

CABINET MEMBER FOR LIFELONG LEARNING

**Venue: Town Hall,
Moorgate Street,
Rotherham.**

Date: Tuesday, 24th June 2008

Time: 8.45 a.m.

A G E N D A

1. To determine if the following matters are to be considered under the categories suggested in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972.
2. To determine any item which the Chairman is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency.
3. The 'amalgamation' of Broom Valley Infant and Junior Schools (report herewith) (Pages 1 - 21)
4. The 'amalgamation' of Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Junior Schools (report herewith) (Pages 22 - 70)

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Lifelong Learning Cabinet Member and Advisers Meeting
2.	Date:	24th June 2008
3.	Title:	The ‘amalgamation’ of Broom Valley Infant and Junior Schools by the closure of Broom Valley Infant School and the expansion and a change of age range at Broom Valley Junior School.
4.	Programme Area:	Children and Young People’s Services Ward 2 – Boston Castle

5. Summary

Proposals for the amalgamation of Broom Valley Infant and Broom Valley Junior Schools have stood for 6 weeks (from 18th April to 30th May) and, in the absence of any objections the matter can now be determined by the Local Authority. This will be by the closure of the Infant school and the expansion and change of age range of the Junior school.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- 1) In the absence of any formal objections, that the Local Authority determines the proposal to amalgamate Broom Valley Infant and Broom Valley Junior Schools by the closure of the Infant school and the expansion and change of age range of the Junior school.**
- 2) That the Secretary of State be informed accordingly.**

7. Proposals and Details

Members have agreed to consult as appropriate whenever two schools meet certain conditions and this is stated within the Local Authority's School Organisation Plan.

The principal objectives of amalgamation are:

- 1) to provide a continuous primary entitlement across the key stages; and
- 2) to provide a unified management structure with a single school ethos which will be more efficient and make more effective use of resources.

Considerations for amalgamation are described in the School Organisation Plan in Section 4, 'LEA Policies and Principles'. (These are described in the appendix to this report)

Members agree to commence the process at a meeting held on the 26th February 2008. Since then meetings have taken places as follows.

Governors	13 th March 2008
Staff	17 th March 2008
Parents	17 th March 2008

(Copies of the minutes of these meetings are attached to the report)

Statutory Notices were published on the 18th April 2008 and have now stood for six weeks. No comments or objections have been received and the Local Authority can now make a determination.

8. Finance

Financial savings which arise are savings on staffing, mainly from the loss of a Head Teacher's post from the school's budget. The 'Minimum Funding Guarantee' procedures protect the school budget in 2008-09 and the school will enjoy additional funding in the first year of the budget because of the saving on the leaving head teacher's salary.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

In earlier deliberations, members considered the advantages and disadvantages to amalgamations of this nature. (As a reminder these are detailed in the appendix to the report)

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The major theme supported by the proposal is 'to ensure that everyone has access to skills, knowledge and information to enable them to play their part in society'.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Report to Cabinet Member and Advisers 26th February 2008 and 16th April (attached), minutes of the meetings held with School Governors (13th March), Staff and Parents (17th March); the School Organisation Plan and the 'Education and Inspections Act 2006'.

The statutory consultation timetable is:

Publication of statutory notices	18 th April 2008
6 week period for representations and objections closes	30 th May 2008
LEA decision	24 th June 2008
Implementation	1 st September 2008

Contact Name: David Hill, Manager, School Organisation Planning and Development, Ext 2536, david-education.hill@rotherham.gov.uk

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Lifelong Learning Cabinet Member and Advisers Meeting
2.	Date:	26th February 2008
3.	Title:	Proposal to consult on the ‘amalgamation’ of Broom Valley Infant and Junior Schools by the closure of Broom Valley Infant School and the expansion and a change of age range at Broom Valley Junior School.
4.	Programme Area:	Children and Young People’s Services Ward 2 – Boston Castle

5. Summary

It is proposed to consult on the ‘amalgamation’ of Broom Valley Infant and Broom Valley Junior Schools. This will be by the closure of the Infant school and the expansion and change of age range of the Junior school. Members have previously agreed to consult as appropriate where two schools meet the considerations for amalgamation which are described in the School Organisation Plan.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that consultation on the proposal to ‘amalgamate Broom Valley Infant and Broom Valley Junior Schools as described above is begun and that a further report be brought to Members with details of the outcome of the consultation.

7. Proposals and Details

The proposal to be consulted on is:-

It is proposed to 'amalgamate' Broom Valley Infant and Broom Valley Junior Schools from September 2008. To do this, the Infant school will be closed and the Junior school will be expanded and will have its age range changed from 7-11 to 3-11 years. Broom Valley Junior will, therefore, become a 'through' primary school and will accommodate the same number of pupils as are currently accommodated within the two schools.

The new School would have 420 places (R-Y6) with a Nursery unit of up to 78 places (39FTE). (This is the combined numbers of the current two schools) The school would have an admission number of 60.

The principal objectives of amalgamation are:

- 1) to provide a continuous primary entitlement across the key stages; and
- 2) to provide a unified management structure with a single school ethos which will be more efficient and make more effective use of resources.

Considerations for amalgamation are described in the School Organisation Plan in Section 4, 'LEA Policies and Principles'. (These are described in **Appendix 'A'**)

There will be a vacancy for the Head Teacher's post at the Infant School, both schools are on the same site and the admission number of the two schools is 60. The conditions for consultation on amalgamation are, therefore, met.

8. Finance

Financial savings which arise are savings on staffing, mainly from the loss of a Head Teacher's post from the school's budget. The 'Minimum Funding Guarantee' procedures protect the school budget in 2008-09 and the school will enjoy additional funding in the first year of the budget because of the saving on the leaving headteacher's salary.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The risks associated to an amalgamation are detailed in section 4 of **Appendix 'A'**.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The major theme supported by the proposal is 'to ensure that everyone has access to skills, knowledge and information to enable them to play their part in society'. The principle advantages of amalgamation arise from the continuous primary education entitlements which are:-

- Removal of the school transfer at the end of key stage1;
- Provision of a whole school curriculum across the primary age range;
- A unified management structure with a single school ethos;
- The potential to remodel the staffing structure and to safeguard the staffing establishment when pupil numbers change across the key stages;
- A whole school approach to staff development across the primary phase; more efficient and effective use of resources, especially accommodation, when numbers fluctuate across the infant and junior phases.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The School Organisation Plan and the 'School Standards and Framework Act 1998'

The consultation process is described in **Appendix 'A'**

Contact Name: David Hill, Manager, School Organisation Planning and Development, Ext 2536, david-education.hill@rotherham.gov.uk

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Lifelong Learning Cabinet Member and Advisers
2.	Date:	15th April 2008
3.	Title:	The proposal is to ‘amalgamate’ Broom Valley Infant and Junior Schools by the closure of Broom Valley Infant School and the expansion and change of age range at Broom Valley Junior School from 7-11 to 3-11 years.
4.	Programme Area:	Children and Young People’s Services Ward 2 – Boston Castle

5. Summary

Broom Valley Junior School and Broom Valley Infant School are both separate schools. The report to Cabinet Member and Advisers on 26th February 2008 approved a pre-statutory consultation on the proposal to amalgamate the two schools by closing the Infant School and expanding and changing the age range at the Junior School. Members have previously agreed to consult as appropriate where two schools meet the considerations for amalgamation which are described in the ‘School Organisation Plan’. Pre-statutory consultations have been undertaken with School Governors, Staff and Parents, and copies of the consultation papers have also been sent to Ward Members. This report details the outcome of these pre-statutory consultations.

6. Recommendation:

It is recommended that the statutory consultation on the proposal to ‘amalgamate’ Broom Valley Junior School and Broom Valley Infant School by closing the Infant School and expanding and changing the age range at Broom Valley Junior School as described in Appendix ‘A’ is begun and that a further report be brought to Members with details of the outcome of the formal consultation.

7. Proposals and Details

The proposal to be consulted on is:-

It is proposed to 'amalgamate' Broom Valley Infant and Broom Valley Junior Schools from September 2008. To do this, the Infant school will be closed and the Junior school will be expanded and will have its age range changed from 7-11 to 3-11 years. Broom Valley Junior will, therefore, become a 'through' primary school and will accommodate the same number of pupils as are currently accommodated within the two schools.

The new School would have 420 places (R-Y6) with a Nursery unit of up to 78 places (39FTE). (This is the combined numbers of the current two schools) The school would have an admission number of 60.

The principal objectives of amalgamation are:

- 1) to provide a continuous primary entitlement across the key stages; and
- 2) to provide a unified management structure with a single school ethos which will be more efficient and make more effective use of resources.

Considerations for amalgamation are described in the School Organisation Plan in Section 4, 'LEA Policies and Principles'. (These are described in Appendix 'A')

There will be a vacancy for the Head Teacher's post at the Infant School, both schools are on the same site and the admission number of the two schools is 60. The conditions for consultation on amalgamation are, therefore, met.

A meeting was held on the 13th March, 2008 for the Governors of both schools. Further meetings were held on the 17th March 2008 for Staff from both schools together with Union Representatives, which was then followed by a meeting for Parents from both schools.

(The minutes of these meetings are attached to this report)

A number of issues were raised at all these meetings and officers from the Authority responded to the questions asked. The following comments address the main issues raised at the meetings:

- 1) Concern was expressed about the extent of support that would be available to the school and whether there would be money available to 'buy-in' expertise. Advice given was that the School Improvement Provider (SIP) will challenge and support with particular emphasis on the 'amalgamation'. Additionally, the H/T from Redscope Primary (a school that has already gone through the process) would be joining in discussions at the school in order to give advice gained from previously experiencing the 'amalgamation' process. There would probably also be scope within the budget for the governors to consider whether or not to buy in some additional advice/expertise, but it was emphasised that this would be a decision for them. No

specific model was being imposed on the governing body, but help and expertise were always available to the school from the LA.

2) There were questions about monitoring the 'amalgamation' and how it would be judged to be successful, if it did take place.

The response was that there will be quality assurance measures put into place as there would be at any other school, but these would be likely to be more frequent and specifically focussed on the 'amalgamation'. There is no single definition of a 'successful' school - many things contribute to this. Research throughout the world suggests that continuity is likely to lead to better attainment and it is important that everyone is looking towards a 'new' school rather than a simple welding of two separate schools.

3) Concern was expressed that staff may be expected to teach different age ranges. The advice given was that where teachers and support staff wished to work with a different age group they could be given the opportunity. Primary school teachers are trained to teach children aged 3-11 and it does not mean that infant teachers couldn't teach 11 year olds. Teachers are not going to be put into a class to fail, all staff are supported and the aim is to do what is the best for the children.

4) Some staff expressed concern that they were on temporary contracts and could be out of a job in September or have to reapply for a job. The advice given that jobs were not at risk as a result of the amalgamation and that the two Head Teachers were already looking to confirm the staffing establishment for September. Advice was available to all from our Human Resources Team.

5) There were a number of questions relating to financial savings and the position of the Deputy Headteachers, particularly in relation to the 'four years protection'. In response, it was explained that there is indeed a four year protection period to support two Deputy Heads following an 'amalgamation'. Previous 'amalgamations' have seen one of the Deputy Heads securing a headship in another school, for example, but if this does not happen within that time period then it would be up to the governors to decide whether or not to support two Deputy Heads from within the school's budget.

'Amalgamation' is not simply about making financial savings. Although a 'saving' is made on one Headteacher's salary, any 'savings' are ring-fenced within the whole schools' budget and, therefore, stay within the schools sector.

6) The question of pupil numbers was raised – could more than 60 pupils be admitted in any year group leading to a larger school?

