

TITLE OF REPORT: The future of Colegate Community School**REPORT OF: Helen Fergusson, Strategic Director of Children's Social Care and Lifelong Learning**

Purpose of the report:

Following the completion of the formal consultation process and the outcome, this report is now recommending the closure of Colegate Community Primary School with effect from no later than 31st August 2025 with the associated reallocation of the school's catchment area.

Background

1. Following Council approval to consult, the Stage 3 Representation process took place from 26th June 2024 – 24th July 2024. During this period, consultation took place with parents/carers, pupils (through the school staff), teaching staff, support staff, school-based Council employees, governors, trade unions and neighbouring primary schools, secondary schools, Academy Trusts, faith bodies and neighbouring local authorities. The proposal was also sent to the Secretary of State in line with statutory guidance. Opportunities were provided for interested parties to speak directly to Council officers face to face.
2. Consultation Information (26th June - 24th July 2024):

Pupils (APPENDIX 2)

Pupil voice was collected from both KS1 and KS2 pupils by members of the school staff. This was shared with the council by the Headteacher.

Parents (APPENDIX 3)

There was 1 session offered to parents / carers initially on school premises:

17th of July 2024 from 8.30am – 10.00am drop-in session.

Parents / carers were offered timeslots at a date and time that was more convenient for them. No parent / carer requested this.

A total of 6 parents attended as a group

Council staff in attendance:

Victoria Cramman, Strategic Lead for Education Support Services

Two parents sent emails to the published email address for concerns or comments. These are included.

Staff and Governors (APPENDIX 4)

- The meeting on the 27th of June included a strategic education officer, Headteacher and Chair of Governors.
- A meeting was held with catering and cleaning staff and their trade union representatives
- All staff have been offered 1:1 meetings with a strategic education officer and HR
- A trade union consultation meeting was held with a strategic education officer, HR, the Headteacher and Chair of Governors.

Communications Implications

3. A careful communication strategy was implemented to align with the distinct phases of the consultation process.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:-

- i) Cabinet approve the closure of Colegate Community Primary School with effect from no later than the 31st August, 2025

Contact: Melanie Maitland and Victoria Cramman **Extension:** 8603 / 5248

Consultees:

The following officers have been consulted on the preparation of this report:

Members of CMT

Portfolio leads for children and adult social care
Suzanne Dunn - Service Director Education, Schools and Inclusion
Zoe Sharratt- Corporate Asset Strategy team
Carole Smith- Finance Business Partner
Sandra Watson – Service Director for Property and Assets
Ian Stewart – Education Service Support Team
Laura Smith - Strategic Lead SEND and Inclusion
Melanie Maitland – Strategic Lead for Schools and EY
Victoria Cramman – Strategic Lead Education Services
Michelle Brown / Emma Manfren / Lisa Gellately – Human Resources
Eric Flannaghan – Legal Support

Policy Context

The process at each stage of the consultation reflects the Council's objectives as set out in "Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives": Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028, in particular the 'Putting people and families at the heart of everything we do', agenda. It also recognises the local authority's responsibility to '...secure efficient primary education is available to meet the needs of the population areas...' as stated in The Education Act, 1996 (Section 13: General Education Responsibilities). It is supported by the work undertaken in the planning of school places to ensure that there are an appropriate number of school places to accommodate all children in Gateshead (School Capacity Document).

Background

1. Colegate Community Primary School carries a large financial deficit which without action was forecast to increase from £208,638 to £219,428 at the end of 2024/25 and increase again at the end of 2025/26 to £372,733. Due to the significant drop in pupil numbers from September 2024 and staff movements the staffing costs for the remainder of 2024/25 have significantly reduced and therefore updated projections indicate a decrease in the deficit at the end of 2024/25. However, due to the decreased pupil numbers and significantly decreased income projected for 2025/26 the deficit even with the significantly reduced staffing costs is estimated at £547,728.
2. Other factors compound the school's financial difficulties. The birth rate is falling, and no new housing is planned for the area. The school is currently judged requires improvement by Ofsted, making it a less attractive option for parents. Consequently, the school roll is falling. The school Pupil Admissions Numbers per year group is 30. In the last 3 years admission to Reception, despite the efforts of staff and governors to attract families, has been half that.
3. The drop in numbers is having a severe impact on finances as school funding is based on the quantity of children on roll - whilst rolls are falling, schools have to continue to pay for maintenance of buildings and staffing structures for more places than there are pupils.
4. Despite the best efforts of staff, outcomes at the end of the academic year 2023-4 were below the national average for Reception and below the national average at the end of Years 1 and 2 in the Phonic Screening check. There will be significant challenges in closing these gaps given the reduction in staffing and the spread of ages in the remaining mixed age classes.
5. In July 2024, Key Stage 2 attainment measures in reading, writing and mathematics were below the national average at the required and higher

standard. This means that some pupils will be starting secondary school with gaps in their academic attainment.

6. Following the announcement of the Stage 3 Representation period, parents of Colegate pupils began submitting transfer applications. In total 80 applications were received of which 64 were offered their first preference, eight second and eight third. Receiving schools in certain year groups exceeded their admission limit to accommodate siblings. There are currently 9 applications to be resolved in the new academic year.
7. Current numbers in school are less than 20 and mean that children are being taught in 2 mixed age classes; one key stage 1 and one key stage 2 class. All children with an EHCP or undergoing a needs assessment, that would be remaining for the academic year 2024-2025, requested a change of provision. These consultations were completed, working with appropriate teams to ensure the best placements to meet needs. As of September 2024, there are no children remaining in the school with an EHCP. Parents of children at SEN support have been in contact with a designated member of the SEN Team who has been in contact with SENDCo's of all receiving schools to ensure a transition package that will support the move, including attending transition days in summer term. Support will continue to be offered for the children who remain at Colegate through LA teams (SEND Team, SENIT and Virtual school) working with the SENDCo and Designated CIOC teacher.
8. The school occupies more than one building. This increases the number of staff needed to ensure pupils' safety. Considerable capital investment (a minimum of £300,000) is required to move all classrooms and facilities into one building. The works required to consolidate all year groups into one building would include the re-location and re-modelling of classrooms, new age-appropriate toilet provision, enhancements to the existing catering facilities, external play areas for nursery and reception aged children, along with associated asbestos removal.
9. There are greater staffing and leadership challenges as of September 2024 as staff who were seconded have returned to their original schools or secured new posts. Permanent members of staff (Teachers and TAs) have also secured new posts in other schools. A part time Executive Head Teacher, the Deputy Head and 3 teachers (1 full time, 2 part time) will be in post at Colegate in September 2024. There are 3 teaching assistants to provide additional support to the 2 remaining mixed age classes. This means the school continues to struggle to implement the changes needed to secure a good judgement at its next inspection and close gaps across all subjects.

The school continues to require a SENDCo. One of the remaining teachers has agreed to begin training as SENDCo but it will take a full year to complete the course. This adds to the leadership challenges and leaves some of the most

vulnerable learners (those with SEND) without a permanent on-site specialist to support their needs.

