

**Captain Shaw's CE School
&
Waberthwaite
FAQs**

Pupil numbers

Q: How easy is it to change the catchment area?

A: *The change of catchment is dependent on the type of school. In the case of Waberthwaite, as they are a Voluntary Aided CE School, they have the ability to seek to change their catchment at any time. However, with regards to Captain Shaw's as they are a Voluntary Controlled CE School, changing of the school catchment area comes under the responsibility of the local authority and at this time the Cabinet have not asked us to consider a change to the catchment areas. If Captain Shaw's did close, then in respect of admissions it is proposed that Waberthwaite would assume control of their catchment area. Changing of catchment areas is, irrespective of school type or designation, a lengthy process requiring consultation including an area-wide review of the effect any proposed change may have on other schools in the area and is likely to have to be approved by the County Council Cabinet.*

Q: When do reviews of catchment areas occur?

A: *Rarely. Catchment areas are usually only reviewed as part of school reorganisation processes – e.g. when a school is proposed for closure. They can technically be reviewed at any time, however, and the county council would have to make a decision on any changes taking into account the views of those consulted.*

Q: Why has Bootle's catchment area been changed without any consultation i.e. as it was in 1984 and since then?

A: *The change of the catchment area following the closure of Hycemoor School was decided upon following consultation, and as a result of parental response, the catchment was merged with Waberthwaite. Hycemoor parents were given the choice of a merger with either Captain Shaw's or Waberthwaite and parents decided merging with Waberthwaite was the preferred option.*

Q: How will Waberthwaite cope with more pupils?

A: *The school can handle this proposed expansion of pupil numbers and has recently had some of the building renovated. The school already has the right number of toilets for these proposed increased numbers for example. Waberthwaite have submitted a LCVAP (capital funding specifically for projects in voluntary aided schools) application for work in the school, though this is not directly related to the expansion, and will be considered regardless of the Cabinet's decision. The county council and Waberthwaite School are confident that if Captain Shaw's School does close then the extra pupils can be accommodated in the existing space.*

Q: The preference for a school is definitely influenced by the size of the catchment.

A: *This is not the case as it can vary school to school.*

Q: Is it guaranteed that the children from Captain Shaw's will come to Waberthwaite if Captain Shaw's close?

A: *Parents will be able to apply for a place at any school. Waberthwaite is the nearest to Captain Shaw's, and is also a Church of England school, so it makes some sense to nominate it as the alternative in the event that Captain Shaw's School closes.*

Q: What about the lack of hall space at Waberthwaite?

A: *The lack of a hall isn't a major issue in terms of the day-to-day operation of the school. Waberthwaite uses the Village Hall for PE, which is very close to the school entrance, and it works very well. Pupils do not cross a main road to access the hall.*

Q: How are the projections arrived at? Will they be published for all to see?

A: Projections are calculated on the basis of data received each year from General Practitioners across the county. This shows where every child under the age of 6 lives, and means we know the number of children living in every school's catchment area. Based on historic trends, we can extrapolate from this the likely numbers coming into schools over the next few years.

A: *The projections are available on the School Organisation website.*

Q: Why have the LA chosen now to consult on closure?

A: *The LA has chosen to consult now because it has become increasingly evident that the pupils at Captain Shaw's School are not making appropriate levels of progress and given the low numbers of pupils in the school, and projected into the future there, would be insufficient funding available to provide adequate teaching and learning resources.*

Q: Why does the CCC not consider Bootle as a sustainable area for a school?

A: *Pupil numbers in the area, as far as can be projected, would mean that a school in Bootle would not be sustainable, not only currently but into the future.*

Q: Why have Governors not been consulted on Admissions Policies before?

A: *The county council is responsible – in law – for determining the admissions policy for Community and Voluntary Controlled schools (such as Captain Shaw's). There is regular consultation, however with all schools, on these policies and the School Admissions Forum which monitors this process has VC school representation on this group.*

School Finances

Q: The budget is done on the 12th January 2012 for the number of children who are in the school. If Captain Shaw's school closed and the pupils did come to Waberthwaite would we get the funding for these children?

A: *Yes, additional funding would be provided in respect of those children who come to Waberthwaite from Captain Shaw's.*

Q: Do the resources and equipment go to Waberthwaite if Captain Shaw's closes?