Advice was given that although numbers born within the catchment area are usually quite high, rates of attrition (movement out of the area and preferences for other schools) together with the ability to limit numbers to 60 through the admissions criteria via a 'tie-breaker' would mean that the number will not be broken. There is a possibility, however, that this might mean that in some years some pupils from within the catchment area may not gain a place at the school.

7) Will the organisation of the Key Stages (in terms of buildings used) stay as it is and could devolved monies be used for any building work?

In the short term, education of the Key Stages is likely to take place within the same buildings, but this could change in the future with, for instance, Y2 being educated within the present Junior building.

Devolved monies could be used for any of the building changes and the school would require a staff room which is large enough for all staff, appropriate office accommodation (via internal building work), a new more central main office and improvements to IT. The LA could provide support for this work.

8) All meetings were advised of the timetable for the consultation and how concerns/comments could be submitted as part of the statutory consultation.

8. Finance

Financial savings, which arise, are savings on staffing, mainly from the loss of a Head Teacher's post from the school's budget. The 'Minimum Funding Guarantee' procedures protect the school budget in 2008-08 and the school will enjoy additional funding is added in the first year of the budget because of the saving on the leaving Head Teachers salary.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

Formal objections may be lodged during the representation period following the publication of a statutory notice. A final decision should be determined by the Cabinet Member within 2 months from the end of the representation period. If this fails to be done, then the matter is referred to the Schools Adjudicator for decision.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The major theme supported by the proposal is 'to ensure that everyone has access to skills, knowledge and information to enable them to play their part in society'. The principle advantages of amalgamation arise from the continuous primary education entitlements which are: -

- Removal of the school transfer at the end of key stage1;
- Provision of a whole school curriculum across the primary age range;
- A unified management structure with a single school ethos;
- The potential to remodel the staffing structure and to safeguard the staffing establishment when pupil numbers change across the key stages;
- A whole school approach to staff development across the primary phase; more efficient and effective use of resources, especially accommodation, when numbers fluctuate across the infant and junior phases.

The experience of the Authority with past amalgamations is that these disadvantages have all been addressed and have not impacted upon the success of the amalgamation of the two schools.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Report to Cabinet Member and Advisers 26th February 2008, minutes of the meetings held with School Governors, staff and parents. The School Organisation Plan and the 'School Standards and Framework Act 1998'

The statutory consultation timetable is:

Publication of statutory notices	18th April 2008
6-week period for representations and objections closes	30 th May 2008
LA decision	24 th June 2008
Implementation	1 st September 2008

Contact Name: David Hill, Manager, School Organisation Planning and Development, Ext 2536, david-education.hill@rotherham.gov.uk

Broom Valley Infant and Junior Schools – proposed ‘amalgamation’

Joint meeting with governors of Broom Valley Infant and Junior Schools held on Thursday 13th March, 2008.

Present: David Hill, Graham Sinclair, David Light and Ann Hercocck of the LA together with approximately 19 governors.

Staff from the LA introduced themselves. David Hill welcomed everyone to the meeting before explaining the background and purpose to the proposed ‘amalgamation’.

This would be achieved by closing the Infant School and expanding and changing the age range of the Junior School from 7-11 to 3-11 years.

He then spoke about existing and future pupil numbers, the financial implications and the advantages and possible disadvantages that could be brought about by any ‘amalgamation’ of separate Junior and Infant Schools.

A summary of this information had already been circulated to all and it included the timetable which would be followed if it was agreed to publish statutory proposals. If the ‘amalgamation’ was finally approved, the implementation date would be 1st September, 2008.

Questions and comments were then invited. These were as follows:

You have talked about financial implications – what support is available over 4 years?

There is a 4 year protection period to support two Deputy Heads following an amalgamation. In previous amalgamations it has often been the case that by the end of that period one Deputy Head has secured a headship in another school.

If this does not happen it would be up to the school to decide whether or not to support two Deputy Heads.

Would there be any additional funding provided as there would be 3 distinct sites making up the amalgamated school.

This would be worked through by the Head Teacher and Governors. There would not be any loss of funding.

Would there be any financial help over the transitional period, for example extra staff might be needed for a short time.

An additional amount would arise from Hazel James leaving. 7/12 of her salary would remain with the school for one year from 1st September.

Could Devolved Capital monies be used for any building work?

The amalgamated school would need:

- A large enough staffroom to accommodate all staff
- Office accommodation (possible internal building work)

- A new, more central main entrance
- Improvements to IT

The LA could provide support for the work.

If the Infant School did close would teaching staff have to apply for jobs?

No, they would simply transfer to the new school. Broom Valley Infant and Junior are popular schools with consistent numbers so all staff would be needed.

How do you know what the numbers will be. Do you just estimate?

The school is consistently up to full capacity. We also look at birth rates and project forward.

What is the position with migrant workers?

There has been a large influx of EU migrant workers. Last year there were 400 and 250 children had places approved in schools. The migrant workers tend to live around Eastwood and Thornhill. Central schools are becoming over-subscribed and pupils are starting to move further out of the centre. They tend to be a mobile group and move in and out of the area.

Will there be funding for them?

No, unless the Authority hits trigger points. It is possible to track numbers of white Europeans. If numbers reach a certain point it can trigger funding. Support usually comes from the Welcome Centre. Graham Sinclair explained the work done there. The Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant also provides support. Also, if pupils are on a PLASC return in January the school is funded for a full year.

What if they arrive at school after January?

This can happen with any pupil but usually this is balanced by pupils leaving the school. One advantage is that classes are quite large so this supports more funding.

David Light explained that an amalgamation provides opportunities for a child. Both schools are already successful and they are already developing a vision for what can be achieved. It could become a school with considerable influence. He also explained that through primaries achieve well at Y2/Y3 compared with single schools.

One Governor said that having served on both governing bodies it was obvious that both sets of staff were of a high quality and should be made to feel a vital part of the process. They need assurance that their jobs are secure.

The Junior Head explained that both sets of staff were keen on the proposal and do work together. There was to be an away-day in June at Carlton Park Hotel to discuss the vision and aims. A speaker from an amalgamated school would be in attendance.

Looking at the timetable for the process how will we be informed that you can go forward from the pre-statutory consultation period?

You will be informed by telephone. The Public Notice will have already been sent for publication with instructions to withdraw it if the decision was not to proceed with the statutory consultation process.

The timetable is very tight. How will it be possible to put plans into place from 24th June in time for September?

Planning can be done before 24th June. You can essentially work as one governing body. A working group could be set up to look at planning issues.

How often has a proposal to amalgamate not been approved?

It has not happened.

Objections have been purely based on funding but the governors who have raised these issues were not able to attend this meeting.

There is a meeting arranged with parents on Monday 17th March. Any governors not able to attend tonight would be welcome.

If the Cabinet Member did not agree to the proposal the Infant School would have to have a temporary Head Teacher until a permanent appointment was made.

At the moment there are two separate budgets. What will happen to the Infant budget when the Infant School is closed?

The budget will go straight to the amalgamated primary school.

There were no further questions and the meeting was closed.

Broom Valley Infant and Junior Schools - proposed 'amalgamation'.

Meeting with parents of pupils attending Broom Valley Infant and Junior Schools held on Monday, 17th March, 2008.

Present: David Hill, David Light, Graham Sinclair and Martin Harrop of the LA, together with approximately 6 parents, governors and staff.

Staff from the LA introduced themselves. David Hill welcomed everyone to the meeting before explaining the background and purpose to the proposed 'amalgamation'.

This would be achieved by closing the Infant School and expanding and changing the age range of the Junior School from 7-11 to 3-11 years.

He then spoke about existing and future pupil numbers, the financial implications and the advantages and possible disadvantages that could be brought about by any 'amalgamation' of separate Junior and Infant Schools. A summary of this information had already been circulated to all and it included the timetable which would be followed if it was agreed to publish statutory proposals. If the 'amalgamation' was finally approved, the implementation date would be 1st September, 2008.

Questions and comments were then invited. These were as follows:

How many previously proposed 'amalgamations' have not gone forward or been agreed?

There has been just one, which related to some technical issues and where the 2 schools were about 0.5 mile apart.

(It is important to say at this point that the 'amalgamation' is not being proposed because anything has gone or is going wrong at the 2 schools. If a new school was being built within the Authority, it would be a through Primary rather than separate Infant and Junior schools).

What is the definition and how would we know that it was a successful amalgamation?

All kinds of things contribute to 'successful' schools. This isn't a 'deficit' model as these are already successful schools. Research throughout the world suggests that continuity is likely to lead to better attainment. We will be looking towards a 'new' school rather than simply welding 2 schools together.

What support is available?

The SIP (School Improvement Partner) will challenge and support with a particular emphasis on the 'amalgamation'.

The H/T of Redscope Primary (previously amalgamated) will be joining discussions at the school and offering advice from the benefit of experience.

Is there a possibility of pupil numbers exceeding 60?

No. Although numbers born in the catchment area can be quite high in some years, rates of attrition and the ability to limit numbers to 60 through the admissions criteria via a tie-breaker mean that the number will not be broken. There is a possibility, however, that this may mean in some years that some pupils from within the catchment area may not gain a place in the school.

What would happen, if it did not go ahead, in terms of recruitment of a replacement H/T for the Infants – timescales would be very short?

The LA does have emergencies from time to time and all possibilities would be looked at (e.g Deputy H/T, another H/T from a Rotherham school or a recently retired H/T on a temporary basis).

A lot would depend on the extent of any opposition to the proposals.

There would have to be a strong educational reason for this not to go ahead.

In the recent past, if there was a comment or objection on/to the proposal in response to the statutory notice then the decision would have passed to an independent group (SOC). If that group had not come to a unanimous decision then the decision would have passed on to the Schools Adjudicator. This would have lengthened the process and also have raised more doubt as to the outcome.

You have mentioned that there will be no financial savings for the Authority, but could there be some savings made in the future after the schools have 'amalgamated'?

No. (Some background was then given to previous funding regimes within the Council). The Authority could previously have reprioritised and used any savings on H/T salaries to, for instance, spend on resurfacing roads. However, all school monies are now ring-fenced to be used on schools expenditure and so the money stays within the schools sector.

After 4 years there will be only one Deputy Head, but shouldn't there be one for each of the 2 Key Stages?

Possibly, but this will be a matter for the H/T and Governing Body to consider. The 4 years simply relates to the period of protection for the school. Decisions on staffing structure will be made by the school.

Will the organisation of the Key Stages (in terms of buildings used) stay as it is?

It will for the time being, but may change in the future. Could, for instance, educate Y2 within the present Junior school building.

Is there any external expertise available to help the school or money within the budget?

The Primary Advisory Team and the H/T at Redscope Primary (as previously mentioned) could offer advice and expertise – free of charge. Governors could also make decisions to spend some of the school's budget if they so wished. The Authority does not wish to impose a model on the school and governors – it is for them to make a decision on the best way forward in that respect, but advice from the LA will always be available, if requested.

How is it going to be monitored?

There will be quality assurance procedures put in place as there would be at any other school, but these could be more frequent/focussed on the amalgamation.

Very confident, although not complacent, that things will work well here with the H/T and governing body in place.

What period would you be looking at before you could judge whether the 'amalgamation' has been successful or not?

Would look at it in 'bite size chunks', but would say that we should have an overall idea of how it has gone after about 5 years.

Why can't the schools start working towards it now?

They can and should move steadily forward in partnership.

There were no further questions and the meeting was closed.

Broom Valley Infant and Junior Schools - proposed 'amalgamation'.

Joint meeting with staff of Broom Valley Infant and Junior Schools and Union Representatives held on Monday, 17th March, 2008.

Present: David Hill, David Light, Paul Fitzpatrick and Martin Harrop of the LA, together with approximately 50 staff and 4 union representatives.

