

YOUR VIEW

What do you think about the academy and the closure plan?

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£18m Academy plans for 'world class' school

A HEADTEACHER has promised that the creation of a new academy in Holbeach will give students "world class" facilities - but will result in closing Crowland's secondary school.

The Holbeach and Crowland Secondary Federation, which includes the George Farmer Technology and Language College and the St Guthlac School, has been awarded academy status which will eventually see the Crowland school closed in 2014.

Plans are in the early stages, but the project will see an investment of up to £18m in the Holbeach college, with around 65 percent of the old school buildings demolished and replaced with state-of-the-art facilities.

Federation executive headteacher Steve Baragwanath is delighted with the news and says the project will provide a "massive investment" into the future of the youngsters of the district.

He said: "This is fantastic news for the youth of South Holland. We will be able to deliver world-class facilities for them."

"This is a chance for us to



Federation headteacher Steve Baragwanath hailed the academy announcement.

vastly improve what is on offer to youngsters. It takes things to a whole new level.

"In September next year both schools will close and then open again immediately to be run as an academy."

"Initially this will be

across two sites and then gradually as capacity at the George Farmer grows, the Crowland site will be closed."

When this happens Lincolnshire County Council has decided to use the existing school site to provide a new primary school, along with enhanced community facilities, for the town.

Building work is planned to start in 2013 and should be completed the following year, allowing the capacity for the academy to operate from Holbeach alone.

Mr Baragwanath said there are 950 students in Holbeach, including the sixth form, and about 320 in Crowland. The new academy will have the scope for 1,200 students, with capacity for students to relocate from Crowland.

The academy will operate outside of county council control in conjunction with an academic sponsor - the University of Lincoln.

In a letter to parents chairman of governors Chris Penney said: "The university already operates a significant campus adjacent to the Holbeach site and the beneficial links between them and the federation, which are already strong, will be enhanced with their

involvement as sponsors.

"The governors are aware that major changes such as this are worrying for parents and the wider community."

"In order to allow all those affected by the changes to have the ability to better understand the process, we will in the near future, be organising a consultation process which will include public meetings. As a governing body we are fully supportive of these exciting proposals which we see as a once in a lifetime opportunity to acquire the first class facilities and educational opportunities that the young people in the area the federation serves deserve."

Lincolnshire County Council says it has had "no correspondence" from the government to suggest this deal will be affected by a review to the Building Schools for the Future project.

The re-branded Department for Education will look at funding earmarked for school building projects but reports in the national press suggest that projects without contractors named may lose their funding.

Langwith Builders, A H Worth and Holbeach Tyres will work on the academy project.