

30 December 2004
T.S.Peryer
The Secretary to the Schools Organisation Committee
PO Box 2
Civic Centre
Harrow
Middlesex
HA1 2UW

Summary of Objections to St Johns C of E First & Middle Schools Amalgamation Process

Please find enclosed my various objections to the above schools' Governing Bodies decision to amalgamate. I apologise for the hurried nature of the objections attached or any grammatical errors that they may contain, I thought the representation period was to end on 5th January 2005, but without confirmation of this (see e-mails dated 29th October) I thought it wise to respond by the end of today.

I have included copies of all correspondence and other documents in the enclosed CD. If you require any confirmed receipts of any of the correspondence, do please let me know and I will provide these if necessary.

Yours sincerely



A Gadsby (first school parent)



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The DFES Organisation Public Guide states the following:

Item 2 'Changes to schools affect a range of people-pupils, parents, teachers, governors and local people etc and need to be considered carefully. In 1999 the government introduced new arrangements which meant that most changes are decided locally by representatives of groups involved in the provision of education. These arrangements are based on clear democratic principles which should ensure that **decisions are taken fairly, based on a range of relevant factors and evidence**'.

The following items are a Summary of objections to fairness of decision and evidence used etc, as above:

- 1 Governing Body did not request LEA to provide comparisons of funding for either of the proposals. (see Joint Governing Body circular to parents dated 18th October 2004, 'comparisons between separate schools and combined schools are not appropriate as the formula differentiates between the different needs of separate and combined schools.' See also unanswered A Gadsby letter of 8th November to Mr A Lewis)
2. LEA did not provide Governing Body with comparisons of funding to study viability of either proposal. (see Ms J Morgan's letter of 26th October to A Gadsby, 'comparisons between separate schools and combined schools are not appropriate as the formula differentiates between the different needs of separate and combined schools.' also Mr A Lewis letter of 1st November 'the Council's school budget advisor visiting us personally to explain precisely how funding would work.' And also unanswered A Gadsby letter of 8th December to Mr A Lewis 'Can you please inform me who carried out the analysis of the formula which has resulted in your understanding that the comparative difference between the formula funding for an amalgamated school is 'about 2-3% less' than a combined budget of our two separate schools?')
- 3 The Governing Bodies did not have any confirmed/substantiated figures from Harrow LEA of any comparison of income in formulae funding, as evidence, to form a basis to show that a restructured amalgamated school would have more finance available to pupils, (prior to any change that may occur with regard to Harrows policy change of 11+, or after any change with regard to 11+), than that of remaining two separate schools.

(see A Lewis letter of 1st, and 5th November to A Gadsby, And A Gadsby Letter of 1st November to Mr A Lewis, and unanswered letter of 8th November to Mr A Lewis.)