David Hill introduced colleagues and welcomed everyone to the meeting before explaining the background and purpose to the proposed 'amalgamation'. This would be achieved by closing the Infant School and expanding and changing the age range of the Junior School from 7-11 to 3-11 years.

He then spoke about existing and future pupil numbers, the financial implications and the advantages and possible disadvantages that could be brought about by any 'amalgamation' of separate Junior and Infant Schools. A summary of this information had already been circulated to all and it included the timetable which would be followed if it was agreed to publish statutory proposals. If the 'amalgamation' was finally approved, the implementation date would be 1st September, 2008.

Paul Fitzpatrick (Human Resources) stressed that the proposed 'amalgamation' wasn't about cuts in staffing. There would be sufficient funding available to maintain current structures.

Questions and comments were then invited. These were as follows:

A number of staff are employed on temporary contracts ending on 31/8/08 – what would happen?

This question had already been raised by senior school staff and the Headteacher had been reassured about the continuation of funding. As stated above, the actual 'amalgamation' process would not trigger any staffing cuts.

What about working outside of staff's current Key Stage?

The school would be a through primary school and everyone would be a member of a primary school staff.

Staff wouldn't be just simply moved around over Key Stages, but there would be opportunities for staff development which could enable such changes to take place in the future. This applies to all staff – not just to teachers.

There were no further questions or comments and the meeting was closed.

ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES

Proposal to 'amalgamate' Broom Valley Infant and Broom Valley Junior Schools.

1 The Proposal and its Purpose

The proposal is to 'amalgamate' Broom Valley Infant and Broom Valley Junior Schools from September 2008. To do this, Broom Valley Infant School will be closed and Broom Valley Junior School will be expanded and have its age range changed from 7-11 to 3-11 years. The school will, therefore, become a 'through' primary school, which will accommodate the same number of pupils as are currently accommodated within the two schools.

The School would have 420 places (R-Y6) with a Nursery unit of up to 78 places (39 FTE). (This is the combined numbers of the current two schools) The new school would have an admission number of 60.

The principal objectives of amalgamation are:

- i) to provide a continuous primary entitlement across the key stages; and
- ii) to provide a unified management structure with a single school ethos which will be more efficient and make more effective use of resources.

Considerations for amalgamation are described in the School Organisation Plan in Section 4, 'LEA Policies and Principles'. These are where:-

- 1) It is possible to accommodate all of the children on one site, thereby removing surplus places (if applicable).
- 2) The admission number(s) is already no more than 60, or can be reduced to no more than 60, by the associated removal of surplus places.
- 3) Both Key Stages are on the same site.
- 4) There will be a vacancy for one or both head teacher posts as a result of retirement or resignation.

2 Existing Situation: Numbers on roll and Capacity

2.1 Broom Valley Infant School

Net Capacity	=	179
Admission Number	=	60 (Admission Capacity 180)
Number on Roll (2008) (NOR)	=	181
Surplus Places	=	0

2.2 Broom Valley Junior School

Net Capacity	=	239
Admission Number	=	60 (Admission Capacity 240)
Number on Roll (2008) (NOR)	=	237
Surplus Places	=	2

3 **Development of Numbers on Roll**

Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Infant	181	174	177	177	180
Junior	237	238	230	235	238
Total	418	412	407	412	418

4 **Advantages and Disadvantages**

The principal ADVANTAGES of amalgamation arise from the continuous primary education entitlement:

- removal of the school transfer at the end of key stage 1;
- provision of a whole school curriculum across the primary age range;
- a unified management structure with a single school ethos;
- the potential to remodel the staffing structure and to safeguard the staffing establishment when pupil numbers change across the key stages;
- a whole school approach to staff development across the primary phase;
- more efficient and effective use of resources, especially accommodation, when numbers fluctuate across the infant and junior phases.

The principal DISADVANTAGES of amalgamation are:

- the loss of the Head teacher of one of the schools which could impact upon accessibility to staff, parents and pupils (this may have particular relevance where schools serve areas of social and economic disadvantage);
- potential difficulties in bringing together two different sets of working practice;
- possible fear of and resistance to change amongst staff, governors and parents;
- in some (but by no means all) cases, a lack of staff expertise in teaching and management across the two key stages.

5 **Financial Implications**

Financial savings which arise are savings on staffing, mainly from the loss of a Head Teacher's post from the school's budget and the 'Minimum Funding Guarantee' procedures protect the school budget in 2008-09.

6 **Consultation Timetable**

Cabinet Member to agree to consultation	26 th February 2008
Pre statutory consultation period, including meetings with governors, staff and families etc.	20 th March 2008
Report to the Cabinet Member	15 th April 2008
Publication of statutory notices	18 th April 2008
6 week period for representations and objections closes	30 th May 2008
LEA decision	24 th June 2008
Implementation	1 st September 2008

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Lifelong Learning Cabinet Member and Advisers
2.	Date:	24th June 2008
3.	Title:	The amalgamation of Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Junior Schools by the closure of Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant School and a change of age range at Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior School.
4.	Programme Area:	Children and Young People's Services Ward 10 - Rawmarsh

5. Summary

Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant School and Rawmarsh Junior School are both separate schools. The report to Cabinet Member and Advisers on 26th February 2008 approved a pre-statutory consultation on the proposal to amalgamate the two schools by closing the Infant School and changing the age range at the Junior School. Members have previously agreed to consult as appropriate where two schools meet the considerations for amalgamation which are described in the 'School Organisation Plan'. Pre-statutory consultations have been undertaken with School Governors, Staff and Parents, and copies of the consultation papers have also been sent to Ward Members. Statutory proposals have now stood for 6 weeks (from 18th April to 30th May) and objections to the proposed amalgamation have been received along with two petitions. The concerns expressed are that the amalgamation would be detrimental to the education of the pupils; there would be disruption and overcrowding. There was also concern that the loss of the land from the infant school site to possible housing or other use would have a detrimental impact on the local community, on the local environment and on wildlife.

6. Recommendation:

It is recommended that:

- 1) The local Authority determines the proposal to amalgamation Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior School and Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant School by closing the Infant School and the expansion of the age range at the Junior School.**
- 2) That the Secretary of State be informed accordingly.**

7. Proposals and Details

It is proposed to 'amalgamate' Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior Schools from September 2008. To do this, the Infant school will be closed and the Junior school will be expanded and will have its age range changed from 7-11 to 3-11 years. Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior will, therefore, become a 'through' primary school and will accommodate the same number of pupils as are currently accommodated within the two schools.

The new School would have 420 places (R-Y6) with a Nursery unit of up to 52 places (26FTE). (This is the combined numbers of the current two schools) The school would have an admission number of 60.

The principal objectives of amalgamation are:

- 1) to provide a continuous primary entitlement across the key stages; and
- 2) to provide a unified management structure with a single school ethos which will be more efficient and make more effective use of resources.

Considerations for amalgamation are described in the School Organisation Plan in the section on 'LEA Policies and Principles'. (These are described in the Appendix to this report).

There will be a vacancy for the Head Teacher's post at the Infant School, both schools are on the same site and the admission number of the two schools is 60 and the conditions for amalgamation are met.

Meetings were held at Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior School on the 28th February 2008 for the Governors of both schools. A meeting was held at Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant School on the 4th March 2008 for Staff from both schools followed by a meeting for Parents from both schools.

(The minutes of these meetings are attached to this report)

Following publication of the Statutory Notice (which has stood for 6 weeks) representations to the proposal have been received. These include a petition signed by 116 people (of these 38 were parents), individual petition slips signed by 113 people (10 of the names on the slips are repeated on the signed petition), a letter from the Local MP asking for further information and requesting a further meeting for concerned residents/parents from the 'Monkwood Against School Closure' (a group set up to oppose the amalgamation) and an email from a local resident whose child will be going to the school. (A further meeting has been held between Elected Members, Officers and representatives from the 'Monkwood against School Closure' group).

(Copies of all these objections are enclosed with this report).

A number of issues have been raised in the representations in the meetings and the following comments address the main issues raised:

1) Concern has been expressed, that the loss of the infant school site would be detrimental to the area, it would leave insufficient space at the junior school site for playing field space and that future housing development on the infant school site would be detrimental to the local residents and to local wildlife.

The Local Authority needs to comply with the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) guidance on the amount of space required for playgrounds, hard and soft play, sports pitches and other recreational areas. Following concerns expressed at the pre-statutory consultation meetings calculations of the areas have been undertaken and these show that both of the school sites (including the Infant and Junior school playing fields) are still needed to provide sufficient hard and soft play space for the amalgamated school. This was reported to Members at the Lifelong Learning, Cabinet Member Meeting held on the 15th April 2008 before approval for the Statutory Consultation was given.

Council Minute No. 62 states:

(2) That, in view of a concern expressed at all meetings with staff, parents and Governors that the land the infant School was built on and the infant playing fields would be disposed of for housing, a suitable press release be issued clearly stating the LEA's view on this matter. Having investigated further, both of the junior and infant school sites would be needed to deliver sufficient playing field space for the amalgamated school.'

The above confirms that the whole site will be needed for the amalgamated school and that no land will become surplus to requirements as a result of the amalgamation. The woodland area is 'Ancient Woodland' and remains part of the school site. Wildlife would not be affected and would continue to be protected in the same way as it is now. Concerns expressed about the future use of the land are therefore unfounded.

2) Concern has been expressed that there would be overcrowding and that the building of an extension onto the Junior school building for the Infant pupils would impact on the education of the pupils.

The Local Authority has undertaken major building work at many schools and has substantial experience of managing building projects so that minimal disturbance takes place. The building of an extension onto the Junior School is unlikely to impact on the operation of the school and our experience show that building work often becomes an educational tool which is used by the school which adds to pupils understanding and it often become an exciting part of the school curriculum. The Infant pupils would remain in the existing Infant school and transfer into the new extension when it is complete. and there would be no overcrowding. There would be no disruption to their education and they would stay in situ in the current Infant building until the new building is complete. The only likely disruption to the Junior School would be occasional noise from the building site which would be screened off from the school. The Primary Capital Strategy has include funding for a new infant building attached to the Junior school provided approval for the amalgamation is given.

3) Concern was expressed that the case for amalgamated schools and for improved educational outcomes was not proven.

Advice has been provided to Governors, Staff and parents at the pre-statutory consultation meetings and further advice has been supplied under a 'Freedom of Information request'. The Local Authority also provided further advice on the benefits of amalgamation and on educational standards and this was sent to the Rawmarsh Monkwood Action Group and the Local MP in correspondence from the Assistant Head of School Effectiveness.

The key benefits can be summarised as:

- A single vision and consistent ethos to benefit pupils, staff and parents/carers
- Continuity, and progression of learning between 5 and 11 (3 and 11 in Rotherham schools)
- Unified leadership and management of curriculum, teaching and learning
- Enhanced range of staff expertise
- Consistency of approaches to inclusion and well being
- Effective relationships with children and parents/carers over the full primary phase
- Efficient use of resources - human and educational

The correspondence also included the Authority's Key Stage 2 performance results for the past three years. These show that Primary Schools consistently perform at a higher level than separate junior schools. This information is disputed by the Rawmarsh Monkwood Action Group who advise that the information they have on schools amalgamated in Rotherham since 2001 do not show that this is the case. The advice given is that variations between individual year groups within a school do not necessarily show how the school is progressing and that in the long term the evidence is that through primary schools do perform consistently at a higher level.

