

## **BISHOP HARLAND/HYLTON RED HOUSE – FIRST STAGE CONSULTATION**

### **Consultation responses**

#### **Q4: What are your comments/views on the options?**

- Option 2 seems the fairest for children and staff alike. Although we have concerns about the syllabus when the new school is formed, will this be curriculum as is now?
- This option (2) will allow us to give our children the best “academic” opportunity and take us from being a good school to an outstanding one.
- Concerned about bad state of repair and décor of Red House compared to Bishop Harland.  
Worried about congestion due to excessive traffic next to Red House which is already bad.
- Good opportunities for staff and pupils to continue the work that has already been successful across the federation.
- I feel that option 2 is the best option for all members. It will still be difficult and all staff are concerned for their jobs. I also think it would be nice to have a foundation stage unit on site including nursery for continuity.
- The Hylton Red House school site is a lovely site with lots of scope for potential. Combining and merging the 2 schools should help with budgetary issues, e.g. maintenance etc and dwindling pupil numbers.
- I think option 2 is the best as HRP is a lot bigger a site and has the space for expansion.
- I only want what is best for my children and after listening to everything at the meeting, I feel option 2 is the way to take things forward for the future for my children.
- Option 1: May cause bullying being “our school” from the pupils from Red House to Bishop Harland. Plus there won’t be a Church of England school over the north side of the river.  
Option 2: Keep the Church of England school over the north side and it will be everyone’s new school being a different name.  
Option 3: Not really an option for the pupils
- This is the best option (2) for the children in my opinion.

- Option 2 I would prefer as it would benefit both children and staff from both schools.
- I feel that option 2 would be best for meeting the needs of the children, this is my main concern! To do nothing would leave the force of an Academy and as a result of this a lot of experienced and hard working staff would be lost from both schools. What a waste!
- A new school would put all staff and students on an even footing. A church school would ensure the ethos and spirituality enjoyed at Bishop Harland would be offered to all. A new school would ensure an able head for all pupils and ensure better roles and therefore funding.
- Option 2 is a better option for the community and the children.
- Option 1 would mean staff losing their jobs which would be terrible  
Option 2 doesn't guarantee everyone's jobs  
Option 3 means changes would be forced anyway
- The schools have already worked well together in the soft federation and continue to do so. This has generated opportunities for teaching expertise to be shared between both schools and to organise joint trips and events.  
To merge the schools will give both sets of pupils, teachers and the community a new beginning (i.e. no taking over of one end by the other)  
A new Church of England Voluntary Aided school would maintain choice on the north side of the river.
- I think option 2 is better for children and use staff expertise in both schools.
- Option 2 seems fairer to both the pupils and teachers. Also this ensures a Church of England school on the North of the river.
- I feel it is important that there is a Church of England school in the are and as we have worked together as two schools, I feel coming together as one is the appropriate and most effective outcome.
- Happy with option 2
- I have ticked option 2, but have concerns about my job and house but believe it is the best way forward.
- After speaking to staff re change, I would be happy for both schools to be brought together. My main concern was that reform would be pushed on the students.
- I think if option 1 went ahead it would be 'a them and us'. Option 3 would not benefit anyone.

- It is very important to combine the two schools to ensure the best possible education is provided for all pupils before resources become more depleted due to further reductions in finances.
- Both schools have worked extremely well together and combining the two together would be the best option for the children, along with major financial benefits that would be available.
- Joining of the schools will create greater opportunities financially for students and enhance a greater community ethos.
- I just think if every child had a brand new school, new start, it would benefit them.
- I feel option 2 is the fairest for all involved all children will deal with the disruption. All staff will have to reapply. I am happy that the site can accommodate all of the children.
- I am all for change. Want the best possible for my kids.
- Change is inevitable. I will stand by option 2. I am ready to help.
- Option 2 is the only viable option. Both schools coming together as one can only improve education for our children on the estate and bring the community together.
- I don't mind option 2, as long as religion is not rammed down the children's throats.
- Option 2 is the best option all round and the fairest on both schools and pupils. Also it keeps out school a Church of England VA school.
- I am a member of staff at Bishop Harland and have been for 23 years. Option 2 would be the best for the children's education as bringing both schools together the children would receive the best education due to the budget being better as if they stay the way we are money would be less in both schools resulting in staff being reduced so then the children's education would be affected. Working with Hylton Red House, we have built up good relationships with staff and worked together on numerous projects which have helped out development, this is also due to outstanding leadership from Mr Williams.
- It gives the opportunity of two brilliant schools to come together and make one outstanding school.
- I prefer option 2, because it gives two schools the chance to come together.
- I'm interested in my child getting the best education possible.

