



**Danby Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School**  
**Formal Proposal to change category from Voluntary Controlled to Voluntary Aided**

**11<sup>th</sup> February 2021**

# **Formal Proposal of the Governing Body of Danby Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School (“Danby”) to change category from Voluntary Controlled to Voluntary Aided**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Danby Governing Body resolved on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2021 to enter formal consultation around the potential for Danby to change category from a Voluntary Controlled School to a Voluntary Aided school.

### **(a) Context of the school**

Danby is a rural Church of England primary school in the Diocese of York serving the village of Danby and the surrounding area. It caters for children between the ages of rising 5 and 11 years. The school currently has 28 children, with an expected intake of 4-6 children in September 2021.

At the last OFSTED (Office for Standards in Education) inspection in May 2018, the school was judged to have been ‘Requires Improvement’. At the last SIAMS inspection (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools) in June 2018 the school was judged to have been “Good”. Since April 2018 Danby School has had a substantive Headteacher in post who has led a programme of significant improvements across the school. In May 2019 the school was reviewed by North Yorkshire County Council who considered that ‘that there has been a significant amount of progress since the inspection and as a result of this, the school will move from Priority 3 (Requires Improvement) to Priority 2 (Good).’ The school currently self-evaluates itself as ‘Good’ in all areas.

Danby currently works in close collaboration with Egton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School (“**Egton**”) and the Headteacher has been leading both Danby and Egton since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.

### **(b) Parallel federation proposals**

These proposals are made in the context of the parallel consultation on a proposal for Danby Governing Body and the Egton Governing Body to federate as from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2021. This would see the two schools work together under a single Governing Body. This is a formal arrangement, governed by regulations, between two or more local authority maintained schools which enables them to work in partnership with a view to raising standards, finding new ways of improving teaching and learning, and building on the strengths of each school.

### **(c) Reasons for the proposal**

The Governing Body believes that a change in category would be good for the children’s education at Danby and good for the community. In summary, the changes would lead to:

**A. Greater protection of, and the ability to further develop, Danby’s Church school ethos.**

For example, as a Voluntary Aided school, Danby would have greater formal links with the Diocese and local Church whilst maintaining a strong and effective relationship with North Yorkshire County Council, and would be able to enhance provision for Religious Education (RE) teaching and learning.

**B. More effective joint working with Egton Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School (“Egton”) due to increased alignment.**

It is felt that this would be enhanced should Danby become a Voluntary Aided School in line with these proposals due to greater alignment between the two schools. For example:

- The schools would have the same RE syllabus enabling greater shared provision;
- The federated Governing Body would be the single employer of staff, making shared staffing arrangements in appropriate cases easier; and
- The inspection processes under the SIAMS framework would be more aligned.

With greater similarities between the school, the Governing Body believe that even greater benefit can be obtained from this collaboration. This is especially the case where it is anticipated that schools will be federated and run by a single governing body.

This is further explored below.

**(d) What are the key differences between Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary Aided Church of England schools?**

As a Voluntary Aided school, the school would continue to be maintained by, and to have a strong and effective relationship with, North Yorkshire County Council.

A table setting out a summary of the key differences between Voluntary Aided and Voluntary Controlled schools can be found on the Diocese’s website at – <https://dioceseofyork.org.uk/uploads/attachment/4561/summary-of-key-differences-between-school-types.pdf>.

The key areas that are relevant in the Governing Body’s decision to seek to change category are further set out below.

**(e) Further exploration of the impact of the proposals**

- **Ethos** - As a Church of England school, Danby already has a strong Church of England ethos. A change to Voluntary Aided would help to make this ethos more

secure into the future due to the additional Church School Protections Voluntary Aided status would give.