A number of issues were also raised at the meetings held with Governors, Staff and Parents. Officers from the Authority responded to the questions asked and the following comments address the main issues raised at these meetings:

1) Concern was expressed at all the meeting with parents that could not a new Infant School Head Teacher be appointed rather than one Head Teacher running both schools. The advice given was that it is the policy of the Local Authority that when the opportunity arises, separate infant and junior schools are brought together. The Authority is of the view that primary schools perform better and have higher educational attainment than separate schools. If the authority were to establish a new school the Authority would always prefer a through primary school. The advice from our school improvement service is that the most satisfactory schools are 3-11 schools and one major positive aspect being that it reduces anxiety at the transition from Y2 to Y3. For its size Rotherham has one of the highest number of separate infant and junior schools in the country.

2) Concern was expressed that the Head Teacher would most likely be based in one building and would not know all the children and that how could one Head Teacher give enough attention to all children. The advice given was that additional funding would be provided for four years to allow the school to have two deputy head teachers and that the new Head Teacher would spend time in each building. A staffing structure has to be put in place that ensures children have regular contact with the Head Teacher and that parents have access to senior staff to voice their concerns or problems. Rotherham has approximately 70 through primary schools and has successful amalgamated 15 separate infant and junior schools.

3) Concern was expressed at the distance between the two school buildings. The advice given was that, due to the distance between the two schools, it would not be possible to physically link the schools and that the Authority would be look to provide an extension to the junior building to accommodate the Infant school pupils and this proposal would appear in the Primary Capital Programme. The authority would also look to see if any alterations needed to be made to staff or other accommodation.

4) Concern was expressed that staff may be expected to teach different age ranges. The advice given was that where teachers and support staff wished to work with a different age group they could be given the opportunity. Primary school teachers are trained to teach children aged 3-11 and it does not mean that infant teachers couldn't teach 11 year olds. Teachers are not going to be put into a class to fail, all staff are supported and the aim is to do what is the best for the children.

5) Some staff expressed concern that they were on temporary contracts and could be out of a job in September. The advice given that jobs were not at risk as a result of the amalgamation and that the two Head Teachers were already looking to confirm the staffing establishment for September. Advice was available to all from our Human Resources Team.

The benefits of amalgamation and creation of a through primary school outweigh the case put forward by the objectors to the amalgamation and the recommendation is that the schools are amalgamated with effect from 1st September 2008.

8. Finance

Financial savings, which arise, are savings on staffing, mainly from the loss of a Head Teacher's post from the school's budget. The 'Minimum Funding Guarantee' procedures protect the school budget in 2008-09 and the school will enjoy additional funding in the first year of the budget because of the saving on the leaving Head Teachers salary.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

If formal objections are lodged during the 'statutory consultation' the proposal will be determined by the Cabinet Member.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The major theme supported by the proposal is 'to ensure that everyone has access to skills, knowledge and information to enable them to play their part in society'.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Report to Cabinet Member and Advisers 26th February 2008 and 15th April (attached) minutes of the meetings held with School Governors, staff, parents and school council. The School Organisation Plan and the 'Education and Inspections Act 2006'.

The statutory consultation timetable is:

Publication of statutory notices	18th April 2008
6-week period for representations and objections closes	30 th May 2008
LEA decision	24 th June 2008
Implementation	1 st September 2008

Contact Name: David Hill, Manager, School Organisation Planning and Development, Ext 2536, david-education.hill@rotherham.gov.uk

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES**Proposal to 'amalgamate' Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior Schools.****1 The Proposal and its Purpose**

The proposal is 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 have its age range changed from 7-11 to 3-11 years. The school will, therefore, become a 'through' primary school, which will accommodate the same number of pupils as are currently accommodated within the two schools,.

The School would have 420 places (R-Y6) with a Nursery unit of up to 52 places (26 FTE). (This is the combined numbers of the current two schools) The new school would have an admission number of 60.

The principal objectives of amalgamation are:

- i) to provide a continuous primary entitlement across the key stages; and
- ii) to provide a unified management structure with a single school ethos which will be more efficient and make more effective use of resources.

Considerations for amalgamation are described in the School Organisation Plan in Section 4, 'LEA Policies and Principles'. These are where:-

- 1) It is possible to accommodate all of the children on one site, thereby removing surplus places (if applicable).
- 2) The admission number(s) is already no more than 60, or can be reduced to no more than 60, by the associated removal of surplus places.
- 3) Both Key Stages are on the same site.
- 4) There will be a vacancy for one or both head teacher posts as a result of retirement or resignation.

2 Existing Situation: Numbers on roll and Capacity**2.1 Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant School**

Net Capacity	=	173
Admission Number	=	60 (Admission Capacity 180)
Number on Roll (2008) (NOR)	=	130
Surplus Places	=	43

2.2 Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior School

Net Capacity	=	243
Admission Number	=	60 (Admission Capacity 240)
Number on Roll (2008) (NOR)	=	211
Surplus Places	=	32

3 **Development of Numbers on Roll**

Year	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12
Infant	130	136	152	160	161
Junior	211	208	197	182	184
Total	341	344	349	342	345

4 **Advantages and Disadvantages**

The principal advantages of amalgamation arise from the continuous primary education entitlement

- removal of the school transfer at the end of key stage 1;
- provision of a whole school curriculum across the primary age range;
- A unified management structure with a single school ethos;
- the potential to remodel the staffing structure and to safeguard the staffing establishment when pupil numbers change across the key stages;
- a whole school approach to staff development across the primary phase;
- more efficient and effective use of resources, especially accommodation, when numbers fluctuate across the infant and junior phases.

The principal disadvantages of amalgamation are:

- the loss of the Head teacher of one of the schools which could impact upon accessibility to staff, parents and pupils (this may have particular relevance where schools serve areas of social and economic disadvantage);
- potential difficulties in bringing together two different sets of working practice;
- possible fear of and resistance to change amongst staff, governors and parents;
- in some (but by no means all) cases, a lack of staff expertise in teaching and management across the two key stages.

5 **Financial Implications**

Financial savings which arise are savings on staffing, mainly from the loss of a Head Teacher's post from the school's budget and the 'Minimum Funding Guarantee' procedures protect the school budget in 2008-09.

6 Consultation Timetable

Cabinet Member to agree to consultation	26 th February 2008
Pre statutory consultation period including meetings with governors, staff and parents	ends 20 th March 2008
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John Healey MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Our Ref JH/IGH

28th April 2008

Sonia Sharp
Strategic Director
Rotherham MBC
Children & Young People's Services
Norfolk House
Walker Place
Rotherham.



Dear Sonia

Amalgamation of Monkwood Junior and Infant Schools

I have had a couple of parents with children at both schools come to see me about the proposed amalgamation. They are part of the local action group concerned about the plans, and have a series of reasoned concerns and questions to which they feel they have not had satisfactory answers – at the meeting on 4 March for parents, in the minutes of the meeting which followed or in other information RMBC has so far made available. From my discussions with the parents and from examining the further information that they have gathered, I summarise my understanding of their main questions or concerns below and I would be grateful if you are able to respond to these points so that I can confirm the information to them.

- What is the educational case for larger, amalgamated J&I schools? In the absence of evidence at the March meeting, the parents have gone to considerable trouble to try examine this for themselves and I enclose a copy of the table they have drawn up from KS2 and APS scores in eight Rotherham schools amalgamated since 2001
- What is the rationale for moving the Infants school (last OFSTED rated as grade 2: good school) into the Juniors (last OFSTED rated as 3: satisfactory schools)? The campaigners do accept that the Junior school inspection was June 2005 and could have improved since then, although they reasonably say that no further information on any improvement has been made available
- Plans for the proposed extension to the Junior school buildings and use of the Infant school site have not been available, fuelling concerns in particular about: a) loss of the Junior school playing fields; b) loss of the Infants schools site for development and non-educational use; c) disruption of the children's education during construction work, including moving some classes off site to St Mary's. I would be grateful for the clearest information and reassurance you can give me on these three points
- What will be the happen to the woodland and wildlife on site? And what will be the impact of the redevelopment of the sites on local residents?
- What will happen to the Sure Start centre?

John Healey MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

You will see that these questions largely stem from the limited information that the parents feel has been available to them so far.

I have also discussed the situation with Cllr Shaun Wright, who has met with some parents from the action group at a surgery. He has said to me that he is willing to organise a roundtable meeting for the leading parents with senior officers at which some of the more detailed points that cannot easily be dealt with in a larger public meeting could be covered. I have passed on this offer to the parents who have been in touch with me.

In view of the short time until the end of the consultation period on 30 May, I would be grateful for a response at your earliest convenience. I am copying this letter to Cllr Shaun Wright, and to his ward colleagues Cllr Whelbourn and Cllr Hamilton.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Healey".

JOHN HEALEY MP
(WENTWORTH CONSTITUENCY)

cc Cllr S Wright
Cllr G Whelbourn
Cllr N Hamilton

MONKWOOD AGAINST SCHOOL CLOSURE

We the undersigned: Oppose the Amalgamation of Monkwood Infant & Junior Schools and the closure of Monkwood Infant School. The proposed amalgamation and subsequent move of Monkwood Infant school will be detrimental to the education of the children and lead to major disruption and overcrowding. Furthermore, the loss of the Infant school site, including Sure Start, to possible housing or other redevelopment will have a serious environmental and social impact on the local community. Therefore the proposed amalgamation and school closure should not go ahead.

116 Names (38 From Parents)

NAME	ADDRESS	Tick Appropriate Box P - Parent R - Resident
G. BARROT	22 Stuart's Road	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
C FOWER	3 BRUNT ROAD	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
C JUDGE	6 BRUNT ROAD	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
K WOOD	40 Middle Ave	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P R
S. WATERHOUSE	6 GOODWIN AVENUE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P R
S. JEFFREY	7 MORRIS AVENUE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P R
S. WEBB	10 ESTATE ROAD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P R
S. WEBB	10 ESTATE ROAD	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
C. Smith	10 ESTATE ROAD	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
J. West	39 RAWMARSH HILL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P R
N. RIDGEWAY	26 HAGUE AVE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
S. CRITCHLOW	17 VESEY RD	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P R
E. OTOBY	7 NORTHFIELD AVE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P R
L. WRIGHT	3 Potterdyke Ave.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P R
L. ROBINSON	76 Hague Ave	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> P R
E. PHILLIPS	101 MONKWOOD ROAD	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
P. BAILEY	25 MONKWOOD RD. RAWMARSH	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
V. BAINS	SECT & AVE BIRCHWOOD	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
L. BIRCHLEY	35 MONKWOOD RD RAWMARSH	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
R. WHITE	37 MONKWOOD RD "	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
R. SYKES	41 MONKWOOD RD RAWMARSH	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
S. OAKS	20 THE BUNGALOWS JACKSON CARS	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R
W. WRIGHT	4B JACKSON CR. MONKWOOD EST.	P <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> R

133 Slips

I the undersigned sign my name as a formal objection to the amalgamation of the Monkwood Junior and Infant schools. Due to the educational disruption and building work which would take place and the environmental damage especially to the wildlife on the schools premises would have a serious impact to the children and local residents.

Name	Address	Postcode
A Bennett	79 CRESSWELL RD	SG4 8PB

I the undersigned sign my name as a formal objection to the amalgamation of the Monkwood Junior and Infant schools. Due to the educational disruption and building work which would take place and the environmental damage especially to the wildlife on the schools premises would have a serious impact to the children and local residents.

Name	Address	Postcode
C Saylor	9 HILVE AVE	SG2 7PG.

I the undersigned sign my name as a formal objection to the amalgamation of the Monkwood Junior and Infant schools. Due to the educational disruption and building work which would take place and the environmental damage especially to the wildlife on the schools premises would have a serious impact to the children and local residents.

Name	Address	Postcode
S. Chadwick	33 Wensleydale road	SG1 4BQ.