10. The above factors mean that there is no prospect of the structural deficit being eliminated.

The Statutory Process undertaken

The statutory process to close a school is set out in the Department for Education's statutory guidance document 'Opening and closing maintained schools statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers' (2023).

The process includes five stages as follows:

- Stage one – Consultation (Already undertaken)
- Stage two – Publication (Already undertaken)
- Stage three – Representation (Already undertaken)
- Stage four – Decision (This report requests this)
- Stage five – Implementation (Will follow the outcome of this report)

Table 1 – Process for closure

Stage	Dates
Stage 1: Statutory Consultation with interested parties – Options Review	20/02/24 – 17/05/24 (Already Undertaken)
Stage 2: Publication	25/06/24 (Already Undertaken)
Stage 3: Representation	26/06/24 – 24/07/24 (Already Undertaken)
Stage 4: Cabinet decision	Yet to be decided
Stage 5: Implementation	Yet to be decided

Responses to the Post-Publication Consultation / Stage 3 Representation:

The results of the Stage 3 Representation consultation period were as follows

11. No substantive, formal representations have been received from neighbouring councils, ward councillors, the Church of England or Catholic Diocese.
12. Employee consultation commenced on 12 February 2024 to ensure that they were aware of the initial Options report being presented to Cabinet on 20th February 2024. Consultation meetings have been held regularly with both the staff and trade unions. This has ensured that their comments were collated, that the staff were supported throughout, that any queries were responded to and staff were fully informed of the potential impact on their employment. An FAQ document was made available and updated during the process.

13. Stage 3 consultation was carried out between 26th June 2024 and 24th July 2024. Information from this consultation is contained in Appendices 2 - 4
14. The Cabinet Members for Children and Young People and Ward Councillor have been consulted on this report.
15. A total of 2 responses were received via the public email for consultation, both of which opposed the closure.
16. With such a small turnout, an analysis of the characteristics of the responses would not be meaningful. The responses were not substantially different to those made in the first phase of consultation.

Cabinet decision (Stage 4)

17. In line with the statutory guidance, the decision maker is the Cabinet of the Council and the proposals, and such observations, feedback, objections and comments are herewith presented to the Cabinet for scrutiny and decision.

The Cabinet is empowered to:

- a. Agree the closure proposal
- b. Agree the closure proposal with modifications
- c. Refuse the closure proposal

Formal closure of the school (Stage 5)

18. If Cabinet agrees to the proposals to close, this will be effective from no later than the 31st August 2025.

Actions undertaken for the pupils, parents and carers affected

19. The local authority, as the body responsible for school admissions in Gateshead, has had to plan for every eventuality to ensure that all children attending Colegate School has a place in September 2025.
20. The majority of children at Colegate School have left the school to start a neighbouring Primary School in September 2024 after the recommendation from Stage 2 was published.
21. The Admissions team at Gateshead Council will continue to support the transition of pupils to neighbouring schools. This will include any in year transfers requested by parents / carers and those who choose to remain until the end of the academic year. Advice will also be provided to support the transition process for the child and their family, working in partnership with Colegate staff and the new school.

22. Support will be offered to parents, carers and pupils to manage the transition to other early years' provision for those who would otherwise be remaining at Colegate until July 2025. As with previous school closures, individualised support will be provided to children with special educational needs and/or transport needs.

Alternative Options

There is no viable alternative to considering the recommendation proposed in this report.

Implications of the recommendation:

- a) Financial Implications – The Strategic Director, Resources and Digital confirms that there are financial implications for Colegate Community Primary School. If the outcome is to close Colegate Community Primary School, this will enable a time limited budget process to be put in place to mitigate as far as possible the increase in Colegate Community Primary School's deficit budget and therefore the impact on Council resources.
- b) Human Resources Implications – If the Cabinet decision is to approve the closure of Colegate Community Primary School, the Council is fully committed to maintaining job security for all its employees (see breakdown below*) where possible. The Council will work with all maintained schools and services across the Council to find suitable alternative redeployment for the employees affected. All employees will be met with to determine an individual way forward based on skills, experiences and qualifications. In addition, employees will be offered training and support for their wellbeing.

*Deputy Head – 1
Teachers – 3
Support Staff - 8
Catering Staff - 3
Cleaning Staff - 3

- c) Property Implications – If the outcome of the review determines that Colegate closes and children are accommodated in other local schools. The existing buildings could be repurposed by the local authority for other educational uses.

23. Risk Management Implication - There are no direct implications, and all statutory procedures are being followed.
24. Equality and Diversity Implications - The impact on pupils and staff, as detailed in the integrated impact assessment: the local authority will mitigate this for pupils through the school admissions process in identifying alternative school places to meet the needs of individuals with protected characteristics and with the support of HR for staff to meet the needs of individuals and protected characteristics also.
25. Crime and Disorder Implications – There are no direct implications.
26. Health Implications - Should Colegate Community Primary School close, it is agreed the alternative schools for the children are within the recommended two mile walking distance for children under 8 outlined in the travel to school guidance from the Department for Education. The consultation process and proposal is likely to cause stress and anxiety for pupils and their parents / carers due to uncertainty. This could have a negative impact on health and wellbeing for pupils and their families. The council will listen to all concerns as part of the consultation process and communicate effectively with all stakeholders to reduce any negative impact on health and wellbeing as far as possible.
27. Climate Emergency and Sustainability Implications – There are no direct implications.
28. Human Rights Implications - If there is an impact on pupils the local authority will mitigate this through the school admissions process in identifying alternative school places to meet the needs of individuals with protected characteristics.
29. Ward Implications - The Wards for which there may be implications are as follows:
- Windy Nook and Whitehills
 - Wardley and Leam Lane
 - Pelaw and Heworth
 - Felling
 - High Fell
 - Deckham
 - Chowdene

30. Background Material

The following documents have been used in order to prepare this document:

- “Making Gateshead a Place Where Everyone Thrives”: Corporate Plan 2023 – 2028
- DfE Closing Maintained Schools:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/63d1357ed3bf7f3c44bcd6b9/Opening_and_closing_maintained_schools_Jan_2023.pdf
- The Education Act, 1996
- DfE: [Opening, closing and making changes to schools - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/opening-closing-and-making-changes-to-schools)
- Cabinet Report: Primary Community Controlled School Admissions Arrangements and Co-ordinated admission schemes for Primary and Secondary Schools for 2025/26
- ‘School Capacity Audit to ensure Sufficiency of School Places’ Report produced by Education Support Services.
- Schools Financial Budget document
- Consultation reports: Staff / Parents / Carers / Colegate E mails (wider stakeholder opportunity) – all available in the following appendices.

Pupil Voice – Stage 3 Representation

20.06.24

What do you love about Colegate Primary School?

- Everyone is a family at Colegate.
- Colegate is not just a school, it's a team.
- The staff are all kind and caring and they really listen to us.
- Colegate is the best school and I love coming to school every day.
- The teachers do everything they possibly can for us.
- I love the work and all the fun activities we do.
- I love being able to play with best friends every day.
- The teachers are the best and Mrs Gladstone is the best headteacher.
- The staff are so lovely and help us learn.

