



The Arthur Terry Learning Partnership
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Richard Gill CBE NPQH, NLE, FRSA
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

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Dear families,

Following my previous letter earlier this term, I want to update you on the recent consultation regarding the proposal to change Nether Stowe School's age range from 11-18 to 11-16.

Thank you to everyone who took the time to reply to the consultation and submit formal feedback. Thank you to those who contacted the school for additional information.

We received 130 responses from a range of voices, including current parents and carers, current staff and current students. Our Trust Board (as the school's admissions authority) has now met to carefully review all the feedback which also included representations from Staffordshire local authority and from Dave Robertson, MP. They also took into consideration feedback received from other post-16 providers.

The Outcome of the Consultation:

After thoughtful consideration, ATLP's Trust Board has decided to proceed with the application for a phased closure of the sixth form at Nether Stowe School. This will mean that current Year 12 students will be able to continue attending the school where we will continue to support them in the completion of their studies.

Trustees acknowledge that this commitment may need the support of other local schools in individual cases where this decision may require specialist, experienced A-level teaching. Where this support is needed; we are assured provision will be available.

The proposed change would take partial effect to the school age range from September 2025 due to the commitment to current Year 12. It would mean that from September 2026, there would be no sixth form provision at the school.

We understand how strongly some members of our community feel about this decision, and we deeply appreciate the respectful way these views were shared. We value the thoughtful feedback shared during the consultation, which the Trust Board carefully considered when making their decision. Ultimately the Trust Board concluded that, to ensure the long-term success and stability of the school, the difficult decision to close the sixth form should proceed.

Why This Change is Necessary:

The current size of the sixth form means that we are unable to provide students with the broad, enriching post-16 education they deserve. We want every student to have access to the best possible opportunities, and that is not something we can sustainably offer with such low numbers. Throughout the time the school has been with ATLP trust, the number of students enrolling in our sixth form has been unsustainably low. Indeed, this was the same before the school joined ATLP and we had hoped to grow the sixth form. However, recent Year 11 expressions of interest, confirmed that this trend is unlikely to change. This means that the overall size of the sixth form, as well the projected class sizes, would continue to be well below the Department for Education's recommended levels. Such unsustainably low numbers in sixth form would further limit our ability to offer a diverse range of subjects to our students.

In recent years, the school has had to redirect a significant amount of funding from students in KS3 and KS4 to keep the sixth form running. We do not believe it is fair to continue to compromise the education of younger students in this way. This challenge has been exacerbated given news of our Year 7 intake from September where we have been impacted by the opening of the new school in Rugeley on the site of the old power station.

What Happens Next:

The final decision on whether to close the sixth form will rest with the Department for Education. If the closure is approved, we want to assure you that the school will be fully committed to supporting all affected students and families as they explore alternative post-16 options.

In addition to the information shared above regarding Y12 students, we are aware that many of the Year 11s who initially expressed an interest in continuing their studies at Nether Stowe School from September, have already secured suitable provision elsewhere, albeit subject to their GCSE results. The school continues to support the very small numbers of pupils who are yet to have a placement for their post-16 study. We are very grateful for the continued close and collaborative relationship with other local providers.

Further Information:

We know that this is difficult news for some, and we are grateful for your engagement throughout this process. To help answer any further questions, we have created an FAQ document based on the key themes raised during the consultation, which you can access [here](#).

Thank you again for your understanding and continued support as we make decisions that we believe are in the best long-term interest of the entire school community.

Yours sincerely,

Richard Gill (CEO)
Kirsty Jones (Head Teacher at Nether Stowe School)