

TITLE OF REPORT: Revised Catchment Areas in East Gateshead

REPORT OF: Caroline O'Neill, Strategic Director, Care, Wellbeing and Learning

Purpose of the Report

1. This report asks Cabinet for approval to amend the school catchment areas in the East Gateshead in light of the Minister for Education's decision to close Thomas Hepburn Community Academy (THCA) at the end of August 2019.

Background

2. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires Local Authorities to adopt a strategic role, with a duty to promote choice, diversity and fair access to school provision. This is only possible when there are sufficient numbers of school places situated with the right location.
3. Historically Gateshead has 'catchment' areas which have linked primary schools to secondary schools/academies. There are 7 secondary school catchment areas; with the 2 Voluntary Aided (Catholic) Schools in Gateshead operating parish boundaries. Emmanuel College operate a post code based admissions policy which covers Gateshead and Newcastle and have historically drawn around 2/3 of their pupils from Gateshead.
4. Therefore, with the closure of THCA a consultation exercise has been undertaken to realign the school's catchment area.

Proposal

5. This paper sets out the proposed catchment areas for the 2020/21 and future years as follows;
 - Thomas Hepburn's catchment area has been divided between Heworth Grange and Joseph Swan secondary school catchment areas based on the temporary arrangements agreed for the 2019/20 admissions round
 - Kelvin Grove Primary School (currently Joseph Swan Academy catchment) becomes part of the Kingsmeadow Comprehensive School catchment area.
 - Fell Dyke Primary School (currently part of Joseph Swan Academy's catchment and prior to that part of Thomas Hepburn catchment) becomes part of the Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy catchment area.

Recommendations

6. It is recommended that Cabinet approve the use of the proposed catchment areas for the academic year 2020/21 and future years.

For the following reason:

In order for parents to apply for a secondary school place within the current catchment area based school admissions policy.

CONTACT: Jeanne Pratt extension: 8644

APPENDIX 1

Policy Context

1. This proposal supports the Council's new strategic approach of Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives, as well as the Sustainable Community Strategy for Gateshead, Vision 2030.
2. The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires Local Authorities to adopt a strategic role, with a duty to promote choice, diversity and fair access to school provision. This is only possible when there are sufficient numbers of school places situated with the right location.
3. The School Admissions Code 2014 states that '*All schools must have admission arrangements, that clearly set out how children will be admitted, including the criteria that will be applied if there are more applications than places at the school. Admission arrangements are determined by admission authorities*'.
4. Admission authorities must set admission arrangements annually. Where changes are proposed to admission arrangements the admission authority must first publicly consult on those arrangements.
5. Consultation must be for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1st October and the 31st January of the school year before those arrangements are to apply. This allows parents, other schools, religious authorities and the local community to raise any concerns about the proposed admission arrangement
6. Over subscription criteria must be reasonable, clear, objective, procedurally fair and comply with relevant legislation, including equalities legislation.
7. Gateshead Council's Community and Voluntary Controlled Primary Schools Admission Policy 2019/20 sets out the oversubscription criteria used in its Information to Parents document which is updated on an annual basis. The 2020/21 policy appears elsewhere on this agenda for approval.
8. The school catchment area is the geographical location where the schools' core intake of pupils lives e.g. the area from which pupils are eligible to attend a local school. This applies to all schools except Voluntary Aided (Catholic) Schools in Gateshead who operate parish boundaries and Emmanuel College, who operate a post code based admissions policy which covers Gateshead and Newcastle. They have historically drawn around 2/3 of their pupils from Gateshead.
9. The Admissions Code 2014 article 1.14 states that catchment areas must be designed so that they are reasonable and clearly defined. Catchment areas do not prevent parents who live outside the catchment of a particular school from expressing a preference for the school.

Background

10. In May 2018, following a short period of consultation the Minister for Education made the decision to close Thomas Hepburn Community Academy at the end of August 2019. The closure has been managed in several phases:
 - Phase 1
 - Y9 pupils moved to new secondary schools at the end of Y9-so they could begin their Y10 (September 2018) in a new school
 - Cabinet agreed a temporary realignment of catchment areas for Thomas Hepburn primary schools so that Y6 pupils whose parents had initially chosen to send their children to Thomas Hepburn could chose a different school for Sept 2018
 - Cabinet agreed a temporary realignment of catchment areas for Thomas Hepburn primary schools so that parents could apply for secondary school places in Sept 2018 for Sept 2019 admissions
 - Phase 2
 - Consultation on revised catchment areas (Oct/Nov 2018)
 - Paper to Cabinet to agree revised catchment areas (February 2019)
 - Y8 and Y9 pupils will be allocated a new school based on parental requests in February 2019
 - Phase 3
 - Use of the building after August 2019
11. At its meeting held on 17th July 2018, Cabinet agreed to the formal consultation for the realignment of THCA's catchment area following Cabinet's previous agreement to a temporary arrangement, so as not to disadvantage parents living within this catchment area for the 2019/20 secondary admissions round.
12. Following the temporary arrangement put in place for 2019/20, which saw the Thomas Hepburn catchment area split between Heworth Grange and Joseph Swan secondary school catchment areas, a formal consultation was required prior to asking for this temporary arrangement to be made permanent.
13. On reflection, following the temporary arrangements made for the 2019/20 admissions process, it was felt that there were too many children in the catchment area for Joseph Swan based upon the PAN of the primary schools. The consultation took this issue into account and therefore also consulted on the move of Kelvin Grove Primary School from Joseph Swan catchment area into Kingsmeadow's catchment area and the move of Fell Dyke from Joseph Swan's catchment (previously Thomas Hepburn catchment) into Lord Lawson catchment.

