

Carlisle South/Central FAQs

Pennine Way

Q: Will Pennine Way be able to make use of facilities already present i.e. Theatre, Sports Hall, Library etc.

A - The precise details of use of the facilities will need to be agreed in discussion with all parties involved, but the intention is to make the best possible use of the spaces available. That is likely to mean that a variety of people will use the different facilities at different times, with the school using some of the 'non-school' spaces, and community or other groups using some of the school accommodation as agreed.

Q: Will there be the opportunity for more jobs and increased community involvement?

A - It's hard to say at the moment whether there'll be more jobs. There will be a large scale construction project, though, so it's possible. We expect the community will be involved when we come to design the new buildings.

Q: Why can't you rebuild Pennine Way on its present site?

A - That would be possible, although it could be disruptive for children using the school during the build process. County councillors have decided that joining up the existing facilities on the Harraby Campus with a new school building will make the best use of resources and provide the best use of that site.

Q: What will happen to the old site? Will there be increased possibility of vandalism?

A - The county council will make sure the site is secured when the school moves to its new building. County councillors will decide what will happen to the site following the move.

Q: Where will the money come from?

A - The county council receives capital funding allocations from the government, and these will be used to fund the new school buildings.

Q: Can the school become a hub / community centre?

A - We hope it will. By joining up the school and the existing facilities, the site should become a real focus for the community.

Q: What if pupils decline in the future?

A - Pupil numbers rise and fall over time – this is inevitable. We seem now to be in a period of sustained growth, and we can be confident that the additional places will be required for the foreseeable future. If and when numbers fall in the future, decisions will need to be taken on how best to manage the reductions.

Petteril Bank School

Q: Petteril Bank School would like to become a 1 form entry school to provide additional opportunities for our children. We would need 2 additional classrooms to achieve this. We have a great team who would like to move the school forward. Our numbers are increasing year on year and we will have a full intake at our proposed increased admission numbers in 2012. Will we be given this opportunity?

A - Cabinet members decided on 12 January to publish proposals to expand the school to 1 form of entry. A final decision on this will be made in March 2012.

Upperby

Q: Where will the 4 extra classrooms be located? The playing field is a huge asset to the school. School hall too small already. What will happen to that?

A - Detailed designs will need to be drawn up in discussion with the school before any final decisions on how and where the expansions are delivered.

Q: If taking account of parental preference is part of the strategy then why wasn't this stated in the consultation document?

A - The county council – as all councils do – have a broad responsibility for meeting as many parental preferences as possible. Many factors are taken into account when seeking to expand schools, and parental preference is one of them.

Q: Will staff, governors and parents be able to contribute ideas to the actual plans for the building?

A - Yes, we would expect the design process to involve consultation with school stakeholders.

Q: Will the facilities, ie hall, etc be extended too?

A - It's possible, but we won't know this until there have been more detailed discussions with the school alongside a design team.

Q: When will the classrooms be built? Will temporary classroom affect the children's learning?

A - We know there is unlikely to be a need for additional places in September 2012, as parents have already expressed a preference for primary school places. County council officers are working on the phasing of the various expansion projects, and will prioritise those which are required soonest.

Q: Will expansion mean fewer mixed age groups?

A - This will be for the governors and the Headteacher to decide. It's possible that expanding the school to take 60 pupils a year could see each year group split into two classes of 30 children each, which would mean having no mixed-age classes.

Q: Why do we need more classrooms when there is already 1 not in use?

A - Any expansion project will seek to make best use of a school's existing buildings. It may not be practicable to use existing spaces in some cases, though. This is something that will be discussed with the school once a final decision has been made.

Brook Street

Q: Will this mean the foundation unit being detached from the main building?

A - This will be for the school to decide, but it is possible that the former music centre could be used as the school's foundation unit.

Q: The school is very small at the moment will the grounds be sufficient to cope?

A - The grounds are sufficient to cope with the additional children.

Q: Will expansion in School places keep siblings in the same School? (Brook Street)

A - We can't guarantee this, but it should make it easier for parents to gain places for younger siblings.

Q: Will the school lose its 'community feel'?

