



Why Amalgamate?

North Yorkshire's decision to amalgamate Moorside Infant and Junior schools is fully supported by the staff and governors.

Developing a primary school can build upon the strengths of each separate Infant and Junior school, to ensure that experiences are enhanced, enabling even higher standards of education to be provided.

Ofsted said, in their January HMI report that:

'Delays in academisation and significant staff turbulence have interrupted the school's journey to improvement. Stable governance and strong and purposeful senior leadership arrangements across both schools, since September 2016, are moving the school in the right direction. This progress has continued and is evidenced in improved pupil outcomes at the end of Reception and Key Stage 1 results in July 2018. An amalgamation will further build on this progress in a POSITIVE way.

Since the Ofsted inspection in 2016, Moorside Infant school has been on an incredible journey to improve in all areas.

In January, Ofsted recognised that

'Relationships between staff and pupils are strong and lessons are usually calm and purposeful. Leaders have established a simple approach to behaviour management that is easily understood by pupils across both schools'.

A Moorside child now enters the Infant school in Nursery, they then apply to attend and transition into Reception, followed by KS1. At this stage in their education, parents are expected to apply for place at Moorside Junior school for KS2, which is an entirely new transition, into a new building with different teaching and support staff, with different facilities and different resources which are unfamiliar. This can cause stress for children and therefore parents.

Over the recent years, it has taken a **huge** amount of work for our whole team to prepare our children with familiar resources, continuity and consistency in learning environments, curriculum coverage and assessments, as they transition from Infants into Juniors....AS WELL AS supporting them in transitioning into a new year group in a new setting.

Historically (until 2016), when the leadership team and teaching staff were separate, the schools followed different policies, systems and protocols and used different

teaching strategies and styles and it therefore felt like we had missed the first few chapters of a book when we met children in Y3 as they entered the Junior school.

This has been a difficult transition to manage for parents and children, who have built relationships with staff who care for their children in one building and then transfer to another, at a stage in children's lives when we expect them to developmentally be becoming independent learners. It is a huge ask for us to expect our children to trust adults, who they are not used to seeing every day, in an environment that they do not yet feel that they belong.

It has been our priority to make this transition as easy as possible for children, but it is not the same as being in a 'through Primary school', no matter how hard we try to grow relationships across two buildings and follow the same policies for consistency!

A Moorside child in the future will begin their learning journey in the same setting and environment where they leave as pupils who are 'secondary ready'. We aim for all pupils to have Moorside PRIDE and part of our vision is to:

- ▶ Create an environment able to inspire inquiry and promote a breadth of learning experiences surrounded by the best educators and specialists.
- ▶ Understand how our children learn and teach them as individuals.

Understanding how each child needs support as they transition (from class to class and key stage to key stage), is imperative to ensure that their learning journey is as smooth as possible. This will be far easier to manage in one building.

There can be a number of complicating factors as a child develops on their learning journey. This can affect a child's well-being or educational development and we believe that as a Primary school, a child's history and future achievements are easily shared, so that we experience them together from the day they enter Nursery/Reception, until they leave us at the end of Year 6 as confident, lifelong learners, willing to explore, question and engage with challenges.

Boundaries and buildings:

We will be:

- Retaining the Junior school playgrounds and fields.
- Retaining our Forest school.
- Provided with a new outdoor area for Foundation and Key Stage one at the back of the current Junior school building.
- Retaining 3 out of the 4 entrances into school. (There is still ongoing work on how this will look).

The DfE and the Local authority are funding the Moorside works to dramatically improve and upgrade the facilities and space in the Junior building.

There will be the addition of a parent meeting room, a nurture room, group working areas and offices for the school to run efficiently.

The Benefits:

Every school must provide a curriculum which is broad and balanced in content and relevant to all learners' needs. A child's learning journey should be seamless throughout their time in school, building on experiences, skills, knowledge and understanding as they progress.

As a primary school, we would be in a stronger position to be able to plan for both continuity and progression in learning, delivering the curriculum in a continuous and coherent way, from the Foundation Stage through to the end of Key Stage 2.

At Moorside, we are already working operationally as one, but physically, the process to become one is a change that can be unnerving for everyone. The Junior school has a GOOD Ofsted judgement, which is why the controlled closure of the Infants has been planned. The building though is not yet fit for Infant children; a strategic plan to apply for planning permission to deliver this, in line with what our children need, has been drawn up between North Yorkshire and ourselves.

As far as the staff and governors are concerned, the operational day to day running of the schools is our priority throughout this process - our children's CURRENT education and development comes first. North Yorkshire are supporting us with the physical amalgamation process. This is a wonderful opportunity for the community to come together and our improved facilities will benefit every child now and in the future.

Claire Rowett - Acting Headteacher
Moorside Infant and Junior schools

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