

Title: Cramlington Village Primary School
Author: Department for Education (DfE)

Impact Assessment – Section 9 Academies Act Duty.

1. Section 9 of the Academies Act 2010 places a duty upon the Secretary of State to take into account what the impact of establishing the additional school would likely to be on maintained schools, Academies, institutions within the further education sector and alternative provision in the area in which the additional school is (or is proposed to be) situated. Due to the number of schools that may be potentially impacted, given the 10 mile catchment area, we have focused our impact assessment on all 8 Primary schools in Cramlington (which are within a two mile radius of the new school).

Background

2. Cramlington Village Primary School (CVPS) will be a 4-11, non-selective and non-denominational primary school. It plans to open in September 2012 with two year groups (30 pupils in Reception and 30 pupils in Year 1) taking 30 pupils more in every subsequent year until it reaches capacity (210 pupils) by 2018. The permanent site for this school is the old Eastlea First School site, Cramlington.
3. The Trust want their school to offer a real alternative to existing provision in Cramlington, aiming to better meet the needs of local working parents, increasing parental choice and provide high standard of education as informed by Reggio Emilia and Vygotskian principles, and extended school services to children and their families.
4. The School is supported by the Cramlington Village Primary Trust and a steering group. The steering group consists of the founder members as well as additional professional people and interested stakeholders, including parents, who have joined since the project was approved to pre-opening stage.

The Schools Catchment Area and Admissions

5. The Admission arrangements of Cramlington Village Primary School comply with the School Admissions Code and Admissions Law. Pupils will be admitted at reception without reference to ability, aptitude or social background. Should the school be over-subscribed, after admitting all children with a statement of SEN which names Cramlington Village Primary School (CVPS), and for whom the school has agreed to be named in the statement, priority will be given in the following order:
 - a. Looked After Children. Children who are looked after by a local authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989 at the date the relevant application for admission is made, and who the local authority has confirmed will continue to be looked after by it in

accordance with the said section at the time they are admitted to the school.

- b. Pupils with exceptional medical or exceptional social need (evidence must be supported in a written statement by a professionally involved third party, such as a doctor or a social worker). Children for whom it is essential to be admitted to this school because of special circumstances to do with significant medical or social needs evidenced by written professional advice, explaining why these needs can realistically only be met by Cramlington Village Primary School. The definition of what constitutes medical or social needs for this purpose will be set out in the school's prospectus.
 - c. Pupils whose parents are regarded as 'founding members' as agreed by the Secretary of State, and who continue to be actively involved in the leadership of the school at the start of term in September 2012.
 - d. Pupils who, on the date of admission, will have a sibling already enrolled in the school. (For the purpose of admissions siblings are deemed to be brothers and sisters, stepbrothers and sisters, adopted brothers and sisters and other children who reside permanently in the household and are treated as siblings.)
 - e. Priority for 5 of the remaining places per class will be given to children who are entitled to free school meals at the time of application and who have successfully applied to the Local Authority and who have received written confirmation of their child's entitlement to free school meals. This amounts to 16% of the overall intake per class, in line with the average for the town. These places will be awarded by random allocation at a meeting monitored by an independent adjudicator.
 - f. After places have been filled using the criteria above any remaining places will be awarded by random allocation to pupils within a 10-mile radius of the school entrance (measured between front doors of the school and home) at a meeting monitored by an independent adjudicator.
6. Cramlington Village Primary School (CVPS) will operate a waiting list for each year group. Where in any year the school receives more applications for places than there are places available, a waiting list will be determined solely in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. Where places become vacant they will be allocated to children on the waiting list in accordance with the oversubscription criteria.
7. Ministers should note that the Free School's oversubscription criterion includes prioritising children of Founders. Ministers agreed that Founder status should be granted to 10 individuals following the submission 21 May 2012 where Founders were agreed. As such, Annex B to the Cramlington Village Primary School Funding Agreement contains a derogation to allow the Cramlington Village Primary Free School to prioritise children of named

Founders in their oversubscription criteria in 2012. Named Founders are held on a closed list dated 22 June as part of Annex B.