4. Mr A Lewis stated in his letter of 5th November 2004, that ‘Any revised management structure will be the job of a shadow Governing Body to decide in partnership with the current Headteachers and senior management team in consultation with staff.’
The temporary Governing body was created after the decision to amalgamate was made by voting on 3rd November, therefore the Governing Bodies could not have had staffing information that would have been necessary to study the financial viability of either of the proposals as evidence prior to voting.
5. As a result of items 3 & 4 above, Governing Bodies could not have studied the financial viability of either of the proposals, through adequate, robust evidence prior to voting, to discover which option included in the proposals, would be of most financial benefit to pupils education.
As stated in Ms Morgan’s letter of 26 October to A Gadsby, ‘As part of this exercise the Governors need to consider a range of issues including the educational benefits for the children, staffing structures, finance, accommodation/development opportunities, managing the school site etc. All of which will raise different issues and have different solutions given the different contexts of schools in Harrow’
6. Governors on both Governing Bodies do not appear to have been independently seeking evidence of which of the proposals (of remaining two separate schools, or amalgamating) were to be the best solutions for either of the First or Middle School.
The First School Chair of Governors stated that as Governors who know about the issues and what is best for the schools, and are involved in the operation of the schools, have to look at a “whole school” approach. Governors know what is best for the schools and had been constantly discussing amalgamation since the previous experience of having to decide whether to amalgamate and were aware of all aspects of amalgamation necessary for consideration. (See AG letter to P Reece dated 19th October 2004). However, there seems to be no analysis made by Governing Bodies, through collation of evidence, that the decision made to amalgamate would be a fair judgement based upon accurate evidence.
7. Meeting minutes/agendas/papers considered etc, documenting Governing Body Meetings, or Committee meetings, discussing amalgamation have not been released/placed in the Public domain by Governing Bodies, for interested parties to inspect, which would allow interested parties to see the information that was available and used by Governing Bodies to make their decision on 3rd November 2004. This information would have shown interested parties, the solutions to proposal issues which were not supplied during the consultation process, and allow interested parties to form a view of the proposals.
Interested parties requested information which was denied by Governing Bodies, and therefore the only way to obtain this information is through meeting minutes/agendas/papers considered etc, by the Governing Bodies, which was not filed and open to the public domain.
(see A Gadsby letters of 16th, and 19th October 2004; 5th, and Item 3 of 24th November 2004, 1st and 16th December to Mr P Reece, A Gadsby letters of 4th, and Items 11 & 12 of 8th November 2004 to Mr A Lewis; Mr A Lewis letter of 23rd October 2004 to A Gadsby.)

The Clerk was removed by First School Chair of Governors and Harrow LEA representative from Governing Body meeting of 15 September 2004, when First School Governing Body appears to have first discussed amalgamation. (see minutes held at first school office before half term, and unanswered queries in A Gadsby letter of 24th November 2004 to Mr P Reece).

The First School Chair of Governors stated that a Governor then took over the Clerk’s role for the remainder of the meeting, but has not confirmed which individual took over the role of clerk. (see A

Gadsby letter of 19th October 2004 to Mr P Reece), and Governing Body have still not released minutes into public domain.

First School Chair of Governors/or LEA representative made the section of Governors Meeting of 15th September discussing amalgamation as “*Class 2 Confidential*”. The First School Chair of Governors has stated that this was because the Governing Body did not want parents/teachers to find out about amalgamation proposals independently from each other. (see A Gadsby letter of 19th October 2004 to Mr P Reece).

However, this explanation seems inadequate as it has subsequently been confirmed that these minutes should not have been in the public domain until after being ratified at the following 1st School Governing Body meeting, (which was after the 13th October when Governing Bodies declared the proposals for amalgamation).

There was clearly no need to make this section of the minutes “*confidential*” due to the fact that these minutes should not have been in the public domain until “ratified” at next Governing Bodies meeting, which was held after very important meeting of 13th October. Therefore, why was this section classified as “confidential?”

One can only assume that the minutes were intended to be classified as “class 2 confidential” in order for the content never to be disclosed for interested parties to view.

Mr A Lewis stated the meeting minutes of 15th September would be “ratified” at the next termly meeting. (see Mr Lewis letter of 23rd October 2004 to A Gadsby). However the First School Chair of Governors stated the autumn termly meeting was held on 1st December 2004. (see Mr P Reece letter of 8th December 2004 to A Gadsby). These meeting minutes have still not been placed into the public domain. (see A Gadsby letter of 16th December 2004 to Mr P Reece).

8. Furthermore, Governing Body Meeting minutes/agendas/papers for meetings held on 3rd November 2004 have not been placed into the public domain for interested parties to inspect/view. (see A Gadsby letter of 16th December 2004 to Mr P Reece).
9. The consultation period covered only 7 School children attendance days which was wholly inadequate, as queries, both verbal and written queries were not answered within the consultation period (and are still not, see unanswered query list). In order for people to respond to the Governing Bodies, with sufficient knowledge and information with regard to the effects/implications/solutions that the amalgamation proposals raised, and were not disclosed by the Governing Bodies to interested parties.