A: *Yes, we would expect the school which takes the pupils of a school that closes to be offered the resources from the school that closes. The resources were bought with council money and the county council would hope that governors would act ethically and pass the resources onto the nominated alternative school. It is also dependent on who owns the resources and equipment. Any surplus resources left after Waberthwaite had taken what it wanted would then be offered to other schools in the area.*

Q: Does Waberthwaite have a different funding stream to get more money than Captain Shaw's?

A: *The vast majority of funding available to any school is delivered through the county council's funding formula. Waberthwaite and Captain Shaw's are both funded in line with that formula.*

Q: Is budget determined on number of pupils?

A: *Yes, for the most part. Small schools in Cumbria are protected through the provision of additional funding allocations.*

Q: Is the £7460 per pupil for Captain Shaw's the highest cost in the County?

A: No. There is one school in the county with a higher per pupil cost.

Q: What size would Captain Shaw's have to be not to go into deficit?

A: *It's difficult, because the pupils would need to be registered in the school by 12th January 2012. The school would need to increase by a third for the first year and then increase by a half again in the second year.*

Q: How much is the 8% deficit in monetary terms?

A: *Around £10,000*

Q: Captain Shaw's school has had numbers falling over the last 3 years, they have never been in deficit so far, why now?

A: *This year the school has had a balanced budget because they haven't had a full time Headteacher, if they did then they would have gone into deficit. The year before they received a £10k grant from the Schools in Financial Difficulty fund, this grant kept Captain Shaw's within budget.*

Q: Will the village hall in Waberthwaite be used for teaching needs?

A: *Not for class teaching, but it is used as a PE space.*

Q: Will there be enough staff if the children come to Waberthwaite if Captain Shaw's close?

A: *The Headteacher considers that they may need an extra half-time teacher.*

Q: If Waberthwaite is currently in deficit and then they employ another teacher how can they afford this?

A: *The school would receive funds for the children who come into the school, and they have a deficit recovery plan in place.*

Q: How long do you have the £10k Schools in Difficult fund for?

A: *1 year.*

Q: How much will CCC save once Captain Shaw's is closed, to offset costs of transport to other schools, etc?

A: *There would be no savings to the county council resulting from the closure of Captain Shaw's School. The money that is allocated to schools comes in the form of a grant from*

the government – essentially, all of the money that comes into the county council is then delegated to schools through the funding formula. Any school receiving pupils from Captain Shaw's would receive funding in respect of those pupils in line with the county council's funding formula. Any non-pupil related funding would form part of the total available, and would be delegated to other schools through the formula.

Q: The other school (Waberthwaite) has been in deficit for 4 years, so will closing Captain Shaw's be bailing out that school?

A: *The Waberthwaite budget has been in deficit as the result of a specific staffing issue. The school has a recovery plan in place that will see it back into surplus over the next 3 years regardless of whether or not Captain Shaw's School closes and pupils transfer.*

Q: Why use the reason of temporary staff to close the school as it was the LA who told the school they had to appoint part-time staff.

A: *The county council can only advise governors on the appointment of staff, but ultimately governors make the decision.*

Q: What is cost of transporting children from Captain Shaw's to Waberthwaite? Does the LA spend £20k?

A: It is anticipated that the additional cost of transporting children to Waberthwaite School will be in the region of £65.00 per day (£12,350 per annum). The current transport arrangements will be reviewed and may be retendered to incorporate pupils currently attending Captain Shaw's School and pupils currently attending Waberthwaite School who will now have an entitlement to transport.

Q: What logic is there in sending pupils away by bus to another school instead of walking to this school?

A: *Children in many rural areas travel to school by bus. Whilst the value of being able to walk to school is not to be underestimated, the benefits are lost if the standards of education delivered by the school in question are below the levels expected.*

Q: Some residents don't drive, so how do they pick up their child/ren from Waberthwaite School if their child/ren are ill, or to get to parents evenings, productions, etc to support their child/ren?

A: *Many Cumbria schools serve areas large rural areas, and there are lessons to be learned from what they do in similar circumstances. Rural schools are used to dealing with all of the issues that come with their rural geography, and we would work with Waberthwaite to ensure that this issue is managed sensitively and appropriately.*

Q: Is free transport available when outside of schools' catchment area?