8. Ministers should also note that the Free School's oversubscription criteria includes prioritising children who qualify for the Pupil Premium. This is permitted in the new Admissions Code for admissions in 2013. Ministers agreed that Cramlington Village Primary School could admit on this basis a year before the new code permits. As such, Annex B to the Cramlington Village Primary Free School Funding Agreement contains a derogation to allow the Cramlington Village Free School to prioritise children who qualify for the Pupil Premium in their oversubscription criteria in 2012.
9. Pupil numbers for September 2012 have fallen significantly from being oversubscribed in Reception (30 + pupils) and currently stand at 14 for Reception and 8 pupils for Y1. The school formal admissions process opened 14 May and closed on 28 May. Parents will be made offers of places for their children subject to the signing of the Supplemental Funding Agreement.
10. The permanent site of Cramlington Village Primary School (CVPS) will be on the site of the old Eastlea First School, on Bowmont Drive, Eastfield Lea in Cramlington. After places have been filled using the admissions criteria any remaining places will be awarded by random allocation to pupils within a 10-mile radius of the school.
11. For the purposes of the impact assessment we have assessed the impact on all the existing primary schools in the town, within a 2 mile radius of the Free School. It is officials' view that it will be unlikely that schools situated outside Cramlington will be impacted or will be more than minimally impacted.

Local Authority View

12. The Department wrote to the Local Authority on 2 March 2012 requesting their view as to the impact of the Free School on other local schools in the area.
13. Northumberland County Council has never been a strong supporter of the Free School proposal and in their response stated that the opening of the Free School in 2012 will represent a significant challenge for the existing primary schools in the town.
14. Northumberland County Council have highlighted the current capacity of all primary schools (excluding the Catholic Schools) in the town is 330 pupils per year group. The Council is predicting that cohort sizes entering Reception over the next few years will be in the range of 260 to 290 (excluding the Catholic Schools) which represents a reduction in pupil numbers of an average of over 10% and of up to 20% in some year groups.
15. Cramlington Village Primary School will bring an additional 30 places which the Local Authority argues will represent a significant challenge for the existing primary schools in the town. The Local Authority argue that the proposal for Cramlington Village Primary School, which will be located in the

north-east corner of the town, where there are already three primary schools and where there has been a falling birth rate, will place undue pressure on other schools.

16. However the town of Cramlington is expanding and approximately 195 new homes are currently under construction in the town. Approval has also been granted, following an area planning committee meeting, for the development of over 700 homes in the south west sector of the town, about 2 miles from the site of Cramlington Village Primary School. It is expected that these houses, once built, will generate a significant number of additional pupils who will need a school place.
17. Northumberland County Council has reserved a site for a new 2 Form Entry school to be developed at the appropriate time in this south-west sector, which the council has explained is unlikely to be required in the next two or three years.
18. In conclusion, Northumberland County Council is concerned that opening the proposed Free School in the former Eastlea building would have a significant negative impact on the existing eight maintained primary schools in the town, and in particular on the three schools in the north of the town where there is already a high falling birth rate. Northumberland County Council argues that all the schools in the town are highly performing schools, and the additional competition that the Free School would generate could leave many of them in significant difficulties. All Primary schools (8 in total) in the town are currently rated either 'satisfactory' or 'good'. There is no 'outstanding' primary provision in the area.
19. The Council would welcome the opportunity to work with the proposers (any potential sponsors) at a later date to develop a new school in the south-west sector, but it believes that this particular proposal is not the right proposal because it comes at the wrong time and in the wrong location.
20. Currently across Northumberland County there is a 12% surplus of primary places. The projected surplus is expected to reduce slightly by 2.5% over the next five years (increase in pupil numbers, 2015/16 = 627) as the primary school population grows. It is difficult, given the size of the County of Northumberland and the level of detail of the data available, to draw any meaningful conclusions (see table below provided by the Local Authority – SCAP 2011 LA forecast).

Capacity			Number of pupils on roll					
Capacity as at May 2011 (negative value = deficit of places)	Surplus capacity 2010/11 (negative value = deficit of places)	Projected surplus capacity 2015/16 (negative value = deficit of places)	Actual 2010/11	Forecast 2011/12	Forecast 2012/13	Forecast 2013/14	Forecast 2014/15	Forecast 2015/16
			Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary	Primary
25593.5	12.0%	9.5%	22532	22654	22821	23095	23169	23159

21. However, it is reasonable to conclude that any potential negative impact on local schools will be mitigated by the proposed new housing development for the south-west sector of Cramlington. Northumberland County Council has stated that over time a significant number of additional school places will be required.
22. The Department considers, given the planned housing developments for the town, that the opening of the Free School will help provide for the additional primary places in the town.