What have you enjoyed the most in your time at Colegate?

- All of the great trips we have been on.
- I have learnt so much at Colegate.
- The sporting events and teams. We have amazing teams and that makes me feel proud when we go to competitions.
- I have made so many good memories with my friends.
- My best friends are the friends I made when we started Nursery. We have been together all the way through.
- Colegate is such a positive space.
- The staff work so hard for us every day and I have the best memories with them.
- I love all the lessons, especially Phonics.
- I love coming in and seeing all the teachers every morning.
- Mr. Stephenson is always so happy when we go through the gate on a morning.
- The way the teachers really look after us all.
- We are team Colegate and we all look out for each other.
- I get to come to school with my family. All my siblings and cousins have come to Colegate.

How do you feel about the possibility of Colegate Primary School closing?

- Heartbroken because I don't want leave Colegate.
- Scared because I will have to make new friends.
- Really sad because I love this school.
- I would be heartbroken because I would miss the teachers and my friends.
- Lonely because we love the teachers and have our friends here. I don't want to leave everyone.
- It would be really hard if our school closed.

- My parents have been really upset and don't want the school to close.
- I hope no one thinks it's a bad school because it's not, it's the best school.
- My mam has been crying about it and everyone is so sad.
- My family are really upset because my whole family have come to Colegate and don't want me to have to go to another school.
- It's sad because Colegate is an amazing school and doesn't deserve to close.
- Annoyed because Colegate has been here for so long. All my family have come to Colegate.
- Heartbroken because my siblings and cousins are here, and I don't want everyone to be separated.
- All the children in Colegate deserve to leave at the end of year 6.
- We were looking forward to being able to come back and visit Colegate after we leave. We won't get to see our teachers again.
- It's not fair that the teachers have to leave Colegate.

How would you feel if you had to go to a different primary school?

- I would be really nervous going to a new school where I didn't know anyone and had to make new friends.
- I don't want to go to a new school, I want to stay at Colegate.
- What if me and my sister can't get a place in a new school together? We don't want to be split up.
- I only get to see my friends at school, so I won't be able to see them all if we had to move.
- It will be hard to start again in a new school.
- We are so close at this school and other schools might not be the same.
- I'm worried that other schools won't be as friendly as Colegate.
- I have been at Colegate since Nursery and don't want to leave my friends and the teachers.
- It will be hard because the staff won't know us as well at different schools.
- I'm worried the teachers won't help me as much as they do at Colegate.
- I don't want to leave my friends, but it could be exciting to meet new friends.
- It won't be as bad if I get a place in the same school as my cousins are in.



STAGE 3: REPRESENTATION COLEGATE CONSULTATION WITH PARENTS / CARERS

This document will detail the comments made by, and responses given, during parent / carer consultation meetings and to any questions received outside of those meetings regarding the Stage 3 Representation period for Colegate Community Primary School.

There was 1 session offered to parents / carers initially on school premises:

- 17th of July 2024 from 8.30am – 10.00am drop in session.
- Parents / carers were offered timeslots at a date and time that was more convenient for them. No parent / carer requested this.
- A total of 6 parents attended as a group.
- Council staff in attendance:
 - Victoria Cramman, Strategic Lead for Education Support Services

Colegate parents meeting notes:

Main comments raised:

- Parents felt that they were 'set up to fail' from the beginning and the decision had already been made.
- **Response:** the final decision to close would not be made until the 17th of September. The process of consultation was described again and assurances that previous views of parents had been represented in the reports to elected members.
- The group stated that this was heartbreaking for all involved: staff, parents and children and that the council should not underestimate the strength of feeling about this potential closure.
- The group asked about support for children transitioning to another school
- **Response:** Reassurance was given that surrounding schools would be highly supportive of children coming in from Colegate and would work closely with both Colegate staff and parents / carers to ensure that the children settled in.
- The group were concerned about the mental health of their children and the impact of the closure on them
- **Response:** Whatever support these children needed would be provided and prioritised. The council will work closely with the new admitting schools to support the well-being of these children.

E mails received:

Sent: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 12:38 PM

To: OCE ColegateOptions <ColegateOptions@gateshead.gov.uk>

Cc: DoNotReply <donotreply@gateshead.gov.uk>

Subject: Colgate community primary school

I think it's an absolute disgrace that you are even considering closing our school. The Staff and children are absolutely devastated to hear this news. I have two children that attend the school both looked after children and this will hit them hard. They have had so much upheaval in their young lives with covid, the breakdown of their home and now this. I've had the best support off the school throughout my journey of getting a special guardian order. They know all about the children and I will never get that same bond again. To the council it's just a ticky box to these children it's stability and support. I know this email will not even be considered as you obviously have made your minds up but couldn't not tell you how it will affect not only my children but all the children at this lovely school.

Sent: Thursday, July 11, 2024 1:44 PM

To: OCE ColegateOptions <ColegateOptions@gateshead.gov.uk>

Cc: DoNotReply <donotreply@gateshead.gov.uk>

Subject: School closure feedback/question

Good afternoon,

I wanted to take the opportunity today to share my thoughts regarding the school's future closure.

My child is due to start her final year with Colegate this September 2024 and I would very much appreciate some insight on the forward outlook on the 'actual' official closure data.

Our wishes are that she is able to stay and complete this final and important year with Colegate, so confirmation that this is possible would be appreciated.

I think we can all agree that the soon to be year 6 students should be given absolute priority in this occasion to allow for minimal disruption during what can already be a difficult year before they transition to secondary school.

I look forward to your response,

Kind regards

Response: Victoria Cramman, Strategic Lead for Education Services addressed the concern with the person involved.



COLEGATE CONSULTATION WITH EMPLOYEES

This document will detail the responses given during employee consultation meetings and to any questions received outside of those meetings regarding the options review for Colegate Community Primary School.

Meeting held 18 June 2024

The meeting was arranged to give the staff a copy of the report being considered by Cabinet on 25 June 2024.

It was reiterated that all the information, gathered from all parties during the pre-consultation stage had been thoroughly reviewed. From the information reviewed it was determined that two options were not viable. The report details option 3 – closure of the school by September 2025, as the proposal Cabinet are being asked to approve to move to the representation stage.

Staff were advised that if Cabinet approved the recommendation, there would be further meetings held to consult on option 3 with staff, Governors and parents, and provisional dates had already been arranged. In addition to staff consultation, the representation stage gathers view from a wider stakeholder group. The final decision is made following a report to Cabinet on the 17 September 2024.

If school closes which schools will the children go to? Parents are being told there are no places available?

- A transition programme is being developed to determine which local schools the children will transfer to. There are positions in other schools where they can be accommodated.

When the report is shared with parents, there will be an increase in transfer requests. Does this make your decision about the school easier?

- It is Cabinet's decision alone, and transfer requests do not make the decision easier for them. The decision will be based on the report submitted detailing the information gathered throughout the representation stage.