Consultation

14. Formal consultation for the proposed changes in catchment areas needs to take place in line with the Schools Admissions Code 2014; *for admissions arrangements for entry in September, consultation must be for a minimum of 6 weeks and must take place between 1st October and the 31st January of the school year before those arrangements are to apply. This allows parents, other*

schools, religious authorities and the local community to raise any concerns about the proposed admission arrangements.

15. As part of this consultation, parents, head teacher's, school governing bodies, religious authorities and members of the community have had an opportunity to express their views on the proposed changes.
16. The consultation was carried out between 10th October 2018 and 23rd November 2018. There had also been a notice in the October Council News to advise parents of this consultation.
17. The consultation was placed on the council's website in both the consultations and school admissions pages. All primary and secondary school governing bodies and head teachers, Diocesan bodies, trades union representatives and neighbouring authorities were also sent copies of the proposals. Those primary schools who were directly affected by the proposed changes were asked to distribute a letter to all of their parents to advise them of this consultation.
18. The consultation documents are contained in appendix 2. Responses to the questions for consultation along with the percentage response are shown in appendix 3. Responses to the questions included;
 - Move Fell Dyke Primary School permanently to the catchment area of Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy.
 - 33% agreed (3 returns)
 - 67% disagreed (6 returns)
 - Move Kelvin Grove Primary School permanently to the catchment area of Kingsmeadow Comprehensive School.
 - 25% agreed (3 returns)
 - 75% disagreed (8 returns)
19. The Cabinet Members for Children and Young People have been consulted.

Alternative Options

20. Although there is no legal requirement to have catchment areas in Gateshead, all secondary schools have adopted an admission policy based on catchment areas or parish boundaries to determine their over subscription criteria.

Implications of Recommended Option

21. Resources:

- a) **Financial Implications** – The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms discussions are currently ongoing with the DfE in relation to the need for basic needs funding to offset cost implications in meeting the proposed increase in pupil numbers that realigning catchment areas may bring to these schools.

- b) **Human Resources Implications** – Staff, governors, families, parents and community members have been consulted on as part of the formal consultation and their views and comments have been taken into consideration
 - c) **Property Implications** - There will be potential need for increased space in existing secondary schools to accommodate the realignment of catchment areas
22. **Risk Management Implication** - Without realigning the THCA catchment areas; parents who apply for a secondary school place for their child will be at a disadvantage if they don't have a catchment secondary school.
 23. **Equality and Diversity Implications** - An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken as part of the consultation which is attached at appendix 4.
 24. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no Crime and Disorder implications arising from this report.
 25. **Health Implications** – There are no Health and Safety implications arising from this report
 26. **Sustainability Implications** - There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.
 27. **Human Rights Implications** - The implications of the Human Rights Act must be considered in any decision that involves a change in policy, function or service change. If implemented the proposal will positively enhance a child's right not to be denied an education.
 28. **Area and Ward Implications** - This report will have implications for the following wards initially: Bridges, Chowdene, Deckham, Felling, High Fell, Lobley Hill, Bensham, Low Fell, Pelaw and Heworth, Saltwell, Wardley and Leam Lane, Windy Nook, Whitehills, Birtley, Lamsley, Dunston and Teams

Background Information

Gateshead Local Authority Admissions to Secondary School
School Admissions Code 2014

School Catchment Area Consultation

Introduction

Following the decision of the Minister of Education to close Thomas Hepburn Community Academy (THCA) in August 2019, the Council is consulting on proposals to re-designate the linked primary school catchment areas.

We need to do this as the current policy for secondary school admissions gives a higher priority to those children living in the catchment area of a secondary school which is based on the linked primary school.

