

Appendix B

Summary of responses to Consultation

People allied to Poulton Primary School

Falling rolls

- People tend to move in and out of the area

Staff and Standards

- Teachers are friendly, caring and considerate
- Staff are like a second family
- Staff were very helpful when I was training as a teaching assistant
- SEN resources and care are exceptional here
- It's not just about league tables
- Standard of teaching is very high
- Staff work well together as a team
- This will lower staff morale
- Concerns about loss of teaching and non-teaching staff
- Concerned about impact of supply staff on continuity
- Concerns about availability of staff vacancies elsewhere
- Concerns about class sizes

Building and site

- Bigger and better
- New windows have been installed
- Big playground with a separate Foundation play area
- There is a lift installed and ramps outside
- The parking area is great for unloading wheelchairs
- Plenty of safe drop-off areas and good parking
- There is a medical room with special changing facilities
- Full disabled access
- Central Park is used for football and summer PE
- Park would need a bigger extension if we merged there
- Park has tatty portacabins
- Concerns about poor disabled access at other schools
- No nursery class at Park
- Concerns about size of playground at Park

- Building a whole new school would be a waste of money

Pupils

- Children go on to do really well in secondary school
- Children should be able to go to a local school
- Children gain self-esteem and confidence
- Attending a school nursery makes the transition to big school smoother
- My children have never been bullied here
- If Poulton's nursery closes, where will the children go
- Other schools cannot cater for children with special needs
- Disruption to education for children in Year 6
- Children would be split up from their friends if the school was closed
- Importance of extra support for the most vulnerable children in coping with transition
- Welfare of the children is the most important thing to consider

The Process

- Taking away parents choice
- The views of the children haven't been consulted
- Local residents should be consulted
- St George's parents should be consulted about the catchment area changes
- Concerns about length of time it would take to implement proposal
- Why were mobiles taken away before decision was made?
- How does potential cost saving compare with necessary capital investment?
- Would a new school have to be a Foundation school and what is the difference from a Community school?
- Rationale behind potential catchment area alterations

Traffic and transport

- Some people can't afford to travel to other schools
- Concerns about drop off and parking at Park Primary
- Sending more children to Park site will make traffic and drop off worse
- Houses on the Marymount site will make traffic congestion at Park even worse

The Options

- Amalgamation would be better for children as they would move with their friends, and have familiar staff in the new school

- Amalgamation would combine the strengths of the two schools
- Amalgamation would best for the community
- You could close Poulton, but guarantee all the children a place at Park Primary to keep them together
- Why not merge at Poulton and use the money for a new roof
- Could build a new nursery at the Poulton site to make more space in the main building
- Proper sensible consideration must be given to both sites
- Concerns about size of new nursery at Park
- Concerns about availability of places at alternative schools
- Where would children go while building work took place?

Other comments

- School is an important piece of Wallasey history, 100 years old next year
- Generations have been to this school

People allied to Park Primary School

Falling rolls

- Understand need to reduce surplus places
- Understand that pupil numbers are falling
- Park has the lowest number of surplus places
- School is bigger than the 180 viable minimum
- Closing schools causes overcrowding and large class sizes
- This is the school of choice for parents

Staff and Standards

- This is one of the best performing schools in the area
- Staff reward and encourage good behaviour
- There are lots of out of school activities available
- School has a good reputation for academic achievement and discipline
- There is an open door policy and issues are addressed quickly
- Staff are a hard working, dedicated, supportive and friendly team
- School has a happy, friendly atmosphere and positive ethos
- Teacher-parent relationships are good
- The headteacher and staff know all the children
- Larger schools lose their community spirit

- School keeps parents well informed and involved in school life
- Standards would go down if amalgamated
- Amalgamation would disrupt two sets of staff instead of just one
- New school would not have the same ethos, staff or governors
- Results are on an upward trend
- I don't want my child taught by under-performing teachers
- This is a happy place to work
- Staff would welcome the challenge of bringing more pupils and their families into the school community
- High standards of teaching

Building and site

- Central Park location is safe, calm and accessible
- The site is secure and well set back from the road
- School uses Central Park as a grassed area for PE
- Excellent facilities
- Poulton's playground is unappealing

Pupils

- Children get certificates for 100% attendance
- Children are well cared for, polite and keen to go to school
- Children go on to do really well in secondary school
- Children gain self-esteem and confidence here
- Concerns about educational disruption, particularly for those in Year 6
- Attending a school nursery provides a smooth transition to school
- My child is happy and settled here
- Children get more individual attention in a small school
- Children need stability and to feel safe and comfortable
- Former Poulton children would need more attention so my child would get less

The Process

- Important to make a speedy decision to remove uncertainty
- Numbers and graphs mean nothing in the real world
- It is sad that money comes before children's education
- Consultation meeting wasn't long enough
- You've already made a decision

- Taking away parents choice
- New housing will bring in more children

Traffic and transport

- Out of zone children come here which shows how popular the school is
- Children can walk to school without crossing major roads