When are the parents made aware of the report?

- The report is published live at 9am. Parents are being made aware following this meeting an email has been prepared to be sent straight

away.

Questions from 10 June 2024

When will the redundancy figures be made available?

- Information needs to be shared with those employees in post in September 2024, therefore now staffing information is available redundancy figures only will be shared before the summer holidays.

Please can you clarify the purpose of the report in June 2024.

- The Executive Group who meets to discuss and review the processes being undertaken regarding Colegate, were asked by the elected members to submit a report detailing **everything learned and collated during Stage 1 of the process.**
- It is this request that led to the timescale changing.
- The Operations Group who are tasked with implementing the processes being undertaken regarding Colegate are currently pulling together all the information received during Stage 1 into the report for Cabinet to consider on 25 June 2024.

Please can you clarify what will happen on 18 June 2024.

- Melanie Maitland together with HR will visit the school to share the new report and will take any immediate questions. The trade unions and governors will also be present. The report will be received as a paper copy.

Please can you clarify what happens after the Cabinet meeting on 25 June 2024.

- Victoria Cramman will email the head teacher and Chair of Governors with the outcome of the cabinet meeting and will be asked to disseminate to staff and parents.
- On 26 June 2024 – the publication will be emailed to the head teacher and Chair of Governors and will be asked to share with staff and parents.

What consultation will occur in the 4-week representation period?

- Trade union and staff consultation will be held on 3 July 2024 by Melanie Maitland and HR.
- The trade union meeting will be held at 1.30pm and staff are offered the opportunity to **meet from 2.30pm, either individually or collectively. Both meetings will be attended by the head teacher and Chair of Governors.**
- Parental consultation will be organised too, during this period.

Who will attend the Cabinet meeting in September 2024? Will the decision be in the public domain before staff are made aware?

- We will look into these points and come back to you with an update, this includes clarifying the dates and actions that will occur.
- The Council is committed to ensuring that staff are prewarned of anything possible and that both staff and parents are notified of any updates as

soon as possible.

What is the earliest date that the school could close should that be decided in September 2024?

- The date of closure will be determined when and if the decision to close is made in September 2024.

Meeting held 3 June 2024

The meeting was arranged to give an update to staff on the timeline being followed for the next stage of consultation.

Staff were reminded that the consultation period of the Option Review on the future of Colegate ended on the 17 May 2024 and were advised that the process of collating all the responses received during this period was being undertaken by the Council.

Staff were then reminded that the initial plan was to move to the next stage on 3 June 2024 but were informed that the elected members have requested that Council officers produce a report to present the consultation responses at a Cabinet meeting on 25 June 2024 and to recommend one option to take forward but as yet, it has not been decided which option.

Therefore, with caution that dates are as known as of 3 June 2024, staff were informed that the key dates with immediate effect are:

- 3rd June – 14 June 2024 – All consultation responses will be collated and analysed and incorporated into a Cabinet report.
- 10 June 2024 3.30pm – further opportunity to ask questions of the Council. Trade unions to be invited.
- 18 June 2024 8.15am - meeting held at school to provide copy of Cabinet report and inform staff of content.
- 18 June 2024 – Cabinet agenda is published
- 25 June 2024 – Cabinet consider report and determine what one option to be taken forward to Stage 2 Representation (a further 4-week consultation period)
- 26 June 2024 - Legal Notification published
- 26 June – 24 July 2024 - Stage 2 process undertaken
- 3 July 2024 – consultation meetings to be offered to all staff and trade unions
- Summer Holidays – the Council will collate and analyse information received from Stage 2 process to inform cabinet report for September 2024.
- 9 or 10 September 2024 – meeting to be held at school to provide copy of Cabinet report and inform staff of content.
- 10 September 2024 – Cabinet agenda is published
- 17 September 2024 – decision will be made by the Council following the statutory process. This date is subject to change.
- Autumn term 2024 – Implementation

Parents will be notified of this change as soon as possible via Helen.

Can the report be emailed to staff on 17 June 2024 (the day before the agenda is published)?

- Unfortunately, not, as it must be published with the Cabinet agenda, hence the meeting on 18 June 2024 to provide you with an update and copy. The trade unions have been invited to this meeting too.

Why can't staff find out the outcome of the consultation at the end of the 4-week representation period?

- Unfortunately, the 4 week representation period ends in the summer holidays and then there is a summer recess by the Council. The timing of the process is therefore bound by the next Cabinet meeting date, which is 17 September 2024.

What happens if Cabinet do not approve the recommended option in the report?

- We can be tasked by Cabinet to look at other options both after the meeting in June and September.

Will the fact staff are leaving have an influence on the decision made?

- No, the report will focus on the three options and the information received during the Stage 1 consultation period.

Questions from 19 and 20 March 2024

If option 2 goes ahead where does that leave Reception? What will happen to the Nursery, will we be allowed to take more children in otherwise how can school continue?

- The building plans for the school will need to be looked at and reviewed again to accommodate the children in one building, this includes Nursery and Reception children. Nursery numbers can't be increased as more staff can't be appointed due to the financial deficit.

If I was to take my redundancy in July/August next year if option 3 happens they said we could not work for 4 weeks but could work as supply?

- Yes

If I, then went on to get another job within the council after these 4 weeks what would happen to my pension?

- You would be enrolled into the pension scheme as a new starter and within 1 year you will need to make the decision to join your pensions together.

Would it stop and re start with a 4-week gap? Would a 4-week gap make much difference to my pension? or would a new pension account be made and the other pension account frozen until I reach retirement age?

- As above.

Most people are aware of the overflow issues for Gibside School and how they are taking space in a couple of nearby schools. Would there be any options to look at creating a 'satellite' at Colegate if option 2 was chosen and therefore making the school more viable?

- This would need to be considered separately.

Will the decision once made in September, be given to staff before it is made public?

- The full Council meeting is a public meeting, therefore there will automatically be a public record. Helen will give the staff an update as soon as the decision is known.

In relation to support for employees looking for new jobs, is this support as of now or once confirmation has been given if the decision is to close the school?

- Support is available now, employees can access support from Christine Elliott in Economic Development in relation to CV's, interviews and sign post relevant training courses.
- HR are currently working on a protocol which would provide the formal support to employees if the decision is taken to close the school e.g. redeployment.
- LA will provide a statement staff can use if the decision was to close the school.

Will local Councillors speak to staff if they are not Gateshead residents?

- Councillor Hayley has confirmed he will speak to employees and parents. If anyone has a problem speaking to any other Councillors, this can be picked up with Councillor Hayley.

Will Ofsted be aware of the options review, and would they come into school?

- Part of Ofsted's due diligence prior to inspecting a school is to search the local news in **relation so they can factor in the current situation. They could decide either way, to inspect or consider the local intelligence and not inspect.**

What would the financial difference be between option 2 and employee redundancies?

- This is being looked at.

If there is not an option to receive capital programme monies, how would option 2 and the changes be paid from the capital programme?

