

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Summary of views of the persons consulted**

#### **People allied to Pensby Park Primary School**

##### **Falling rolls**

- Understand need to review surplus places and rationalise assets
- People move here just before they have children
- Older residents will eventually be replaced by younger people who will have children
- Admissions have been artificially low for years because of scaremongering and Council reviews
- Number on roll does not accurately reflect the school's popularity
- Predictions are unreliable
- Parents who might have chosen Pensby Park have gone elsewhere because of a belief the school will close
- Rolls would increase if school stays open as threat of closure is lifted
- We will work hard to improve the school's profile and attract more pupils
- We want more government funding to continue to operate the school at this size
- More families will move into the area to fill the surplus places
- Less surplus places than Infant and Junior
- Concerns about availability of places in other schools outside Pensby
- What if more places are needed in the future
- Birth rate calculation is flawed

##### **Staff and Standards**

- Recommended by friends
- Special and unique school
- Staff are supportive, approachable, friendly, caring and understanding
- League tables say school is value for money
- Inclusion is encouraged
- Excellent, dedicated and skilful recent leadership
- Excellent and improving Ofsted reports
- Concerns about lack of leadership, low morale and large classes in other schools
- The best staff are now leaving and being replaced with temporary staff
- Continuous provision must be maintained in any new school
- Becoming increasingly difficult to deliver the curriculum with falling numbers on roll

- Good teacher:pupil ratio
- School caters for both sexes, all religions, cultures and abilities
- School works closely with Orrets Meadow Special school
- Links with Calday Grammar and Hilbre
- Participates in various external schemes such as Children's University
- Anti-bullying policy in place
- After school activities
- Good behaviour is rewarded
- Children benefit from a small school environment
- Concerns about increased class sizes
- Children get more attention in small classes
- Teachers cannot control classes with over 40 pupils
- Large schools hinder children's future prospects
- Ofsted reports should be more available

#### **Building and site**

- Successful pre-school on same site as school
- Modern well maintained building
- No graffiti or vandalism
- Safe and stimulating environment
- Full disabled access and ramps
- Excellent playground equipment
- ICT suite
- Cycle shelter
- Space to build more classrooms or a Children's Centre
- Close to Pensby High schools and sports centre
- Site could be used temporarily while building work went on elsewhere
- Concerns about the future of the land if the school closed
- Large field which is well used in the summer
- Money spent on building would be wasted if school closed

#### **Pupils**

- Concerns about educational disruption, particularly for Y6
- Children of all ages interact
- My children are already facing family problems they do not need more disruption
- Some vulnerable children do not cope well with change

- Children are treated as individuals, not numbers
- Many children attend Sunday school
- Parents are already pulling their children out of the school
- Children's education must be safeguarded while this is going on
- Children go on to do really well in secondary school
- Disabled and able-bodied pupils are integrated
- Concerns about psychological and behavioural effects on children
- Concerns about bullying in other schools
- My child's special needs would not be met anywhere else
- Children are happy, polite and well mannered
- Would children have to go back to a school they had left?
- My child does not like crowded and noisy atmospheres
- Children who go to large primary schools cost more later on because they need more help

### **The Process**

- Consultation meeting was not long enough
- Projected figures are misleading and inaccurate
- Council decided to keep the school open in 2000, why is it proposed for closure now?
- School has been under review for years
- You are putting financial considerations ahead of children and parents interests
- Statistics can be used to prove anything
- Pensby Park has been treated unfairly
- Taking away parent's choice
- Who is looking after children's interests?
- Needs of the few are being overlooking in favour of penny pinching, bureaucracy and jobs worth attitudes
- Authority is playing upon parents fears so the school will close itself
- Council does not care about the outcome of their decisions
- The consultation is a waste of time as the Council does not listen
- Taking too long to make a decision will unsettle everyone
- Consultation pack (*Cabinet report?*) arrived on December 14<sup>th</sup> which did not allow time to change my admission preferences
- School does not have 25% surplus places
- 25% surplus is not a statutory reporting requirement
- Net capacity calculation assumes 30 children in a class

