

STANBURN FIRST SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY
Abercorn Road
Stanmore
Middlesex HA7 2PJ
Tel: 020 8954 1423

16th July 2013

Ms Catherine Doran
Corporate Director of Children and Families
Harrow Council
Civic Centre
Civic 1
Station Road
Harrow, Middlesex

Dear Ms Doran

On Thursday 11th July 2013 a meeting of the Task and Finish Group met to discuss the way forward regarding the amalgamation of Stanburn First and Stanburn Junior Schools.

I am writing to reaffirm our original letter to Mr A Parker dated 6th March 2013 stating that the Governing Body of Stanburn First School support the amalgamation of the two schools.

The Governing Body have always remained focused on the long-term, strategic future of this school and we feel it would be detrimental not to amalgamate the two schools into a new all-through primary school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Martin
Chair - First School Governing Body

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6th March 2013

Mr A Parker
Harrow Teachers Centre
Tudor Road
Wealdstone
Middlesex
HA3 5PQ

Dear Mr Parker

On Thursday 28th February a meeting of the full Governing Body of Stanburn First School was held. At the meeting full discussion took place to consider all the evidence and points of view presented as part of the Consultation process when considering whether the two schools should now be amalgamated.

Firstly I think it needs to be acknowledged that, for whatever reasons, there has been a very high level of frustration for many of the parties involved especially the parents. This was caused mainly because, on the face of it, the Local Authority were not able to offer any other alternatives other than a 'yes' or 'no' to amalgamation. In the case of 'no' there was no 'official' alternative. The Local Authority had a very restricted brief and also seemed to have a very restricted 'script' to work from when trying to answer questions/concerns. It seemed to the Governing Body that many of the parents felt that this was purely a cost cutting exercise.

At most meetings one of the most frequently asked questions was at what level of negative response would the Council say that the status quo would remain. Council Officers were unable to answer the question but many felt, based on history that, to a large extent, it was a fait accompli. The overriding, compelling reasons not to amalgamate that were cited would not fit the Stanburn model and arguments over size, in all probability, would not be accepted by Cabinet.

Further it seems that a lot of parents took the opportunity to air grievances over the expansion process. Without wishing to get too side tracked on this issue it must be noted that most of them chose not to take part in the consultation process for that and are only now choosing to take the opportunity to make the views belatedly known.

Before continuing, the other issue that I feel should be brought before this forum is the totally unfounded vitriolic attacks on the First School Head. These spurious comments appear to have been borne out of nothing but ignorance and in specific cases personal grudges have been brought to bear. Whatever the reason they have been deeply hurtful and steps hopefully will be taken by the Local Authority to redress this situation.

Whether or not to amalgamate. The Governing Body have always remained focussed on the long-term, strategic future for this school. One of the first questions that we considered was that in the

unlikely event of Cabinet allowing the two schools to remain separate, what would happen when one or other of the heads resign. The answer appears to be very clear cut and that is that we would have to go through this whole damaging process again. It has clearly been, and continues to be, a highly divisive process and not one that we would want to repeat.

After much debate, and soul searching, the Governing Body strongly felt that this is an outstanding school, with outstanding facilities, resources, staff and, of course, results. Likewise the Junior School has received an 'Outstanding' rating by OFSTED. We could, therefore, see no detriment being caused to either school, or the wider community, by amalgamating the two schools into a new all-through primary school.

As we share not only a site, but a building, both schools need to have a productive working relationship. This is essential for the good of the social and emotional well being of the staff, students and parents of both schools, and ultimately to continue with the outstanding academic progression for our students.

Bearing all of this in mind the Governing Body of Stanburn First School voted, and ratified, for the two schools to be amalgamated with effect from September 2013.

Yours sincerely

Mrs L Martin
Chair – First School Governing Body