A: *The county council's home to school transport policy applies. Pupils living in the catchment area who are attending a school at the time of its closure, and who transfer to the new catchment school, receive free transport until they leave school, providing the distance between home and school is more than one mile in the case of pupils under eight, and over two miles for older pupils. This only applies if pupils have to go to a different site that is further from their home than the site they previously attended. If the distance from their home were more than the statutory walking distance of two/three miles, however, the general policy would apply. The general policy is: free transport is provided to a child's nearest or catchment school if the distance between their home and the school exceeds the 'statutory walking distance'. The 'statutory walking distance' is three miles for children aged eight and above, and two miles for children under eight. The distance is*

measured by the nearest available walking route using the Geographical Information System (GIS).

Q: Waberthwaite School are in receipt of funding to reduce their deficit, so why hasn't Captain Shaw's been offered it?

A: *It has. Captain Shaw's received a 'Schools in Financial Difficulty' payment of around £10,000 in 2010-11.*

Q: Why can't the future residents of Wellbank development bring their children to Captain Shaw's?

A: *Assuming the school was still open, they could. But, the Wellbank development does not yet have planning consent, and there is no certainty as to when it will be constructed, or how long the construction will take.*

Q: How can Captain Shaw's have a deficit recovery plan when we aren't actually in deficit?

A: *Schools have to submit 3-year budgets to the county council so that we can monitor whether there are any likely to fall into deficit, or which are predicting substantial surpluses. Where schools are predicting they will be in deficit, we would expect them to produce a plan showing how that can be avoided or recovered. We cannot approve any budget where the deficit is forecast to be more than 8% of the total budget allocated, and this is the case at Captain Shaw's School. The expenditure figures presented take no account of inflationary increases in the cost of fuel, water or electricity, and nor do they forecast any spend on educational resources.*

Q: Are you proposing enhanced transfer, for children who come to Waberthwaite from Captain Shaw's and would Waberthwaite pick up the cost of doing the enhanced transfer?

A: *There would be an increase in funding available to Waberthwaite for the pupils admitted from Captain Shaw's for transition activities.*

Q: Why can't enhanced transfer be done in the summer term after decision by Cabinet has been made?

A: *The county council's general adviser works with both schools currently, and will support the transition process over the summer term so that children can transfer in September if Captain Shaw's is to close. Should parents wish to seek a transfer prior to that, they are at liberty to make an application.*

Education

Q: If so many small schools don't have high standards of education, how is it that only 1 in the county showing concern with Ofsted was a small school?

A: *This is not about small schools in general, it is a consultation on the future of Captain Shaw's School, where we have concerns about the progress and achievement of children.*

General

Q: What is Net capacity and how is it worked out?

A: *Net capacity is based on the number of classrooms. There is a national, standard calculation; each classroom is measured and the number of children who could be accommodated in each is calculated. Some former classrooms have been designated as, for example, ICT suites or libraries, and this removes them from the net capacity*

calculation. However, these rooms can be brought back into classroom use (and included on the net capacity calculation) as required.

Q: The reason why Waberthwaite use the multi-use room is that it doesn't have a dining room.

A: *Answer, by the Chair of Governors of Waberthwaite, – The kitchen is big enough to cope with any intake that might come from the closure of Captain Shaw's, the multi-use room would continue to be used as a dining room, there is an old ICT room that is no longer being used that could become a classroom.*

Q: Could the hall and kitchen accommodate 80+ pupils?

A: *Yes, the school did have these numbers previously.*

Q: Is there any statutory requirement to have a PE hall on site?

A: *No, it's not unusual for schools to use other facilities for PE off site.*

Q: Why isn't the LA coming up with plans to keep Captain Shaw's open rather than concentrating on shutting it down?

A: *The LA has kept Captain Shaw's open for a number of years but the education of the children is now considered not to be at the levels expected. The county council has supported Captain Shaw's through the funding formula, and was prepared to consider viable alternatives to closure such as Federation. The Governing Bodies of both schools have now decided that this is not desirable to them.*

Q: There is a potential new build at BNFL. Will the CCC not look daft at having closed Captain Shaw's and then not be in a position to have capacity for all the children who will come into the area?

