Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Junior School Proposed Amalgamation

Joint Meeting with Staff of Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Junior Schools on Tuesday 4th March 2008.

Present: Graham Sinclair, David Hill, Helen Rogers, Paul Fitzpatrick and Ann Hercock (LA), Chris Cohen (Head of Infant), Liz Gee (Head of Junior), members of staff of both schools and union representatives.

David Hill outlined the proposal to amalgamate Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior Schools from September 2008. To do this Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant School will be closed and Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior School will be expanded and its age range will change from 7-11 to 3-11 years. The new school will become a 'through' primary school, which will accommodate the same number of pupils as are currently accommodated within the two schools.

He spoke about existing and predicted numbers on roll, financial implications and the advantages and disadvantages of amalgamation. A summary of the information had been distributed prior to the meeting, which also included a timetable for the consultation process.

Paul Fitzpatrick, Human Resources Manager stressed that the proposed amalgamation was not about reducing staff. There was no reason why any post should be at risk. Teaching staff would remain the same as the numbers of children would not change and catering and cleaning staff would be unchanged. Admin and clerical staff could see some changes but no jobs were at risk. The new Head would probably wish to look at structures but there was no cause for concern.

Questions and comments were then invited which were as follows:-

<u>I am employed on a temporary contract</u>. What will happen to my post at the end of August?

This would be an issue for the two Head Teachers to consider. The Infant Head confirmed that there would still be a need for the post.

I am part of the Admin Team at the Infant School. There would be four members of staff should the schools amalgamate. What would happen to salary scales and pensions?

There would be a consultation process involving staff and unions. It is likely that there would be a new staffing structure and some role changes may take place.

According to the timetable, the Local Authority decision will take place on 24th June. This is only three weeks before the end of the school term. This does not leave much time for consultation with staff.

The two Head Teachers have been meeting regularly with staff for some weeks now. They have been encouraged to think through the process well before 24th June. For practical purposes, it has to be assumed that the amalgamation will take place.

<u>I am the Clerk to the Infant Governing Body.</u> The next meeting is due to take place in May. What happens after that?

The Infant Governing Body continues until 31st August 2008. It would be possible to hold another meeting after the one in May. The Head Teachers and Chair will think about how to fill the vacancies on the Junior Governing Body.

<u>I am the Site Supervisor.</u> What will happen to my accommodation? What would happen if the Infant site was sold off?

You could remain there even if the site was sold off or alternatively there would be negotiations to re-house you.

What is the timetable for the move to the Junior School?

This will be published in the Primary Capital Programme 2009-2011. The aim would be to plan to rebuild Monkwood school.

<u>I currently work in the new Foundation Unit here at the Infant School? What would happen to that – it seems a waste.</u>

There will be a new Unit based in the Junior School as part of the building work. Children have benefited from attending the Foundation Unit and will continue to do so until the move to the Junior building takes place.

Is there enough room to build on to the Junior School?

I can confirm there is sufficient space.

Would the school field be lost?

No as there is enough room at the front of the building.

Would building onto the front restrict the light going into the building?

The architect would address this.

There are concerns that the building would be too close to the road.

Every site has its risks and issues. As part of the process staff, parents and governors will all be involved and consulted.

The Junior school has experienced a lot of vandalism. If you build nearer to the road it would only encourage more.

Often a new school instils a sense of pride in the community. It would be a matter of working with the children and parents.

Some parents think that because of the wording on the letter the Infant school will close in September and their children will have to be accommodated in the junior building.

The children would remain in the Infant School building until the new accommodation was ready.

What does the Local Authority propose to do with the infant school site?

Children and Young People's Services would decide if it had a need for the buildings and site. If we did not then it would be a Council decision. The site would go into a land bank that the Council manages. Nothing would be decided in the short term.

Why build onto the junior site rather than the Infant?

There is more space on the junior site to build on. It is a cost issue and a space issue. The infant site is on three different levels which is not suitable for children, staff and visitors with access difficulties. Access to the site is also limited.

What about play areas – would they be separate ones for infant and junior age children?

In the past many playgrounds were rectangular with a variety of activities taking place in the same area. In recent times it is more usual to have separate, themed areas (e.g. quiet seating areas, specific play areas). The Foundation Stage and Infant play areas would be totally separate from Junior play areas.

Would the dining area be extended to cope with the extra number of children?

Ron Parry, the Catering Manager would be involved with this and it is something to be taken into account with the architect.

There were no more questions.

Graham Sinclair explained that the pre-statutory consultation period will end on 20th March. Anyone wishing to ask any more questions or make any comments outside this meeting should speak to the Head Teachers who will pass them on to the appropriate officers. All points will be recorded and submitted to the Cabinet Member.