I the undersigned sign my name as a formal objection to the amalgamation of the Monkwood Junior and Infant schools. Due to the educational disruption and building work which would take place and the environmental damage especially to the wildlife on the schools premises would have a serious impact to the children and local residents.

Name	Address	Postcode
A Bennett	79 CRESSWELL RD	SG4 8PB

Children & Young People's Services

Norfolk House, Walker Place, Rotherham S65 1AS
Tel: (01709) 382121 Fax: (01709) 372056

Email: david_education.hill@rotherham.gov.uk

Email the Council for free @ your local library!

Ref: SOPD/DRH Tel: 01709 822536 Contact: Mr D R Hill Date: 13th May 2008

John Healey MP
House of Commons
LONDON
SW1A 0AA

Dear Mr Healey

Amalgamation of Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior and Infant Schools

Thank you for your letter of 28th April 2008 in which you advise me of the concerns of some of your constituents who have pupils at the above schools.

The Authority has provided additional information to parents following the consultation meetings and this has included information on Key Stage results and evidence to support the proposed amalgamation.

In reply to your specific questions:

1) The educational case for the amalgamation of Junior and Infant Schools was supplied to parents along with the invitation to the consultation meeting. This was attached as 'Appendix A' to the invitation and I enclose a copy of the appendix. (Your letter did not enclose a copy of the table of information produced by the parents and we would be grateful to receive a copy).

Following the consultation meeting we supplied parents with a copy of the Key Stage results for all the schools in Rotherham amalgamated since 2001. In addition the Monkwood Action Group asked for further evidence to support the amalgamation and a detailed reply on the benefits of amalgamation was sent by Helen Rogers, Assistant Head of School Effectiveness to the group (sent on the 8th April) and I attach a copy of her reply. Her reply detailed the Key benefits of amalgamation which I have listed below, along with information on a 'through School' and also Key Stage results from all Rotherham Schools which show that Primary Schools consistently perform better than separate Junior and Infant Schools

The key benefits can be summarised as:

- A single vision and consistent ethos to benefit pupils, staff and parents/carers
- Continuity, and progression of learning between 5 and 11 (3 and 11 in Rotherham schools)
- Unified leadership and management of curriculum, teaching and learning
- Enhanced range of staff expertise
- Consistency of approaches to inclusion and well being

- Effective relationships with children and parents/carers over the full primary phase
- Efficient use of resources - human and educational

A "through school" structure allows children:

- a longer period of time in which to develop closer contact with the staff & head teacher
- to benefit from all teachers and other staff having a good understanding of the child's whole experience
- increased stability; security and confidence can be built more easily when children have minimal transition
- continuity, especially for the most vulnerable children and those with special needs
- access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full primary range
- opportunities for increased educational contact with younger and older children and the chance to share the outcomes of learning across the key stages
- opportunities for increased social development - older pupils having some appropriate pastoral responsibility for younger children
- access to a greater range of staff talent and expertise with a larger staff
- access to a wider enrichment opportunities across the curriculum and beyond

2) Your constituents have incorrectly read the OFSTED inspection reports. The Infant School was last inspected in July 2006 and was judged to be a 'Good School'. The Junior School was last Inspected in June 2005 and was also judged to be a 'Good School which was improving fast with rising standards'.

The Junior School was assessed by OFSTED under the Inspection procedures set out in the School Inspection Act 1996 and received grades of mainly 3's which is good with some Grade 2's which is very good. (The scale used by the inspectors then was: Grade 1 is excellent, Grade 2 is very good, Grade 3 is good, Grade 4 is satisfactory, Grade 5 is unsatisfactory, Grade 6 is poor and Grade 7 is very poor.)

The Infant School was assessed by OFSTED under the revised inspection procedures set out in the Education Act 2005 and received grades of 2 which is good. (The scale now used by the inspectors is: Grade 1 is outstanding, Grade 2 is good, Grade 3 is satisfactory and Grade 4 is inadequate.) It is not possible to compare the grades in the two inspections; it is the comments that needed to be compared.

As you can see what is proposed is the amalgamation of two equally good schools and one which we believe will perform even better following amalgamation. (I enclose a copy of the two inspection reports)

3(a) The Authority has not drawn up any plans for an extension to the Junior School to accommodate the Infant pupils and would not do without full consultation with the School Governors, the School Staff, pupils, parents and representatives from the local community. The design of a building/location of a school extension is not imposed on the school/parents by the Authority it is a joint process and we need everybody who is involved in the process to have an input. The Authority uses guidance produced by CABA and the Design, Quality Indicator process to ensure that the school meets the needs of the end user. These procedures are part of our 'Primary Capital Strategy' which is currently out for consultation with schools.

3 (b&c) Both of the school sites (Infant and Junior school playing fields) are still needed to provide sufficient hard and soft play space for the amalgamated school. The Authority needs to comply with the DCSF guidance on the amount of space required for playgrounds, hard and soft play, sports pitches and other recreational areas and our calculations show that both schools sites are required. This was reported to Members at the Lifelong Learning, Cabinet Member Meeting held on the 15th April 2008 when approval for the Statutory Consultation was made.

The council minute states:

(2) That, in view of a concern expressed at all meetings with staff, parents and Governors that the land the infant School was built on and the infant playing fields would be disposed of for housing, a suitable press release be issued clearly stating the LEA's view on this matter. Having investigated further, both of the junior and infant school sites would be needed to deliver sufficient playing field site for the amalgamated school.'

The above confirms that the whole site will be needed for the amalgamated school.

3(d) The building of an extension onto the Junior School would not impact on the operation of the school. The Infant pupils would remain in the existing Infant school and transfer into the new extension when it is complete. There would be no disruption to their education and they would stay in situ until the new building is complete. The only likely disruption to the Junior School would be occasional noise from the building site which would be screened off from the school. The authority has vast experience of building on school sites and building developments often become an exciting part of the school curriculum.

4) The woodland area is 'Ancient Woodland' and remains part of the school site. Wildlife would not be affected and would continue to be protected in the same way as it is now.

5) There are no plans to move the Sure Start unit. Parts of the Social Care Teams across the authority are being centralised in the new Locality Team bases and some of the Social Care provision at this unit will transfer to the new locality base in the former Rawmarsh St Mary's School.

We would be able to send representatives to any further meetings arranged to consider the amalgamation.

Yours sincerely

David Hill
Manager – School Organisation, Planning and Development

Subject: RE: Monkwood Amalgamation
Date: Tue, 8 Apr 2008 18:55:53 +0100
From: Helen.Rogers@rotherham.gov.uk
To: monkwoodasc@hotmail.co.uk
CC: Graham.Sinclair@rotherham.gov.uk; Catharine.Kinsella@rotherham.gov.uk; David-Education.Hill@rotherham.gov.uk

Thank you for your email.

Please find details of the "evidence" you have requested in your email below, that was referred to at the parents' meeting held on 4th March 2008 at Monkwood Infant School in relation to the proposed amalgamation of the Infant and Junior Schools:

Benefits of "Through Schools"

The benefits of a "through school" structure have been supported by research and the experience of practitioners both locally and nationally:

(DFEE (DCSF) guidance issued in 1987 following the publication of a White Paper entitled "Better Schools"

"Continuities and Discontinuities in Learning": Maurice Galton, John Gray & Jean Ruddock - University of Cambridge & Ian Schagen & Maria Charles - National Foundation for Educational Research

School Effectiveness Service Rotherham

School Effectiveness & Planning Services: Birmingham; Knowsley; Bradford; City of Nottingham; City of Leeds; Telford & Wrekin

The key benefits can be summarised as:

- A single vision and consistent ethos to benefit pupils, staff and parents/carers
- Continuity, and progression of learning between 5 and 11 (3 and 11 in Rotherham schools)
- Unified leadership and management of curriculum, teaching and learning
- Enhanced range of staff expertise
- Consistency of approaches to inclusion and well being
- Effective relationships with children and parents/carers over the full primary phase
- Efficient use of resources - human and educational

All of the above contribute to marked benefits for Children

The National Curriculum Handbook for Primary Teachers in England (DFEE/QCA 1999) emphasises the importance of "continuity" and "progression" for all children. Both younger and older children have opportunities to share the outcomes of learning activities and develop enhanced understanding of the range of personal achievement across the key stages. A "through school" provides an environment where children can work and play together over a longer period of time developing greater understanding and appreciation of one another's diverse strengths, skills and personalities.

A "through school" structure allows children:

- a longer period of time in which to develop closer contact with the staff & headteacher
- to benefit from all teachers and other staff having a good understanding of the child's whole experience
- increased stability; security and confidence can be built more easily when children have minimal transition
- continuity, especially for the most vulnerable children and those with special needs
- access to a curriculum planned and assessed across the full primary range
- opportunities for increased educational contact with younger and older children and the chance to share the outcomes of learning across the key stages
- opportunities for increased social development - older pupils having some appropriate pastoral responsibility for younger children
- access to a greater range of staff talent and expertise with a larger staff
- access to a wider enrichment opportunities across the curriculum and beyond

As referred to during the meeting, there is a notable difference in the standards profile for through Primary Schools and separate Junior Schools in Rotherham by the end of key Stage 2 - as detailed in the table below:

LA Totals

2007

	Reading		Writing		English		Maths		Science	
	L4	L5	L4	L5	L4	L5	L4	L5	L4	L5
Primary	80.5%	39.5%	64.6%	15.4%	77.2%	26.4%	74.5%	26.9%	85.4%	40.0%
Separate junior	81.2%	40.3%	63.4%	15.4%	76.6%	26.5%	71.1%	25.6%	85.5%	40.4%

2006

	Reading		Writing		English		Maths		Science	
	L4	L5	L4	L5	L4	L5	L4	L5	L4	L5
Primary	79.1%	40.2%	63.3%	14.0%	74.8%	26.3%	72.3%	28.4%	83.0%	40.8%
Separate junior	76.3%	36.0%	60.7%	13.4%	73.5%	23.6%	70.2%	27.4%	81.9%	37.2%

2005

	Reading		Writing		English		Maths		Science	
	L4	L5	L4	L5	L4	L5	L4	L5	L4	L5
Primary	84.4%	41.0%	64.8%	14.3%	79.1%	26.0%	75.2%	29.4%	87.2%	45.8%
Separate junior	81.2%	33.5%	58.8%	14.1%	75.1%	21.6%	73.9%	29.3%	86.2%	43.5%

The table above illustrates that over the last three years our collective strategies to address the significant differences in standards between through primary schools and separate Junior Schools are bearing fruit and improving year on year.

I hope that the information provided meets your request.

