

## Possible Amalgamation of Meadow Lane Infant and College House Junior Schools

### Consultation Responses Analysis

Consultation documents distributed: electronic via both schools' and NCC websites, plus 300 paper documents delivered locally

Status of Respondent	No. of responses received Agreed	No. of responses received Disagreed	No. of responses received Didn't Know
Parent/Carer	17	5	3
Governor	4	0	0
Staff	0	2	2
Pupil	1	0	0
Other	3	0	0
Unknown	1	2	0
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>
Where reply forms indicated more than one type of respondent, only one has been included in the table above using a priority order of 'parent/carers', 'governor', 'staff' and then 'pupil/other'.			

## **Comments/Issues/Points raised at consultation meetings and within written and on-line responses:**

### **The views of the Governing Bodies**

- Supported the proposed amalgamation.

### **Staffing matters**

- In support of the proposal, comments were made that there will be the opportunity to increase staff knowledge and skills across a wider age range
- Views expressed that existing excellent executive head and staff teams have the skills and vision to manage the process and ensure that the best possible outcome is achieved for all children
- Staff would benefit if it meant more opportunities for career development, mentoring and support
- However, concerns were expressed about job security.

### **Building and site-related issues**

- Recognition that a split site would present problems, but that any difficulties are far outweighed by the potential benefits for the whole school community
- Reservations expressed on how split site will work
- Advantages of amalgamation indicated that Meadow Lane pupils would benefit if they could use some of the College House facilities more frequently
- Concerns expressed about traffic congestion and parking in the neighbourhood
- Concerns expressed about road safety for groups of children moving between sites.

### **Financial issues**

- If amalgamated, possible benefits in terms of ordering goods with economies of scale
- However, the combined budget of an amalgamated school will be less than current individual budgets combined. Concern about the initial loss of funding to the amalgamated school, from the £100,000 currently allocated per school to £100,000 allocated to the combined school.

## **Pupil, Curriculum and Community related issues**

### In Agreement

- The two schools are so closely involved that amalgamation would just make following into junior years a lot simpler and smoother
- Amalgamation will improve education and continuity for children, and the new school will still feel like 'our' community school
- A single school will create a stronger educational pathway for the children
- Amalgamation provides a smooth and seamless solution and will better serve the community for years to come
- It makes sense to keep the schools together, given that they work so closely currently. In a climate where academisation is becoming the norm it surely makes sense to strengthen these schools by amalgamating them. It will guarantee these schools work as a family, as they have done in the past
- It gives a better Reception to Year 6 journey for the children, and avoids joining two year 2 streams into one year 3. It can also provide better continuity of planning etc.
- Year 2 classes could be moved in to the 3 new classes being built allowing for a longer transition in to junior school
- Reception and Year 1 could remain at Meadow Lane where facilities are more suited to a younger age group
- It was seen as positive that pupil capacity will only increase in line with the 3 additional classrooms being built
- All children in the catchment area would be provided with the same opportunities in terms of educational experience. The school can pull in resources and expertise to provide the best education for all local pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2
- Amalgamation will provide the best long term outcome for the two schools and enable better integration through the primary phase for pupils
- The establishment of a single school with a PAN of 90 will be of huge benefit, as opposed to current PANs at the two schools which lead to a very complex and less than ideal class structures
- It makes sense to have all the Reception and Year 1 children on one site, rather than two
- The amalgamated school will be able to operate single -aged classes, rather than split-year groups. This will be easier to teach and more beneficial to children.

## Disagreement

- It was felt that not everyone wants their children to attend a large primary school
- College House could be expanded as a primary, without incorporating Meadow Lane
- Both buildings with Key Stage 1 classes on each site will create problems of consistency, care and experience for children involved
- A disadvantage will be accommodating only Reception and Year 1 pupils on one site. The Year 2s have a guardianship-type role which they enjoy, will be greatly missed, while it is important for children to have that responsibility
- Concern that should the schools amalgamate, no children will get an infant school experience
- View expressed that children need three years in one environment in order to adjust and form relationships with peers and adults, which is particularly so for vulnerable families
- Current links between the two schools are developing positively and existing transition between Y2 and Y3 is established and runs smoothly
- Supporters of amalgamation argue that transition would be better as infant pupils tend to dip in Year 3 on moving to a junior school. Pupils, though, will still have a transition at the end of Year 1. This will unsettle the beginning of Year 2, which is an important time for infant-aged pupils
- Currently, all staff know the pupils personally. Fear was expressed that this will be lost and each child will become a number rather than an individual
- The caring, nurturing environment of Meadow Lane school will disappear
- Concern that class sizes will be routinely bigger as admission numbers will be set higher than at present, when there are less than 30 children in each class at College House.