

## **Review of Primary Education for Children Living in the Armathwaite and High Hesketh Area**

### **Introduction**

Between 16<sup>th</sup> February and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2011 a consultation exercise was conducted seeking the views of stakeholders and the local community on the possibility of a change of age range at Armathwaite Community School. The proposal would allow Armathwaite School to become an all-through primary catering for children aged 4 to 11 with no requirement to transfer at the end of year 3 to another School.

### **Summary of Responses**

A total of 322 people responded during the consultation period. 90 responses were in the form of completed questionnaires received by post, 147 were questionnaires completed online, 78 were submissions to the consultation sent by letter, 27 were submissions sent by email and 1 was a petition with 12 signatures. (The number of response types will not add up to 322 as some respondents contributed their comments by more than one of the means mentioned above, in which case their responses were amalgamated into a single return). Those responding included school governing bodies, parish councils, diocese of Carlisle and headteachers of local schools. In addition there were also separate responses from the children of the two schools (see attached summaries).

Overall 68.0% (219) of respondents supported the proposal to change the age range of Armathwaite School, 31.4% (101) did not support the proposal and 0.6% (2) did not state a preference. Of those respondents with a stated interest in Armathwaite School 99.4% were in favour of the proposal (0.6% against). Of those respondents with a stated interest in High Hesketh School 86.8% were not in favour of the proposal (13.2% in favour). Of those respondents with a stated interest in both schools 88.5% were in favour of the proposal (11.5% against). Of those respondents with no stated interest in either school 70.8% were in favour of the proposal (20.8% against and 8.4% did not state a preference).

37.8% (122) of all respondents are parents, of which 14.6% (47) are parents at Armathwaite School, 16.8% (54) are parents at High Hesketh School and 6.5% (21) are parents at the two schools. 0.6% (2) of respondents are school governing bodies, 3.4% (11) are governors, 2.8% (9) are pupils, 5.2% (17) are staff (this includes 1 response from a staff body). 52.8% (170) of respondents were not parents, staff, governors or pupils. Figures may not add up to 100% as multiple categories were selectable.

49.4% (159) of respondents who stated an address were within the catchment areas of the two schools.

## Q1.

### Do you agree that Armathwaite School should have its age range extended to 4-11?

320 respondents answered this question 219 were in favour of the proposal and 101 were against the proposal.

## Q2

### Additional Comments

262 respondents made additional comments including:-

Comment	Frequency
An age range extension would be good as it would provide continuity	101
The changes will result in undesirable mixed year group teaching (years 5&6)	46
This could result in High Hesket teachers losing their jobs.	45
The move would decrease traffic/increase health through walking/cut transport costs	41
Money has been spent on Armathwaite/High Hesket alterations which will be wasted	40
Armathwaite children are disadvantaged by having to move at 8/it is inequitable	41
Moving schools has a detrimental effect on performance/is disruptive/is a worry to parents and children	36
There will be a loss of extra curricular opportunities at High Hesket	35
Armathwaite have strong leadership, use innovative teaching techniques and are supportive of the community	35
The move between schools prepares pupils for the move to secondary education	30
The mixing of the 2 schools allows the children to make more friends & improve their social skills	28
Move Armathwaite children over sooner so as not to cross any Key Stages (turn into Armathwaite into an infant school)	18
Leave the schools as they are/it is a small minority that want the change	18
Armathwaite is rated as 'outstanding' by OFSTED	16
Children are more supported by the structured approach at High Hesket and its larger pupil base	14
The change will result in Armathwaite not having enough classrooms and High Hesket having too many for their pupil rolls and will alter the structure of the school	13
No capital expenditure is required at Armathwaite to cope with the change	13
Family houses built in Armathwaite will eventually affect numbers/the population is likely to increase/Armathwaite identified as service centre	12
Children should have freedom of choice as to which school they attend/they want to stay at Armathwaite	11
The consultation seems one sided	9
The consultation seems rushed/delay changes for a year	9
Are there enough children in the areas to support two primary schools/dropping numbers could make High Hesket unviable	9
Changing Armathwaite to an all through primary is in line with local authority policy/preference	9
A full primary at Armathwaite will be a social focus, not splitting parents' loyalty and effort	9
Close Armathwaite School into High Hesket	8
Favouritism is shown towards the High Hesket children at the point of transfer/children are joining an already established cohort	7