- If the decision taken in September is to go with option 2, Cabinet will make sure the money is there to facilitate this option.

If option 2 is approved in September, when would the work start?

- It would be assumed that the work would be prioritised, and a general timescale will be requested from the Property & Assets Team.

Has Colegate asked School Forum for financial help?

- Carole Smith has asked for support numerous times, and unfortunately no monies have been available for Colegate.

How much information is being shared with employees about the financial position of Colegate? Are there any breakdowns?

- Colegate is in a significant budget deficit as stated in the report. It would be up to the Head Teacher and the Chair of Governors to decide on what detail can be shared. The next **Governing Body meeting is on 25 March 2024 and Helen will discuss this with the Chair.**

Questions provided from staff on 14 and 15 March 2024

Are there going to be any minutes/notes being distributed from the meetings?

- This document will be the record of any meetings held and will record questions asked and responses received, as well any addition questions received in between meetings.

What happened regarding the previous options that were made?

- See below.

Redundancy payments

- The Council's current redundancy pay table has been distributed and at present we are calculating estimates for your redundancy payment, and we will provide these on 1 May 2024.

Why is the OFSTED visit is not happening?

- This is answered below.

What are the meetings scheduled for May 1st?

- This will be the next consultation with staff and the trade unions. The Council will meet the trade unions separately first at 1pm to explore any questions, suggestions, and comments they have. HR and Melanie will then be available to meet with the whole staff team, groups of staff or individuals, this will be their opportunity to contribute in the way they feel most comfortable, or not at all if this is their preference. This document will continue to be shared with all employees. We are happy to meet and discuss any element of this process. Between now and then please submit any questions you have via Helen, direct to HR or via your trade union representative, this process should not conclude with you having outstanding **questions.**

What happens after the decision?

- Updates will be provided to staff and parents as soon as this is possible in September 2024 (dates of the meetings where the decision will be taken will be confirmed to all parties when known) and whatever decision is made will

be confirmed in writing, and staff and parents **will be made aware of the next steps. An implementation plan will be developed for whatever decision is made.**

#TeamColegate and uncertainty on use

- We are aware that #teamcolegate has been used by school previously and is being used by parents to support their preferred option for the school's future. We do not want school or staff to stop using #teamcolegate but need school to be aware of the posts they are reposting on the official Facebook page.

Is it possible for the Chair to be available?

- Subject to his availability he will continue to provide support to school and staff.

If made redundant, is there any impact on my redundancy payment depending on where I get a job?

- A redundancy payment will not be payable to you in the event that you receive and accept an offer of employment from another 'local government employer'* before your redundancy date and this new employment is to start within four weeks of your redundancy date.

**** Any employer as specified in Part II of Schedule 2 of the Redundancy Payments (Continuity of Employment in Local Government, etc.) (Modification) Order 1999.***

Meeting held Thursday 29 February 2024

Process

Can you explain why we are given different dates - first, it was September, then May, however, the Evening Chronicle is staying June for a decision? If all evidence is gathered by May half term, why will the decision not be announced until September?

- A copy of the timeline was shared at the meeting with confirmation of the following dates:
 - 20th February – 17th May 2024 (Stage 1)
 - 3rd June 2024 - (Legal Notification)
 - 3rd June – 28th June 2024 (Stage 2)
 - September 2024 – decision will be made by the Council following the statutory process (this is the earliest opportunity for Cabinet and Council to consider)
 - Autumn term 2024 –

Implementation **Where will the legal**

notification appear?

- We expect this to be the Evening Chronicle.

Closure

If the school was too close, what is the earliest date this could happen? Are we talking as soon as Christmas 2024? What is the timescale? Lots of staff with weddings, young families, mortgages, etc and need to plan effectively for the future but staff are incredibly loyal.

- School would not close Christmas 2024. If the decision to close is made, then the likelihood is that this would be at the end of the academic year, July 2025. This, however, cannot be **finalised until we reach the decision in September 2024.**

Option 2 – Move to one building

If we were to move to one building when would that decision be made, for us to set up etc?

- Until a decision is made, timescales for option 2 cannot be determined.

Parents

Would it be possible to get the views of the parents and our local MPs; also, to ask our MPs what they think about the situation, and can they help us with Colegate's situation? The MP's constituents are the people and area that they are supposed to help, so what can they do?

- Views of all parents are being sought, through the inbox plus one-to-one meetings, with the Council and Councillor Haley are being offered to all parents. Meetings can be held in whatever format parents feel comfortable.
- The MP for Gateshead is Ian Mearns, and he can be contacted on ian.mearns.mp@parliament.uk.

What do we do with the growing interest of nursery numbers? Do I contact families to offer places for next year?

- Yes, continue as usual and the current nursery numbers will be asked for from Colegate during this phase of the consultation.

HR

Will there be any incentive rewards given to the staff that choose not to leave and go find new employment elsewhere?

- No incentives can be offered.

What would happen to staff who have fixed term contracts?

- This will depend on the staffing structure that will be in place for September 2024. This needs to be decided by Helen as soon as possible.

If staff need to find new posts, how will the LA support with this and will current salaries be protected?

- The Council is currently developing a protocol to be agreed with schools across Gateshead that would give priority to staff from Colegate. In addition, jobs across the Council can be ringfenced for the team and training can be made available.

How will the redundancy work... last in first out? Will we need to reapply for the jobs left?

- It is expected that redundancy would occur at the same time on the date of closure unless an alternative option is implemented, and this then results in a restructure which may require a selection process from the school's redundancy policy will be evoked.

What if staff leave/made redundant and there's not enough teachers to teach the lessons and not enough staff to supervise the children? What will happen then with the remaining children/staff?

- Helen would have to cover the posts as she usually would, this may mean supply staff.

Do you keep your employment entitlements if you move to another job within Council?

- Yes

If the closure goes ahead and if Windy Nook are expanding as mentioned, are Colegate staff being given first refusal on any jobs this creates in the first instance?

- Once a protocol is agreed with schools, we will be able to provide the detail on how this would operate for Colegate staff.

If the closure goes ahead, and the council goes forward with the creation of a KS3 SEMH provision, will Colegate staff be given first refusal on any jobs this creates in the first instance?

- The Council have no plans for a KS3 SEMH provision.

What contracts will be offered if alternative employment is found?

- Contracts may be offered on a permanent, fixed term or temporary basis and will be dependent on a schools' staffing requirements. It will be made clear to Colegate staff the circumstances of the jobs they are applying for.

Impact for School

Why has the LA not produced a positive report about the school to combat the negativity written in the Evening Chronicle? Staff are unlikely to get jobs when the report was so negative and damaged the reputation of the school?

- The Council has no control on how the Evening Chronicle report on the options review however the Council is aware of how hard you have all worked and will positively promote staff to other schools. There will be a prepared statement that all staff can use in job applications and references.

What will happen in September 2024 with mixed classes?

- Helen will need to carry on as normal and make decisions on classes and staffing for September 2024.

What happens if parents chose to leave the school before decisions are made and once the decision is made?