- **Church involvement in governance structures** - At present, Foundation Governors (Governors with special responsibility to secure that the school's religious character is preserved and developed and that the school is conducted in accordance with its trust deed) are in the minority on the Danby Governing Body. This would change in any case in the event that Egton and Danby federate on 1st September 2021 as proposed, as in order to federate with Egton as a Voluntary Aided school, the joint Governing Body has to include a majority of Foundation Governors. However, should the schools not federate, or should the federation ever be dissolved and Danby had to re-establish its own Governing Body, Danby's Governing Body would need to reconstitute: in a Voluntary Aided school, Foundation Governors must outnumber all other Governors by two. It should be noted that some non-Foundation Governors might be in a position to become Foundation Governors as part of this process to retain the strength of the skills on the current Danby Governing Body.
- **Collective Worship** – there would be no change to Collective Worship at the school under these proposals.
- **Religious Education** - At present, Danby uses the locally agreed syllabus for RE. This is the same syllabus used by community schools. As a Voluntary Aided school, the Governing Body would be able to adopt the Diocese of York's RE syllabus. This syllabus would continue to provide for the teaching of a range of religious and worldviews, but would make available increased support from the Diocese. This syllabus is currently used by Egton and it is felt that it would bring further opportunities to develop learning and teaching in RE at Danby. Having the same syllabus as Egton would also strengthen the ability of the schools to collaborate on RE, strengthening learning and outcomes for children.
- **Inspection** – As a Voluntary Aided school, Danby would continue to be inspected by Ofsted and under the SIAMS schedule. SIAMS would continue to evaluate the effectiveness of the school's Christian vision in enabling pupils and adults to flourish. The school would still receive an overall judgement, along with a specific judgement in respect of the impact of Collective Worship. In addition, there would be a specific judgement in respect of the standards of teaching and learning in RE - a Voluntary Controlled school does not receive this additional specific judgement. The Governors believe that increased accountability for RE under the SIAMS schedule would further improve learning and teaching in RE. The aligned inspection processes for Egton and Danby would also further support joint working and thereby improve learning and outcomes for children across the two schools.
- **Staffing** – In a Voluntary Aided school, the Governing Body is the employer of all staff, rather than the local authority. Staff in Danby would automatically transfer their employment on their existing terms and conditions from the local authority to the federated governing body under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of

Employment) Regulations (TUPE). Staff appointments would continue to be funded through the delegated budget the school receives from the local authority. As a Voluntary Aided school, the Governing Body would be able to use the provisions of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998: for example, Christian commitment could be taken into account in the appointment of the Headteacher and may be taken into account for other members of staff where appropriate.

- **Admissions** - At present North Yorkshire County Council is the school's Admission Authority and as such is responsible for admissions at the school, including determining the school's admissions policy. Following the change of category, the Governing Body would become the Admissions Authority and therefore be responsible for determining the school's admission arrangements, with admissions applications continuing to be processed under North Yorkshire County Council's Co-ordinated admissions scheme. All Admissions Authorities must comply with the School Admissions and Appeals Codes and the law relating to school admissions including the duty to comply with infant class size legislation and the duty to consult on its proposed admissions arrangements both periodically and (with very minor exceptions) in the event that it wishes to make changes to the policy. As a maintained school, this would also be subject to the oversight of the Schools Adjudicator. Admissions Appeals would continue to be heard by an Independent Appeals Panel. Any changes to the admissions policy in future would be subject to separate consultation and are likely to include the addition of a faith-based over subscription criteria. The Governing Body is committed to serving its local community and there are no plans to change the catchment of the school.
- **Buildings**
  - The ownership of the school site would not change under these proposals. The school would continue to receive Devolved Formula Capital Grant (capital funding calculated on a formulaic basis for each educational establishment) in the same way as it does at present.
  - The local authority receives school condition allocation to invest in priorities across the schools for which they are responsible, including Voluntary Controlled Schools. As a Voluntary Aided school, Danby would not look to the local authority for this funding: instead, the Diocese receives school condition allocation to distribute based on an assessment of priorities across the Voluntary Aided schools in the Diocese. The Governing Body feels that being part of a smaller group of schools bidding for funding (with Danby there would be twelve Voluntary Aided schools in the Diocese) will enable us to have a stronger voice in stating Danby's case for access to such funding.
  - As a Voluntary Aided school we would be responsible for making a 10% statutory contribution to all capital works funded from school condition allocation funding or Devolved Formula Capital. Governing Bodies cannot use their devolved formula capital to meet their 10% contribution, but they can use the revenue budget delegated to the school or money raised through fundraising events and other revenue generation. For example: commitment by the staff to Initial Teacher

Training brings in additional revenue to the school which has been ring-fenced in preparation to meet the 10% needs should it be required. If the schools federate in line with the federation proposal, there will be experience on the federated Governing Body from this perspective as this has always been the position at Egton.