Following the closure of THCA there are three Secondary Community Academies, who will have this in their policy for admission and who could be allocated previous THCA catchment primary schools on a permanent basis;

- Heworth Grange School
- Joseph Swan Academy
- Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy

The other two schools located in the east Gateshead planning area have different admission policies and therefore cannot be allocated any of THCA primary schools;

- Cardinal Hume Catholic School – determined by parish boundaries.
- Emmanuel College, City Technology College – determined by post code between Gateshead and Newcastle.

Catchment Areas

The Department for Education (DfE) School Admissions Code, December 2014, states that “catchment areas must be designed so that they are reasonable and clearly defined”.

All community, voluntary controlled, some voluntary aided/foundation schools and academies are surrounded by a defined geographical area known as their catchment area.

Catchment areas help schools to identify their communities and give parents an indication of their local school. There is no guarantee of a place for pupils resident within a school's catchment area or for pupils who move into the area at a later date, who are considered individually. Living in a catchment area can, however, give pupils a higher priority for admission to a school over other pupils who live outside the catchment area.

To further determine a school catchment area that is reasonable, wherever possible walking distance to school is taken in to account. Current DfE guidance on Home to school transport, July 2014, states that statutory walking distances are;

- 2 miles if below the age of 8

- 3 miles if aged between 8 and 16

Consultation Requirements

The School Admissions Code December 2014 requires Local Authorities to consult on their admission arrangements that will apply for the following school year and this must be for a period of six weeks to take place between 1st October 2018 and 31st January 2019. The consultation should include parents, schools, diocesan bodies, Governors, other local authorities and others who may have an interest.

Once the consultation is completed the findings will be presented to the Council in February 2019 who will agree the revised catchment area schools.

Background

Thomas Hepburn Community Secondary School which has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 150 for each year group, became a sponsored academy in October 2013, following a number of poor Ofsted Reports (March 2011- Satisfactory, Nov 2012- Inadequate). The academy sponsor was Northern Education Trust (NET). A further Ofsted in Nov 2016 also judged THCA as Inadequate.

Over the past few years admissions numbers into Y7 in THCA have been well below their 150 PAN and since 2016/17 have fallen year on year with projection figures also not showing any significant increase. For September 2018 the school had 46 pupils allocated a place at the school which NET felt was financially unsustainable to continue to run the school.

2014/15	78 pupils
2015/16	83 pupils
2016/17	90 pupils
2017/18	56 pupils
2018/19	46 pupils (projected)

NET decided to consult on the closure of THCA and following a period of consultation (February-March 2018) the Minister for Education decided in May 2018 to close the Academy with effect from August 2019, eighteen months earlier than published guidance on closing a maintained school.

There is no published guidance from the DfE on the closure of an Academy.

The closure was to be in two stages;

- Stage 1 would focus on the 46 pupils in Year 6 who had been allocated THCA for Year 7 to find an alternative school place and the Year 9 pupils at THCA who would move into Year 10 in September 2018 to give them the best chance of GCSE success in a new school. Despite the enormous pressure on the availability of school places, all students have been found alternative school places.
- This would leave Years 8, 9 and 11 in THCA for the 2018/19 academic year.

The Temporary Proposal Agreed by Cabinet in June 2018

The THCA catchment area consists of 9 primary schools highlighted in the table below.

Across the cluster of primary schools, the number of pupils is such that had they all gone to THCA, the school would have been oversubscribed. However, as THCA has been undersubscribed a large percentage of pupils have found places in other secondary schools.

This proposal was put into place following discussions with both primary and secondary schools and is based on which secondary school the majority of pupils go to at the present time. Cardinal Hume is not included in this proposal; as a faith school their catchment is on parish boundaries. Emmanuel College was also not included in the proposal as their catchment is by post code and across Gateshead and Newcastle.

The new catchment areas see the primary schools in the THCA catchment re-designated to Heworth Grange and Joseph Swan Academies as follows:

Proposed Heworth Grange Catchment	
School	PAN
Bede	30
Bill Quay	30
Brandling	30
Colegate	45
Falla Park	30
Lingey House	60
Roman Road	30
The Drive	29
Wardley	45
White Mere	30
Windy Nook	45
Total	404

Proposed Joseph Swan Catchment	
School	PAN
Carr Hill	45
Fell Dyke	45
Glynwood	60
Harlow Green	60
Kells Lane	60
Kelvin Grove	60
Larkspur	29
Oakfield Jr	60
South Street	44
Total	463

Highlighted schools were previously THCA catchment primary schools

The changes above were initially proposed for 1 year only in order to give children in THCA's catchment area a priority for admissions to secondary school in September 2019. The current consultation is to determine the permanent change in THCA catchment areas.

The Current Proposal

(See maps at Appendix A)

Heworth Grange School

Given the location of the school in relation to the re-designated primary schools or the current linked primary schools, there are no options to consider any alternative secondary school on a permanent basis.

