



# Townfield Primary School

Townfield Lane, Oxton, Wirral, CH43 2LH

0151 652 8498 | [schooloffice@townfield.wirral.sch.uk](mailto:schooloffice@townfield.wirral.sch.uk) |

[www.townfieldprimaryschool.co.uk](http://www.townfieldprimaryschool.co.uk) Headteacher: Mrs Moira Loftus

## Consultation on closure of

### Hearing Impairment Resourced Base

#### What is the consultation about?

Townfield Primary School ("Townfield") is a mainstream academy operated by a single academy trust. On its conversion to an academy in 2014, Townfield was able to accommodate up to ten places in a resourced provision for those children with hearing impairments ("the Base"). These places are commissioned by Wirral Council ("the Council") from Townfield to form part of the Council's Local Offer. The funding for these places are to be met by Wirral with the agreement of Townfield.

Following a change in senior leadership at Townfield and an audit of finances, it has become clear that the funding received from the Council for the commissioned places in the Base is insufficient to meet the actual cost of operating the provision. Townfield must now consider closure of the Base as it is no longer financially viable.

#### Why is closure of the base being considered?

Discussions about the financial issues arising out of the operation of the Base were commenced in January 2020 with Wirral. Despite efforts to reach an agreement to enable the Base's cost to be properly and fully funded, Wirral has not agreed to the funding required in order to commission the places and keep the Base a viable provision at Townfield.

The absence of funding has resulted in the general annual grant for Townfield having to meet the operational cost which has, in part, resulted in a budget deficit which cannot be sustained. The draw down on the general annual grant funding, which is not for the Base, impacts the resources available for the wider operation of Townfield. The Trustees of Townfield have an obligation to ensure that the public funds it receives are managed effectively.

Whilst it would be the Trustees' strong preference to continue with the Base, Townfield simply cannot do so unless Wirral pays the full cost of operating these places. Townfield has advised Wirral what is required in order to fund the Base, but this has not been agreed. Townfield has also offered to allow Wirral to take over direct operation of the Base at its site to limit any disruption to the Base pupils, but this has also not been accepted. Paul Boyce, Director of Children's Services has since accepted that the Base will have to close in the circumstances and Wirral will seek to commission an alternative provider who can work to its budget.

#### Your views

This consultation will run for 4 weeks and close on **1<sup>st</sup> December 2020**. The Trustees will consider the responses received from stakeholders before it considers the next steps to take with the Office of the Regional Schools Commissioner and Education and Skills Funding Agency.

*Responsible Respectful Resilient*

If you wish to provide your response to this consultation please direct them as follows:

- By e-mail to: [rbconsultation@townfield.wirral.sch.uk](mailto:rbconsultation@townfield.wirral.sch.uk)
- By post to: The Clerk to Trustees, Townfield Primary School, Townfield Lane, Prenton, Wirral, CH43 2LH

Due to on-going restrictions arising out of COVID-19 there are no public meetings proposed as part of this consultation.

Yours faithfully/sincerely



Mrs Moira Loftus  
Headteacher