

Bitterne Church of England Infant Junior School Merger Proposal Appendix 2

Comments from Bitterne CE Infant & Junior Merger Proposal Consultation Meetings

- Concern about the differing learning environments for children in Year R and Year 6
- Has the Ofsted rating for other schools going through the merger process improved?
- What will the playground situation be? Concerns about younger children mixing with older children.
- What are the benefits of all through primary schools as opposed to separate infant and juniors?
- Concerns about 4 year olds mixing with 11 year olds
- There will be a much larger workload if there is only one headteacher – what support will be available?
- Who will lead the infant school in the interim between a decision being made and the schools formally coming together in September 2014?
- There might be some disruption as a result of the current head leaving, an interim head being appointed and then the junior HT becoming HT of the primary
- Some parents chose Bitterne CE Infant because it is a small school, concern that this will change if it becomes a primary
- Year R pupils/parents have had some disruption this year and fear this process could cause more disruption
- What will the admissions process be? When will year 2 pupils not have to apply for a year 3 place?
- What are the benefits of all through primary schools / why do this?
- Why is the proposal being put forward for this pairing of schools?
- What would the Ofsted rating for the primary be?
- Would the junior HT be the HT for the primary?
- What would the management structure be?
- Can one person manage all the staff across both the infant and the junior?
- Are there any plans to change the buildings at the schools?
- Would the playgrounds stay separate? Will the natural divide between them remain?
- Is there any evidence of the merger of infant and junior schools making a difference?
- Would the role of the headteacher change? Would their job description change?
- Have any other management structures (besides primary) been explored?
- Why wasn't an infant/junior merger considered before it was known that one of the headteachers was leaving?

Consultation responses on the proposed merger of Bitterne CE Infant and Bitterne CE Junior Schools.

Responses to the following question "Do you support the proposal to create an all-through primary school by merging Bitterne CE Infant and Bitterne CE Junior schools? (Please answer yes or no)"

Infants Parents/Carers – 17 Yes / 1 No

Junior Parents/Carers – 13 Yes

Infant & Junior Parents/Carers – 3 Yes

School Staff – 4 Yes

Infant responses:

"I fully support the proposal to merge the existing schools into a primary. At 7/8 years continuity is really important and being in a familiar place with teachers/adults provides a lot of reassurance. My child came to the infants not knowing any other children and despite making many lovely friends very quickly, he is still very anxious about the move to a new school as he still remembers the first days when he had no friends and thought that would never happen again. If the two schools were merged the continuity of rules and general structure will lessen the anxiety for the children. As long as the teaching 'at the top' can be aligned seamlessly to ensure the schools remain the happy, nurturing places they are now and Mr Peterson and the

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other staff are supported to ensure this happens, then the merger should be seen as a positive. It is important that the children already in school do not see this as a 'big change'."

"I feel that one Headteacher to cover both schools will mean the schools will lose out on the personal touches that the current heads can give. How is one Headteacher able to cope with the workload of 2 jobs and still learn the names of every child in school."

"Both my wife and I are fully supportive of the changes recommended in the letter sent out on 30th April."

Junior Responses:

"I feel this is a very positive move for both schools."

Staff Response:

"Looking forward to it."