(see all correspondence) A longer period of consultation was necessary.

The First School Chair of Governor’s explanations for the short consultation period were, on 13th October, so as “*not to worry parents*” and on 15th October, “in deference” to the outgoing Head Teacher Mrs B Fuggle. The DFES states consultation should be no longer than 12 months, therefore why did the Governing Bodies decide on such a short consultation period, with a minimal amount of time for parents/interested parties to be informed sufficiently of the issues and their solutions that the proposals raised? The reasons given for the short consultation period are not compatible with the DFES reasons that the consultation period should be long enough to sufficiently inform and allow enough time for people to understand and form a view of the proposed changes. The consultation exercise should allow people sufficient time to consider the proposals and respond.

The Consultation period was therefore too short to answer all queries to enable parents to be sufficiently informed of proposals and their solutions, especially when Governors:

- Did not answer all verbal queries at meetings
- Did not answer written queries

- First School Chair of Governors made himself unavailable for further parents meetings which the parents volunteered to arrange independently
- Parents had to hurriedly research answers for themselves to be sufficiently informed, rather than Governors freely providing the information.
- First School Chair of Governors forbade parents from transmitting information to each other on school property. (see A Gadsby letter of 19th October 2004 to Mr P Reece)
- Parent Governor fully enforced above dictate (see A Gadsby letter of 19th October 2004 to Mr P Reece)

10. There was no agenda given to parents for the meeting held on 13 October 2004. The agenda given in the notice for this meeting to parents was that the meeting was "Very Important". In Governing Body forms for parents to fill in and return, the "very important" meeting was referred to as a "consultation meeting", implying that the agenda was known by parents prior to the meeting, including the SOC.

In Governing Body forms for parents to complete and return, the "very important" meeting was referred to as the "consultation meeting", giving respondents the idea that the agenda was known by parents prior to the meeting, including the SOC.

This form from Governing Bodies to be returned with parents comments, issued with the proposal document to parents, asked "Did you attend the Consultation meeting?" when no one was advised in advance of the subject or the agenda for the meeting of 13 October was to inform parents, that the governing Bodies were considering to amalgamate the schools. Therefore this question was not a realistic or fair one i.e as many parents who did not attend would not have had any idea of the subject under discussion and as it was forbidden to discuss/pass information between parents on school property, they could not be advised of the facts.

11. The proposal documents stated that an advantage of amalgamating the schools (over remaining separate schools) was that the two separate Governing Bodies would become one Governing Body and therefore governors in both school Governing Bodies would not duplicate work.

This is not a true advantage of amalgamation as the two separate School Governing Bodies can federate to become one Governing Body.

(see A Gadsby letter of 29th October 2004 to Mr P Reece)

12. As Stakeholders, parents were not informed that any future major projects would be eventually funded by the disposal of the First School site. Almost all parents, and teachers were unaware of this fact during the consultation period, and indeed, as far as I am aware, still are.

During this current process stakeholders (parents/teachers/pupils) have thereby also been excluded from consultation with regard to how any profit from the disposal of the First School site would be used.

Eg

My very approximate sums regarding the profit the schools would gain from this action is around £3-£4 million ie:

For example, 20 town houses on First School site valued at £500,000 =	£10 million
Deduct cost of building town houses, say, 20 at £200,000 =	£4 million
Deduct cost of accommodation for First School Pupils/teachers on Middle School site, say =	£2 million
PROFIT	£4 million

13. Parents as stakeholders, are also not to be consulted in the future, with regard to major projects included in the proposals when the newly amalgamated Governing Body is formed. As a result of

which, parents as stakeholders will not be consulted on the Governing Bodies use of the profit from this disposal of the First School site,
ie whether profit would be used to refurbish swimming pool that is not used on Middle School site etc.

This was made clear by Governing Bodies' circular issued to parents on 18 October 2004 stating *"Teachers, staff, Governing Bodies and Diocese will be consulted on any motion for Developments requiring capital expenditure"* ie, parents have been omitted from this consultation process.