Proposed Heworth Grange Catchment	
School	PAN
Bede	30
Bill Quay	30
Brandling	30
Colegate	45
Falla Park	30
Lingey House	60
Roman Road	30
The Drive	29
Wardley	45
White Mere	30
Windy Nook	45
Total	404

Proposed Joseph Swan Catchment	
School	PAN
Carr Hill	45
Glynwood	60
Harlow Green	60
Kells Lane	60
Larkspur	29
Oakfield Jr	60
South Street	44
Total	358

Highlighted schools were previously THCA catchment primary schools

Joseph Swan Academy

Given the previous pattern of admissions and the availability of transport, the following schools could be allocated to another secondary school;

- **Fell Dyke Primary School** – This school serves the area of Wrekenton and Springwell Estate. There are established school bus services to Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy whose current catchment area for Birtley East Primary School incorporates Eighton Banks. Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy has historically attracted a number of students from this area and given the large increase in numbers for Joseph Swan Academy this proposal may give a more even distribution of students from the area.

There are also established school bus links to Joseph Swan Academy from this area and the school also attracts a number of students from this area.

Using distance as the crow flies, Fell Dyke Primary School is 2.3 miles from Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy and 1.5 miles from Joseph Swan Academy.

- **Kelvin Grove Primary School** – This school serves the south of the Avenues area from Whitehall Road to Shipcote including Saltwell Park. Other schools in the area, Brighton Avenue and Caedmom Primary Schools are currently within the catchment area for Kingsmeadow Community Comprehensive School in Dunston. There is an established school bus service to Kingsmeadow from the Avenues area and admissions to the school from established Kingsmeadow catchment

schools in the area are evenly split between Joseph Swan and Kingsmeadow due to the proximity of the schools.

There are also established school bus links to Joseph Swan Academy from this area and the school continues to attract students from the area.

Using distance as the crow flies, Kelvin Grove Primary School is 1.7 miles from Kingsmeadow Comprehensive School and 1.4 miles from Joseph Swan Academy.

Other catchment areas

In light of the above proposed changes, the Council is taking the opportunity to look at other secondary school catchment areas and propose the following changes to more fairly distribute pupils. The list of current primary schools allocated to secondary schools is attached at Appendix 2

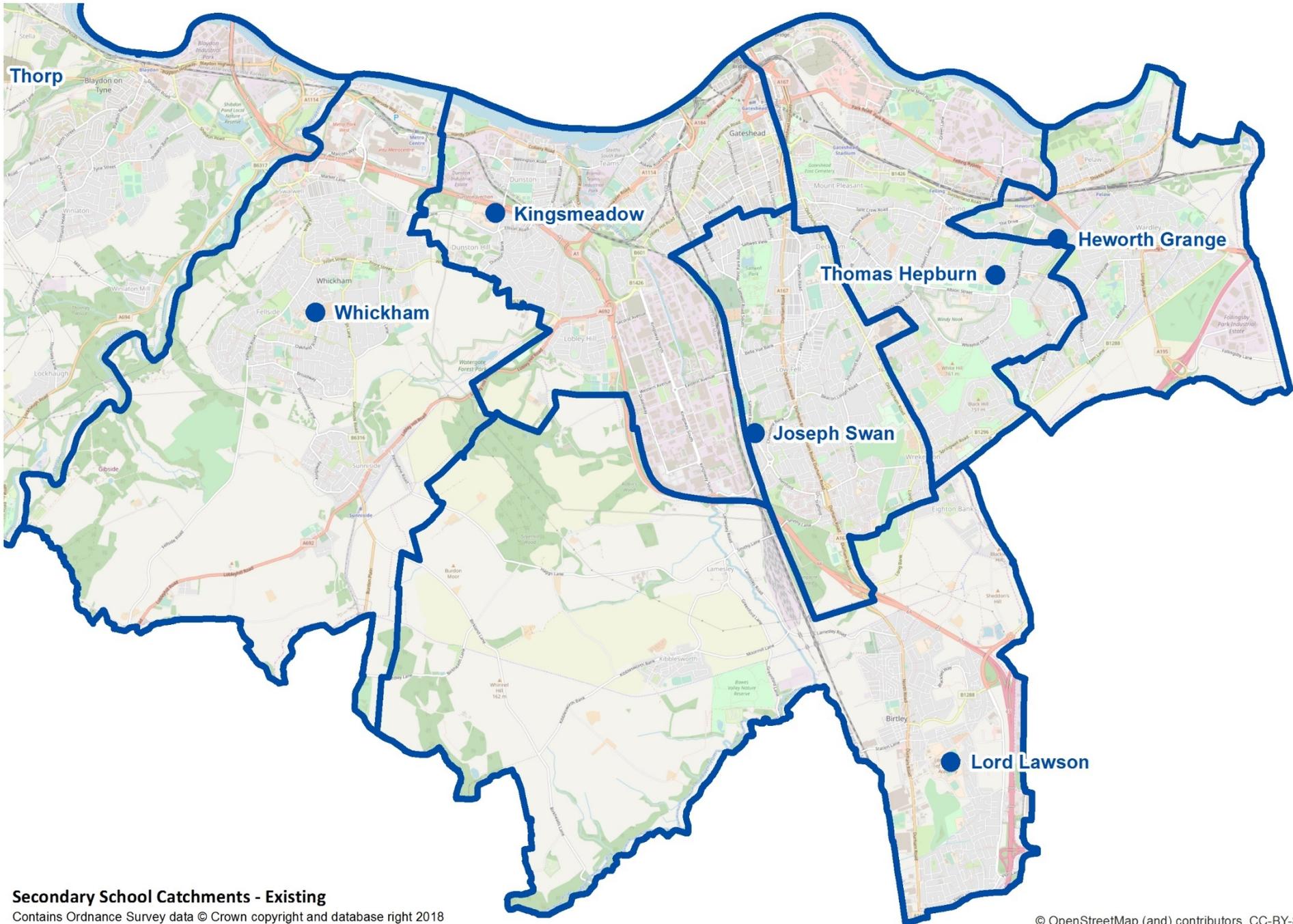
- **Kingsmeadow Community Comprehensive School** - There is large scale house building planned for the Dunston area, however, following the closure of Thomas Hepburn Community Academy, the proposal is for a large number of additional students to be included within the catchment area of Joseph Swan Academy. To address this, as above, the Council is proposing that Kelvin Grove Primary School becomes part of the Kingsmeadow catchment area for all of the Avenues area to be covered by one secondary school.