Representations

23. When the proposers group first went public about their plans to open a Free School in Cramlington, a resident of the village wrote to the Department to express his concern about the increase in traffic. However, this related to the site of a nursery school (owned and managed by a lead member of the proposer group) not the site of the Free School. Since the site of the Free School was revealed to be elsewhere, no further correspondence has been received. No other direct representations have been received by the Department but a public consultation has been carried out by the proposer group.
24. Free Schools are obliged, under Section 10 of the Academies Act 2010, to consult with those persons they think are appropriate as to whether the Academy Trust should enter into the Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State. The proposer group undertook significant stakeholder engagement ensuring that the wider community were well aware of the nature of the Free School proposal before formal consultation began on 1 March 2012.
25. A variety of media were used to consult and engage key stakeholders (LA, local MP, parents, potential parents and nurseries). These ranged from formal consultation documents and surveys, to using open events where question and answer sessions were held, to the use of social media. The formal consultation period ran from 1 March to 31 March 2012. The Trust asked the following question on its website and allowed 4 weeks for responses:

“Do you agree that Cramlington Village Primary School should enter into a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State to open a new Free Primary School on the old Eastlea First School site, Cramlington?”

26. The Trust received 107 responses. 61% of respondents were parents or carers, 19% were staff at local primary-phase schools or nurseries, 1% pupils at local schools with the remainder split between local residents, governors and elected officials. Overall 93% of respondents supported the formation of a new primary school in Cramlington. 61% of potential parents/carers were interested or very interested in sending their child to the proposed primary school.
27. Respondents to the questionnaires and attendees of the public meeting expressed some concerns over admissions to the school with the worry that a 10 mile radius was too large and could well be excluding those pupils within the direct local community i.e. Eastfield.
28. In conclusion, there were a reasonable number of responses received during the consultation period and that the overall opinion was that the formation of the new primary school would be a positive attribute to Cramlington and its local community.
29. We believe the consultation undertaken by the Academy Trust is sufficient to comply with s.10 of the Academies Act 2010 and that as a result it is reasonable for the Secretary of State to enter into the Funding Agreement with the Academy Trust.

Impact on other schools

30. Below is a discussion of the likely impact that the Free School may have on the eight maintained primary schools in Cramlington (within a two mile radius of the new school), as detailed in the map below. The table shows that opening the Free School will have a minimal impact on 6 schools, a moderate impact on 2 schools and a high impact on none. It is officials' view that it will be unlikely that schools situated over 2 miles away from the Free School will be impacted or will be more than minimally impacted.
31. The map of the town, see below, shows the location of the eight maintained primary schools included within the impact assessment. The proposed site for Cramlington Village Primary School is marked by the unnumbered location marker.
1. Cramlington Shanklea Primary School
 2. Cragside CofE Cronrolled Primary School
 3. St Paul's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided School
 4. Hareside Primary School
 5. Beaconhill Community Primary School
 6. Burnside Primary School
 7. Cramlington Eastlea Primary School
 8. Cramlington Northburn Primary School

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School name	Distance from Free School	Impact rating	Capacity	Pupils on roll	% of Y6 pupils attaining Level 4 in English and maths in 2011	Ofsted rating
Schools where the impact has been assessed as being minimal or moderate from list of all nearest schools listed below						
Cramlington Eastlea Primary School	0.40	Moderate	210	180	68%	Good
Burnside Primary School	0.55	Minimal	420	405	90%	Good
Cramlington Shanklea Primary School	0.59	Moderate	315	337	64%	Satisfactory
Cramlington	0.77		315	322		

Northburn Primary School		Minimal			82%	Good
Cragside CofE controlled Primary School	0.88	Minimal	420	359	74%	Good
St Paul's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided	0.91	Minimal	187	140	71%	Good
Hareside Primary School	1.12	Minimal	420	423	73%	Good
Beaconhill Community Primary School	1.44	Minimal	210	191	82%	Good

Impact ratings

- A minimal rating implies that the school will not lose pupils to the Free School or may lose some but will still be able to fill most or all of its places. It will not significantly impact on the school's overall attainment and ability to improve
- A moderate rating implies that the school may lose some pupils but should still be able to fill most of its places. However there might be some impact on the school's overall attainment and ability to improve
- A high rating implies that the school may lose some pupils and may exacerbate surplus capacity already in the school. There may be a significant impact on the school's overall attainment and ability to improve.