14. There are no disadvantages listed in the proposals, other than the comment that ' It is essential that the different educational provision for First and Middle school pupils is guaranteed. Strategies would need to be in place to ensure that the special qualities of education for younger and older children are preserved.'

When asked what the solution to counter this would be in an amalgamated school, Governing Bodies did not have an answer.

(see A Gadsby letter of 15th October 2004 with Preliminary Query list enclosed to Mr P Reece. Answers have not been provided, see A Gadsby letter of 23rd November to Mr P Reece)

15. The proposals appear to be heavily weighted in favour of amalgamation without providing any solutions to each issue listed in the proposals, or evidence of how the solutions will be achieved in practice. Parents were not given any solutions to issues at any of the meetings held (13th, 15th, or 18th October), or within the circular from Joint Governing Bodies issued on 18th October.

(see all correspondence)

The only solution advised to parents in any form was that should the Governing Bodies decide to amalgamate, the two Governing Bodies would become one Governing Body.

However this was not a true advantage of amalgamating, as the two Governing Bodies could do this if the two schools remained separate schools anyway (by federating).

16. Almost all First school parents and teachers are still completely unaware that amalgamation will result in the disposal of the First school site to fund future major developments, and therefore the forms returned with comments to the Governing Body from Parents do not represent parent's full thoughts of the process because due to the lack of information given to parents, they are unaware of the full facts/information. (In fact parents were told that the schools would remain as they are and nothing would change should the Governing Bodies decide to amalgamate!)

17. The yellow document accompanying the proposal documents with information for parents is very contradictory.

Eg the following items in this document lead parents to believe that amalgamation will mean that the two schools will remain on their current site;

Item 2. 'There would be more finely graduated policies, eg. Homework/equipment, that make it less of a shock to reach Middle school.'

Item 4. 'The children & staff would have greater opportunities to access facilities in both schools.'

However the following items in this document lead me to believe that amalgamation will require the eventual disposal of the First School site;

Item 1. 'The amalgamation of separate first & middle schools would provide a combined first & middle school which, based on an education rationale is the Council's preferred organisation'

Item 5. 'What developments will there be on the school site ?

In the short term there will be an accommodation review. This will look at current accommodation and identify areas for change or improvement across the school site.

Any major development will require considerable capital investment. This would be a longer-term activity when funding was available.'

Ms Morgan's letter of 26th October 2004 however states that before making their decision of whether to amalgamate or not, the Governing Bodies need to consider a range of issues, including 'accommodation/development opportunities,'

During the consultation period, parents were not informed of what accommodation/development opportunities existed, and therefore also not informed of the means to fund such developments (i.e as the Harrow School Organisation Debate states, the loss of a school site must be considered). Thereby, in St Johns case, the loss (disposal) of the First School site, must be considered to fund the 'major development' of providing accommodation on the Middle School site, for First School pupil's and teachers.

This has meant that the consultation process has been undemocratic and as a result of not sufficiently informing all stakeholders, including parents, the Governing Bodies have therefore not received sufficiently 'informed' comments from all stakeholders, including parents, during the consultation to inform their decision made on 3rd November 2004.

The DFES Organisation Public Guide states the following:

Item 11 ‘Consultation should provide sufficient information and allow enough time for people to understand and form a view of the proposed changes. It should also provide an opportunity for people to comment. This is an opportunity for you to express your views as those publishing statutory proposals must be able to show how they took into account peoples’ views’

Also:

Item 12 ‘There is no time limit specified in law for consultation, however a consultation exercise should allow enough time to consider the proposals and respond’

The following items are a Summary of objections to sufficient information not being provided, and that insufficient time was allowed for interested parties or parents to understand and form a true view of the proposed changes.

