and the Council wants to be sure that it spends the money on schools that will help children and young people in the Coquet area to learn and achieve to the best of their ability, now and in the future.

Over the last few months, Council officers have been talking to the headteachers and Chair of Governors at all of the schools that make up the Coquet Partnership (see later in this document) to ask them about the current system of schools. All the headteachers and Chairs of Governors agreed that it is now the right time to ask you (as a student in JCSC), your parents and carers, your teachers and the local community what they think about education and schools.

In this document, we have set out the reasons why this consultation is taking place. Your views will be read by the Councillors who will make the decision on whether or not to change the schools, so I hope that you will find some time to read this document and then respond to the questions. I'm really looking forward to hearing your views.



Audrey Kingham
Joint Interim Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Children's Services
Northumberland County Council

BACKGROUND TO THE CONSULTATION



Schools in the Coquet Partnership

These are the schools that make up the 'Coquet Partnership'

- Amble First
- Amble Links First
- Broomhill First
- Grange View CE First
- Red Row First
- NCEA Warkworth Church of England Primary
- James Calvert Spence College

Types of schools

Not all schools and school systems in Northumberland are the same. Some areas in the county have the 3-tier system school system, where students attend first, middle and then high schools; other areas in the county have the 2-tier system (primary/secondary), where students attend a primary school and then a secondary school. These are explained as follows:

3-tier system of schools

- First Schools - students join in Reception Class and leave at the end of Year 4.
- Middle Schools – students join in Year 5 and leave at the end of Year 8.
- High Schools – students join in Year 9 and leave either at the end of Year 11 or Year 13.

Students therefore move schools twice in this system.

2-tier (primary/secondary) system of schools

- Primary schools – children join Reception Class and leave at the end of Year 6.
- Secondary schools – children join in Year 7 and leave either at the end of Year 11 or Year 13.

Students therefore move schools once in this system.

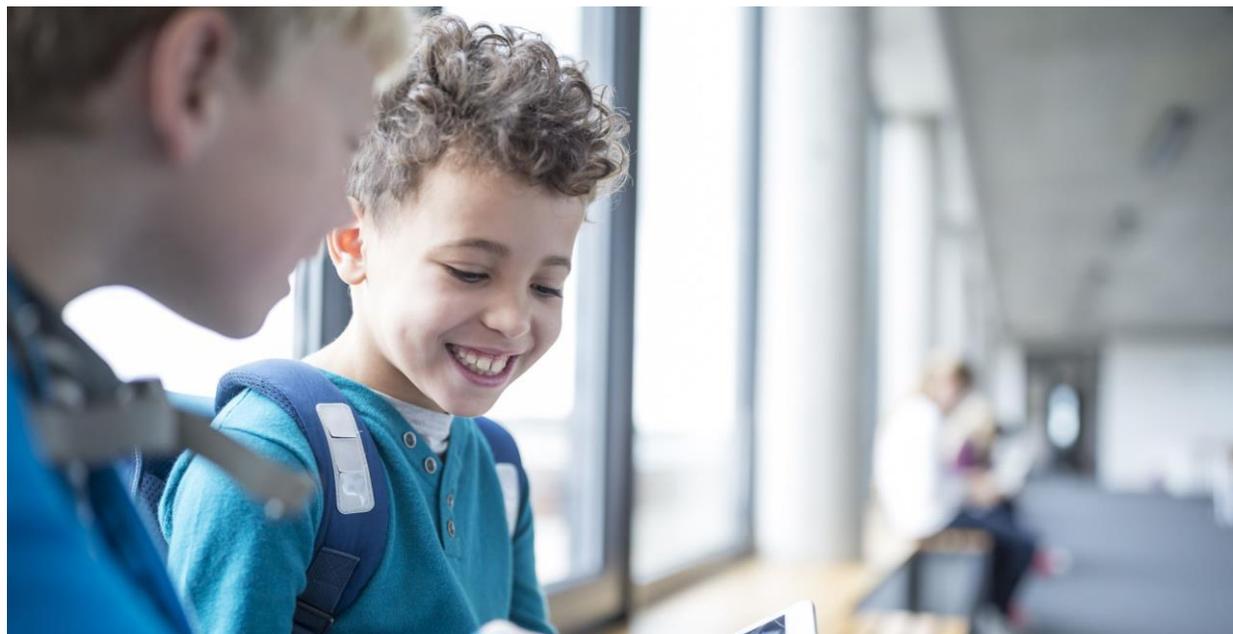
School system in Coquet Partnership

The school system in the Coquet Partnership is a mixture of both the 3-tier system and the 2-tier (primary/secondary) system:

- First Schools - children join in Reception Class and leave at the end of Year 4.
- James Calvert Spence College - children join in Year 5 and leave either at the end of Year 11 or Year 13.
- Warkworth Primary School - children join Reception Class and leave at the end of Year 6 to go into JCSC or a secondary school.

Students therefore join JCSC in Year 5 like a middle school in the 3-tier system, but then stay with the school through to GCSE or A levels, and therefore move schools once like the 2-tier (primary/secondary) system.

WHY IS THERE A CONSULTATION ABOUT SCHOOLS?



Views of headteachers and Chairs of Governors of schools in the Coquet Partnership

Council officers have been meeting with headteachers and Chairs of Governors of schools in the Coquet Partnership over the last few months to ask whether the current school system is better for students to be educated in, or whether the 2-tier (primary/secondary) system is better. The main views of headteachers and Chairs of Governors are set out in Table 1:

Table 1

Main views on current system (First schools/JCSC)	Main views on 2-tier (primary/secondary)
This system is no longer the right one for the Coquet Partnership and the educational journey of students	Most schools in the Coquet Partnership would like to consult on the whether the 2-tier (primary/secondary) system would be better for students.
The responsibility for Key Stage 2 is split between 2 schools	One school would be responsible for the whole of Key Stage 2 (i.e. the primary schools)
Some children are not ready to travel to a larger school at age 9	Moving school at end of Key Stage 2 fits with the National Curriculum that all schools follow.
Parents choose to send their children to primary schools in other areas	The 2-tier (primary/secondary) system would support schools in the long-term.
Many children feel happy about moving into Year 5 at JCSC.	Any changes to schools would have to be timed to have as least impact as possible on students.
There are good elements and bad elements of both school systems.	

Overall, most schools agreed that it was time to ask everybody involved with schools for their views on what would be the best system of schools for students in the Coquet Partnership.

HOW IS A STUDENT'S EDUCATIONAL PROGRESS MEASURED?



Ofsted Ratings

You may have heard your teachers talk about Ofsted inspections. Ofsted stands for 'The Office for Standards in Education'. Ofsted is responsible for inspecting state schools in England to make sure the education that students receive is of the right standard.

At the moment, all first schools in the Coquet Partnership have an Ofsted rating of 'Good', while JCSC has a rating of 'Requires Improvement'. Inspections take place every few years, so schools can move up and down the grading system and therefore a school's Ofsted grade can change.

Testing, examinations and the Key Stages

When you attended your first school, you will have been tested at the end of Year 2 which is the end of Key Stage 1. These results are only used by the school to measure your progress to inform your parents or carers of how you are doing at school. These results are not shared with anyone else.

Key Stage 2 covers Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, with students taking 'SATS' at the end of Year 6. Therefore, in the current system in the Coquet Partnership, the first schools and JCSC

share responsibility for your Key Stage 2 outcomes, even though you sit your SATS at JCSC.

Key Stage 3 covers Years 7,8 and 9, but there are no official tests at the end of this key stage. However, like all schools, your teachers constantly assess your progress and inform your parents or carers of how you are doing at parent/carers evenings for example.

Key Stage 4 starts in Year 10 and ends with students taking their GCSE examinations at the end of Year 11.

Key Stage 5 covers Years 12 and 13, if students stay on at school to do 'A' levels or technical/vocational qualifications.

If you are interested in learning what results JCSC has been achieving in Key Stage 2 SATS and at GCSE and A level in recent years, you can cut and paste this link to the parent/carer version of this document into your browser.

