

**APPENDIX 2:
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON RESPONSES TO STATUTORY CONSULTATION FROM
1st JULY TO 11th AUGUST 2009**

SUBJECT	POINTS MADE	LOCAL AUTHORITY RESPONSE
<p>CONSULTATION TIMING</p> <p>(9 responses)</p>	<p>Why have both consultations taken place over school holiday periods? The first was over the Easter holiday and this is over the summer holiday when many who may wish to comment will be away.</p>	<p>The initial consultation began in school term time and provided an adequate period of time for all stakeholders to make representations (as evidenced by the strong response). The start date of the statutory consultation round was chosen to meet legal requirements in relation to the decision making process and officers have worked closely with the DCSF to ensure that legal requirements have been met. The public meeting held on July 15th at Harefield Infant School was an additional consultation event to provide further opportunity for comments and questions in advance of the school holiday period.</p>
<p>TRANSITION IMPROVEMENT OVERSTATED</p> <p>(9 responses)</p>	<p>Transition improvements (including for SEN pupils) are overstated - e.g. are already good; barriers would remain, such as separate buildings, the nursery-to-infant transition.</p>	<p>The local authority believes that amalgamation would promote continuity of learning and ethos between the ages of 5 and 11, thus avoiding a potential performance dip on transfer between separate schools and that there would be greater opportunities for staff development across the full primary phase. Where such arrangements are already working well, amalgamation can provide a further opportunity to develop unified good practice across the school.</p>

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<p>SCHOOL BUILDINGS/PREMISES ISSUES</p> <p>(7 responses)</p>	<p>The amount of accommodation would remain the same.</p> <p>Are any ways to undertake work to, for example, create a single entrance.</p>	<p>If the amalgamation went ahead, the Junior School would take over the current Infant School building. This would therefore provide opportunities for both school phases to utilise rooms in both buildings. At this stage, there are no plans for premises changes, but funding for minor adaptations to support the smooth-running of the amalgamated school may be possible.</p>
<p>PERSONNEL</p> <p>(13 responses)</p>	<p>The Harefield Infant School's head teacher post was advertised, but interviews were cancelled at short notice. Is this the proper way to manage change?</p>	<p>Governors were alerted to the fact that, should they choose to advertise for the post, any potential candidates could be disappointed in the event of a statutory consultation on amalgamation.</p>
	<p>Regarding the shortage of available head teachers, what effect has the Fast Track Teacher scheme had?</p>	<p>The local authority has researched this further. The Fast Track scheme stopped taking new entrants from March 2008 and is coming to an end on 31st August 2009. A report in June 2008 concluded that "<i>overall, Fast Track has been a success</i>".</p>
	<p>Is there any research with regard to the preferences of potential Headteachers? Perhaps the National College of School Leadership have some?</p>	<p>Neither the Local Authority nor the NCSL currently have any research on teacher preferences in relation to where they would prefer to work as a head.</p>
	<p>Would a new Head Teacher be recruited to cover both schools?</p>	<p>Should the amalgamation be approved, it would be for the governing body to determine the process that it wishes to put in place. More than one approach would be possible i.e. ring-fencing or open competition. The governing body should seek to avoid redundancy, whilst satisfying itself that the individual has suitable qualifications, experience and ability for the all-through school.</p>
	<p>Workforce issues - e.g. impact on staff numbers not sufficiently explained/explored; staff expertise would be generalised, with reduced</p>	<p>A re-structuring of the school staffing resources could take many forms with staff being deployed in similar roles (assimilated) or to revised job descriptions but more than likely a mixture of both. Whether staff were deployed in more general roles (with reduced</p>

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	scope for specialisms.	scope for specialisms) would be a matter for the headteacher and governing body as part of their proposal but this would not be a natural consequence of amalgamation. There may be areas of duplication but a restructure may offer up different opportunities to meet the school's needs.
EXTERNAL SERVICES (1 response)	There is currently provision of external services e.g. educational psychologists / sports coaching from Harefield Academy. Would the block (separate for Infant and Junior) of time remain the same or reduce upon amalgamation?	The extent of services tends to be driven by the number of pupils and their individual needs.
CHOICES / PREFERENCES (2 responses)	Would reduce parental choice (e.g. for smaller schools or separate stages)	The proposals would not remove school places, nor make the Infant and Junior phases of education within the Primary school larger or smaller than they already are.
INCONSISTENT APPROACH TO SCHOOLS (1 response)	Inconsistent treatment. A similar amalgamation proposed for the Newnham Junior and Infant Schools was abandoned. It is inconsistent that proposals to amalgamate Harefield schools should be considered.	The decision to pursue school amalgamations was taken by the Council in March 2009. Each situation is considered on a case-by-case basis.
OTHER POINTS (23 responses)	Concerns that fewer small schools could impact on willingness/availability of future Heads to manage large primary schools, & subsequent impact on standards.	The Local Authority is not aware of any evidence of this.
	There is a need for distinct nursery & junior schools' ethos / identity / educational approaches	The Local Authority is of the opinion that a single school ethos and identity will benefit the school and local community. However, it will be a matter for the Governing Body to consider whether each school phase should retain its own identity.
	Would result in a larger & more impersonal school	The Local Authority believes that such an environment can be avoided through the continuance of good relationships, excellent teaching, and involvement with parents and the local community.