No other changes are being considered at this time.

- **Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy** - There is large scale house building in the Birtley area, however, historically students from the Wrekenton and Springwell Village area have chosen to attend Lord Lawson and there is established school transport. The current catchment area of Birtley East Primary School includes Eighton Banks which backs on to the catchment area for Fell Dyke Primary School. The Council is therefore proposing that Fell Dyke Community Primary School becomes part of Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy catchment area to further reduce the numbers of children in the Joseph Swan catchment area.

No other changes are being considered at this time.

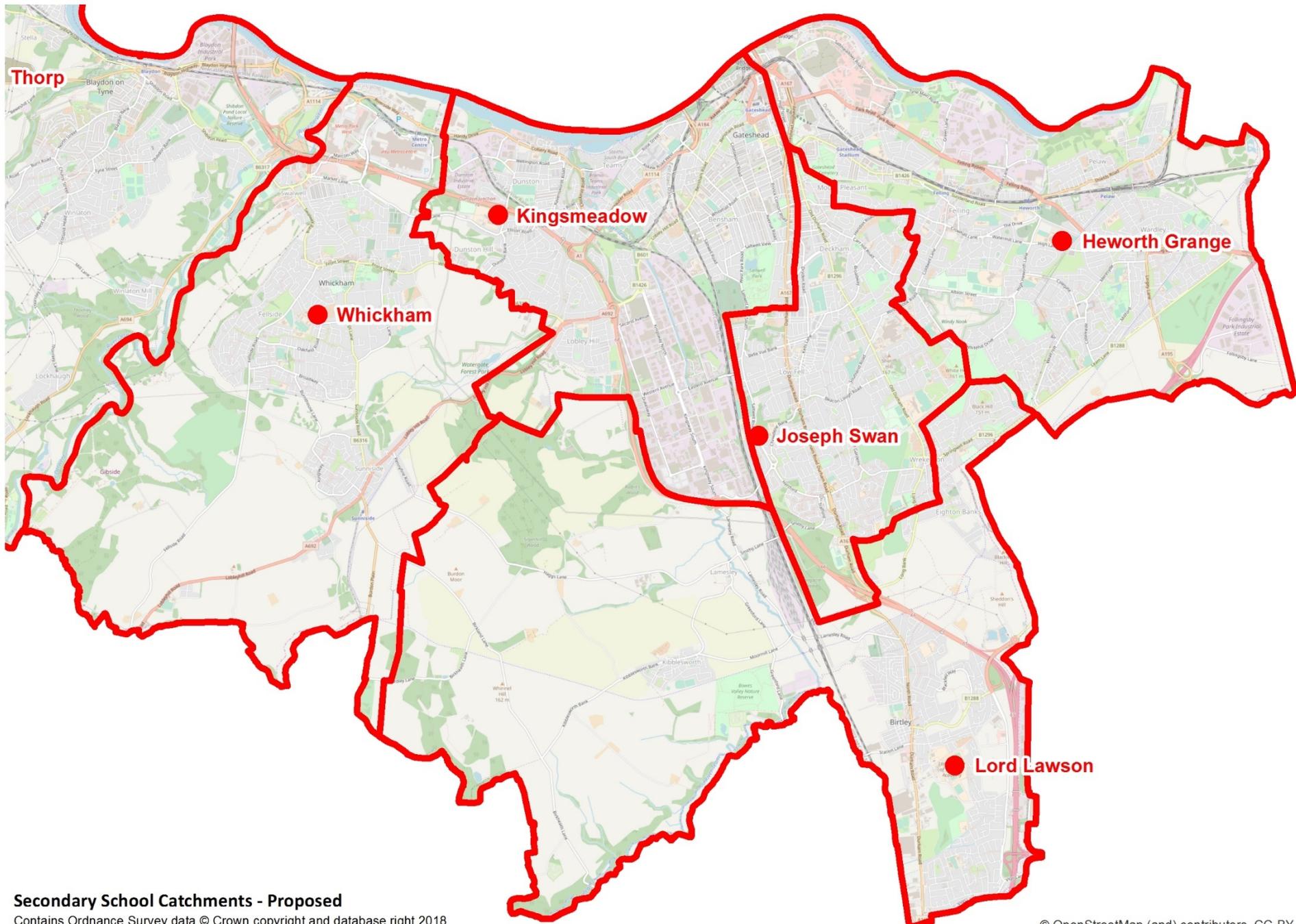
- **Thorp Academy** - There are no changes being considered at this time.
- **Whickham School** - There are no changes being considered at this time.