- More people would have complained about the schools closure if were not for the proposed health centre

### **Traffic and transport**

- Travel plan includes walking bus which is healthy and pupils enjoy
- Do not want to take children to two different locations
- Car traffic congestion would be increased as further to travel
- Too far to walk to Irby or Thingwall if I do not want either a Catholic school or separate Infant/Junior schools
- I would have to travel out of the area if the school closed
- I do not drive and would not be able to travel to another school

### **The Options**

- Would my two children be able to go to the same school?
- Should amalgamate Infant and Junior as parents and children expect to go on to Junior anyway
- Makes sense to amalgamate Infant and Junior as they are on the same site
- Better to have continuous primary school not separate schools
- Pupils of different ages can interact more in a primary school
- Separate Infant and Junior schools do not allow older and younger children to interact
- I chose Pensby Park because I did not want separate Infant and Junior schools
- Leave Pensby Park alone
- Closure would not benefit anyone
- School should stay open as a Church of England school
- Strong links with the Parish
- CE status would bring more funding to the school
- Amalgamate all three schools as a Church of England school on the Pensby Park site
- Must ensure sustainable primary education in the area which may mean amalgamation
- I would refuse to take my child to school if amalgamation takes place
- Why merge with a school with a poor reputation and results?
- You are closing the school so you can build a health centre

### **Other comments**

- Closure would be detrimental to the whole community
- We have already moved our child rather than wait for the uncertainty to be resolved
- Would there be enough pre-school places in the area?

- Governors say the school has no financial problems
- We would rather move out of Wirral if the school closed
- Any reduction in amenities would affect house prices
- Generations have gone to this school
- What happened to “Education, education, education”?

***Other comments from the Pensby and Thingwall area***

**Falling rolls**

- Concerns about potentially increased class sizes at neighbouring schools in future
- Pensby Park could be viable in future, if still small

**Staff and standards**

- Pensby Park has a distinctive atmosphere and culture

**Building and site**

- Building could be redeveloped after closure as an Extended school centre for working parents used by all the schools in the area

**Traffic and Transport**

- Concerns about increased traffic in Fishers Lane if Pensby Park site is used for amalgamation
- Inadequate safe crossing points on Fishers Lane

**The Process**

- Do not let any bad feeling that may have been caused affect your judgement
- Parents should have the opportunity to choose Pensby Park rather than the more structured and traditional approach of the Infant and Junior schools

**The Options**

- Creating another CE school seems like a waste of money
- Aided schools can be seen as elitist, if CE option goes ahead it should be a Controlled school with an open admission policy

**Other comments**

- All governors first priority is the education and well being of children

## Minutes taken at Pensby Park Primary Meeting

Introduction                      Councillor Phil Davies  
Presentation                      Marie Stacey

### Comments

**Please note :**

- **(2) or (3) denotes a person speaking for the second/third time.**
- ***Any response to a speaker is in italics***

Parent :                              Cloud hanging over the school for several years, threat of closure leads to children going to other schools.  
Pensby Park close to the High Schools – good interaction.  
School has been in a ‘no win’ situation.  
Young Children – more young families moving into the area – need to take account of increasing pre-school numbers in the area.

*PD:                                      Responded – understand the uncertainty.*

Parent:                              Moved from Liverpool – used Internet to choose school. Uncertainty affects numbers. Amalgamate Infants and Juniors – that’s what the parents have already chosen – leave Pensby Park alone.

Parent:                              Parent of MLD child – Pensby Park supported my child. Ofsteds show Pensby Park to be the better school, has better disabled access, better SEN provision, more diverse pupil population, better ICT. Pensby Park has more pupils with additional needs – quoted from ECM, and council definition of inclusion. Closure would appear to disregard council’s equality and diversity issues.  
How do you intend to consult with children?

*PD:                                      Responded on consultation with pupils.*

Parent:                              We are forgetting the children here.

*PD:                                      Responded.*

Acting Headteacher:      School Council have been spoken to . They are writing letters on behalf of all pupils.

