

Analysis Of Rother Valley Second Phase Consultation Responses

1533 responses were received in total, some respondents made reference to more than one proposal with many responding to individual primary school proposals. Comments on the proposal for an Academy will be the subject of a separate report. Responses were also received from governing bodies as well as other organisations in the area.

The majority of responses received were from "Other" – largely residents, followed by parents, staff, governors and students respectively.

EAST

Bury (5 responses)

All of the responses were from parents, one of whom is also a governor. All are in favour of a move to a 4-11 primary school.

Fittleworth (50 responses)

- All responses were from parents with pupils at the school;
- all who expressed a preference stated they were in favour of change to 11+ transfer, all through primary and 2 tier system;
- concerns were expressed over 10 year olds attending MGS - 78% of respondents made reference to concerns regarding traffic/transport issues i.e. travel to Midhurst;
- 88% of respondents stated they want Year 6 to stay in primaries from 2009.

St James, Coldwaltham (20 responses)

- All respondents were parents and those who expressed a preference stated they were in favour of change to 11+ transfer, all through primary and 2 tier system and that the advantages educational advantages outweighed the disadvantages;
- the key issues were to ensure that the buildings were fit for purpose and that proposals for the current Yr 4 and Yr 5 pupils were carefully planned and appropriately funded.

Graffham/Duncton (5 responses)

- More than half stated that they do not want 10 year olds to attend MGS and raised transport concerns as the particular issue;
- more than half stated that they want their children to stay in Y6 in 2009;
- one was against the proposal to amalgamate;
- one made reference to concern about drop in funding and a drop in the PAN, also keen to retain original names of schools.

Northchapel/Petworth (714 responses)

- 9% of respondents were parents and 90% "Other" because they had not stated who they were;

- 95% of responses referred to Northchapel specifically;
- of those who stated a preference, 83% were in favour of change to 11+ transfer, 91% for all through primary and 90% for a 2 tier system;
- 94% stated they are against the proposal to split Northchapel children over two school sites.

Other Issues/Concerns

- Over disruption to children;
- over 10 year olds attending MGS;
- over transport / traffic issues;
- that proposals would create a 3-tier system for Northchapel pupils.

NORTH (WEST)

Camelsdale (55 responses)

- The majority of responses received were from parents with pupils currently attending the school;
- of those who expressed a preference, 100% were in favour of the change to 11+ transfer, all through primaries and the 2 tier system;
- 80% stated that they did not want their children to attend MGS at age 10 and would prefer they remain in primary for Year 6 in 2009.

Fernhurst (14 responses)

- Of those who expressed a preference, 50% were in favour of the change to 11+ transfer, all through primaries and the 2 tier system and 50% were against;
- concern over need for additional classrooms;
- concern over speed of consultation process;
- concern over level of appropriate funding needed.

Other Issues

- concern raised over the potential disruption to children;
- consultation rushed.

CENTRAL

Easebourne (7 responses)

- Of those who expressed a preference, 83% supported the change to 11+ transfer, all through primaries and the 2 tier system;
- concern over 10 year olds attending MGS;
- of those who expressed a preference, 100% felt the advantages of the primary proposals outweighed the disadvantages.

Midhurst/Stedham (183 responses)

- 70% of responses were from parents;
- of those who expressed a preference, the majority were in favour of change to 11/all through primary/2 tier system;

- 71% stated against amalgamation of the two schools largely because they felt the proposals were purely financially led and would be disruptive to the children.

Other Issues

- Request that no merger considered until impact of 2-tier system assessed;
- against amalgamations generally;
- proposals would have a negative impact on community;
- concern for teachers jobs (particularly headteachers);
- traffic/transport issues (between sites);
- excellent recent Ofsted;
- consultation rushed;
- split site schools would be difficult to manage – many quoting the Director for Children & Young People’s Services who referred to the difficulties of split site secondary schools at the Academy meeting.

WEST

Rake/Hollycombe (79 responses)

- 65 respondents made reference specifically to Rake & 35 specifically to Hollycombe, some making reference to both;
- the majority of responses received were from “Others” – a lot of these were mostly residents;
 - followed by parents;
 - staff & governors jointly; and
 - 1 student.
- clear support still coming through for all through primaries and changing the age of transfer;
- 85% of respondents were against the proposed amalgamation.

Other Issues

- Amalgamation across split sites would be difficult for the headteacher and their effectiveness would be diluted;
- some requested the schools remained stand alone;
- one raised the issue of the amalgamated school becoming CE – that some parents choose to send their children there because it is not a church school
- some questioned whether the proposals would be educationally beneficial;
- 11 urged to change the age of transfer (add Year 6) and then assess whether any further changes such as amalgamation were required;
- querying the consultation process;
- felt the proposals were financially led only;
- class sizes be kept down – these comments made particular reference to the possibility of Hollycombe having several year groups in one class and the need for an additional class to be built;
- worried about the disruption to pupils;
- data was flawed;
- the consultation was rushed.

Rogate (107 responses)

- 34% from parents, 6% staff/governors, 60% other;
- 96% of those who expressed a preference were in favour of change to 11+ transfer, all through primary and 2 tier system;
- 89% of responses specifically stated that they were against closure of the school;
- only 5% wanted to amalgamate Rogate with South Harting;
- 15% felt there had been poor consultation;
- more than half felt the proposals would have a negative effect on the local community.

Other Issues

- Concern over traffic/transport issues for pupils;
- concern over disruption to children.

St Mary and St Paul, South Harting

- 41 responses of which 65 were from parents/guardians and 17% from staff/governors;
- 56% of respondents specifically expressed a preference for a move to the two-tier all-through primary system. No responses argued against it;
- 13 respondents stated that they were in favour of the response put forward by the governing body;
- 14 respondents state that the Published Admission Number (PAN) should remain at 20 and not be reduced to 15. To this figure must be added the 13 respondents who wrote in support of the response of the governors. This was the key issue for the majority of the respondents;
- 10 state that they are against a Rogate/South Harting amalgamation with no responses in favour of it;
- other issues raised concerned that the data is flawed with more children in the area than suggested and a concern that the line through Rogate reflecting the new catchment area should be reconsidered to include Fyning Lane.

Commentary

The officer commentary in Appendix 2 also addressed the responses from individual consultees.