- I would like my child to have the best education possible and believe this is the best option (2).
- Having looked carefully at all options, I've come to the conclusion that option 2 is the only choice that will be beneficial for all the children and I am happy to have this happen.
- I would rather the school stay open but if there is no other option then the schools will have to merge.
- Don't want this school to close, my kids have just settled lovely in the school.
- I wish it to be known that I support the option of merger of Red House Academy and Bishop Harland school, which would ensure continuity for both students and staff.
- Having worked at Bishop Harland for 12 years, it will be sad to see the school close. However there is overwhelming evidence, in my opinion, that option 2 is the best and only option for the children on the Hylton Red House Estate. Our children deserve an outstanding education. Option 2 would enable our staff to build an outstanding church school. There are a number of reasons to support option 2:
  - Falling role numbers of both schools
  - Important to maintain church school presence in this area of Sunderland and therefore ensure parents have a range of choice.
  - Future security of the school in the changing financial and political climate.
  - Excellent chance to secure an outstanding school for the Hylton Red House Estate.
  - Build on good practice established in both schools.
  - We would be able to offer the children a wider range of experiences and learning opportunities if we had a larger, secure Church of England School.
  - This would be a local solution instead of having to look outside to support the schools
  - Option 2 provides us with a wide range of fantastic opportunities. I could not support option 1 or 3.
- I am supportive of the closure of both school and the opening of a new Church of England school on the current Red House site. I have every faith in the management team of Hylton Red House and feel confident that they will lead the transition to a very positive outcome. I would comment though that (like everyone) I am disappointed that the council is unable to provide adequate financial support to the schools due to the cut-backs. I understand that the council wishes to continue to offer diversity across education providers on the North site of the city and so it is

important that a Church of England school remains an option for parents.

My main concerns are:

- Children who are currently underperforming at Bishop Harland impact on the recent good results achieved by Hylton Red House.
  - The cost to parents (of both schools) of purchasing new uniforms.
  - The volume of traffic around the school should the majority of Bishop Harland pupils transfer to the Hylton Red House site.
  - The closure of Bishop Harland will impact negatively on the area surrounding the site, unless a suitable new purpose is found very quickly. I feel house prices and local shop revenues will be negatively affected.
- Almost all children thought that it was a good idea to create a 'new school' from the two existing schools. Some children said that they would be anxious but agreed with others that if we worked together more for activities, then making new friends and classmates would be a good idea.
- All children agreed that it was unfair to close Bishop Harland and allow teachers to lose their jobs.
- No child was concerned that a 'new school' would mean new uniform and new name. Whilst discussing this, several children referred to Townhill-Bexhill Academy and said how it had made that school better so they could see no problem with making a new school.
- All children at Hylton Red House Primary said that they would like to see their school developed and said that the dinner hall was their biggest worry because it was already too busy at lunchtime (and some of us don't have enough time to eat our lunch (service currently lasts 1½ hours)).
- About 10% pupils at Bishop Harland said that they would want to have lots more opportunities to meet new classmates, but that they were anxious to see what the school would be like, however they wanted to make new friends.
- About 90% pupils at Bishop Harland pupils had no issue with moving to the Red House site but almost all of the pupils said they would initially feel sad to say goodbye to their school. They recognised that it would be a good challenge though and wanted new opportunities.
- I think there is no other option.
  - I just feel bigger class sizes need to be looked into.
  - Obviously option 1 enables staff at Hylton Red House to keep their posts – Option 2 would result in some staff possibly losing jobs – however I do think having Church of England school is feasible option.
  - Option 1 can be the only option as Bishop Harland couldn't accommodate the children from Hylton Red House and why the need to build a new school when Hylton Red House could accommodate

both schools. As for Option 3 – if student numbers are down then surely this needs to be addressed now.

- Option 3 – it would be better for children to stay where they are used to. I don't think parents were given enough information on what would happen if the school was made into an academy just that we wouldn't have any say in how the school was run. I don't think most parents have a say anyway especially if not at the school regularly.
- I believe that it is imperative that a Church of England school presence be maintained north of the river. Both schools are equally uneconomically viable, but one would work well and effectively in the current federation agreement, but we know this cannot last due to economic considerations. The schools share a progressive, dynamic and inspirational Christian Headteacher and the option above enables us to build on the strengths of both schools will support from Church of England.

#### **Q5: Alternative Options:**

- The possibility of adding a nursery to the new Church of England school proposed.
- A completely new school could be an option but not on the Hylton Red House Primary site as the Juniors side of the school is prone to flooding in bad weather. I'm not sure where the new school could be built.
- I suggest a brand new school built on a different site. I know this is going to cost a lot more money but it has been done in the surrounding areas of Sunderland and in Newcastle too. There is a site in the middle which does not hardly get used, behind Pickersgill House.
- Bringing the Nursery in as part of the plan making it all Church of England from the start.
- Possible inclusion of a Nursery.
- New build in the middle of two schools.
- I feel that a separate nursery school is important to the area as I understand that it offers a more flexible provision than a nursery that is attached to a maintained school, and that the current nursery school is having an extremely positive impact on the progress of pre-school children.
- Not at this time.