- 18 Page 2 of the proposal documents state: ‘This document is being issued to start the consultation process’
All meetings, 13th, 15th and 18th October ended before all queries could be heard, due to the following scheduled meetings. Therefore insufficient time was allocated, or given to interested parties to ensure that sufficient information was provided, for parents/parties to understand and form an accurate view of all angles and issues listed in the proposals. (see A.Gadsby Covering letter of 15th October to Mr P Reece, and Letter of 20th October to Mr P Reece)
(see also items of Harrow School debate included in item 46 below)
- 19 During half-term, the Schools were closed and therefore queries/letters could not be sent to any Governor (parents were not allowed to have addresses of Governors). However, Mr P Reece’s letter of 20 October 2004 (delivered by hand to Mr A Gadsby) was delivered on personal headed paper including home and email addresses. I attempted to e-mail Mr P Reece during half-term to establish the best method to respond to a letter I had received from Mr A Lewis in the half term period but received an automated reply from Mr P Reece’s e-mail address stating that he was unavailable until Monday 1st November. (See A Gadsby e-mail of 25 October 2004 to Mr P Reece, and Mr P Reece autoreply of 25th October 2004, A Gadsby cover letter of 30th October to Mr P Reece). Therefore as Governors could not be contacted over the half-term period, this period should not be included as part of the consultation period for interested parties/parents. The day immediately after half-term was Monday 1st November, which was a teacher inset and also the day that parents responses had to be returned to the schools which would have meant parents had to make a separate visit to the school to return their forms. I believe this was engineered by Governing bodies (see Mr P Reece’s reasons for this, confirmed in A Gadsby letter of 19th October 2004 to Mr P Reece) so that teachers could be used to collate only limited responses. Therefore the amount of time given to parents/interested parties during the consultation period to consult, either in person, or in writing, with Governors, or each other, was from Thursday 14th October to Friday 22nd October 2004, a total of 7 School children days.
- 20 **The time allocated for parents/interested parties to consider the proposals was not adequate for people to understand the issues and consider them, before the time slots offered by Governors for drop-in surgeries. First School parents who attended meeting of 13th October had**

1 days notice, First School parents who did not attend meeting had **NO days notice**, prior to Governors drop-in surgeries, to answer queries, even if they were aware of the subject under discussion.

(see A Gadsby letter to Mr P Reece dated 19th October 2004, i.e. note given in children's bookbags at end of 14th October that proposals could be picked up from school office. Therefore parents who did not attend 'very important' meeting of 13th October could not have seen Proposal documents until 15th October 2004. See 'yellow' document accompanying proposal document) When all Governors attended the initial meeting of 13th October were not prepared to answer queries with regard to future Capital Investments and therefore disposal of First School site, together with wording used in the form to return to governors Did you attend 'the consultation meeting?' (When the note sent to parents on 8th October did not state that the meeting was a consultation meeting for amalgamating the two schools, it just stated there was to be 'a very important meeting'). The feeling of many parents was exasperation that the process being carried out would be a 'whitewash' and there was no point in asking questions etc, or returning the forms provided, because there was nothing anyone could do, or say about the process, and to do so, would cause them problems at the school.

(See A Gadsby letter of 16 October to Mr P Reece, i.e. 'I asked this question at the meeting on 13 October, I did not get a response, but also no denial.' Notification of 'very important meeting' sent to parents on 8th October 2004)

