



Barnsole Schools Federation



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15th October 2010

Ms R. Collinson
Director of Children and Adults – Learning and Caring
Medway Council
Gun Wharf
Chatham
Kent
ME4 4TR

Cc: Mr Chris McKenzie
Councillor Royle
Councillor Wicks

Ref: Barnsole Schools Federation

Dear Ms Collinson

At our meeting on Thursday 14th October 2010, the Governing Body of Barnsole Federation discussed the progress being made with the plans to amalgamate Barnsole Infant and Junior Schools. The Governors have been considering the various related issues and agreed to write to you with our recommendations and requests.

Pupil Admission Number (PAN)

A previous decision made jointly with Officer representatives, to reduce the PAN to 60 with effect from next September appears to now be questionable. The current Reception year has 86 pupils and this seems to be indicative of a change in the number of younger children in the local area. Officers have informed us that there may well be a need for Barnsole to be 3FE in future years. If this is the case **we wish to formally initiate action to revert the PAN to 90 as soon as possible.**

Building Plans

The Governors have carefully considered the options for building work associated with amalgamation to make a Primary School. Option E – to reroute Sturdee Avenue would undoubtedly offer exciting possibilities for a new building. However, the reality is that this option would be very unpopular in the local area and would almost certainly be over the budget available.

Should the road remain, **our preferred option is Option A** – a complete refurbishment of the Junior building, some changes to the Infant building and construction of an Early Years area and staffroom.

This option would mean that Barnsole would retain the capacity to accommodate 3FE. Governors are concerned that a reduction in pupil numbers would leave us with everyday bills to pay for a large building with funding for fewer pupils, making budgeting an issue.

Pupil Admission Number (PAN) – September 2012 onwards

Taking the above points into account, the Governors at Barnsole would ask Officers to give careful consideration to our PAN. **We strongly request that the PAN remains at 90.** Although a 3FE Primary School is considered to be large, the schools are currently working as if they are already one. Management systems and efficient communication is being put in place which show we can operate in this way, to the benefit of our pupils.

Amalgamation – September 2013?

When the new strategy was agreed the Governing Body questioned the length of time to amalgamation. Four years from the start of consultation to amalgamation, is a long time. Amalgamation and building projects are not necessarily the same issue, one is not dependent on the other as was previously thought to be the case when negotiations started some two years ago. From this September the schools are working as one. Full amalgamation would be achievable very quickly and would be more of an administrative exercise than anything else. The only issue we foresee is changing our private pre-school provision to FS1. Amalgamation as a 3FE school would mean that most of the existing staff could be retained – there would be minimal redundancy. **The Governing Body requests that the amalgamation date be brought forward to September 2011.**

Road Safety Measures

Although there are plans for measures to improve road safety in the area, we request that wider work be undertaken. Our suggestions include:

- Extended traffic calming such as speed bumps along Sturdee Avenue.
- A 20mph speed restriction along Sturdee Avenue and Barnsole Road.
- A pedestrian crossing on Barnsole Road in the immediate area of the school.

We hope that these points will receive serious consideration and our views taken into account at the next decision making opportunity.

Yours sincerely

Mrs D. Smith
Vice Chair of Governors
On behalf of the Governing Body

Mrs A. Pullen
Executive Headteacher