## **General Comments:**

- Our main concern is what would become of the Bishop Harland site. Our daughter attends Hylton Red House school, although we live in close proximity to Bishop Harland school. Obviously if this site closes what would this bring to the community/area? In today's disruptive society, would the desolate site invite vandalism etc you see around other estates. It would be put to better use as park land/play areas for the children.
- If either option 1 or 2 are chosen, I would like reassurance that staffing issues are decided ASAP to us a fair chance of getting satisfactory employment for next September.
- My concern is that there will be no Church of England Nursery attached to the new Church of England school – is this something that could be possible in the not too distant future?
- We have every faith in the staff's ambitions and drive for the future of our children. Therefore we agree with option 2 as it does seem to be best for all children concerned, as well as maintaining relevant staff all of our children are used to, saving money also. I asked my daughter her opinion on the consultation and she thought it was a great idea. She said "a nice way to make more friends!" It is also bringing the best of both schools into one.
- I think the staff of both schools should keep all children informed of changes in case of some children getting upset about any changes in school, routines etc. Hopefully everything done in the future will not disrupt the pupils.
- Further parking facilities would be required if joining the two schools together as it is a nightmare at the moment travelling past Red House school being just one.  
A school bus for traffic purposes since people would be travelling from Downhill could be an option, which would also help the above point.
- I don't drive and am concerned about getting my children to school safely because of traffic/roads etc. Also I am concerned about the walk to school in the rain/snow. The kids will be soaked by the time they get to school. Will this be considered with regards to uniform (waterproofs possibly)
- Even though I believe option 2 is the best choice, I also empathise with the views of the local residents of Bishop Harland estate. Leaving a school empty would be damaging to a community and encourage vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Decisions need to be made about the building quickly to put the residents minds at rest.

- The schools are both on a much firmer footing this year with Steve Williamson's lead and the good co-operation of the staff. To have a new Church of England aided school would consolidate his leadership, the staff co-operation and the Church input has proved so valuable to people.
- The children must come first we (staff) wouldn't have a job if there were no children. Also needs to be fair to all employees to have a job in the new school if that option is chosen.
- I feel this option will benefit children's education. If both schools continue to work together the result will be an outstanding school and all staff will benefit.
- Hopefully if the new school goes ahead, I would like to see an attached Church of England Nursery in the very near future.
- It would be a shame to lose both schools – it would be wise to have them both at the same site.
- I am personally pleased that the proposals do not include a nursery class. I feel that if we had a nursery class, it would be detrimental to both the nursery class and the nursery school to be competing for roles and funding, therefore placing them in the same position as the two current primary schools. I feel it would be best for the children (if a new school went ahead without a nursery class) for all authorities involved, including the new school, to support the nursery school in any way possible to help the children through transition.
- Worried about travel options (weather conditions)
- Would there be any scholars buses provided to get the children to school safe and dry?
- I would like to see the Harland site converted into a youth project, however I think this needs to be set up quickly for the community as the building will certainly be vandalised. I'm sure the community would not want this to happen.
- As a member of staff and shop steward of GMB, I feel and am willing to put my job at risk for the children to have the best education and I can speak for my members they all feel the same. This is a great chance to build up on what both school have to offer and to work alongside the church and community.
- The winter months are bothering me, it takes me a good half hour to get my children to school now when icy conditions and I only live a 5 minute walk away, so will there be any transport/help to get the children to school.

- Myself and my children all attended Bishop Harland Primary school – it would be very sad to see the school close but after discussing all the options, option 2 is the better – this means there will still be a Church of England school (which is important)
- I think putting both schools together with the help of the dioceses will put our new school on the map!
- Just hope the upheaval doesn't distract the kids and hope they're still with their friends.
- Option 3 cannot be considered due to falling numbers in both schools.
- I think Hylton Red House School is the best option as it is the core of the community – with parents taking their children to school and meeting older people as our estate has lost its post office which was always a hub of activity. The school if needed has lots of land which could be used to build on if necessary – it is now one of the only green belts for the areas and is in an ideal location – pleasant to look at and I feel unnecessary to pull down and rebuild.
- I don't think the children from both schools will mix easily together there's already been suggestions that parents from Red House don't want to mix with parents from Bishop Harland, and also that they don't want children from Bishop Harland that live on Downhill to go to Red House as that was one of the reasons they didn't put their children in Bishop Harland as they didn't want them to mix with children from Downhill. Although the teacher, council and diocese want option 2 they don't live in the area so don't realise fully what concerns children and parents have about moving schools and the disruption it will cause.