The Options

- Why disrupt Park by amalgamating it when it is doing so well
- The special quality of Park would be lost if it was amalgamated
- Closing Poulton and dispersing the children would help with surplus places at more schools
- Closing Poulton would disrupt less children
- Would there be enough places for all the children of both schools if amalgamated?
- Building work would be disruptive
- All primary schools would be better with a nursery class
- I don't want my child to go to Poulton as children are from different backgrounds
- Would have gone to Poulton already if that was what I wanted
- Better to amalgamate at Park site
- A nursery class would take up surplus space at Park
- A nursery class means children can go to same school as older brothers and sisters
- There is room at Park to accommodate more children if required
- Leave both schools open so that children are not upset

Other comments

- Cost per pupil is lower than Wirral average
- This is a much loved school
- Friends of Park (Parents Association) does a lot for the school
- Generations have gone to this school

Notes from Meeting at Poulton Primary School

Introduction	Phil Davies
Presentation	Marie Stacey
	Introduction
	Full presentation
	– general background
	+ South Wallasey context

Questions/Comments

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

Parent governor:	Fairness of money spent on small schools. Issue re: choice and friendship groups – some children come in from a distance. Have we thought about upturn in numbers?
Parent:	Amalgamate – issues which site.
DA:	<i>Answered</i>
Parent governor:	Decision should be based on care not just league tables!
PD:	<i>Answered – all factors would be taken into account</i>
Parent:	Issue re numbers of SEN pupils at Poulton who receive good care. What is the difference between amalgamation and closure?.
CB:	<i>Answered</i>
Parent:	Timetable
PD:	<i>Used the slide from the presentation.</i>
Parent governor:	What happens between now and 2007? No one would want to come to the school.
PD:	<i>Answered - decide as quickly as possible.</i>
	School would lose staff?
MS:	<i>Responded – giving examples from Phase 1 & 2, particularly The Dell.</i>

Parent: Would there be places for all the pupils.

DA: *Answered – would be places*

Parent: Nursery at Poulton – no Nursery at Park.

PD: *Responded that there would be Nursery provision replicated.*

MS *added to response.*

CB *Added background re Brentwood which would impact on Nursery provision?*

Parent /midday: Couldn't merger be done here. If amalgamation is little different to closure why don't we just amalgamate?

CB: *Responded*

Staff member: Talked re loving, caring atmosphere. Closure would lose a lot, amalgamation would allow skills and strengths to be maintained.

Teacher governor: If school closed and pupils went to several schools that would affect the personal development of pupils.

Parent (2): As Park is bigger with more parents will they win the argument? – Will the site be looked at in a fair way?.

PD: *Responded*

Early Years – should be choice which meets the needs of the children.

Teacher: If it's a choice between Poulton and Park, a merger would be the best choice – it would create a new, stronger school.

Teacher governor: Merger would be the best option – greater continuity and better for children. Would use the strengths of both schools

Parent: Clarification re amalgamation – If amalgamation is on the Park site – wouldn't Park be closing.

MS *Responded giving examples from Phase 1.*

CB *Gave further answer re transfer of pupils if Poulton closed..*

Parent /midday: Issue re Park site.

DA: *Responded re space for pupils.*
What about parking/playspace?

CB: *Responded re adaptations and financing of capital works. Clarified re: revenue funding.*

Parent: Couldn't the Park children come here?

CB: *Answered Yes they could – with investments being made in the building.*

Parent: Why were the mobiles taken away?

Parent: Already parking issues at Park – more children would make it worse.

Parent: How do we justify capital investment? What is the return period?

CB & DA *Answered.*

Parent: If children go to Park what would happen to the teachers?

MS: *Answered – try to do the best for all staff whatever their wishes.*
Explained issues re Headteacher.

CB: *Provided further background on employment/staffing issues and Wirral context on placing staff in other schools.*

Parent: What would happen re class sizes?

CB: *Responded – can't answer re specifics. Schools always try to maximize number of classes and trying to get class sizes as low as possible. Removing surplus places allows more investment in teachers.*

Parent: If the school closed would our children be supported? – not every child can make a smooth transition.

MS: *Responded – confirming every effort would be made to support pupils. Confident that Head of a receiving or amalgamated school would provide support.*

PD: *Added re experience in receiving schools in Phase I.*

MS: *We've had no letters of complaint.*

- Parent: Why is closure an option when amalgamation is better. Poulton shouldn't be simply closed.
- Parent: Would any amalgamated school be a Community school?
- CB: *Responded re latest Education Act and or current position is that we are awaiting DfES guidance.*
- Staff member: What about staff other than teachers: in terms or redeployment.
- MS: *Responded that we are concerned with supporting all staff. Talked about some previous transfers of non-teaching staff.*
- Staff member: If you keep closing or amalgamating schools won't you run out of vacancies?
- CB: *Responded re number of staff being driven by pupil numbers.*
- If the school is scheduled for closure – what happens when staff leave and more supply teachers come in?
- CB: *We work to manage a stable position up to closure.*
- Parent: Closure of Brentwood. Prefer school based Nursery than a stand alone nursery like Brentwood.
- Chair of Governors: Thanks to Phil and council team. This is the beginning of the consultation. Need to concentrate on the welfare of the children. Please consider what the parents have said. Please make the decision as soon as possible. Parents reminded they can write in or contact via e.mail or via the Headteacher.