Schools where the impact is moderate

The impact of the Free School on the two schools below has been assessed as moderate:

(i) **Cramlington Eastlea Primary School** is a small primary school located 0.4 miles from the proposed site. The school has capacity for 210 pupils and currently 180 pupils are on roll. The school was oversubscribed for entry 2011/12 with 330 applications received for 30 places.

Attainment: overall in English and mathematics at the end of Year 6 is in line with national expectations. The percentage of children achieving Level 4 in English and maths in 2011 was 68%.

Ofsted: The school was judged **Good** in May 2012. Ofsted's analysis of the school's assessments shows that children enter the Nursery with generally below and sometimes well below expected skills, especially in aspects of communication, language and literacy. However, the support, encouragement and praise pupils receive and also a strong focus on teaching good progress is made throughout the school and attainment gaps between girls and boys and between pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and their peers are narrowing rapidly.

Impact - Moderate: This is the closest school to the preferred site, less than half a mile away; therefore the school may lose some potential pupils. The school was oversubscribed for entry in 2011/12, so even if they do lose some pupils to the Free School they may still be able to fill up most of their places –and with the housing development the primary pupil population in the area will increase which may mitigate any loss of pupils. Despite the school being oversubscribed the school is carrying 30 surplus places. This indicates parents may have not taken up the offer of a place and accepted an alternative offer within the town. However on balance, as a result, the opening of the Free School should not, alone, impact on the long-term financial viability of the school.

(ii) **Cramlington Shanklea Primary School** is a larger than average-sized primary school Situated on the Parkside Chase Estate, about 0.6 miles from Cramlington Village Primary School. The school has capacity for 315 pupils and currently 337 pupils are on roll.

Attainment: Overall and the percentage of children achieving Level 4 in English and maths in 2011 was 64%.

Ofsted: The school was judged **Satisfactory** in February 2012. The recent Ofsted Inspection noted that almost all pupils are of White British heritage with none at the early stages of learning English as an additional language. A below average proportion of pupils is known to be eligible for free school meals. The proportion of disabled pupils and those with special educational needs is above the national average. An increasing number have a statement of special educational needs. The school meets the current floor standard. The school has made exceptional progress in the last 12 months, eradicating a legacy of underachievement. Over time pupils' achievement is satisfactory from their typically average starting points. Currently, it is rising rapidly for pupils of all abilities, especially in Years 1 to 6, as essential improvements in the quality of learning are successfully embedded.

Impact – Moderate: Parents may be attracted to an alternative school and the school could lose some potential pupils. However the number of students on roll is 6% over its stated capacity and the primary pupil population in the area is expected to increase. It is unlikely numbers of children that Cramlington Village Primary School could divert from this school would be sufficient to affect the continued viability of the school.

If the school did lose potential pupils they should still be able to fill most or all of their places. Therefore the opening of the Free School should not affect the long term financial viability of the school.

Other Schools where the impact is minimal

32. It is expected that the six other primary schools in Cramlington will feel a minimal impact from the opening of the Free School. All six primary schools are unlikely to lose a significant number of pupils to the Free School. Two of these schools are oversubscribed so, even if they did lose pupils to the Free School, they should still be able to fill most or all of their places. Two of the schools are faith schools so are unlikely to lose pupils to the non-faith Free School. Additionally, the primary population is set to increase over the next few years so any loss of pupils to the Free School should also be mitigated by the increased demand in the area.

33. Attainment 4 schools have achieved national and above average attainment at Key Stage 2 in English and Maths in 2011 (with attainment ranging from 74% to 90%). 2 of the schools achieved below average Key Stage 2 attainment (with 71% to 73% pupils achieving the expected levels at Key Stage 2 in Maths and English in 2011). All six schools have been rated as Good by Ofsted. The establishment of the Free School is likely to improve standards in the area through increased competition.

Standards in Northumberland

34. There are no 'outstanding' primary schools in Cramlington. Ofsted says Northumberland results are below average. The Ofsted inspection reports (from schools and the Joint Area Review) Northumberland County Council's Children's Services Scrutiny Committee Minutes state;

"Results at age 16 match those in similar areas, but at age 11 they are below. Children and young people with special educational needs and those from low-income families do less well than others of the same age nationally."