- The school will be setting the budget for the financial year 2024/2025 in April 2024 and therefore reducing numbers will not affect the school financially in this period. In addition, once the decision is known this will be factored into any implementation needed.

Questions provided by staff on 19 March 2024

Parents and Children

Can the parents and staff have a meeting with cabinet to express their views?

- No but feedback can be provided through Colegate's local councillors who are Councillor Paul Diston, Councillor Tom Graham, Councillor Rachel Mullen, Councillor Ian Patterson, **Councillor Jim Turnbull, and Councillor Amanda Wintcher.**

For children going through the EHCP process, how will this affect them if they were to move? For example, VI child in Y5, will they be given priority to ensure that the provision they are going to are able to meet their needs and will be welcomed and provision met?

- Children with an EHCP or going through the process will go through the SEND panel and then consultation with local schools as per usual procedures. Schools will reply to with the consultation as to whether they can meet need or not.

Many of our parents don't own cars or work and are on benefits and walk to school, even the bus fares and the miles you are expecting these families to walk to school will have a major impact on school learning, attendance, mental health of the children and parents. Are you going to support our families financially with expensive bus fares/ taxis to get children to school?

- No, there are no finances within the Council to offer this.

If we were to have another teacher in nursery, we would be able to up our numbers considerably, why has this not been offered?

- The school is in a significant deficit position. It is not in a financial position to be able to employ another teacher.

What will happen to the remainder of children and staff if the decision is to close the school and parents to pull children out early? Will the school close earlier than planned?

- Not in a position to answer this at this stage.

Reputation

Will Ofsted be coming back in to see how far we have come before the final decision is made?

- The Council are not given any notice of when a school will be inspected. The Council is notified after the school have been notified.

Our Key stage 2 results were above national average. Why is that not mentioned in the options report? Why has the report not recognised what has been achieved?

- The report has to be written in a particular style as it is for Cabinet. The Council were asked to present the challenges faced by the school. The report reflects this.

Finance/Buildings

Can the plans previously drawn up for Colegate be considered again?

- Moving to one building is option 2 for the options review and the relevant officers are reconsidering these at present.

Why isn't option 2 a priority when financially this would benefit the LA through sale or use of buildings and the school field?

- See above, considering as part of option 2.

If we were in one building how much would be saved on energy, cleaning, maintenance etc?

- It is estimated that the school could save up to £40,000 in building related costs if the school moved to one site. However, this option would also need considerable capital investment by the Council, and at present this option is not in the Capital Programme.

Would the cabinet consider leaving the nursery and reception where it is and use other parts of ks1 building for other council departments? KS1 move to top building?

- See above, considering as part of option 2.

Why have we had to take on the huge debt built up by the previous management?

- The Council does not manage the finance or budget of the school. This is delegated to Helen and the governing body.
- The Council is not able to write off any school's deficit budget. This is set out in Gateshead's Scheme for Financing Schools, which is mostly prescribed by the Department for Education (DfE).

What financial support will be available from April 2025?

- The rules around school funding and Gateshead fair funding formula for mainstream schools are subject to very prescribed rules by the DfE. It is not anticipated that there will be any additional funding other than the current grant funding available to all schools.



COLEGATE STAGE 3 REPRESENTATION FEEDBACK WITH EMPLOYEES AND GOVERNORS

This document will detail the responses given during employee consultation meetings and to any questions received outside of those meetings regarding the options review for Colegate Community Primary School.

Colegate Community Primary School, Full Governing Body Meeting 27th June 2024

The following has been agreed by the COG as a true record of the meeting.

Present: HT and 10 governors.

Strategic Lead for Schools and Early Years, was in attendance for the first part of the meeting to answer governor questions relating to the latest report issued for Colegate Community Primary School.

Questions were asked, and *answered* to as follows:

Q: In the first bullet point of the most recent report, this states the birth rate is falling and there is no local housing. It then states that the birth rate is stable and that there are plans for 9 new houses. This is contradictory to what it originally states.

In the report the table shows a decrease based on the birth rate information. This has fallen over time and is low. It is low and stable at this low position. If there were plans to build significantly more new houses, this could be taken into consideration. There are only 9 planned, this is not enough houses needed for consideration.

Q: How does the birth rate effect this if the report states it is stable?

The birth rate is not growing, it has reduced and it currently at a low point. The school is also not attracting those from within the catchment area.

A governor commented that they have concerns over children currently in Year 5, moving into Year 6 sitting SATs. There are also concerns for staff in September. Things are changing rapidly and often daily.

The HT added that the pupil numbers are changing daily and have changed from what was included within the HT report. The school have been inundated with transfer forms. One local primary school has advised they would like all children in place by 10 July 2024. A lot of children may leave before the summer holidays.

Strategic Lead advised that the admissions team are looking at transfer requests for Colegate as a separate entity from now due to the significant number that came in as of

yesterday. Colegate children will be given first preference where possible. All local schools have been directed to refer back to the admissions team. The transfers were anticipated, however not at the rate they have been.

The HT highlighted that children with an EHCP are as a separate process. SL from the LA is working with EHCP parents to help in this process.

JS – School Improvement Partner, is visiting school tomorrow to meet with the HT to discuss what classes could potentially be from September. There was an advert for three new teachers, 50 applications have been received for these posts. Applications will also be worked through tomorrow alongside the School Improvement Partner.

Strategic Lead stated that the admissions team will provide a weekly update to herself, the Strategic Lead for Education Services and the Service Director for Education, Schools and Inclusion.

Q: How many staff are leaving now?

The HT responded - No more teachers are leaving. Three teachers are remaining. The applications for the three teaching posts were good. However, the school need to see if there is a need for new staff with the lower number of children anticipated.

Q: If there is a space for a child at another school, is it not better for the child to leave?
This would be the parent's choice. This would need to be done through the admissions team. It is up to the families as to if/when they want to leave.

A member of staff commented that the school does not get to find out which school children are moving to and when. This would be beneficial for the school and staff to know; this information isn't included on the transfer forms. The SBM has asked the LA for this information to be included.

Strategic Lead explained at this point that offers and also acceptances may not have been processed, families may still decline the places offered.

Q: Is the school looking at closure for definite?

No. A decision will be made by Cabinet on 17 September 2024.

Q: How many children are needed to make the school financially viable?

There is no least number, the school is not financially viable now, the deficit is continuing to grow.

Q: The report gave the impression that the school wouldn't stay open, was there ever an opportunity that the school would've stayed open?

The other two options for the school to stay open were reviewed to see if they were viable and as detailed in the report they weren't. There were also no alternatives put forward during the options review. Cabinet will decide in September on the option of closure.

The Chair added if Cabinet decide to not close the school following consultation, other options will need to be sought and the school would remain open.

A governor commented that if parents knew the school would remain open, they would not leave.

The HT advised that an email has been sent to parents by school, asking for them to let the school know if they are transferring their children.

Q: An initial question asked at the start of the process was if siblings would stay together. This now doesn't seem to be possible.