Secondary School Catchments - Existing

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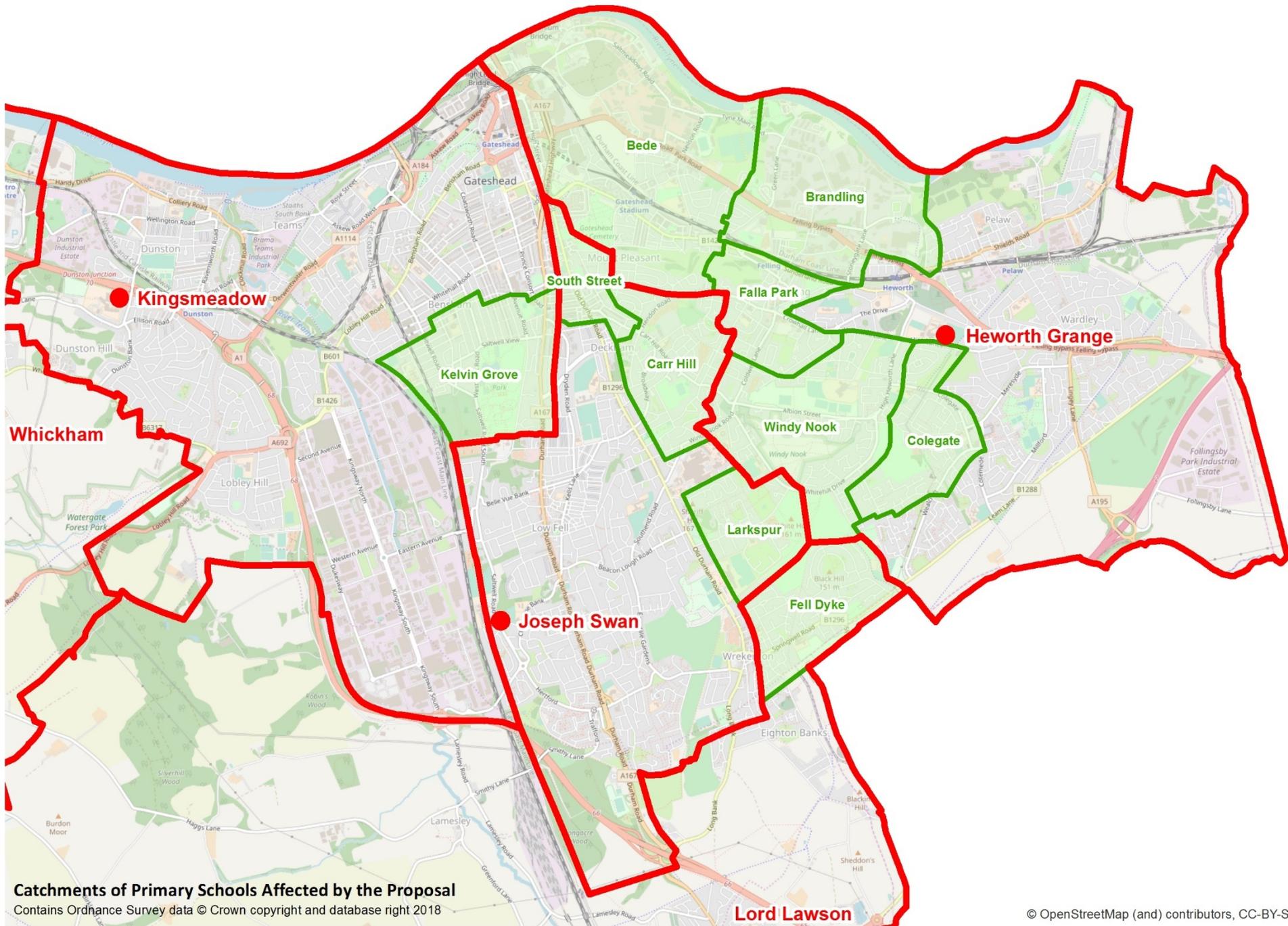
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Secondary School Catchments - Proposed