NOTES OF MEETING AT PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL

- Phil Davies Introduction
- Marie Stacey Presentation

Questions/Comments

Please note : - (2) or (3) denotes a person speaking for the second/third time.

- ***Any response to a speaker is in italics***

- Teacher: Schools closure normally relates to surplus places and poor results. Why close a successful school?

- Teacher: Not a small school – equally shared workload – no issues re workload; good Ofsted report; issues resolved.
- Parent: Puzzled at including Park in the review – low surplus, good out of zone input, good results/standards, good value for money. Successful school at reasonable cost. Amalgamation is a risk – no logic in pursuing Option B – urge Cabinet not to pursue policy.
- Parent: What is a surplus place?
- DA: *Answered on surplus places.*
- MS: *Answered re class size*
- Teacher: Amalgamation would be very disruptive to a lot of children.
- Parent: School is 14th in the PANDA. Poulton is 85th. Mixing our children with these pupils – we will suffer.
- Staff governor: Spoke positively about Park. Surplus place removal could take place without upheaval. We would be happy to accept other pupils.
- Parent: Out of zone parent – good school. Cheaper option would be to close, fewer number of staff to re-deploy.
- Parent: Asked who owns the site. Park is next to the park – good site. Park is safer than Poulton which is surrounded by roads. Room for expansion, safer environment, better re transport, connections.
- Vice Chair of Govs Raised issues of Foundation status impact on school. Can we give guarantees as who will run the school.
- DA: *Answered re technicalities of Foundation.*
- MS: *Added detail re working with Foundation schools – relationships would be the same,*
- DA: *Provided further detail.*
- Teacher: How would Foundation status affect redundancy?.
- MS: *Answered re impacts on staff. Referred to previous amalgamations and outcomes from the amalgamations – Vyner and St Oswalds. Also talked about issues if one school used heavy criticism against another school.*
- Parent: Issues re new housing – 57 new homes on Marymount.

DA: *Answered.*

Parent: Why do you want to interrupt a good school?

Parent Gov (2): School would be professional. Don't want my child to go through change. spoke re good standards, rising standards, good management, good plans in place – other very positive references to the school. A successful, strong, improving school. an amalgamation would jeopardize the work here. “The LEA would lose one of the best performing schools in the borough”. School could work successfully to enlarge the school. Urge the Cabinet not to accept the amalgamation option.

Parent/ex pupil: Park already has a happy atmosphere, why rock the boat?

Deputy Head: Four years in post – spoke re other ways of measuring success other than standards. Amalgamation – would have to start again. If the LEA needed a new school it would want a school like Park.

Parent: Asked re nature of re-building.

DA: *Responded*

Parent: Why do you close/amalgamate.

PD: *Answered.*

School cook: What about the happiness of the children if the schools amalgamate?

PD: *Answered using Vyner/St Oswalds as an example.*

Headteacher: Every Child Matters.
Cabinet should continue to invest in Park Primary School. Much more done since the 2002 Ofsted. Feel data in consultation document does not give the full picture of good standards and good progress with pupils who enjoy learning. Spoke re a range of initiatives and the aims of the school. Cost effective school. Want to continue to build our school and continue our successful development. Quote from Carey Marsden – very positive comments on the school.

- Parent: Traffic issues. After school. Oasis Nursery does not require crossing roads from Park. "No need to rock the boat"
- Parent: 4 – 6 rooms needed? Yes.
- Parent: Park has the highest attendance in South Wallasey – an amalgamation would jeopardize this position.
- Parent: Is Poulton on listed?
- DA: *Answered No.*
- Parent: Low staff turnover a key feature of Park. If you just close Poulton is that a more effective removal of surplus places?
- Parent: Followed up on attendance – don't see why we have to disrupt all this.
- Parent: This school is "head and shoulders above the rest". Shy children – settle well here and are happy children – would want the same experience for my youngest children.
- Parent: Out of zone. I walk past Poulton and I am so glad my children come here. I would walk 3000 miles to not go to Poulton.
- Chair of Governors: Thanks to us for listening to views. Clear views given. Need to put children's welfare above all else. Need to be calm. Councillor Davies – I know you will take into account the very strong feelings which have been expressed here on the school – everything from its standards to its location. Ask for a decision as soon as possible.

Cllr Davies thanked all for coming. further comments can be written in or e.mailed to us – more forms from the school.

School gave a Powerpoint pictorial presentation to conclude the meeting.