A - There's no reason that it should. The governors and staff have created a very positive community atmosphere, and will continue to do so.

Inglewood Infant & Junior Schools

Q: Will increasing class sizes within FS/KS1 has a detrimental effect on Children's education? (Inglewood Infant)

A - The class sizes in the Early Years will still be limited to a maximum of 30 children after expansion. Many schools are used to operating with 30 children in a class, and there is no reason that this should have any negative impact on children's education.

Q: I already find both schools can barely cope with the amount of children in each year group, why do they need to be stretched anymore than they are? (Inglewood Infant & Juniors)

A - Both schools were originally built with sufficient space for 90 children per year group. For Cumbria, this is a relatively large cohort, but it is manageable within the accommodation and space available.

Q: Parking, dropping off is a long process and School events are overcrowded already. Will there be any facilities provided for parking? (Inglewood Infants & Junior)

A - Discussions are ongoing with all schools involved in expansion to determine what additional facilities can be provided. The budget is limited, however, and the concentration must be on teaching spaces. Other factors – such as car parking – will be considered, of course.

Q: With 90+ children in each year group will this not mean it is hard to have one to one attention with the children, parents and staff? (Inglewood Infants and Junior)

A - Additional children will generate additional funding and, potentially, additional staffing. There is no reason that the amount of time given to individual children should decrease.

Q: Will there be a financial assistance to the schools to help with the modifications necessary?

A - We are discussing with all schools involved in expansions the additional facilities required. It is not possible at this stage to say exactly what will be provided.

Bishop Harvey Goodwin

Q: Why weren't all the staff, parents and Governors at the Bishop Harvey Goodwin School given the opportunity to be fully involved in the consultation from the start and be able to respond on the website?

A - The consultation process was widely publicised in the local press, was available on the county council website and was sent to the school. Governors attended the consultation drop-in session held at Richard Rose Central Academy, and there was initially the facility for e-mail or written responses. Once the issue with the electronic response form had been pointed out (i.e.

that there was no 'tick-box' for parents to say they were representing Bishop Harvey Goodwin School), this was immediately rectified.

Q: Bishop Harvey Goodwin has existing space, additional outside space, improved facilities and a dedicated team to move an expansion of our school forward. So why not expand out school?

A - As a voluntary aided school, the governors decide on the number of admissions, and can increase their admission number without consultation. If the school has the physical capacity to expand, the governors can make this happen.

Q: Why not use the spare capacity in the Bishop Harvey Goodwin School before extra building / spending costs in other schools?

A - Getting the right number of places in the right locations is quite complex. We had to look at the pattern of parental preferences and make decisions based on the expected level of demand from parents, as well as other factors such as cost, existing building conditions, where people live, the practicability of expansion etc. The demand for places at Bishop Harvey Goodwin over the last few years has been consistently below its existing admission number and, for that reason, it was felt prudent to look to expand other schools in Carlisle.

General

Q: Will there be financial support for schools which can accommodate the increase in numbers? Increasing numbers does have an impact of utilising current classrooms, moving ICT suites, furnishing rooms and so on.

A - We'll be talking to all of the schools taking additional pupils to understand the implications on their buildings and the way they operate. We have a budget to work within, but will do all we can to make sure that the expansions do not negatively impact on the schools involved.

Q: Why has the consultation taken place?

A - Because the number of primary-age children in Carlisle has been growing for some time, and we're now at the stage where there are expected to be insufficient places to accommodate them all over the next few years. Whenever the county council seeks to expand a school, it must consult before making any decisions.

Q: Will the number of teachers/staff be increased?

A - In general, yes. More children generate more funding for schools, so they will be able to employ extra staff.

Q: Will the expansions mean fewer appeals?

A - Possibly, yes. There should be greater opportunities for parents to access a place, although we would still expect some schools to be oversubscribed.

Q: Will the increase in primary places have an effect on Secondary places?

A - Eventually, yes. The higher primary numbers will work their way through to secondary schools over the next few years. At the moment we have sufficient capacity in secondary schools to accommodate the children we know about, but will need to monitor continuing growth to determine whether we need more secondary places in the future.