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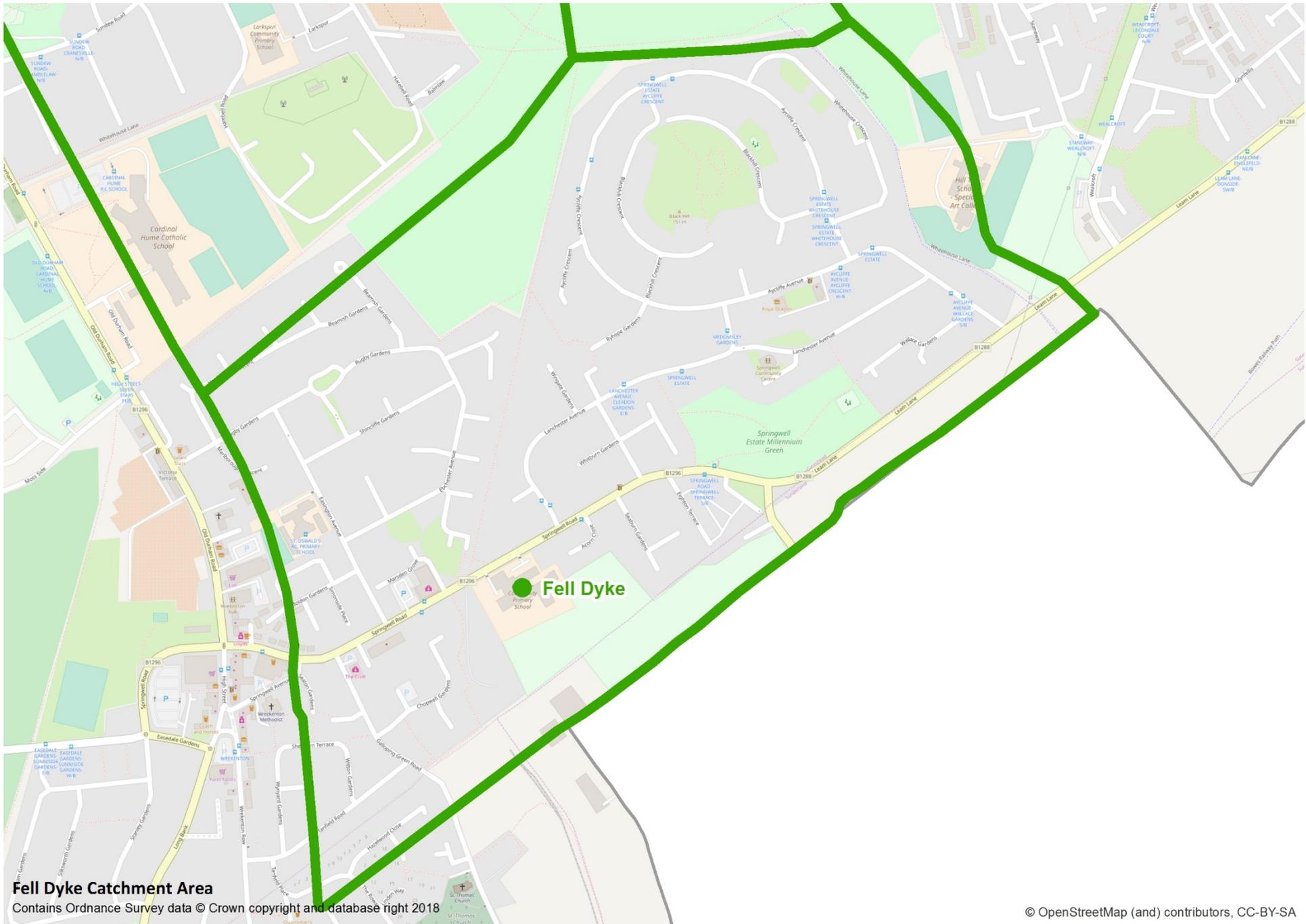
Catchments of Primary Schools Affected by the Proposal