SUBJECT	POINTS MADE	LOCAL AUTHORITY RESPONSE
	Would take up significant amount of management time	This will be a matter for the Governing Body to administer through an appropriate organisational structure.
	Parental/family involvement is already good and not an issue	The Local Authority acknowledges that in this set of circumstances, there is indeed a good participation from parents and that this is not an issue. The Local Authority hopes that this level of involvement will continue and be of benefit to the new organisational structure at the school.
	Improvements to governor recruitment overstated.	Nationally and locally governor recruitment is becoming more difficult.
	LA have not explored, or have dismissed, other alternatives (e.g. amalgamation at later date; joint employment of specialist staff)	The Local Authority has considered maintaining the status quo. However, in accordance with the council's decision in March 2009 on school amalgamations, the Local Authority has considered that the circumstances at Harefield Infant School do present an opportunity for formal amalgamation. The Local Authority is of the opinion that the benefits outweigh the disadvantages in this case.

APPENDIX 2 - RESPONSES TO STATUTORY CONSULTATION ABOUT HAREFIELD AMALGAMATION PROPOSALS

Group	General objection / concern (e.g. proposal is only to save money; could have detrimental impact)	Efficiency savings overstated, because of 2 separate buildings (eg 2 staff rooms needed; different size sites; different size children's furniture)	Reduced school funding/budget, which could affect standards & school management	Transition improvements (including for SEN pupils) are overstated - eg are already good; barriers would remain, such as separate buildings, the nursery-to-infant transition.	Concerns about consultation process: eg insufficient time / presumptive or pre-judged outcome	Workforce issues - eg impact on staff numbers not sufficiently explained/explored; staff expertise would be generalised, with reduced scope for specialisms.	Could create further disruption to pupils' learning environment (following building of new nursery)	LA have not explored, or have dismissed, other alternatives (eg amalgamation at later date; joint employment of specialist staff)
Organisation								
Parent	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	
Parish	1							
Parent	1	1	1		1		1	
Parent Governor	1				1			
Parent	1			1	1			
Parent	1	1	1			1	1	
Staff	1	1			1			
Parent Governor	1				1	1	1	
Parent Governor	1	1	1	1	1	1		1
Staff	1	1		1	1	1		1
Parent or Resident	1							
Parent or Resident	1	1	1			1	1	1
Parent	1	1				1		
Parent	1	1	1	1				
Chair of Governors Harefield Infant & Junior School	1	1	1	1		1	1	1
Parish	1	1	1		1	1		1
Chair of Governors Harefield Infant & Junior School	1	1	1	1			1	1
Chair of Governors Harefield Infant & Junior School	1	1	1	1			1	1
Parent or Resident	1	1		1				
School Governor - Lead Petitioner								
353 Signatures	353							
	372	14	10	9	9	9	8	7

KEY

GENERAL / EFFICIENCY	372
STANDARDS	27
BENEFITS OVERSTATED	35
FINANCIAL	10
BENEFITS NOT EXPLAINED	5
CONSULTATION PROCESS	9
OTHER	34

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Group	Would take up significant amount of management time	Separate buildings (entrance / access between etc.)	Going against Governing Body	Reputation & standards are already good / or would be put at risk	Headteacher recruitment problem overstated (i.e. school had invited strong candidates for interview)	Benefits OR Disadvantages not sufficiently explained / not supported by evidence to enable a considered view.	Concerns that fewer small schools could impact on willingness/availability of future Heads to manage large primary schools, & subsequent impact on standards.	Queries about comparative evidence of standards at separate schools vs. all-through schools
Organisation								
Parent	1				1			
Parish		1	1	1	1			
Parent		1				1		
Parent Governor			1					
Parent		1	1					1
Parent	1	1						1
Staff								
Parent Governor						1		
Parent Governor			1		1	1	1	
Staff					1	1		1
Parent or Resident								
Parent or Resident		1		1		1		
Parent	1	1			1		1	
Parent	1						1	
Chair of Governors Harefield Infant & Junior School	1		1	1				
Parish								
Chair of Governors Harefield Infant & Junior School	1		1	1				
Chair of Governors Harefield Infant & Junior School	1		1	1				
Parent or Resident		1		1	1			
School Governor - Lead Petitioner								
353 Signatures								
	7	7	7	6	6	5	3	3

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Group	There is a need for distinct nursery & junior schools' ethos / identity / educational approaches	Would result in a larger & more impersonal school	Older children being role models overstated, as separate buildings would be an obstacle.	Parental/family involvement is already good and not an issue	Improvements to governor recruitment overstated	Inconsistent strategy (eg with reference to Newnham Infant & Junior Schools)
Organisation						
Parent						
Parish		1				1
Parent		1	1			
Parent Governor						
Parent	1		1			
Parent						
Staff						
Parent Governor						
Parent Governor						
Staff						
Parent or Resident						
Parent or Resident						
Parent						
Parent						
Chair of Governors Harefield Infant & Junior School						
Parish						
Chair of Governors Harefield Infant & Junior School						
Chair of Governors Harefield Infant & Junior School						
Parent or Resident	1			1	1	
School Governor - Lead Petitioner						
353 Signatures	2	2	2	1	1	1