



**Appendix 5**

Free.  
Letter forwarded  
12/12/12.

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Tel: 522 7721

Mr K.Moore,  
Executive Director of Children's Services,  
Sunderland City Council,  
P.O.Box 101,  
Civic Centre,  
Sunderland,  
SR2 7DN

7<sup>th</sup> December 2012

Dear Mr Moore,

**Re: Proposed Merger : Bishop Harland CE VA School and Hylton Red House Primary School**

Thank you for the copies of the Sunderland City Council and Durham Diocesan Board of Finance notices about the proposal to establish a new voluntary aided school. I would like to take the opportunity to comment on this proposal, as invited, as part of the consultation.

Speaking as a Governor of Bishop Harland CE VA School, I am all in favour of the suggested option of discontinuing both schools and opening a new Church of England VA primary School on the Hylton Red House site. As noted in the proposal notices, this proposal will establish a new school operating at full or near full capacity and therefore afford the school greater stability and flexibility to respond to the future needs of all of the pupils from both of the original schools.

The two 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 into a new entity will give both sets of pupils, teachers and the community a new beginning and create a stronger platform for progress. A new Church of England Voluntary Aided School will also maintain choice on the north side of the river.

Please accept my comments above in favour of the proposal.

Yours sincerely,

*Eileen Watson*

Eileen Watson (Mrs)





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Executive Headteacher: Steve Williamson M.A.

17<sup>th</sup> December 2012

**Re: Statutory Representation: Establishing a new Church of England Voluntary Aided School.**

I am delighted to lend my full support to the proposals to discontinue Hylton Red House Primary and Bishop Harland CE VA Primary and establish a new VA school.

The discontinuance of the two schools is essential in order to address school place planning and to assist the Local Authority in cutting unnecessary budget expenditure, whilst at the same time resolving school budget issues caused by running two sites.

Since coming to Sunderland in November 2009 I have witnessed a rapid improvement in the quality of children's education in the Redhill Ward. This, in part, is due to the significant focused support provided to me by the Local Authority which enabled Hylton Red House Primary to be removed so successfully from Special Measures and become, as it is today, the 8<sup>th</sup> most improved school in the country. Similar support received by Bishop Harland CE VA school has resulted in significantly improved results and in 2012 the progress made by pupils from their starting points placed them in the top 5 schools in Sunderland for that measure.

It is for that reason that the gains made at the two schools must be built upon and investment in a new VA school which would continue to serve the local community makes sense. The very positive response to the initial consultation is indicative of the strong bonds and partnerships between Local Authority, Diocese of Durham and the school community. It is unusual to see such levels of support from all parties involved especially during significant school reorganisation and I urge Cabinet to take note of this phenomenon.

That we can ensure the highest standard of education for our pupils and community is of no doubt considering our track record. But it is imperative that we do this in partnership and I am delighted that the Local Authority and Diocese have been able to support plans so effectively in anticipation of a positive decision of the School Organisation Committee. The possibility of a new VA school demonstrates that working together Sunderland schools can increase their resilience and impact even within the current national political climate. I look forward to Cabinet's wholehearted endorsement which will enable us to move forward confidently in providing a local solution.

**Steve Williamson**  
Executive Head Teacher



*Two schools  
Aiming high together*



Learning with...

