

APPENDIX 3 B

Summary of responses by school

People allied to Cathcart Street Primary School

Falling rolls

- Birkenhead Docklands development will provide homes for 20,000 people
- The Priory CE has taken more children than it should
- Numbers aren't falling anymore, they've fallen

Staff and Standards

- Provides good before and after school club
- Ofsted said was a good school
- Wraparound care for F1 children
- Courses for parents
- Good teachers and teaching assistants
- School trips
- A meeting place for parents
- Teaching and ethos is outstanding
- Bent over backwards to meet the needs of my physically disabled child
- Inclusive school
- Hardworking, dedicated staff
- Has an Ofsted registered childminding club in the school holidays
- Parents rely on CATS club so they can keep their jobs
- Specialises in special needs
- High staff:pupil ratio
- Staff can deal with mixed age teaching
- Children make good progress
- One to one teaching
- Children are assessed properly
- Out of school clubs – sports, cookery, languages etc

Pupils

- Would take children elsewhere if school was in Birkenhead Park
- My child loves coming to school here
- My child is happy and settled here
- Concerns about disruption to education

- Children go on to do really well in secondary school
- Other schools wouldn't give my child her medication
- Children would miss their friends
- Can't force children to like each other
- Concerns about class sizes
- I would not want my child mixing with Cole Street children

Building and site

- DDA compliant
- Shower and disabled toilet
- Relatively modern building
- School could be updated.
- Open land on the site for extension and enhanced outdoor space.
- Good landscaping, hedging and many types of trees, a green oasis
- Access is via a quiet cul de sac
- Close to pedestrian and cycle-way routes
- Citylands Regeneration area
- Residential properties on three sides
- Close to Birkenhead Docklands
- Large playground
- Separate Foundation playground
- Centre courtyard garden
- Can accommodate children from both schools
- CATS childcare facility on site
- Scope for more extended services e.g. clinic, children's centre, library
- Cheaper to build here
- New parents room
- ICT suites
- White boards in every classroom
- Walking distance to Europa Pools
- Memorial bench in the courtyard garden
- Inter school sporting events are held here
- Only school in the area with a grassed playing field

New School in the Park

- We already use the Park as much as possible

- New build in the Park would be potential safety risk to children
- New build in the Park would be open to more vandalism, drink and drug abuse
- Older children would go to the Park instead of straight home
- There is broken glass and drug paraphernalia in the Park
- Council would have to make sure Park was cleaned daily
- Dark and rocky areas in the Park

The Options

- A brand new school would give focus to the area
- Will the finance be available for a new school given the “credit crunch”?
- Would have to be a suitable and better site than at present.
- Question is which is best of current sites.
- If St Laurence’s closes, more children would come here
- Cathcart Street is a newer building
- How will you fit both sets of children onto one site?
- Concerns about new uniforms
- If St Laurence’s closes, could move the Children’s Centre satellite here
- Potential for development of more services here
- Concern about future of CATS club if school closes
- Don’t necessarily need a new school, but a renewed school
- Close to Wirral Waters development

The Process

- What are the main criteria for making a decision?
- Are out of catchment pupils taken into account?
- Staff should have had letters at the same time as parents

Traffic and transport

- Too far to travel to Bidston and St James Children’s Centre, would be better located at Cathcart Street
- Easy for grandparents to pick my child up if necessary
- School is on footpath and cycle way through City Lands

Financial

- How will you fund a new school?

Other Comments

- Heart of the community

People allied to Cole Street Primary School

Falling rolls

- Nearby houses are being improved
- Cole Street has more pupils than the other schools
- Cole Street has less surplus places than Cathcart Street
- Parents who would come here are put off by the closure consultation
- Many parents are expecting new babies
- F1 is full
- Parents don't come here because of the POTENS home
- People don't stop having children
- Cole Street is not a set of facts and figures

Staff and Standards

- Friendly
- Good standards
- CVA is good
- Links with two secondary schools
- Inclusive school
- School works closely with parents and children
- Family learning courses
- Nurture class was closed by Council
- Staff help parents find out about other services
- Activity week in the school holidays
- Provides extended services
- Supportive, patient, dedicated, caring and understanding staff
- One to one teaching
- Good relationships with midday staff
- Nurturing approach
- Family school
- Good communication
- Staff are devoted to dealing with each child's individual needs – personalised learning
- Good reputation
- I sent my children here despite Cole Street's poor reputation and have not been disappointed

- Outstanding care and education
- Raises aspirations through links with St Anselms
- Trust between staff and the community
- Always taking on new initiatives
- Concerns about future of staff

Building and site

- Centrally located
- Playground on the roof – one of five in Britain
- Children are safe in the rooftop playground
- Easy access to the park and library
- Park is used for events and lessons
- Solid building in good repair
- Are other schools the same age being pulled down?
- Should be improved not pulled down
- Good security
- Kitchen is a good size
- Very little vandalism
- Solid, substantial building
- Has had new toilets, replacement windows and the staffroom has been improved
- Large almost soundproof classrooms
- Two halls
- Existing car park could be used for play space if replacement car parking provided in or near the Park
- Small grassed area could be brought within the school
- Buildings to the rear could be bought to expand the site
- Warm in winter, cool in summer
- Could build a conservatory on the flat roof to house technology unit
- Could upgrade the computers
- Historical landmark, reeks of heritage
- Schools with playing fields often don't use them due to bad weather
- Disabled access would be improved by a lift
- Schools with playing fields don't use them because they're wet and expensive to maintain