Yours faithfully

Helen B Rogers
Assistant Head of School Effectiveness (3 to 11)

Brinsworth Whitehill Primary (Amalgamated Sept 2001)**Key Stage 1**

	Reading		Writing		Maths	
	L2+	L3	L2+	L3	L2+	L3
2000	78.4	24.3	75.7	2.7	91.9	16.2
2001	93.5	16.1	90.3	6.5	96.8	29
2002	73.2	17.1	75.6	4.9	85.4	19.5
2003	83.3	16.7	75	2.8	91.7	13.9
2004	75.7	32.4	75.7	21.6	83.8	32.4
2005	83.3	28.6	76.2	26.2	92.9	14.3
2006	84.8	30.3	75.8	12.1	87.9	27.3
2007	70	27.5	72.5	10	85	10

Area = 24190m²

NOR = 258

Area per pupil = 93.7m²**Key Stage 2**

	English		Maths		Science	
	L4+	L5	L4+	L5	L4+	L5
2000	74.2	22.6	74.2	21	90.3	37.1
2001	72	32	72	20	86	48
2002	76.5	29.4	62.7	29.4	88.2	49
2003	67.8	11.9	71.2	28.8	84.7	35.6
2004	92.1	34.2	84.2	42.1	97.4	60.5
2005	85.7	28.6	78.6	35.7	97.6	66.7
2006	78.6	16.7	71.4	28.6	88.1	45.2
2007	86.5	45.9	91.9	37.8	94.6	83.8

Dinnington Primary (Amalgamated Sept 2001)**Key Stage 1**

	Reading		Writing		Maths	
	L2+	L3	L2+	L3	L2+	L3
2000	81.1	30.2	86.8	5.7	92.5	32.1
2001	79.6	22.2	87	3.7	88.9	37
2002	78.3	17.4	82.6	4.3	93.5	17.4
2003	74.5	17	61.7	6.4	83	17
2004	47.4	18.4	39.5	2.6	81.6	13.2
2005	53.5	9.3	58.1	4.7	76.7	7
2006	33.3	13.3	36.7	0	73.3	3.3
2007	70.6	11.8	67.6	2.9	88.2	14.7

Area = 13966m²

NOR = 247

Area per pupil = 56.5m²**Key Stage 2**

	English		Maths		Science	
	L4+	L5	L4+	L5	L4+	L5
2000	51.7	5.2	29.3	3.4	53.4	1.7
2001	52.9	7.4	42.6	7.4	72.1	13.2
2002	56	14	52	16	82	24
2003	52.8	22.6	54.7	17	77.4	32.1
2004	77.5	25	55	25	85	35
2005	40	5	42.5	12.5	65	17.5
2006	57.8	13.3	42.2	13.3	66.7	8.9
2007	45.2	7.1	47.6	11.9	64.3	7.1

Roughwood Primary (Amalgamated Sept 2003)**Key Stage 1**

	Reading		Writing		Maths	
	L2+	L3	L2+	L3	L2+	L3
2002	80.8	34.6	92.3	11.5	94.2	38.5
2003	87.3	36.4	83.6	12.7	98.2	27.3
2004	75	32.7	88.5	5.8	92.3	26.9
2005	78.8	30.8	86.5	19.2	90.4	30.8
2006	70.2	17.5	70.2	7	80.7	21.1
2007	82.4	31.4	88.2	13.7	96.1	25.5

Area = 31133m²

NOR = 348

Area per pupil = 89.46m²**Key Stage 2**

	English		Maths		Science	
	L4+	L5	L4+	L5	L4+	L5
2002	62.3	1.6	50.8	13.1	68.9	4.9
2003	67.8	11.9	54.2	16.9	71.2	8.5
2004	56.1	8.8	66.7	21.1	80.7	31.6
2005	75	18.8	67.2	29.7	76.6	29.7
2006	62.3	13.2	64.2	7.5	83	28.3
2007	72.2	13	68.5	22.2	79.6	25.9

Wickersley Northfield Primary (Amalgamated Sept 2003)**Key Stage 1**

	Reading		Writing		Maths	
	L2+	L3	L2+	L3	L2+	L3
2002	96.7	30	96.7	5	95	41.7
2003	85	31.7	83.3	10	85	38.3
2004	85	21.7	88.3	6.7	96.7	36.7
2005	91.4	25.9	89.7	22.4	96.6	19
2006	80	25	88.3	15	90	23.3
2007	82.5	28.1	78.9	7	87.7	28.1

Area = 24130m²

NOR = 439

Area per pupil = 54.9m²**Key Stage 2**

	English		Maths		Science	
	L4+	L5	L4+	L5	L4+	L5
2002	93.7	42.9	95.2	41.3	96.8	50.8
2003	68.4	19.3	68.4	26.3	100	33.3
2004	91.8	42.6	75.4	23	96.7	39.3
2005	78.7	16.4	72.1	24.6	85.2	32.8
2006	79	24.2	85.5	29	85.5	33.9
2007	74.2	22.6	79	37.1	80.6	29

Wath Central Primary (Amalgamated Sept 2005)**Key Stage 1**

	Reading		Writing		Maths	
	L2+	L3	L2+	L3	L2+	L3
2004	71.7	25	76.7	5	93.3	31.7
2005	68.3	28.3	81.7	5	80	13.3
2006	86.8	7.5	81.1	3.8	79.2	9.4
2007	84.2	14	82.5	8.8	78.9	14

Area = 15652m²

NOR = 421

Area per pupil = 37.17m²

Key Stage 2

	English		Maths		Science	
	L4+	L5	L4+	L5	L4+	L5
2004	65.2	20.3	76.8	40.6	94.2	50.7
2005	80.9	32.4	72.1	35.3	85.3	52.9
2006	83.6	26.2	82	36.1	93.4	57.4
2007	82.5	20.6	82.5	41.3	95.2	65.1

Redscope Primary (Amalgamated April 2005)**Key Stage 1**

	Reading		Writing		Maths	
	L2+	L3	L2+	L3	L2+	L3
2003	93.8	20	93.8	3.1	96.9	20
2004	94.8	36.2	91.4	12.1	91.4	27.6
2005	92.9	25	92.9	7.1	91.1	17.9
2006	93.9	18.4	89.8	0	98	22.4
2007	71.4	12.2	63.3	0	79.6	4.1

Area = 31381m²

NOR = 366

Area per pupil = 85.7m²**Key Stage 2**

	English		Maths		Science	
	L4+	L5	L4+	L5	L4+	L5
2003	68.7	29.9	52.2	14.9	73.1	19.4
2004	72.9	13.6	71.2	25.4	78	39
2005	81.7	25	70	20	81.7	31.7
2006	74.1	35.2	70.4	18.5	77.8	25.9
2007	67.2	21.9	62.5	14.1	71.9	21.9

Swinton Fitzwilliam Primary (Amalgamated September 2006)**Key Stage 1**

	Reading		Writing		Maths	
	L2+	L3	L2+	L3	L2+	L3
2005	95.1	34.1	92.7	14.6	95.1	19.5
2006	74.3	22.9	77.1	14.3	82.9	25.7
2007	80.4	12.5	66.1	3.6	85.7	14.3

Area = 18540m²

NOR = 316

Area per pupil = 58.67m²**Key Stage 2**

	English		Maths		Science	
	L4+	L5	L4+	L5	L4+	L5
2005	72.5	25.5	76.5	35.3	88.2	45.1
2006	79.4	35.3	70.6	26.5	82.4	50
2007	80.4	28.3	63	19.6	78.3	28.3

Maltby Manor Primary (Amalgamated April 2007)**Key Stage 1**

	Reading		Writing		Maths	
	L2+	L3	L2+	L3	L2+	L3
2005	88.3	36.7	83.3	23.3	96.7	33.3
2006	79.6	27.8	77.8	11.1	87	7.4
2007	78.7	38.3	78.7	14.9	87.2	31.9

Area = 32113m²

NOR = 395

Area per pupil = 81.29m²

Key Stage 2

	English		Maths		Science	
	L4+	L5	L4+	L5	L4+	L5
2005	75	19.2	75	17.3	86.5	38.5
2006	60	16.7	66.7	20	83.3	30
2007	75.5	34	71.7	17	83	30.2

Rawmarsh Monkwood School Site = 46060m²
not including woodland = 31325m²

NOR = 362

Area per pupil inc woodland = 127.23m²

Area per pupil not inc woodland = 86.53m²

69 Haugh Green
Upper Haugh
Rotherham
S62 7FB

[Tel: 01709 523381](tel:01709523381)
Mb: 07882795119

22 April 2008

Dear Sir,

Proposed closure of Monkwood Infant School.

I am most concerned to hear from a local meeting that you plan to close our local Infant School, Monkwood Infant School, which will include the closure of the newly built nursery, this is very likely to directly impact my daughter, who is currently 10 months old.

Having looked at local statistics, I feel that this is a backwards move, as it can be seen from the statistics available from the LEA website that school which have previously been 'amalgamated' that performance of the school's suffers.

It is also plain to see that the expansion of buildings on the junior school site to accommodate the infants will have a dramatic impact on the space available for play, also taking into consideration that there will be twice as many pupils to use this space. Even before the infant pupils join with the junior's there will be a decrease in space available to the junior school children whilst the building takes place. I also understand that it is planned that the building works will take place whilst the school is still in session. There are many issues which will affect and disrupt children currently in education particularly distraction, noise and dust, which may also be health issues and will certainly impact on the schools performance.

The current ofstead report for the Infant School shows the school to be 'providing good value for money' and has rated it as 'grade 2' or 'good', whilst this is also true of the most recent inspection report for the juniors, it is worth noting that the report also says that standards have improved recently, but that standards previously were poor due to inconsistency and 'considerable staff turnover'. Obviously staff turnover in the event of an amalgamation of the schools is likely to increase as staff feel less secure in their positions. This will again contribute to a lessening of quality of teaching at the school.

I have read the minutes of the meeting at which you informed the parents of the school children and am surprised that as you were aware of Mrs Cohen's age and your policy to amalgamate separate infant and junior schools, that a substantial amount of money was spent on the construction of the new nursery, this seems at odds with the current financial climate.

As a minimum I would suggest that the amalgamation is put on hold until the outcome of 'the primary review' which is currently being undertaken is known. The current interim

report research 9/1 – The structure of primary education England and other countries, states on page 12 section 3.4

<http://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/pdfs/downloadable/proreport.pdf> ‘The Plowden Report (DES 1967) recommended separate first and middle schools as the most suitable organisation of primary education; although it suggested combined (that is, combined first and middle) schools may be necessary in rural areas and some voluntary schools.

Interestingly, the period since the Plowden Report appears to have seen a reduction in both first and middle schools’. Indeed this recommendation is made in Chapter 13 – The size of primary schools.

I have been able to find no evidence that the amalgamation of infant and junior schools is beneficial to the children.

Yours faithfully,

Carol Spencer (Mrs)

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Lifelong Learning Cabinet Member and Advisers Meeting
2.	Date:	26th February 2008
3.	Title:	Proposal to consult on the ‘amalgamation’ of Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Junior Schools by the closure of Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant School and the expansion and a change of age range at Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior School.
4.	Programme Area:	Children and Young People’s Services Ward 10 - Rawmarsh

5. Summary

It is proposed to consult on the ‘amalgamation’ of Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior Schools. This will be by the closure of the Infant school and the expansion and change of age range of the Junior school. Members have previously agreed to consult as appropriate where two schools meet the considerations for amalgamation which are described in the School Organisation Plan.

6. Recommendations

It is recommended that consultation on the proposal to ‘amalgamate’ Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior Schools as described above is begun and that a further report be brought to Members with details of the outcome of the consultation.

7. Proposals and Details

The proposal to be consulted on is:-

It is proposed to 'amalgamate' Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior Schools from September 2008. To do this, the Infant school will be closed and the Junior school will be expanded and will have its age range changed from 7-11 to 3-11 years. Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior will, therefore, become a 'through' primary school and will accommodate the same number of pupils as are currently accommodated within the two schools.

The new School would have 420 places (R-Y6) with a Nursery unit of up to 52 places (26FTE). The school would have an admission number of 60.

The principal objectives of amalgamation are:

- 1) to provide a continuous primary entitlement across the key stages; and
- 2) to provide a unified management structure with a single school ethos which will be more efficient and make more effective use of resources.

The principle advantages of amalgamation arise from the continuous primary education entitlements which are:-

- Removal of the school transfer at the end of key stage1;
- Provision of a whole school curriculum across the primary age range;
- A unified management structure with a single school ethos;
- The potential to remodel the staffing structure and to safeguard the staffing establishment when pupil numbers change across the key stages;
- A whole school approach to staff development across the primary phase; more efficient and effective use of resources, especially accommodation, when numbers fluctuate across the infant and junior phases.