*"However, in some primary and middle schools, the progress children make in English and mathematics between the ages of seven to 11 is too slow and, despite improvement, some schools do not reach the expected levels. Over several years now results in national tests have been below similar areas. The local authority recognises that some primary and middle schools require intensive support."*¹

Source: Joint Area Review completed December 2010 by Ofsted

35. In a report to the Children's Services Scrutiny Committee in December 2009, the local authority's director of commissioning² admitted that the latest validated educational performance information showed that Northumberland is at the national average for standards at KS2 but in the bottom 1% of authorities for adding value to the KS1 performance.³

¹ Key areas for further development in December 2010 OFSTED review: "Improve education outcomes for children and young people who have special educational needs and those from low-income families" and "Improve overall results at age 11".

² Frank Jordan

³ The Joint Area Review inspection commented on "the need to ensure a relentless focus on raising standards at Key Stage 2" (Ofsted 2007) and the Annual Performance Assessment highlighted reducing the proportion of young people not engaged in education, training or employment.

36. When compared with 10 statistically similar authorities (Calderdale, Darlington, Derbyshire, Durham, East Riding of Yorkshire, North Tyneside, Staffordshire, Stockton on Tees, Nottinghamshire and Warrington) Northumberland is the second worst performing county in KS2 English and the worst performing county in Maths and value added from KS1.⁴

Local schools have poor record of adding value between KS1 and KS2

National measure for all mainstream schools (2010)	% of schools nationally	Cramlington schools
101.8 and above	Top 5%	
100.8 to 101.7	Next 20%	Eastlea (101.5)
100.3 to 100.7	Next 15%	Beaconhill (100.5) Northburn (100.3)
99.8 to 100.2	Middle 20%	
99.3 to 99.7	Next 15%	
97.9 to 99.2	Next 20%	St Peter's (99.1) Burnside (99.0) Shanklea (98.8) Hareside(98.6)
97.8 and below	Bottom 5%	

Impact on Secondary Schools, Special Schools, Alternative Provision and FE institutions

37. Cramlington Vilage Primary School will be a school admitting children of primary age. It will begin with an intake of two year groups (30 pupils in Reception and 30 pupils in Year 1) taking 30 pupils more in every subsequent year until they reach capacity (210 pupils). It will have no specialist SEN provision but will work to accommodate the needs of pupils where the school is named in their statement of SEN. As such, it is unlikely to have any direct impact on local secondary schools, Special Schools, alternative provision and even less likely to impact post-16 and FE institutions.

38. The introduction of a new primary school may, however, have an indirect impact on local secondary schools in terms of the types of primary feeder schools in the area for local secondary schools. Northumberland County Council will need to consider the increasing demand in the area for secondary places which the rising population in the area will create.

39. After a time-lag, rising rolls in primary schools translate to rising rolls in secondary school. Because of the greater degree of predictability of secondary age pupil numbers five or more years in advance, the planning of expansions to meet demand is a more certain process. For these reasons the impact on secondary schools and FE institutions is assessed as being negligible.

Conclusion

40. The overall impact on the primary schools in the town should be minimal. Officials have concluded that any potential negative impact on local schools will be mitigated by the new housing developments in the town. The Department considers,

⁴ *Narrowing The Gap*, Frank Jordan, Northumberland County Council, December 2009

given the planned housing developments for the town, that the opening of the Free School will help provide for the additional primary places in the town.

41. Two primary schools in the town are oversubscribed so even if they did lose pupils to the Free School, they should still be able to fill most or all of their places. It should also be noted that as the school wishes to open with only a 1 form intake, whilst two schools may experience a moderate impact their long-term viability would not be affected.

42. Additionally, the primary population is set to increase over the next few years in the town so any loss of pupils to the Free School should also be mitigated by the increased demand in the area.

43. Any negative impact on particular institutions is outweighed by the positive impact that Cramlington Village Primary School will have on improving parental choice, by widening the number and type of places available in local primary state provision, and may drive up standards in the town and the surrounding area. Both these features are key aims of the Free Schools policy and we would expect Cramlington Village Primary School to help drive up standards in schools across the board, improving standards for all young people in the area.

44. Given all this information, we consider that any marginal impact of establishing Cramlington Village Primary School on maintained schools, Academies and FE institutions in the surrounding area is outweighed by the positive impact that the school will have on parental choice and in driving up standards in nearby institutions.