The LA will work with schools and families in order to keep siblings together.

Q: What happens if Cabinet refuse and decide not to close the school?

Funding will need to be sought. Schools' forum has been asked previously to help support the schools with deficit budgets, however they agreed this would not happen. School deficits can't be written off as explained in the report.

The Chair added that if the school does not close, it would remain open and further options would need to be sought.

A governor commented that communications within the community give the indication that the school has closed. It has been picked up that children are leaving the school. Could this be a political decision from the LA, has Colegate been set up as a red herring? There has been no representation from Councillors for the school, there has been no investment in the school. The Headteacher is in school for three days per week and does an incredible amount of work in this time. All work to try and reduce the budget, support all children in the school and staff, has been forgotten about.

Q: Does the information received on Tuesday, mirror what parents have also received?
Yes, everyone has received the same report.

A governor commented that as the report is quite negative, could this have led parents to believe that this is the end of Colegate.

Q: A governor asked one of the Cllrs present what do Councillors think of this?
The governor replied - If a parent wants to remove their child from the school, they can do this when they feel it is right for their children. The LA can't continue to subsidise the school.

Another governor commented that closing one school would not make a difference to the overall education deficit.

The Chair commented that governors do believe that the report is negative, everyone has received the report, and this is accepted as read. Staff are voting with their feet, as are families. It feels as though the school is on course to close itself. The main concern is the quality of education children receive whilst they are attending Colegate.

Q: What happened to the initial closure date of Easter?

There has never been an Easter closure date. This date was only shared during the staff 1:1 consultations in relation to possible redundancy calculations. HR advised those individual staff that this was the only reason for an Easter date. The date has not moved from July 2025 which it states in the report.

Q: Is there anything that could force the date to change?

This decision is for Cabinet. The LA can't say if this would change.

Q: Can parents be forced to move their children now?

No, the LA can't force a move now. The LA are working with schools and families to ensure they have a place in a school of preference. The admissions team are prioritising Colegate. Everything that can be done, will be done to support families.

The HT added that parents just want what is best for their children and would look to move sooner to ensure their children are settled in a new school. Colegate has advised families that they have got to do what they feel is best.

Q: Why has it been such a long time to make a decision?

The LA abide by the policies for opening and closing schools which sets the timescales. There is also the summer holiday and the meeting dates of Cabinet to take into consideration.

Q: Why was this initially pushed back by Cabinet?

A request came for a different type of second report. A significant amount of information submitted during the first part of the consultation needed to be considered.

Q: What will the make up of classes be?

This is unknown as the numbers are changing often. This will be discussed during the meeting with the Headteacher and School Improvement Partner tomorrow.

The Strategic Lead highlighted to governors, if they have any additional questions or queries, to contact her. The inbox continues to be monitored. All views will be reviewed and kept for the next steps of the process.

<p>Title of proposal:</p> <p>The Future of Colegate Community Primary School:</p> <p>Following the completion of the formal consultation process and the outcome, this report is now recommending the closure of Colegate Community Primary School with effect from no later than 31st August 2025 with the associated reallocation the school's catchment area.</p>	Age	Race	Sex	Gender reassignment	Disability	Religion or Belief	Pregnancy and Maternity	Sexual Orientation	Marriage and Civil Partnership	<p>Description of potential mitigation</p>
<p>Equality impact: (ü all that apply. The assessment should also consider impact on council employees and carers where applicable)</p> <p>Description of impact:</p> <p>Colegate community primary school is proposed to close</p>	Y				Y					<p><u>Mitigation of impact on Children and Young People:</u> The local authority will mitigate the impact on pupils, and their families and carers, through a separate school transfer process by identifying alternative school places to meet the needs of any pupils with protected characteristics.</p>

from September 2025 and the existing school pupils will be accommodated in neighbouring schools with available places.

Colegate is a single form entry school with a total Pupil Admission Number of 210 (30 x 7 year groups) and an age range of 3-11 years old.

There are currently 11 children in nursery, 5 are projected to attend Nursery September 2024, which is a non-statutory provision.

For 2024/25 the total school roll numbers are less than 20 out of 210 capacity.

Age is the most affected protected characteristic. We acknowledge there will be a negative impact on all existing pupils at Colegate primary schools.

Following the announcement of the Stage 3 Representation period, parents of Colegate pupils began submitting transfer applications. In total 80 applications were received of which 64 were offered their first preference, eight second and eight third. Receiving schools in certain year groups exceeded their admission limit to accommodate siblings. There are currently 9 applications to be resolved in the new academic year.

Current numbers in school are less than 20 and mean that children are being taught in 2 mixed age classes; one key stage 1 and one key stage 2 class. All children with an EHCP or undergoing a needs assessment, that would be remaining for the academic year 2024-2025, requested a change of provision. These consultations were completed, working with appropriate teams to ensure the best placements to meet needs. As of September 2024, there are no children remaining in the school

<p>Disability:</p> <p>There are no children with an EHCP remaining at Colgate.</p> <p>Closure of Colegate Primary school will have a negative impact on existing pupils, parents/carers and staff as well as the local community and stakeholders. These individuals could have any of the 9 protected characteristics.</p> <p><u>Impact on Workforce:</u></p> <p>Closure of a Local Authority maintained school will mean a loss of employment for staff who are employees of Gateshead Council.</p> <p>The Options Review Stage 1: consultation resulted in affected employees being placed at risk of redundancy.</p> <p>Until a final decision is made to undertake any proposed closure it will become more difficult to maintain education</p>										<p>with an EHCP. Parents of children at SEN support have been in contact with a designated member of the SEN Team who has been in contact with SENDCo's of all receiving schools to ensure a transition package that will support the move, including attending transition days in summer term. Support will continue to be offered for the children who remain at Colegate through LA teams (SEND Team, SENIT and Virtual school) working with the SENDCo and Designated CIOC teacher.</p> <p>School admissions staff will continue to work with parents/carers and all neighbouring schools to secure appropriate alternative school places for all remaining pupils. Due to the distances between Colegate primary and the neighbouring schools there should be no need for home to school transport assessments.</p>
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<p>standards and support for the pupils as experienced staff leave to move on to other employment. This will likely cause increased anxiety for both the pupils and their parents/carers.</p> <p>There is a risk the school may close earlier than the proposed date of August 2025 due to pupils moving schools prior to any planned closure and a lack of staff if they leave current posts</p>									<p>Considering current numbers in September 2024 all pupils in Colegate Primary School can currently be accommodated in spaces available in the nearest 7 neighbouring schools which are within a reasonable walking distance as outlined in Department for Education guidance. (2 miles walking distance for children under 8 years of age and 3 miles for children 8 years and over).</p> <p>These are Windy Nook, The Drive, Wardley, St Augustine’s, Roman Road, Lingey House and White Mere primary schools. It is approximately 1.7 miles from the furthest point of Colegate’s catchment area to the two school furthest away from Colegate Primary School i.e. Wardley and White Mere Primary Schools</p> <p>All neighbouring schools have a current Ofsted rating of at least Good.</p> <p>If this proposal is agreed there will be a clear plan for all of the children who currently attend Colegate to be</p>
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									<p>accommodated in neighbouring schools from September 2025.</p> <p>The LA Admissions team will work with the receiving schools to try and accommodate all parent's preferences. A separate transfer process will be implemented by school admissions to manage the transfer of pupils.</p> <p><u>Mitigation of impact on CYP with Disabilities:</u> Children with SEND and EHCPs will continue to be supported in any new school setting.</p> <p>There is greater capacity in other schools to support the number of children with disabilities and additional needs.</p> <p><u>Mitigation of impact on workforce:</u> The negative impact on local authority staff is acknowledged and support will be through agreed HR policies and procedures available to all employees. These will include training, redeployment</p>
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										<p>opportunities, counselling, and support for employee wellbeing.</p> <p>If the council determines that the only viable option to take forward is to close Colgate Community Primary School then the council will strive to avoid any compulsory redundancies, by working with all maintained schools and services across the Council to find suitable alternative redeployment for the employees. However, the full detail of this cannot be determined until a decision has been made.</p>
<p>Health impact: (eg physical, mental health, wellbeing, substance misuse) This proposal is likely to cause significant stress and anxiety for staff, pupils and their parents / carers due to uncertainty. This could have a negative impact on health and wellbeing for school employees and pupils and their families/carers.</p> <p>Families and carers are also likely to experience anxiety about supporting their children and young people through such a significant change if Colegate school were to close.</p> <p>Pupils attending the school with a physical disability or neuro-diverse condition may have specific additional needs that are currently well met at Colegate primary school and supported by its staff.</p> <p>It is anticipated that there would be a negative impact on mental health and wellbeing for everyone, in particular any CYP with neuro-diversity who may</p>										<p>Should Colegate close, it is agreed the alternative schools for the children are within the recommended two mile walking distance for children under 8 outlined in the travel to school guidance from the Department for Education.</p> <p>The council will listen to all concerns as part of the consultation process and communicate effectively with all stakeholders to reduce any</p>

