

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

## **People allied to Pensby Infant School**

### **Falling rolls**

- What are class sizes like at other schools?

### **Staff and Standards**

- Very good school
- Good Ofsted reports
- Has won various awards
- Concerns about staff redeployment
- Concerns about standards at Junior school
- Infant and Junior working together to address concerns
- Nottingham University uses teachers to train other teachers
- National shortage of headteachers
- Infant head could be head of new primary school
- Good reputation

### **Building and site**

- Building work should be managed for minimal disruption to running of the school
- Concerns about sufficient play area after new build

### **Pupils**

- Concerns about educational disruption

### **The Process**

- Documents are biased in favour of primary schools, what about the positives of separate schools
- Lessons must be learnt from previous amalgamations

### **The Options**

- Children usually go on to the Junior school anyway
- Sensible to amalgamate smaller schools
- Happy in separate schools, why change it?
- Should close Pensby Park, keeping Infant and Junior separate until new building is ready, then amalgamate
- New school could include the Children's Centre and other community amenities
- Would amalgamated school have a single headteacher?
- Can you guarantee funding for a new school building?

### **Other comments**

- School has had financial problems for a long time, managed by careful planning

## **People allied to Pensby Junior School**

### **Falling rolls**

- Surplus places means smaller class sizes
- Financial savings are not the first priority
- If everyone went to their zone school, would this be a problem?

### **Staff and Standards**

- No longer any educational advantage to keeping a separate Junior school

### **Building and site**

- Who owns the school sites?

### **Pupils**

- Concerns about educational disruption

### **The Process**

- Why weren't there options for Heswall?
- Need a stable long term solution
- Another school has not abided by the Authority's media protocol, what impact will this have on Cabinet's decision

### **The Options**

- Sensible to amalgamate smaller schools
- Happy in separate schools, why change it?
- Close Pensby Park, but keep the Infant and Junior separate for now, then amalgamate when the new school is built at the Infant/Junior site
- Any solution which leaves small schools means the problem will return again and again
- Should keep primary school in the heart of the community, not on the Pensby High site
- Can we trust the politicians to build a new school?
- As long as new school is all-through primary, location does not matter much
- We want to see a new school being built before we amalgamate
- Three schools cannot be educationally or financially viable
- New school would allow community needs to be addressed, such as Children's Centre

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

### **Falling rolls**

- Concerns about potentially increased class sizes at neighbouring schools in future

### **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

**APPENDIX B**  
**Minutes taken at consultation meetings**

**Pensby Infant School - 1.2.07 – 7.00pm**

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| Introduction | Lesley Keyworth |
| Phil Davies  | Introduction    |
| Presentation | Chris Batman    |

**Phil Davies invited Questions/Comments**

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

Vice Chair of Govs: David Spencer: Comments in document show bias towards primary, no mention of Infant/Junior benefits. Please bear comments in mind.  
on behalf of gov. body  
Good Ofsted report, plus other awards. Have studied the document put out by LEA and considered what's best for all parties.  
Agree with A – close Pensby Park. Keep Infant and Junior separate for now.  
Build a new school. Amalgamate and move in to the new school.  
Include the Children's Centre and facilities for the community.

Parent governor: Read from document re issues re staffing and issues regarding re-deployment of teachers.

*CB: Provided answer regarding staffing a new school, following an amalgamation from the establishment of the shadow governing body, legal issues re ring fencing of Heads post and procedures in respect of other staff.*

Parent governor (2): Would a new school be cowed into taking staff off the redeployment list?

*CB: Responded on general and specifics of redeployment across the borough and in relation to a specific newly formed school.*

Parent: There are concerns about aspects of the Junior School which many parents would like to discuss – this is not the place to discuss them.

Parent: What are we doing at schools which are full or over capacity?

Parent: Can we give class sizes for each school.

*DA: Gave 2006 data.*

Parent: If you had one school would you have one school, one Head. Would you have to amalgamate or could you keep two separate schools.

Parent (2): I work on the amalgamated school on the Beechwood – some things have been missed.

