

Burnt Yates CE Primary School –Parents Forum Meeting

Wednesday 27th September 2017 Parent questions/comments in red Actions in green

Start: 6.30pm

Finish: 8.30pm

Attendance

Steven Holmes (SH) Local Authority Lead Adviser, Jacqui Palmer (JP) Headteacher, Jean Tither (JT) Chair of Governors, Fiona Beevers (FB) Diocese, Andrew Dixon (Strategic Planning Manager for NYCC), Rose Gosling (RG) CofG Ripley, Mark Stoddart (MS), Diana Kitzing (DK), Janet Newell (JN), Jane Smith (JS), Joanne Mallinson (JM),

Welcome

JT (CofG)

Updates to Governing Body

Helen Leslie governorship expired. Hoping to re-appoint to Governing body, steps underway to do this. JT CofG elected for an interim period. Vacancy for 2 x Foundation Governors. William Moore & Alan Manship stood down at end of summer term. Parent Governor election and JS elected but still require another parent governor. Please give that consideration - going into a vitally important year for the school.

Diocese Update

FB - Update on Amalgamation. Letter issued to parents today naming the school as Ripley Endowed Primary School. Following a Governors meeting last night, Ripley Governors agreed to further explore amalgamation. Burnt Yates (BY) will cease to exist by July 2018. Ripley will become a split site school using Ripley & BY sites. This creates possibilities that neither school can do on their own. Retains education on the BY site. Potential for pre-school, wrap around care as well as establishing a strong education for all of the children. There will be a formal consultation process that will have to go ahead. Parent's voices formally & informally will be heard. NYCC also has to approve this. Lots of work to do so we need lots of Governors to work collaboratively to share this workload.

Q. Why have 2 academic terms been wasted pursuing something (Academy) that was not viable? We had to approach other things and the information at the time from the DfE was that they would not look at amalgamation of 2 smaller schools unless 1 of them was outstanding. There has now been a change in Government policy which is now allowing this. We had to look at Academisation however due to the Academy Order.

Strategic Planning Update

AD - When an Academy Order has been issued, an LA has to explore and ensure this is put into action. We now need to prove sustainability. As the authority, we do not want to see any schools close, and we would encourage schools to look at how they can make themselves sustainable. This could be through collaboration or federation. Now the door for amalgamation has opened, this is welcomed by the authority as a way forward.

Parent: Our support will always be with the school, but our patience is now very thin. We appreciate you cannot tell us everything, but there are things that could have been told such as YCST only taking on schools with 95 units +. We are not been given the information to enable us to get behind you and support you.

FB: We are working as we can but some things take a long time and some things do not work out as we hoped in the first place. We have to abide by a professional way of working. We gave you as much information as we could. We cannot comment on other organisations that may not have abided in the same way. We are here to support the Governors and help them move forward.

DK - Academy Orders are very new, The Diocese, LA, NYCC, all trying to work together with uncertainty even from Phillipa James.

SH - These things take time, Richmond started an Academisation process in Jan 2015 and that still has not happened.

Parent: We cannot bring the parents/governors/children back that have chosen to leave. We need to move forward and look at things such as: **How practical will 2 sites work? What uniform will they wear? What will the school be called? Will there be a change of teachers again? Will there be 1 body of Governors?** Nothing has been discussed/decided. Very early stages, Ripley Governors only agreed last night that they are willing to explore this further. Because it will be one school, it will be one Governing Body. The composition will be decided in the future as part of the consultation.

Parent: **Can you give us a list of what the process is?** SH - Yes, this is part of the consultation process.

Parent: We are where we are. My understanding is that Governors have agreed to take this forward. **Do Trustees need to agree this? Will the consultation involve parents of both schools?** Yes, Governors, parish councils, local community, LA + all stakeholders. **Does it look financially viable at this early stage?** Not at that point yet. **Is there a time frame?** Yes but I cannot tell you what that is yet. A timeframe for the whole thing will be issued ASAP.

SH - Financial Due Diligence needs to happen first as if it is not financially viable, we cannot move forward. Once this has proved viable, then consultation will begin.

If not financially viable what happens? The school will close.

AD - if the conclusion is that we can move forward, we would start the consultation:

1. Informal stage - proposal for way forward of 2 sites & enlarged Ripley School (6 term week consultation) public meeting maybe one at BY and 1 at Ripley.

Opportunity for everyone to submit written comments

2. LA/Diocese to look at the consultation document and decide

3. Second stage - 4 week process. Formal statutory proposal is published. Extract of consultation process on school gates & in press. Anybody can then comment.

4. Determination of proposal.

Who is responsible for driving this forward? Who is the point of contact for parents?

In the first instance it is the Governors, once it is agreed to enter into the consultation period, it would be Strategic Services i.e. Andrew's Team

A Team of Governors is being agreed to drive the Due Diligence forward.

JP - Ripley Governors have not taken this decision for BY. They see this as the way forward for Ripley School. It gives the opportunity to develop one school.

A lot of the due diligence was carried out in response to the Academy Order. This would need updating due to the timescales, but in large a lot of this is in one place already. The main issue, is what the Trustees on both sides say. But both sets of Trustees are committed to wanting an educational establishment to remain at both sites.

When will the decision be made about which Key Stage is on each site? As part of the due diligence this will be looked at together with the make-up of the whole thing i.e. Staff. This will be a part of the consultation.

Can we be more transparent about where staff are on a daily basis? And when Governors leave etc? This could just be an update in the Newsletter. We will try to do this as much as we can.

What skills are you looking for in a Governor to fill the 3 vacancies? Somebody with an educational background as William Moore had lots of skills in this area due to being an ex-Headteacher of a Primary School. **How do we find these Governors?** Through Janet/Church or we can advertise to try and encourage people with skills & knowledge to come forward. Somebody who is passionate to help the school continue and to move forward.

Can we mix the BY & Ripley children more in readiness for the amalgamation? Yes this would be a good idea and should be explored.

Is JP only here for 2 terms? Yes, 2 possibly 3.

It would help if she could stay for the whole year to help drive the amalgamation forward and to provide reassurance for the parents.

If the amalgamation happens in September 2018 when would we expect to see OFSTED return? It would go from the timeline of Ripley's last OFSTED (May 2017) and 24-30 months from last inspection.

Next meeting - Wednesday 1st November, 6.30pm