<p>not respond positively to change of routine, loss of familiar staff, peers and attending an alternative school.</p>	<p>negative impact on health and wellbeing as far as possible</p> <p>Students with SEND would be prioritised and their needs and transition managed carefully by the SEND Team at Education Gateshead in conjunction with the HT at Colegate.</p>
<p>Socio Economic impact: (eg neighbourhood, ward, area of deprivation, household group, income, wealth)</p> <p>Colegate Primary school is located in Pelaw and Heworth ward in the East of Gateshead.</p> <p>The population in the immediate surrounding areas to Colegate school is within the 20-30% most deprived in England, according to the Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019).</p> <p>Published school census data shows that 59.9% of pupils are eligible for free school meals (FSM).</p> <p>It is acknowledged that there is likely to be a negative impact on low income households, in particular those in receipt of FSM. If Colegate school were to close there would be additional financial costs, such as a need to purchase an alternative school uniform, and potentially incur additional travel costs if mode of transport to school had to change from walking to public transport or use of private vehicles.</p>	<p><u>Mitigation of impact on workforce:</u></p> <p>Support to employees at risk of redundancy will be through agreed HR policies and procedures available to all employees. These will include training, redeployment opportunities, counselling, and support for employee wellbeing.</p> <p>If the council determines that the only viable option to take forward is to close Colgate Community Primary School then the council will strive to avoid any compulsory redundancies, by working with all maintained schools and services across the Council to find suitable alternative redeployment for the</p>

<p>The negative financial impact on local authority staff employed at Colegate school if the school were to close is acknowledged, if staff were to be made redundant.</p>	<p>employees. However, the full detail of this cannot be determined until a decision has been made.</p> <p>Support from Economic Development team is available to all staff in relation to CV's, interviews and signposting to training.</p>
<p>Environmental impact: (does the proposal impact on climate change and the Council's commitment to be carbon neutral by 2030? Is the proposal in line with the Council's Environmental Policy? Does the proposal increase natural resource use? Does the proposal increase waste? Does the proposal increase pollution? Does the proposal impact on wildlife? Does the proposal increase car use? Does the proposal increase energy use?)</p> <p>There may be an overall a neutral environmental impact.</p> <p>There is likely to be an increase in carbon emissions if parents/carers have to switch from walking children to school to public transport or using private vehicles if school places allocated are further away from home.</p> <p>This could be offset by the reduced carbon emissions of no longer heating and lighting school buildings.</p>	
<p>Cumulative impact: (consider impact based on successive budgetary decisions relating to the proposal or is the proposal part of wider budgetary considerations that may collectively have an impact on service users, and is potentially at odds with the Thrive agenda)</p>	

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**Summary of consultation/data/research undertaken to inform the assessment:
(eg feedback and engagement with service users, trade unions, employees, partners, public, benchmarking, case studies)**

The Stage 1 Consultation process on the Options Review took place from the 20th February 2024 – 17th May 2024. During this period consultations took place with parents, pupils (through the school staff), teaching staff, support staff, school-based Council employees, governors, trade unions, local councillors and neighbouring primary schools. Opportunities were provided for interested parties to speak directly to Council Officers face to face wherever possible and the views expressed were collated and considered.

Stage 1 consultation information:

- Pupil voice was collected from both KS1 and KS2 pupils by members of the school staff
- There were 2 sessions offered to parents / carers on school premises with 28 parents attending. The consultation was also translated into 6 languages to ensure that parents could access this
- Parents of children with SEND needs were offered a separate meeting
- 7 meetings have been held for staff who chose to attend which involved council officers (including HR and Strategic Education staff), Headteacher and Chair of Governors and included Trade Unions.
- 2 meetings have been held with Catering and Cleaning Staff
- An e mail address was published for all stakeholders / interested parties to post their views. A total of 13 responses were recorded and considered.
- A petition was delivered to Council on the 23rd of May 2024 where one of the parents delivered a statement from a number of other parents. The e-petition presented 4,500 signatures supporting the school staying open.

The Stage 1-consultation outcome was that most respondents wanted to explore option 2 i.e. retain and relocate the school in to one building on the current site. Further investigation of this option showed that this would cost around £300,000 adding to the serious financial position the school is currently in. It would also be difficult to use the other building for an alternative purpose given the proximity to the main school building on the same site.

The Stage 3: Representation 4-week period on the future of Colegate Community Primary School and proposal to close the school from September 2025, took place from the 26th June 2024 until 24th July 2024.

The representation period triggered formal consultation with other admission authorities in the area, neighbouring local authorities, appropriate local organisations, group and individuals. No comments or objections were received from these groups.

Comments and objections from parents, staff and pupils have been recorded in this report but with such a small turnout, an analysis of the characteristics of the responses would not be meaningful. The responses were not substantially different to those made in the first phase of consultation.

A careful communication strategy will be required to align with the decision for this Stage 4 phase.

Signed: (completing officer) Victoria Cramman

Date: 21/08/24

Service Director: (approved) Suzanne Dunn

Date: 21/08/24