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Education/Schools/Consultations.aspx>

WHY IS THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS ON ROLL AT A SCHOOL IMPORTANT?



The number of students on roll at a school is important because a school receives funding from the Government for each student. Therefore, if a school is full it will gain the maximum funding. So, if a school has lots of spare student places, it will have a lot less funding.

While there are many students attending JCSC, it does have places for more students in the local area to join and we want to understand how it could attract more students to keep it well-funded for the future. As part of this consultation, we want to find out whether you think more students would join JCSC if it remained organised as an age 9-18 school, or whether more students would join if it became an age 11 to 18 'secondary school'. Or if you think it would not make any difference to the number of students that attend whatever system is in place.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Many students need extra help at school because they have special educational needs, known as 'SEN'. You may need extra help at school or you may have a friend or relative who does. Sometimes this extra help can be provided in the local school, or sometimes students with certain types of SEN have to attend a school with more specialised teachers and resources. Unfortunately, there are no specialist SEN schools in the Coquet area, so students with greater SEN need to travel long distances to and from school every day.

The number of students with greater SEN needs is also growing every year. One idea that has been put forward is that Barndale Special School in Alnwick could set up an arm of its school in the Coquet Partnership so that students with SEN could have their education within their local community. We would also like to know what you think about this idea as part of this consultation.

PROPOSAL FOR REORGANISATION OF SCHOOLS IN THE COQUET PARTNERSHIP



The Council is now asking students, staff, parents/carers and anyone else with an interest in education in the Coquet Partnership whether:

1. The current system of schools should stay in place (see page 5 - students leave first schools at the end of Year 4 and join JCSC in Year 5) – this is ‘Model A’,
or
2. The 2-tier (primary/secondary) should be put in place (see page 5 - first schools change to primary schools and keep their students in Years 5 and 6, joining JCSC in Year 7) - this is ‘Model B’.

As Warkworth CE Primary School already keeps its students until the end of Year 6, it would not be impacted by any changes to the other schools and it is not part of this consultation.

WHAT OTHER THINGS MIGHT BE IMPACTED IF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM IS CHANGED IN COQUET PARTNERSHIP?

School staff

If there is no change to the way schools are organised in the Coquet Partnership, i.e. Model A, there would be no change to the way staff work in your school or the first school. If schools are organised to Model B, the first schools would need more staff for Year 5 and

6 classes as they would become primary schools. JCSC would need fewer staff as they would no longer need teaching staff for Years 5 and 6.

Buildings and funding

At the beginning of this consultation document, we told you that the Council has agreed to spend £25.5m towards improving school buildings in the Coquet Partnership. This investment will happen whether Model A stays in place or whether Model B is implemented, but there may be differences in how much is spent on individual school buildings.

Transport

If you receive home to school transport now, you will still receive it whether or not schools remain organised as they are now under Model A or whether they are reorganised under Model B.

Sport and recreation

The investment of £25.5m in the Coquet Partnership means that there will be an opportunity to provide better sporting facilities at the JCSC site under either Model A or Model B. If Model B is approved for implementation, there may also be an opportunity to improve the current sport and recreation facilities in some first schools if they become primaries.

OTHER IDEAS

This consultation document has presented Model A (current structure) and Model B (primary/secondary structure) as options for the organisation of schools in the Coquet Partnership. However, if you think you have a good idea for organising schools in a different way than Model A or Model B that could be better for all students and help to retain viable schools for the future, then please set this out in the response form that accompanies this document.

HOW CAN I SUBMIT MY VIEWS ABOUT THIS PROPOSAL?

This consultation **will now continue until midnight on 29 June 2022**

Please copy this link to your browser to answer the questionnaire and let us have your views

<https://haveyoursay.northumberland.gov.uk/education-skills/student-consultation-proposals-for-a-school-system>

At the end of this consultation, your feedback will be considered by the Council's Cabinet before deciding on whether or not to move to the next steps in the process.

Thank you for participating in this consultation