**(f) Process**

The process of decision making and timetable for implementation is outlined below:

Date(s)	Action
4 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	Governing Body meeting to decide whether to consult on becoming a Voluntary Aided school
Prior to 11 <sup>th</sup> February 2021	Obtain relevant Diocesan and site trustee consents
11 <sup>th</sup> February 2021 – 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Public consultation on proposals to become a Voluntary Aided school (minimum 6 weeks)
15 <sup>th</sup> April 2021	Governing Body meeting to consider consultation responses and make a formal decision whether to publish statutory proposals for change of category to Voluntary Aided
19 <sup>th</sup> April 2021-17 <sup>th</sup> May 2021	Public Statutory Notice published for representation period.
May 2021	Formal report prepared for Local Authority decision makers
Late May 2021	Local Authority approves or rejects proposals (within two months of end of representation period) and relevant parties notified.
June – early July 2021– 4 term-time weeks.	TUPE consultation with staff and Unions (change of employer with all staff transferring on their existing terms and conditions)
June- July 2021	Governing Body proceed to implementation, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw up and obtain approvals for Instrument of Government</li> <li>• Reconstitute Governing Body</li> </ul>
1 <sup>st</sup> September 2021	School opens as a Voluntary Aided school

**(g) Nature and scope of formal consultation**

The Governing Body is committed to meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the consultation period. The consultation process is supported by the York Diocesan Board of Education and the Local Authority.

**(i) How we will consult**

This consultation will remain open for 6 weeks and will consist of:

- Publication of this proposal on the website of the School.
- Email copy letters to all parents outlining the consultation and signposting to the full proposal online (including advice on how to obtain a hard copy by request and advice on how to make written representations).
- Email copies of this proposal document and covering letter sent to all staff employed to work at the School.
- A scheduled parents’ consultation evening (as tabled below). The parents’ consultation evenings are also open to members of the community.
- A scheduled staff consultation meeting (as tabled below). Additional detail surrounding this will be provided separately.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Audience</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>Venue</b>
11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Staff	4pm	Zoom
11 <sup>th</sup> March 2021	Parents	5pm	Zoom

**Please note:** due to the current Pandemic, these meeting will be taking place via Zoom. Please contact the school directly to obtain the appropriate zoom link. Thank you.

If possible please ensure any questions for the meetings have been sent in by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2021 to ensure that the meeting is as productive as possible.

- Copy of this proposal document and covering letter forwarded to all main teaching and support staff trade unions and trade union representatives invited to staff meetings.
- Copy of this proposal document and covering letter sent to the Secretary of State, the Local Authority, the Diocesan Authority, site trustees, the Parochial Church Councils, local Parish Councils and the local district and county councillors at the start of the consultation period 11<sup>th</sup> February 2021.
- Carefully planned child involvement to involve children in the rationale and impact on them.

**(ii) How you can provide feedback**

We have provided a form as part of this pack as a way of gathering feedback. Please fill out the form and return to the school marked for the attention of the Chair of Governors.

- (a) Handing the form into the school;

- (b) Sending a hard copy to: Danby CE VC Primary School, Ainthorpe Lane, Danby, YO21 2NG
- (c) Emailing: [admin@danby.n-yorks.sch.uk](mailto:admin@danby.n-yorks.sch.uk)

Alternatively, if you want to provide additional substantive feedback, the email or postal address above can be used.

The local authority and Diocese can also provide further information. Please contact:

- (a) Matt George, Strategic Planning Officer - [Matt.George@northyorks.gov.uk](mailto:Matt.George@northyorks.gov.uk).
- (b) Claire Graham-Brown, Deputy Director of Education - [claire.graham-brown@yorkdiocese.org](mailto:claire.graham-brown@yorkdiocese.org).

**Thank you for your support in considering this important decision for our school**