- CB: *Answered, said points would be taken back to the school. Said overall the Head has reported very positively on the amalgamation (Cannot talk in detail about another school).*
- Parent: Asked how building works would be planned and issue re outdoor space.
- DA: *Answered.*
- Parent: The people who know best are the teachers.  
What does Mrs Keyworth think?
- Governor: Please commit to build a new school.
- DA: *Explained that that is a political decision.*  
PD *Followed through, acknowledged that the governors proposal for a new school had been made and will be discussed.*
- Governor: So money is not guaranteed?.
- CB: *Explained re revenue savings benefiting all schools and capital funding sources including prudential borrowing.*
- Parent: Has a deadline date been set?  
*Earliest 2008 – could be later. We try to aim for September.*
- Parent/gov: Reassure parents re Junior schools. Governors at both schools are working on issues together.  
Personal preference would be to keep two separate schools.  
Spoke highly of infants – I would fight to keep schools separate and address the issues in the juniors.
- Vice chair of gov: Issue re parents from Pensby park attending the meeting.
- Vice chair: Headteacher has a letter to read. Statement read out (attached)  
Agreed with gov. body statement.
- Parent gov (2) Also a gov at the Juniors. Efforts are being made between the two schools. Headteachers and governing bodies are working together.  
Bear in mind some fact/some rumour. Concerns had been raised with Heads and governors.
- Chair: Thanks for coming.  
School has had financial problems for a long time. Every year we get by with careful planning and saving. Also raised £18,000 last year towards our own running costs – allows us to improve staffing. Teachers are good and are used by Nottingham University to train teachers – not mentioned in the documents. Documents do not say a great deal about standards – LEA needs to look at standards. Two examples given in the document produce the same outcomes for the LEA in terms of surplus place removal.  
Talked re article in The Times re Ofsted special measures figures.  
There is a shortage of Headteachers – our Headteacher could become a Primary Head in the new school. Our school is currently above average in terms of standards – wrong to close this school with its high standards and good reputation.
- Phil Davies – closing remarks.

## Statement

Ideally we would like to stay as we are, as we are proud of our school and all that it has and continues to achieve. We have had three very good Ofsted Inspections; we have Investors in people and Healthy School Status also an Activemark. We provide school centred initial teacher training and our children achieve very good standards in all curriculum areas, as can be seen from our Key Stage One results which are above the National and Wirral average.

The imminent review is taking the school into a new phase and brings with it many challenges. As a staff we ask councillors and Local Authority representatives to ensure that any decisions made regarding the reorganisation should be in the best interests of the whole of the Pensby community.

We believe that the area needs stability and the best education and childcare facilities that can be provided. Our experience tells us that children learn best when they are in a warm, caring environment in which they feel happy and secure.

This is not an easy time for anyone connected with the schools in Pensby but we think it is important to look to the future and think how our children and their families needs will be best met.

This may mean an eventual amalgamation of the schools, we agree with the views of our governing body and ask the authority to consider the phasing in of changes to ensure that any inevitable disruption is kept to a minimum.

By doing this the Pensby area will benefit from having stability within its schools, the Local Authority will have achieved their goal of reducing surplus places and this community would be united knowing that it had a secure future with the benefit of experienced teaching and support staff, well resourced and equipped buildings fit for purpose to nurture and educate Pensby's children.

Phil Davies – Introduction  
Marie Stacey - Presentation

**Comments made**

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- Parent: Does the council own the land at all the schools?
- DA* Yes.
- Parent: Is the Heswall area not affected by this?
- PD:* *Answered re capacities.*
- Parent: Council should ensure that school should be at the heart of the community – not on the Pensby High site.
- Governor: Difficult to juggle budget in small schools – any solution which leaves small schools is not a solution – the problem will just return again and again. Need a stable long-term solution. Build a new school.
- Headteacher: Issue re pupils' education – through education now best – old advantages of juniors separate has gone.  
- location – principles of an all through school are more important than the location. Would have a new school
- Parent: Does surplus places not equal smaller classes?
- CB:* *Answered.*
- Parent governor: Review is primarily to deal with places, financial savings are not the first priority.
- PD:* *Answered.*
- Governor (2): Governors have already put forward a proposal. Can politicians be trusted to build a new school – we would like it ahead of amalgamation – as it is key to the amalgamation process.
- Governor (3): Another school has stepped out of the protocol guidelines issued by the Authority – what influence will that have on the Cabinet's decision?
- PD:* *Answered.*
- Parent Would we still have a problem if everyone attended their zone school.
- CB:* *Answered.*
- Parent: What happens next?
- CB:* *Responded on what LA will do..*  
*PD:* *Replied on political issues.*

Chair of Govs:

Connected to school for 12 years – presented governors’ statement – position arrived at after a long debate.

**Statement of the Pensby Junior School Governing Body**

**“The Governing Body at Pensby Junior School agree to the closure of Pensby Park Primary School and a new school to be built on the top playing field of the Pensby Infant and Junior Schools site, with both schools remaining as separate entities and full amalgamation taking place once the new building is completed”.**

Personal view – long standing member of community – falling roll – means three schools cannot be financially or educationally viable – best option is through primary on one site – needs to be one building not two. Pensby Park should close – and a new school built on a site determined by the council. Once built Infants and Juniors should combine into the new build.

A new school would also allow other community needs to be addressed eg. Children’s Centres and Health Centre.

Cllr Phil Davies –Thanks for coming – there is time to respond up to the end of March.