



12 July 2019

Dear parent/pupil/resident

Please see below a joint statement from Newcastle City Council, Gosforth Federated Academies Trust and Gosforth Schools' Trust regarding middle school places in Gosforth and Newcastle Great Park.

Gosforth and Newcastle Great Park School Places Update – July 2019

There has been significant growth in Newcastle's primary-age school population in the last ten years. Since 2011, the Council has funded and delivered 33 different capital projects in more than 20 schools creating over 1,500 additional places in first, primary and middle schools to cater for the growing pupil population. This included the expansion of three first schools in Gosforth in September 2015. Pupils leaving these schools will require middle school places in September 2020. The additional middle school (and subsequently high school) places will be provided through the new school at Newcastle Great Park for year 5 to year 11 pupils and the proposed expansion of Gosforth Central Middle School.

The new middle/secondary school to be run by Gosforth Federated Academies Trust at Newcastle Great Park (NGP) was included in the outline planning application for NGP Cell A. Planning Committee was 'minded to grant' permission for this in December 2018 subject to the completion of the legal agreement between the City Council and the housing developers, which is expected imminently.

Once planning permission is granted, the Department for Education will be responsible for delivering the middle-secondary school on this site. However, given that this will not be built and occupied by September 2020, Newcastle City Council has been working with Gosforth Academies Trust on contingency plans to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to provide places for all pupils leaving Gosforth Junior High's feeder schools in 2020.

In addition, work is ongoing with Gosforth Central Middle School's governing body, Gosforth Schools' Trust and the PFI Company which manages that school building on plans to increase capacity to accommodate the additional pupils leaving its feeder schools in 2020.

We understand that parents/carers are concerned that these additional places have not yet been established. We want to assure parents/carers that there will be sufficient places in middle schools for all pupils leaving Gosforth first schools in 2020 who apply on time. When the 2020 admissions window opens in the Autumn term of 2019, parents/carers should apply as usual for places in their preferred schools and are strongly encouraged to use all of the preferences available, including their 'feeder middle school'.

Further updates will be provided when available.