- 21 Parents had to attempt to find out this information and solutions for themselves, by writing to relevant parties, however Governors still did not answer pertinent written queries adequately, in the consultation period and circulate sufficient information, for parents to be sufficiently informed of the solutions.
- As described on page 3 of the proposal document **'The policy will raise a number of issues for both schools but it is important that these are discussed in an informed manner to ensure that there is a clear understanding on both sides about these issues and their potential solutions.'** This was clearly not adhered to by the Governing Bodies.
- (See A Gadsby covering letter of 15th October including Preliminary Query list to Mr P Reece, A Gadsby letter of 16th October, 19th October, 20th October (am), 20th October (pm), 29th October, 4th November, 5th November, 23 November, 24th November, 1st December 14th December and 16th December to Mr P Reece, A Gadsby letters of 1st November, 4th November, 8th November to Mr A Lewis) which still remain unanswered.
- 22 Parents attempted to have a further meeting with Governors to discuss, ask questions, discover the solutions to items included in the proposal documentation.
- The First School Chair of Governors was asked to make the First School hall available for this purpose at the Middle School drop-in surgery on 18th October. (see A Gadsby letter of 19 October and 20 October 2004 to Mr P Reece) but Governors failed to give permission for the school hall to be used in time for a meeting to be arranged.
- 23 Information/correspondence/leaflets discussing amalgamation were not allowed to be circulated between parents, after copies of A Gadsby letter of 16th October 2004 were distributed to some First School parents on the morning of 18th October 2004 (see A Gadsby letter of 19th October 2004 confirming some points raised at Governors drop-in surgery of 18th October) on school property.
- When attempting to hand out a leaflet (informing parents that the request for a further parents meeting had to be sanctioned by all Governors) outside School property, the parents representative Governor admonished me for doing so. (see A Gadsby letter of 19th October 2004 to Mr P Reece).
- 24 Permission was not given to hold a further meeting within the "consultation period" for parents to attempt to discover further information to sufficiently understand the practical solutions to the issues listed in the proposal documents. First School Vice-Chair of Governors telephoned me, at Mr P Reeces request, on the evening of 20 October and stated it would not be possible to contact

Governors to be asked for permission to use the First School hall until the morning of 21st October. I stated that parents required more notice to make any arrangements necessary prior to a meeting, and confirmed that I had e-mailed parents notifying them that permission had not been granted in time to hold a meeting, prior to the phone call. (reasons of notice required for baby sitters etc).

(see Mr A Lewis letter of 23rd October 2004 to A Gadsby, and A Gadsby letter of 25th October to Mr A Lewis).

Why did the First School Chair of Governors have the personal authority to prevent parents from communicating to each other through information/correspondence/leaflets on school property, without consulting other Governors permission; but chose not to have the personal authority to authorise the use of the First School hall for a further parents meeting with Governors, and required permission to be given from all of the First School Governors?

- 25 The First School Chair of Governors was the only Governors' representative to speak to parents and answer questions at the meetings of 13th, 15th, and 18th October, and subsequently made himself unavailable to answer further queries in person, or in writing, for the remainder of the available consultation period, and therefore for any possible further parents meeting with Governors. (see P Reece letter of 20 October 2004 to A Gadsby).
- 26 Governors did not answer pertinent written queries, after the consultation period. (See A Gadsby letters of 8th November to Mr A Lewis, 23rd, 24th November, 1st, 14th, and 16th December to Mr P Reece.)
- 27 Governors did not inform parents sufficiently to ensure there was/is a clear understanding of the proposal items, or their solutions.
(see unanswered Question 1 of Preliminary Query list,
- 28 Governors have not consulted parents/interested parties with regards to the eventual disposal of First School site (as Harrow School Organisation debate) to fund the future capital projects listed in the proposal documents, and Joint Governing Body circular to parents dated 18th October 2004 confirmed that parents would not be included in the consultation exercise that would occur after amalgamating with regard to major developments that would require considerable capital investment. (see Item 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.13, 4.14, and 4.16 of Harrow School Organisation debate included in A Gadsby letter of 24th November to Mr P Reece and Joint Governing Body circular dated 18th October 2004).
- 29 Governing Bodies do not intend to consult parents, as stakeholders, regarding future Capital Projects, or the disposal of the First School site as means of funding Capital projects, and as a result will be denying any form of consultation with parents regarding the disposal of the first school site.
(see Joint Governing Body circular to parents dated 18th October 2004).
- 30 Governors did not inform parents of the proposals regarding the projects requiring capital expenditure and the implications of this capital expenditure. This question was asked at meeting held on 13th October and not answered, also in subsequent correspondence.
(see A Gadsby letters of 15th October 2004 including Preliminary Query list, 16th, 20th
- 31 Governors did not answer queries with regards to proposal items (see all correspondence enclosed)
- 32 Governors have withheld and are still withholding meeting minutes discussing amalgamation which should have been placed into the public domain. By making section of First School

Governing Body meeting of 15 September 2004 discussing amalgamation "*Class 2 Confidential*" and still not releasing these minutes after termly meeting of 1 December 2004.