Parent:                              Picked this school because it was a small school – how will class sizes be affected?

*CB:                                      Responded re school sizes and class sizes.*

Parent:                              My concern is SEN. Child went to Pensby Infants with no support, gets good support here and good links to Orrets Meadow – need assurance that SEN pupils will be supported in an amalgamated school?

*MS:* Responded on SEN and numbers issues – used The Dell as an example re SEN issues being dealt with with the focus on the children.

Parent: 1 main school, 1 pre school – out of zone. Close the school because of its size. Why there were no amalgamations in Phase 2 – just closures?

*CB:* Answered – no reason for that. changes in law for Phase 3 make things more complicated.

Parent: Concerned about current instability – a year is a long time to a child – children come home with all sorts of tales – when will a decision be made?

*PD* Responded re timescale – also understanding re need to give children more security.

Parent: Also issues at Pensby Park re instability on the staff – no permanent HT and other staff changes.  
*MS:* Responded re support to the school, including Acting HT put in place.

Parent (2) Our children’s future is being based on birth rates – how can you deal with birth rate projections.

*CB/SG:* Responded re projections and birth rate figures.

Parent: Choice/Children – this is all about politics and money – close the school – reduces choice – not full choice across all neighbouring schools as some are full.

Parent: Why was that graph 0-15 – why not just primary?  
*SG:* Answered

Parent: Took our children out of Pensby Infants for numerous reasons – have complained three times to the LEA and still await a response – we chose not to go to Pensby Infants – the only choice would be to go there – we won’t go there (to Pensby Infants) – so you will still have surplus places.

*PD:* Responded

Parent (2): We chose this school.  
*PD:* Responded

Parent (2) Need to think about the children.  
*PD:* Responded

Parent: If all schools were amalgamated – what would happen to Sports College links, Children’s University, spacious SEN provision – also why do we need a new playground (Ofsted recommendation).

Parent: Links to Sports College?  
 MS: *Responded*

Parent: Surplus places – if the other two schools are amalgamated and Pensby Park remains open, more pupils would come to Pensby Park.

Parent: Sense in Infants and Junior amalgamating – seems logical – put in Pensby Park it becomes us and them – our children would be the outsiders – how will they integrate?  
 PD: *Responded re experiences in Phase 1 re amalgamation – supported by MS re Bidston/Vyner/Dell experiences.*

Parent: Best idea amalgamate the Infant and Junior school, makes sense. If that left Pensby Park in place – what would you do to give parents security?  
 CB: *Responded.*  
 Parent came back – LEA did nothing last time to increase confidence  
 CB: *Responded again.*

Parent: SEN child moved here at Junior transfer having been to Pensby Infants – criticism of statements by Pensby Junior HT.  
 MS: *Explained we cannot respond to this is a public setting.*

Parent: Spoke very positively re the school – how son had done better since moving from Woodlands. People have been told Pensby Infants is closing. Pupils will not be moved to Pensby Primary if a new school is built – large number of pupils will become children taught at home – this will put huge pressure on the Education Dept. – we are concerned about the children we have now.

Husband of teacher: You have no option but to keep Pensby Park open – all the things you want for children are here – better provision – you must keep this school open.

Teacher: Taught across Wirral – a pleasure to teach here – good continuity and able to deliver a personalized learning package for each child – good sized school to work in.  
 MS: *Responded*  
 CB: *Responded re class sizes*

Teacher: Worked in a variety of schools across Wirral, have yet to come across a class size smaller than 25.

Parent: Church of England option – could merge Infants and Juniors and turn Pensby Park into a CofE school, which “re-starts” the school and would build confidence in the school. Everybody wins.

Parent: If Pensby Park is closed what would happen to the site. What about the Children's Centre?

Vice Chair of Govs: Two children in the school. Good to hear that parents want the same as the governors. We are struggling as a school, currently only two permanent members of staff. Need greater stability. Governors would want to work with parents and LEA in any plans which come forward.

Cllr Phil Davies – closing remarks.