Considerations for amalgamation are described in the School Organisation Plan in Section 4, 'LEA Policies and Principles'. (These are described in **Appendix 'A'**)

There will be a vacancy for the Head Teacher's post at the Infant School, both schools are on the same site and the admission number of the two schools is 60. The conditions for consultation on amalgamation are, therefore, met.

8. Finance

Financial savings which arise are savings on staffing, mainly from the loss of a Head Teacher's post from the school's budget. The 'Minimum Funding Guarantee' procedures protect the school budget in 2008-09 and the school will enjoy additional funding in the first year of the budget because of the saving on the leaving headteacher's salary.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

The risks associated to an amalgamation are detailed in section 4 of **Appendix 'A'**.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications.

The major themes supported by the proposal are Rotherham Learning and Rotherham Achieving where the aims are to ensure that learning and development opportunities are available and accessible and that all children achieve. Improved attainment and the raising of aspirations is key to ensure that everyone has access to skills, knowledge and information to enable them to play their part in society.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

The School Organisation Plan and the 'School Standards and Framework Act 1998'

The consultation process is described in **Appendix 'A'**

Contact Name: David Hill, Manager, School Organisation Planning and Development, Ext 2536, david-education.hill@rotherham.gov.uk

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS
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1.	Meeting:	Lifelong Learning Cabinet Member and Advisers
2.	Date:	15th April 2008
3.	Title:	The proposal is to amalgamate Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Junior Schools by the closure of Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant School and a change of age range at Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior School.
4.	Programme Area:	Children and Young People’s Services Ward 10 - Rawmarsh

5. Summary

Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior School and Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant School are both separate schools. The report to Cabinet Member and Advisers on 26th February 2008 approved a pre-statutory consultation on the proposal to amalgamate the two schools by closing the Infant School and changing the age range at the Junior School. Members have previously agreed to consult as appropriate where two schools meet the considerations for amalgamation which are described in the ‘School Organisation Plan’. Pre-statutory consultations have been undertaken with School Governors, Staff and Parents, and copies of the consultation papers have also been sent to Ward Members. This report details the outcome of these pre-statutory consultations.

6. Recommendation:

It is recommended that the statutory consultation on the proposal to amalgamation Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior School and Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant School by closing the Infant School and changing the age range at Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior School as described in Appendix ‘A’ is begun and that a further report be brought to Members with details of the outcome of the formal consultation.

7. Proposals and Details

The proposal to be consulted on is:-

It is proposed to 'amalgamate' Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior Schools from September 2008. To do this, the Infant school will be closed and the Junior school will be expanded and will have its age range changed from 7-11 to 3-11 years. Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior will, therefore, become a 'through' primary school and will accommodate the same number of pupils as are currently accommodated within the two schools.

The new School would have 420 places (R-Y6) with a Nursery unit of up to 52 places (26FTE). (This is the combined numbers of the current two schools) The school would have an admission number of 60.

The principal objectives of amalgamation are:

- 1) to provide a continuous primary entitlement across the key stages; and
- 2) to provide a unified management structure with a single school ethos which will be more efficient and make more effective use of resources.

Considerations for amalgamation are described in the School Organisation Plan in Section 4, 'LEA Policies and Principles'. (These are described in Appendix 'A')

There will be a vacancy for the Head Teacher's post at the Infant School, both schools are on the same site and the admission number of the two schools is 60. The conditions for consultation on amalgamation are, therefore, met.

A Meeting was held at Rawmarsh Monkwood Junior School on the 28th February 2008 for the Governors of both schools. A meeting was held at Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant School on the 4th March 2008 for Staff from both schools followed by a meeting for Parents from both schools. (Copies of the minutes of the meeting with Parents was requested and these will be sent to the school for circulation)

(The minutes of these meetings are attached to this report)

A number of issues were raised at all these meetings and officers from the Authority responded to the questions asked. The following comments address the main issues raised at the meetings:

- 1) Concern was expressed at all the meeting with parents that could not a new Infant School Head Teacher be appointed rather than one Head Teacher running both schools. The advice given was that it is the policy of the Local Authority that when the opportunity arises, separate infant and junior schools are brought together. The Authority is of the view that primary schools perform better and have higher educational attainment than separate schools. If the authority were to establish a new school the Authority would always prefer a through primary school. The advice from our school improvement service is that the most satisfactory schools are 3-11 schools and one major positive aspect being that it reduces anxiety at the transition from Y2 to Y3. For its size

Rotherham has one of the highest number of separate infant and junior schools in the country.

- 2) There was some confusion over the future of the Infant School building and some parents had assumed that the Infant School building would be shut in September. The advice given was that the Infant School building would continue to operate in September and that there would be one Head Teacher running both the infants and juniors.
- 3) Concern was expressed that the Head Teacher would most likely be based in one building and would not know all the children and that how could one Head Teacher give enough attention to all children. The advice given was that additional funding would be provided for four years to allow the school to have two deputy head teachers and that the new Head Teacher would spend time in each building. A staffing structure has to be put in place that ensures children have regular contact with the Head Teacher and that parents have access to senior staff to voice their concerns or problems. Rotherham has approximately 70 through primary schools and has successful amalgamated 15 separate infant and junior schools.
- 4) Concern was expressed at the distance between the two school buildings. The advice given was that, due to the distance between the two schools, it would not be possible to physically link the schools and that the Authority would be look to provide an extension to the junior building to accommodate the Infant school pupils and this proposal would appear in the Primary Capital Programme. All meetings were advised that there appeared to be sufficient space on the Junior School site but plans would need to be drawn up and this would be in consultation with the Governors/Parents. Concern was raised about playground space and all meetings were advised that the plans would need to accommodate separate play areas for Foundation, Infant and Junior pupils. The authority would also look to see if any alterations needed to be made to staff or other accommodation.
- 5) Concern was expressed, particularly at the meeting with Parents that the decision to amalgamate had already been made. The advice given was that this was the first stage in the consultation process and that their views would be recorded in the minutes of the meetings. All the minutes to be presented to the Cabinet Member for Lifelong Learning in April prior to any decision to publish 'Statutory Proposals'.
- 6) Concern was expressed that this was a cost-cutting exercise. Reassurance was given that this was not the case and that any savings made were retained within the education budget and shared amongst all schools.
- 7) Concern was expressed at all meetings that the land the Infant School was on built on and the infant playing fields would be disposed off for housing. The advice given was that at present the land was still needed and that if in the future, new infant accommodation was built on to the Junior school building the Infant building and land may become surplus to 'Children and Young People's Services' requirements. If they did become surplus and the CYPS

Service had no other use for the building/land it would then be declared surplus and it would be the Council which made any future determinations on what would happen. All meetings were advised that the ancient woodland would not be affected.

- 8) Concern was expressed that staff may be expected to teach different age ranges. The advice given was that where teachers and support staff wished to work with a different age group they could be given the opportunity. Primary school teachers are trained to teach children aged 3-11 and it does not mean that infant teachers couldn't teach 11 year olds. Teachers are not going to be put into a class to fail, all staff are supported and the aim is to do what is the best for the children.
- 9) Some staff expressed concern that they were on temporary contracts and could be out of a job in September. The advice given that jobs were not at risk as a result of the amalgamation and that the two Head Teachers were already looking to confirm the staffing establishment for September. Advice was available to all from our Human Resources Team.
- 10) Concern was expressed at the meeting with parents that statistics had not been brought to the meeting which confirmed that levels of attainment were higher at through primary schools. The authority advised that these could be made available and would be forwarded to the schools.
- 11) All meetings were advised of the timetable for the consultation and how concerns/comments could be submitted as part of the statutory consultation.

8. Finance

Financial savings, which arise, are savings on staffing, mainly from the loss of a Head Teacher's post from the school's budget. The 'Minimum Funding Guarantee' procedures protect the school budget in 2008-08 and the school will enjoy additional funding is added in the first year of the budget because of the saving on the leaving Head Teachers salary.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

If formal objections are lodged during the 'statutory consultation' the proposal will be determined by the Cabinet Member.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The major theme supported by the proposal is 'to ensure that everyone has access to skills, knowledge and information to enable them to play their part in society'. The principle advantages of amalgamation arise from the continuous primary education entitlements which are: -

- Removal of the school transfer at the end of key stage1;
- Provision of a whole school curriculum across the primary age range;

- A unified management structure with a single school ethos;
- The potential to remodel the staffing structure and to safeguard the staffing establishment when pupil numbers change across the key stages;
- A whole school approach to staff development across the primary phase; more efficient and effective use of resources, especially accommodation, when numbers fluctuate across the infant and junior phases.

The experience of the Authority with past amalgamations is that these disadvantages have all been addressed and have not impacted upon the success of the amalgamation of the two schools.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Report to Cabinet Member and Advisers 26th February 2008, minutes of the meetings held with School Governors, staff and parents. The School Organisation Plan and the 'School Standards and Framework Act 1998'

The statutory consultation timetable is:

Publication of statutory notices	18th April 2008
6-week period for representations and objections closes	30 th May 2008
LEA decision	24 th June 2008
Implementation	1 st September 2008

Contact Name: David Hill, Manager, School Organisation Planning and Development, Ext 2536, david-education.hill@rotherham.gov.uk

Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Junior School Proposed Amalgamation

Joint Governing Body Meeting Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Junior Schools on Thursday 28th February 2008.

Present: Graham Sinclair, David Hill, Helen Rogers and Ann Hercock (Local Authority), Chris Cohen (Head of Infant), Liz Gee (Head of Junior), and members of the two Governing Bodies.

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.

David Hill explained that it was the long term wish to build infant classrooms onto the junior building.

Helen Rogers spoke of the advantages of an amalgamated school particularly for the children making the transition from Y2 to Y3. In separate infant and junior schools there is often a 'dip' in performance. It is about continuity. Separate schools have a different ethos and curriculum. When looked at collectively attainment is usually better in through primaries.

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

Will the children have separate playgrounds?

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.

What happens in the interim before the building work is completed?

Mrs Gee will manage along with the infant staff a process where she will be visible to infant parents. Systems will be established to ensure that the infant department does not feel as though they have been taken over. Additionally, in the first year the school will receive a financial boost.

From the outset then both schools will remain open? Parents think that the infant school is going to physically close.

Mrs Gee explained that she has had experience as an Acting Head of an amalgamated school on a split site. The school buildings were a third of a mile apart.

I am concerned about the interim period and would like to know how soon schools can be brought together. It is difficult to envisage which site would be better.

Both schools would not be knocked down. There would be an extension on to the junior school.

It is also difficult to envisage where to build the extension.

We would have to look into how much open space is required.

How long will the work take?

It would take a minimum of two years to complete.

Would the Governors have any input on the design?

Yes, there would be Governor representatives on the design team.

Can I ask about the budget – what happens in September?

In September there would be a whole school budget. Until that time the budgets would be separate but it is important for the two schools to speak together and plan for being together.

What would happen to budgets in the future? There is no split site funding in Rotherham anymore so how would maintaining two buildings be managed budget wise? There would only be one amount of grounds maintenance funding and yet there would be two premises.

Graham Sinclair said if it was found that there was a need for temporary funding, it could be arranged. He also explained about the 4 year arrangement for Deputy Heads. In all amalgamated schools only one Deputy has remained at the end of 4 years. In this case the schools would have to restructure.

What about the rest of the teaching staff?

As the total number of children would be the same, the same number of teachers would be required. This applies also to support staff.

In the case of admin staff hours worked would have to be looked at and there may have to be negotiations on both hours and roles. In the interim all will be needed in both schools.

Hazel Gee asked if they would be able to have two Learning Mentors as the Junior School had lost one. She felt they had benefited greatly from EiC funding.