Pupils

- Children love coming to school
- Children learn really well and get on with the other children
- Children gain confidence here
- Children would not cope with more children in a class
- Provides stability for children
- Moving school would be an upheaval for children
- Options will compromise children's education and affect their progress
- Children would miss their friends
- I moved here so my children could attend Cole Street
- My child is happy and settled here
- Pleased with my child's progress here
- There would be more lateness if children had to travel further to school

New School in the Park

- New school in the park could be safety risk to children
- Staff would have to check all the time that strangers were not talking to children through the railings
- New build may have superb technology, but could be installed in Cole Street
- New build seems attractive but loss outweighs advantages
- Unlikely to get planning permission for school in the park due to heritage issues
- Would not want children to walk near the Park after dark, I would not do so as an adult
- A teenage girl was sexually assaulted in the Park in the last year
- Teachers would not be safe working late at night
- We are already so near to the Park, how close do we need to be
- School used to have a canteen in the park
- Sea Cadet building could be used for new school as it may help with planning permission

The Options

- Why destroy a rich learning environment just to build a new one
- Change does not have to mean destruction
- All Cathcart Street children would be welcome and can be accommodated here

- Closing Cole Street would leave a big gap in primary school provision – the other two are only 5 minutes away from each other
- Should spend money on an existing school to make it accessible and suitable for the 21st century
- Recycle not rebuild, use what we already have
- Could a bridge be built from Cole Street to the Park?
- Cathcart Street is in an industrial area
- Could house the Children's Centre satellite if the derelict building at the back was bought
- Close the school with the least pupils
- Existing schools are looking a bit old and tatty
- A new school with all "modcons" like a gym and a swimming pool would not take long to settle into
- Why not amalgamate Cathcart Street and The Priory CE?

Traffic and transport

- Easy to get to
- Concerns about distance to alternative schools
- Need better traffic control between Cole Street and the Park
- Children would have to cross either Charing Cross or Conway Street to get to another school

Financial

- Expenditure per pupil is lower than the other two schools

The Process

- The local authority must do everything it can to stop pupils drifting away before a decision is made

Other comments

- Used as a polling station
- Centre of its community
- Used as an evacuation refuge for POTENS residential home
- Generations have gone to this school
- As a childminder, I would find it difficult to pick children up from further away
- Open for 80 years
- Friends of Cole Street are active in the school – Summer Fairs etc
- If not used as a school, would Sea Cadets be interested in Cole Street as a building?
- Our school has the best dinners

- Birkenhead has had it's heart systematically ripped out by successive Councils, you should leave us alone

People allied to St Laurence's Catholic Primary School

Falling rolls

- Numbers would improve if school was publicised more
- Less children are being born
- Lots of demolition in the area
- Numbers are low
- If parents had known this was coming, maybe they would have sent their children here
- Government says "have a career" so of course people have less children
- Why didn't extra children (above capacity) at Our Lady and St Edwards come here rather than building extra classrooms there?

Staff and Standards

- Provides good education
- Small school means more one to one time for children
- Teachers are great, go above and beyond the call of duty
- Fun approach to learning
- Smaller classes means greater learning
- Lots of sports, trips and activities
- School works well with children with special needs
- Is in an area of high deprivation
- Some children do not have English as their first language
- Small schools are just as capable of providing an effective education
- Small schools can deliver the National Curriculum
- Small schools have a good ethos
- Inclusive school regardless of faith
- A small school works because the staff make it work
- Class sizes would be bigger in other schools
- School represents Wirral in football and cricket
- CVA is high, good standards
- Nurturing school
- Would quality of education be as good in other schools?

- One to one teaching

Building and site

- Children's Centre satellite to St Werburghs
- Could get another two small schools on this site with a good architect
- Questions about land ownership

Pupils

- Children would miss their friends
- Hard to make new friends in new school
- Children would be upset if school closed
- Pupils go on to do well in secondary school
- My child is happy and settled here
- Concerns about additional disruption for children with special needs
- Would children get places in Catholic secondary schools if they went to non-Catholic primary schools?
- Children get the nurturing here they don't always get at home
- Children always come back to see us when they've left for secondary school

The Options

- If closed, the Diocese and Local Authority would work together to ensure places at St Werburgh's and Our Lady and St Edward's for every child whose parents want them to go there
- Best date for closure would be August 2010
- Couldn't you scale the school down by finding other uses for the rest of the building rather than close the school?
- Why isn't there an amalgamation option?
- We were supposed to amalgamate with St Werburgh's about 20 years ago and it never happened
- Would be cheaper to keep St Laurence's open rather than build places. Traffic and transport
- Our Lady and St Edward's is already full
- Is the building work at Our Lady and St Edwards to take more children from St Laurences?

Traffic and Transport

- Concern about distance to alternative schools
- Expect us to walk two miles in the rain
- People won't cross roads to get to school

Financial

- It costs a lot to educate the children, but don't they deserve it?
- This is all about money
- Council wants the land to build houses on
- Can't the Catholic Church provide funding to keep the school open?
- Will the Diocese sell the land to the Council?

The Process

- This should be about children, not about statistics
- Staff would like help from HR earlier in the process
- Decision in January 2010 doesn't give much time for staff to find alternative employment
- You've already made a decision
- Michael Clarke should be at the meeting

Other comments

- Generations have gone to this school
- Parish church already closed – where did the funding go, was it to the school or the church
- Centre of its community
- Sports days and fairs get lots of visitors