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Kelvin Grove Catchment Area
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Fell Dyke Catchment Area

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Primary Schools within Existing Secondary School Catchments

Heworth Grange

Bill Quay
Lingey House
Roman Road
The Drive
Wardley
White Mere

Thomas Hepburn

Bede
Brandling
Carr Hill
Colegate
Falla Park
Fell Dyke
Larkspur
South Street
Windy Nook

Joseph Swan

Glynwood
Harlow Green
Kells Lane
Kelvin Grove
Oakfield

Kingsmeadow

Brighton Avenue
Caedmon
Dunston Hill
Lobley Hill
Riverside

Lord Lawson

Barley Mow
Birtley East
Kibblesworth
Portobello
Ravensworth Terrace

Whickham

Clover Hill
Front Street
Swalwell
Washingwell
Fellside
Whickham C of E

Thorp

Blaydon West
Chopwell
Crookhill
Emmaville
Greenside
High Spen
Highfield
Parkhead
Rowlands Gill
Winlaton West Lane
Ryton

Primary Schools within Proposed Secondary School Catchments

Heworth Grange

Bill Quay
Lingey House
Roman Road
The Drive
Wardley
White Mere
Bede
Brandling
Colegate
Falla Park
Windy Nook

Joseph Swan

Glynwood
Harlow Green
Kells Lane
Oakfield
Carr Hill
Larkspur
South Street

Kingsmeadow

Brighton Avenue
Caedmon
Dunston Hill
Lobley Hill
Riverside
Kelvin Grove

Lord Lawson

Barley Mow
Birtley East
Kibblesworth
Portobello
Ravensworth Terrace
Fell Dyke

Whickham

Clover Hill
Front Street
Swalwell
Washingwell
Fellside
Whickham C of E

Thorp

Blaydon West
Chopwell
Crookhill
Emmaville
Greenside
High Spen
Highfield

Your Views Count!

Thomas Hepburn School Catchment Area Consultation

Having read the full consultation document (www.gateshead.gov.uk/catchmentsurvey), do you agree or disagree with the following proposed changes:

Q1. Move Fell Dyke Primary School permanently to the catchment area of Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy

Agree Disagree

Please give any comments below

Q2. Move Kelvin Grove Primary School permanently to the catchment area of Kingsmeadow Comprehensive School

Agree Disagree

Please give any comments below

Q3. Do you have any further comments on the above proposed changes, or on the wider reallocation of schools to the Heworth Grange Comprehensive and Joseph Swan Academy catchment areas (as outlined in the consultation document)?

Q4. Are you...?

- A parent/carer of a pupil
- Pupil
- Union
- Voluntary representative
- Staff member of a school
- Governor
- Diocesan representative
- Other

Q5. Which school or organisation are you from?

Please return this response form by no later than 23 November 2018 to:

Jackie Soulsby, Education Support Service,
The Dryden Centre,
Evistones Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, NE9
5UR

Appendix 3

Details of the responses are as follows;

Move Fell Dyke Primary School permanently to catchment area of Lord Lawson of Beamish Academy;

33% Agreed (3 responses)

67% Disagreed (6 responses)

Move Kelvin Grove Primary School permanently to the catchment area of Kingsmeadow Comprehensive School;

25% Agreed (3 responses)

75% Disagreed (8 responses)

Students from these primary schools have previously been allocated the following secondary schools;

Kelvin Grove 2018

Cardinal Hume – 2

Emmanuel – 3

Joseph Swan – 25

Kingsmeadow – 3

Park View – 1

Whickham – 2

Fell Dyke 2018

Cardinal Hume - 4

Emmanuel - 1

Joseph Swan - 23

Lord Lawson - 11

Kelvin Grove 2017

Lord Lawson – 3

Joseph Swan – 24

Emmanuel – 6

Kingsmeadow – 6

Sacred Heart – 1

Emmanuel - 4

Thomas Hepburn – 6

Fell Dyke 2017

Cardinal Hume - 5

Whickham - 1

Joseph Swan - 15

Heworth - 4

Lord Lawson – 11

Kelvin Grove 2016

Emmanuel – 3

Joseph Swan – 20

Whickham – 1

Cardinal Hume – 2

Kingsmeadow – 1

Thomas Hepburn – 1

Lord Lawson – 1

Newcastle High School – 1

Fell Dyke 2016

Cardinal Hume - 4

Hill Top - 1

Joseph Swan - 7

Heworth - 6

Lord Lawson - 3

Thomas Hepburn - 9