Graham confirmed that as the EiC funding was separate from the school budget there is no reason why it would not be possible to have two Learning Mentors again.

When the new build is complete and the amalgamated school is in one building would this mean it would receive less funding than when it was in two buildings?

Yes because of the consequential efficiencies.

If a person objects to the proposal what do they have to do?

Anyone can submit a formal objection once the Public Notice has been published. If anyone wishes to speak to an officer from the Local Authority to discuss any concerns they are free to do so. They can also speak to Mrs Cohen or Mrs Gee who will ensure that the appropriate officer is made aware of any comments.

Is the junior site big enough, particularly with regard to car parking and catering?

There are guidelines about these which have recently been increased. There are two kitchens at the moment and Ron Parry has confirmed that in September this will remain the same.

There is no expectation to have dining halls in schools. The expectation is that children will eat in main halls. Also the DSCF is keen on schools having flexible spaces and these can be used for eating areas too.

What will happen to the Governing Body?

There are some 'shared' governors and infant governors would have the opportunity to fill vacancies on the junior governing body. There are various models for a governing body. It could be expanded and it could have associate members who would be able to contribute to discussions but without a vote.

What are the implications for staff governors?

Now any member of staff can attend a meeting as a staff governor. It is about the whole staff working together and not about the juniors 'taking over' the infants. It will be one school.

Would one of the staffrooms be expanded?

This could be considered depending on how big the existing ones are and on space available. Hazel suggested that there could be alternate meetings – one in the junior building and the next in the infant building. That way staff would get to know each other.

Will Sure Start remain at the school?

If they wish to continue there will be more space as the social workers are moving elsewhere.

The nursery here caters for Thorogate.

Parents are free to choose if there is space. There are 52 places on a part-time basis.

Could we have another meeting if required?

That would be possible.

There is much confusion amongst parents about the closure of the infant school. Some think that the infant children will have to be accommodated in the junior building from September.

This unfortunately is due to the wording of the letter which has to be like that for legal reasons. It will be made clear to parents at the meeting with them on 4th March.

There is much concern about the amount of money that has been spent at the infant school.

Children have had the advantage of being there and have benefited from them. They will continue to do so until the building work is complete and the move to the new school takes place.

There were no more questions and the meeting was closed.

Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Junior School Proposed Amalgamation

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

Present: Graham Sinclair, David Hill, Helen Rogers and Ann Herccock
(Local Authority), Chris Cohen (Head of Infant), Liz Gee (Head of Junior), and 27 parents.

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.

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

Why not just appoint a new Head Teacher for the Infant School?

It is the policy of the Local Authority that when the opportunity arises, separate infant and junior schools are brought together. The Local Authority (L.A.) is of the opinion that through primary schools are better for children. If starting new, the L.A. would always prefer a through primary school.

Helen Rogers advised that the most satisfactory schools are 3-11 schools. The positive aspect is that it reduces anxiety at the transition from Y2 to Y3. This is not just recognised by Rotherham, it is a nationwide opinion. For its size Rotherham has one of the highest number of separate infant and junior schools in the country.

Why then could we not have a through primary school with two Head Teachers?

This is not about financial savings. The benefit is one leader ensuring continuity in ethos, values, curriculum planning and the general running of the school.

I cannot see how one Head Teacher can give enough attention to all children in a 3-11 school.

Rotherham has approximately 70 through primary schools. We have amalgamated 15 separate infant and junior schools. A staffing structure has to be put in place that ensures children have regular contact with the Head Teacher and that parents have access to senior staff to voice their concerns or problems. In an amalgamated school, two Deputy Heads are supported for a period of four years.

As far as costs are concerned, schools are funded through the Dedicated Schools Grant (£163m). £140m goes to schools direct. The Local Authority cannot access that amount.

It is a saving but it is a saving for all schools. During the first year of an amalgamation two schools are funded separately so 7/12 of Mrs Cohen's salary will go back to the school.

How long will the school operate with two buildings?

Plans will be published in the Primary Capital Strategy 2009-11. The aim is to add on to the existing junior school building. Parents, staff and children will be involved in the process.

There are no plans for the extension yet. What impact would there be on the junior school and the woodland. Is the infant site ear-marked for housing?

As far as the infant site is concerned it would be up to Children and Young People's Services to decide if they have an alternative use for it. If not, the site would be passed to the Council land bank and the Council would decide what the land would be used for.

So in four years this site will be flattened. Would it not be better to delay the amalgamation. We are worried about the land being used for housing.

No, Mrs Cohen leaves at the end of the school year and the children need a firm structure in place. It is not an excuse.

Where are the statistics proving that through primaries are better?

These can be provided.

How long have you known that this is the best way?

We have had a strategy of amalgamations for a very long time in this authority, and certainly for the last 13 years.

Why were the schools not amalgamated then?

At that time numbers were volatile. It would not have made sense to amalgamate when numbers may have exceeded a 2 form entry.

We need to see a plan of what the junior school would look like. It feels like the Local Authority is doing this for its own purposes.

What we are doing is making sure there is something in place. We will work with the parents, children and architect during the planning stage.

Will there be much disruption during the building work?

We have a lot of experience of building on school sites. There is ample room on the junior school site. All will benefit from gaining a newer building. The infant children will not be affected during the build.

Will the children have separate playgrounds?

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.

Will there be any building on the woodland area?

No, that is ancient woodland and it will not be touched.

Where will the new build be – on the school field? Where are the plans?

The plans have not been drawn up. However, the site has been measured and there would be sufficient space for the new build.

Is the junior school stopping as it is?

The junior building will be added on to and will have one main entrance.

Will the school have a new name in September?

There is no reason why the school could not be named Rawmarsh Monkwood Primary.

Why not keep the infant building?

There are many reasons. For example, the school is wood built, the site is more cramped, access is limited and the playing field is small.

What would the life expectancy of the new build be?

About 60 years.

What about parking?

Access is something that needs looking at.

What is wrong with the ethos of the Infant School?

There is nothing wrong with the ethos of either school. This is not a criticism of what has already been achieved here. What is being said is that now the Local Authority would always build through primaries now and in the future.

Would staff numbers be cut?

No, there would be the same number of children in total.

Would infant teachers be forced to teach junior children?

No but where teachers and support staff wish to work with a different age group they can be given the opportunity.

Primary school teachers are trained to teach children aged 3-11. It does not mean infant teachers cannot teach 11 year olds. They are qualified; that is not an issue. Experience is something that can be helped with. Teachers are not going to be put into a class to fail. The aim is to do what is the best for the children.

Would there be staff training for special needs? There are children here (infants) with differing special needs.

Training is an on-going process. The Head Teacher would utilise the skills of staff. It is not in anyone's interest to do anything that would lead to a weakening.

There are two issues here. Is it a management shift or is it a land grab? I was so concerned I went to see Councillor Wright. Are we going to hear what the staff and governors have said?

Another thing is the land. Other amalgamations have not involved a split site with woodland in between.

This is a political decision. If it does not go through what happens then? If people want to safeguard what we have then turn down the amalgamation.

If the Council wanted to do anything with the land there would have to be a planning consultation. It would be a change of use. It was built for educational purposes. To answer your question why is the amalgamation being proposed, it is to benefit the children.

All comments made will be presented to the Cabinet Member and will be published on the Council's website. They can also be sent to the school for people to look at.

We have turned up here tonight and there has been no information about how the Governors and Staff feel. You should have invited them all to come to one meeting. There should also have been an opinion poll.

Another option is if there is no significant objection we can amalgamate but keep the buildings separate.

There is no point mending something that is not broken.

If a Head Teacher retires we will propose an amalgamation if it meets all the criteria.

What happens in the four year period before the building work is completed?

Mrs Gee will handle it in such a way that will ensure she will have time for parents and children.

When will she find this time?

Mrs Gee explained that she has had experience of an amalgamated school on a split site. The school buildings were a third of a mile apart. Also there will be two Deputy Heads.

They will be Deputies though – not a Head Teacher. The Deputy Head of the Infants will be doing Mrs Cohen's work.

The staffing structure will be different. The Heads and Deputy Heads have already met to discuss.

All this is being done before the decision is made.

We have to plan as though it is going to happen in order to be prepared.

What is the alternative to amalgamation?

If the Council decide not to amalgamate then it will not go ahead and 2 separate schools will be retained.

I went to another amalgamated school – Wath Central and it seemed all cramped together.

At the moment there are wide open spaces here. If the junior building is extended to accommodate all of the children they might lose that. How can you know that this will not be so if there are no plans?

The Local Authority has significant experience of building new schools.

Are there any views from other amalgamated schools such as Wath Central?

There has been no negative feedback.

This is a lovely site. It will become smaller if all of the children are at the junior site. That is why we are so against it.

The idea will be to maximise the space already there. There is no line through the woodland area; it is all part of education land. The trees will not be affected. The extra build will be onto the school.

There should have been plans.

If we had had plans it would have looked like it was already a done deal.

What would happen if numbers drop? Some parents have said they will not send their children to this school if it does amalgamate.

It is unlikely that this would happen.

How strong would objections have to be?

Anyone wishing to would have to submit a formal objection after the Public Notice has been published on 18th April. There will then be a six week period during which people can object or comment. All objections/comments would then be presented to the Cabinet Member as part of the decision-making process.

Would it have been better to have a vote?

We have to follow statutory procedure and a vote is not part of this process. The only way we can understand what is happening is to come here and meet with you and now we do understand.

How can we find out what the Governors think?

The Chair of the Governing Body was present at the meeting and informed the parents that at the Governors meeting there was a debate on educational issues. Personally, he felt strongly that the amalgamation should happen but that the infant land should be left for both school and community use.

After the Public Notice is published there are six weeks to object. It is up to us to come up with a process to object. We need to put it to a vote amongst ourselves. Councillor Wright was asked if the land would be used for new housing and he could not guarantee that it would not. It is left to us to fight.

Mrs Gee was asked if she would be willing to be Head Teacher if the sites were kept separate.

She confirmed that she would.

How is it going to look for the children this September?

Day to day things would not look any different but there would be a different management structure.

Will Mrs Gee be walking through the Infant School for children to get to know her?

She stated that she already does.

Is the budget guaranteed for next year?

The budget is basically based on the number of children in school.

On a positive note I am fully behind it. I have looked at Rawmarsh Thorogate and it is a lovely school with a good atmosphere and good community spirit.

The main worry is the disturbance for children. Where would Sure Start go?

We need to discuss with Sure Start.

I work in a through primary but do appreciate the concerns. I agree that through primaries are the way to go. It would be a good idea for parents here to speak to parents of children in an amalgamated school.

Will there be anymore meetings?

No, but meetings can be arranged with parents whose children do attend an amalgamated school.

There were no more questions so the meeting was closed.

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:-

I am employed on a temporary contract. 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.

I am the Clerk to the Infant Governing Body. 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.

I am the Site Supervisor. 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.

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

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.

Meeting with School Councils of Rawmarsh Monkwood Infant and Junior Schools

21st May 2008

Present: Graham Sinclair, Liz Gee, Infant Deputy, 19 children both infant and juniors.

Main Points

- 1 Transition - Y3 children confirmed they have been worried about moving from infant school to junior school but found they had a positive experience when they did move – they found older children looked after them.
- 2 Lots of questions on how dinners would work – Head teacher suggested there may be a staggered dinner hour.
- 3 Lots of interest in the new build and external playground. GS confirmed they would be involved in the planning.
- 4 The group spoke about what infants and juniors did the same and what they did differently eg both did golden time.
- 5 All were asked if they thought it was a good or bad idea. Sixteen children all thought it was a good idea with 3 thinking it ok. All of the infant children thought it was a good idea. They liked the idea of seeing older brothers, sisters and friends.