There is a strong community feel at High Hesket	6
The proposal could cause bad feeling between the two villages	6
The two schools have different teaching styles	6
It will create ghost pupil funding	5
Amalgamate the two schools	5
Government guidance states that proposals on the grounds of parental choice and standards should take precedence over any surplus place issues	5
Government strategy is for a system shaped by parents	5
People who live in Armathwaite chose the area knowing the situation with the schools	5
There is a great parental and community desire for the change	5
Armathwaite is looked to nationally as a beacon of good practice	5
Full status would allow Armathwaite to participate fully with other schools	5
Armathwaite should retain it's non-denominational status	5
Armathwaite does not provide a safe route (or drop off point/parking) to school and is on a dangerous narrow road	4
It will be hard for High Hesket to adjust to the financial implications of the loss of children while still maintaining the same infrastructure	4
What alterations need making to Armathwaite (and at what cost) to allow the age change	4
Lift the artificial limit on High Hesket's reception intake, which is in place to allow for the intake from Armathwaite in Year 4, so allowing the school to fill up.	4
It will produce two smaller less economically viable schools	3
Parents are not forced into this transfer they can look at other schools	3
As a parent my child did not suffer an educational 'dip' on transfer/the dip at this stage is not due to the transfer	3
The changes will increase individual car traffic in High Hesket as pupils from out of catchment fill the places in High Hesket left by the Armathwaite children	3
Weight of numbers is in favour of Armathwaite getting the change	3
The specialism and flexibility to support others will be lost at High Hesket	3
It will increase congestion at both schools	3
There is a comprehensive program of induction/support for children moving up to High Hesket	3
The timescale to enact redundancies/recruitment are too short	3
There are enough children in the area to support two full status schools	3
It will improve opportunities for children in Armathwaite	2
Armathwaite gaining full primary status has been a recurrent theme over the years	2
Both schools already work well together	2
High Hesket have been underhand	2
The extra building at High Hesket is not relevant to the debate as it is used for a foundation class.	2
I want to stay at the school, it has a good learning environment, it is where my friends are and we help each other	2
Armathwaite was the only school in the UK selected by the National Innovation Project	2
The move would increase surplus places at High Hesket	2
Friends can get split up in the move to High Hesket	2
It is appropriate in times of close financial scrutiny to make one school smaller in order to enlarge another	2
Family houses built in High Hesket will eventually affect numbers	2
Those currently in year 3 at Armathwaite will be the oldest children in school for the next 4 years.	2

Time spent on the transfer process would be better used for teaching the children by the removal of the transfer altogether	2
Many children come from out catchment to Armathwaite	2
Extend the age range as long as it is viable in the current financial climate	1
High Hesket is rated as 'outstanding' by OFSTED	1
The expansion is necessary on educational and social grounds	1
It is impossible for staff to liaise with 3 miles between them	1
There should be an historical analysis of the performance 'dip' suffered because of the transfer	1
There should be more options considered and costed in the document	1
The railway line at Armathwaite should be a concern	1
Consult the children	1
Close Armathwaite and relocate Carlisle children	1
Canvas all Cumbria taxpayers on where their money is spent	1
Figures between option A and B differ	1
The whole area projection should be used	1
The consultation has been pre-decided by CCC	1
The loss of staff at High Hesket will be matched by a gain at Armathwaite	1
Evidence does not support the viewpoint that mixed age teaching is detrimental (looking at local/abutting school KS2 results)	1
High Hesket is overcrowded and the village cannot cope with all the cars	1
Disabled facilities are an issue at Armathwaite	1
The two schools are within easy travelling distance	1
Would those in High Hesket be happy to be sending their children off to another school at 8?	1
Legal redress (in favour of the expansion) would be locally funded if required	1
Freeing up the places taken by Armathwaite children will allow High Hesket to take in out of catchment children	1
The two schools will have the support of SIT if the change occurs	1
With falling rolls in the region the next consultation is likely to be to close one of the 9 schools in the immediate area	1
My child has a disability that needs close monitoring and staff training - the move between schools will disrupt their care and personally cause them stress	1
Bigger schools are better than smaller ones	1
There is a trend of outward migration of children from Carlisle	1
The "first" school status was only supposed to be for a trial period	1
High Hesket is too big - taking pupils from other catchments	1
Make the decision based on the childrens' interests	1
Hesket Parish Council supports every school in its parish equally.	1
The change would create economies of scale for Armathwaite	1
Ainstable Parish Council would like to express support for Armathwaite School	1
The situation is anomalous and should be regularised	1
The document doesn't explore the impact of the change on High Hesket	1
Feedback in the consultation meetings was unfair to High Hesket (referring to the number of responses from High Hesket and leading to a swell in the number of Armathwaite responses)	1
High Hesket has succesful outcomes at KS2 for all children	1
The needs of SEN will be lost in mixed age class	1
The transfer process forges links between the two communities	1

Out of school care will be lost at High Hesketh	1
Current arrangements for school transport keeps down carbon footprint	1
Parents have said that choice is about the kind of education offered, the chance to integrate socially and with the wider community	1
High Hesketh is the only school between Carlisle and Penrith that offers separate KS2 teaching, changes to this will reduce parental choice	1
High Hesketh strikes a balance between church and secular provision	1