A: *As with the proposed housing development discussed previously, the Nuclear New Build project is not yet confirmed and is likely to be some years away. The number of additional workers bringing their families to Cumbria during the construction phase is very difficult to quantify, but given the sites identified for potentially housing these workers, Captain Shaw's School would be unlikely to benefit.*

Q: Does bussing children to school not remove parent's face to face contact with teachers/parents at the school gates?

A: *Parents can still have face to face contact with other parents when they drop off and pick up their children from pick up points. Teacher contact will be maintained through a regular cycle of events and individual appointments where requested.*

Q: Why did comments have to be on the Questionnaire? What other forms of response were there?

A: *We received responses by letter/email/on-line and via the questionnaire. All of these options were set out in the consultation paper.*

Q: Q2 on the website is different to the paper questionnaire, and needs to be amended.

A: *This has been amended.*

Q: What is a "period of representation"?

- A: *Following the publication of a Statutory Notice there is a period of six weeks whereby anyone can put in writing their comments for or against the proposal. These are called representations. Any representations received during this period are forwarded to the Cabinet to help the decision-makers decide on the outcome.*
- Q: What happens to the governing body at Captain Shaw's if the school closes?
- A: *It would be dissolved.*
- Q: *Would it help the cause if the governors complete the consultation document?*
- A: *It is important to get everyone's views.*
- Q: When was the decision made to consult on closing Captain Shaw's?
- A: Mid October, but governors have been aware of the issues for a number of years.
- Q: Why is the consultation period not longer?
- A: It's in line with guidance and there is a statutory timetable for proposals.
- Q: Are both schools the same religion?
- A: *The schools are both designated as Church of England Schools, one is Voluntary Aided the other Voluntary Controlled.*
- Q: How will the 16 pupils who come from Captain Shaw's affect the children already in Waberthwaite?
- A: *Answer, by the Chair of Governors of Waberthwaite, the school has no qualms in integrating the children.*
- Q: The call-in period of five working days, could this change the dates of implementation?
- A: *Call-in is when three Councillors question the decision the cabinet has made. In the event of a call-in, a Scrutiny panel would then review the decision made and could refer the decision back to the Cabinet to be reconsidered. So, yes, dates could change depending on call-in.*
- Q: Why can't the schools federate?
- A: *The Captain Shaw's governors approached Waberthwaite's governing body to discuss this as a possibility. There was a unanimous decision by both governing bodies not to proceed with federation as they felt this would be of no benefit to either school.*
- Q: Would a proper impact assessment of the closure be taken into consideration for the 12th January 2012?
- A: *The impact assessment is a living document and changes will be made as issues arise. Part of the consultation process is about understanding the real issues for local people and seeking to address them.*
- Q: How has it worked with previous school closures and bad feeling in the village?
- A: *The county council would manage the transition process to ensure that children are able to integrate into their new school as smoothly as possible. This would include joint events for children and parents, visits to the school, and discussions between staff prior to transfer to*

give a full understanding of individual children's needs. We appreciate that it can be an anxious time for parents and children alike, but would do all we can to ensure that any 'bad feeling' is overcome so that children can fully benefit from what their new school offers.

Q: How many children would be transported to Waberthwaite?

A: *The number of children would depend on how many opted to transfer to Waberthwaite. The contracts would have to be retendered to cope with the increase of children, but we would make sure that it included, for example, appropriate vehicles for the routes in the area.*

Q: When you use historic figures, how far back do you go?

A: *It varies, very much dependent on the school and what has happened recently. We can go back 10 years.*

Q: Single dwellings can be built now that couldn't have been built 10-15 years ago. Will this not increase the pupils at Captain Shaw's?

A: *It's possible, but not certain. As mentioned previously, whilst there is no planning permission in place, we cannot simply assume that additional pupils will be living in the area at some point in the future. New housing doesn't necessarily produce a huge number of new children – on average across the county, for every 5 houses there is only on average one child of primary school age.*

Q: Haven't the government got a policy to look after rural areas?

A: *The Schools Forum in Cumbria weights funding heavily in favour of small schools (many of which are in rural areas) to give them protection. There is a presumption against the closure of small schools written into legislation. This doesn't mean that small schools can't close but there has to sound good reason for this to be proposed. The council believes that the education of children is of paramount importance and in the event that this is being adversely affected, then it has to consider other options.*