There were/are also no committee meeting minutes of the First School at all in school office for inspection.

There were/are no agendas, or papers of relevant documents attached to GM meeting minutes held at school office.

(See also item 7 above)

- 33 Questions asked at consultation meeting of 13 October have still not been not answered by Governors.
- 34 Questions asked at meeting of 18 October 2004 were not answered.
- 35 Time allowed for parents at meeting of 18 October 2004 was delayed by raising unimportant matters such as, correct salutations in correspondence etc. (see A Gadsby letter of 19th October 2004 to Mr P Reece).
- 36 Chair of Governors did not consult other Governors in time for further parents' meeting to be organised for Governors to answer further parents' queries. However chair of Governors did not have to consult other Governors to ban literature/correspondence to be handed out to parents with correspondence, with the purpose of further informing parents with relevant information with regards to amalgamation.
- 37 Chair of Governors then made himself unavailable for remainder of consultation period to answer further parents' queries.
- 38 Chair of Governors, when unavailable, did not suggest which Governors would take over queries from parents in his absence on "parish duties".
- 39 All three meetings with parents (13 October, 15 October 18 October 2004) had to end before all questions could be heard due to following meetings taking place.
- 40 Parents' queries on 15 and 18 October 2004 were restricted to short period of time allowed for these meetings and also only Chair of Governors was available at these meetings to offer assurances to parents concerns but completely lacked full information.
- 41 Meetings for parents on 15 and 18 October 2004 were held in the school day at 2.45pm shortly before the end of the school day, therefore resulted in:
- a) restricting the time for questions
 - b) parents present had to leave meetings to collect children at 3.20pm
 - c) these meetings did not allow enough time for parents to consider the proposals, (from the availability of proposal information. See item 20, 1days notice and 0 days notice.) before drop-in surgeries.
 - d) As a result of c) above, there was not enough notice given for parents to take time off work to attend.

Therefore the time periods Governors allowed for consultation with parents was totally inadequate.

- 41 Chair of Governors felt he had the authority to personally to restrict parents from discussing/passing information/documentation letters amongst each other on school property,

but not to agree to further parent meetings when requested. (see A Gadsby letter of 19th October 2004 to Mr P Reece)

It would therefore appear that the First School Chair of Governors clearly wanted to restrict parents discussing amalgamation between themselves and therefore to restrict all parents discovering possible solutions to some proposals items included in documents.

- 42 Other Councils, eg Barnet, Hertsmere, freely inform interested parties that Governing Bodies must consider the disposal of one school site and accommodating one school pupils/teachers on the other school site as part of the amalgamation process, by including this information in proposal documents.
Harrow or St Johns Governing Bodies should have done so, to sufficiently inform interested parties.
(see A Gadsby letter of 8th November to Mr A Lewis)
- 43 Other Councils eg Barnet, Hertsmere, freely inform interested parties, that amalgamation includes the transferring one school pupils/teachers on the other schools site, by building additional accommodation on the other school's site, will be funded by the disposal of school site.
Harrow or St Johns Governing Bodies should have done so to sufficiently inform interested parties.
(see A Gadsby letter of 8th November to Mr A Lewis)
- 44 Parents were told by Chair of Governors (at meetings held) that the schools would have to amalgamate anyway when Harrow changes policy of 11+. However, in Harrow school debate item States our schools will not be "unviable" as separate schools when policy of 11+ in implemented. (see unanswered item 7 of A Gadsby letter of 24th November to Mr P Reece)

Questions that remain unanswered to date:

- 45 Item 1 of the yellow document issued with the proposal documents states: 'The amalgamation of separate first and middle schools would provide a combined first and middle school which, based on an education rationale is the Council's preferred organisation'
At no stage has either Governing Bodies informed parents of what the Council's education rationale is. I have asked this question in my letter of 8th November 2004 to Mr A Lewis and have not had a response.
It would appear, in the Harrow Organisation debate that the rationale is to close dispose of one school site, to accommodate pupils/teachers of the disposed school site, in new accommodation on the remaining other school site. (Which appears to be the solution/rationale of all other councils when schools have to consider amalgamation. See unanswered A Gadsby letter of 8th November to Mr A Lewis.)

Andrew Gadsby's letter of 23 November 2004 to Mr Reece summarising unanswered queries

Andrew Gadsby's letter of 24 November 2004 to Mr Reece
- 46 Recommendations/guidelines included in the Harrow Schools debate, issued by Harrow Council to schools Chair of Governors and Head Teachers, includes the practices that Governing Bodies and Harrow Council should follow, when a school is to consider amalgamation
These procedure have obviously not been followed/adhered to by St Johns schools Governing Bodies, or Harrow Council.
(see A Gadsby Letter of 29th October 2004 to Mr P Reece and unanswered A Gadsby letter of 24th November 2004 to Mr P Reece, also A Gadsby letter of 1st November to Mr A Lewis)

47 Governing Bodies have not answered queries in the following correspondence.
A Gadsby letter to Mr A Lewis dated 8th November 2004.
A Gadsby letter of 23rd November 2004 to Mr P Reece, outlining some of the outstanding unanswered queries commencing from 15th October 2004.
A Gadsby letter of 24th November to Mr P Reece
It would appear that the First School Governing Body met on 1st December 2004 and discussed my letters containing outstanding queries, and made a decision not to answer my queries, but to meet with me to discuss the content of my letters.
It would also appear that the First School Chair of Governors, decide to arrange a meeting including Harrow Council representatives and legal advisors in order to discuss the contents of my correspondence.
(see letter from Mr Reece of 8th December 2004)

- a) this meeting was highly inappropriate in that ALL parents/interested parties should have been invited.
- b) Outstanding unanswered queries were to the First School Governing Body and therefore should not have included others.
- c) This meeting should have been held in a consultation period with access for all interested parties/parents having the opportunity to be present and to be informed.
- d) The Chair of Governors stated that Governing Body required representatives to meet me sooner rather than later.

Why therefore was confirmations of this dated 8 December, when the Governing Body decided this on 1 December. For example, why was this letter of 8 December delivered by Recorded Delivery and unsuccessfully delivered on 10 December and not received until an email was sent by First School Chair of Governors and received on Tuesday 14 December 2004.

When the First School Chair of Governors became unavailable (due to "parish duties" during the consultation period) on 20th October 2004, the letter confirming this was delivered by hand, that evening.

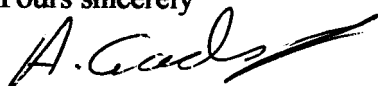
- e) The agenda for a meeting of 17th December did not state my questions would be answered.
- f) Letter for meeting did not state why Harrow Representatives (Mr Wingrove, Miss Morgan and Legal Advisor) were necessary to be present with regards to my queries.
- g) Letter informing me of the meeting did not state whether the meeting would be minuted etc.

I therefore thought this offer of a meeting to be highly irregular and intimidating.

I would have thought that this type of meeting should have been held during a consultation period, and open to all interested parties, including parents to discuss the aspects raised in correspondence for the Governing Body to answer these queries regarding the solutions to amalgamation issues, and the actions Governing Bodies have taken, with regard to amalgamation issues, in public with interested parties and parents present. To enable all parties to be informed as item 21 above.

(see A Gadsby letter of 14th December 2004 to Mr P Reece)

Yours sincerely



A Gadsby (first school parent)