

Appendix 3

**Consultation on Draft Proposal to Amalgamate
Oswestry Infant School and Beech Grove Junior School**

Introduction

This appendix selects and responds to the main points raised during the consultation, including at the meetings with staff, governors and the community. The minutes of the meetings at each school are also attached to the report as appendices 2a and 2b. The actual responses received are available for inspection in the Members Library and will be available to Members at the Cabinet Meeting on 19 May 2008.

Points Raised and Response by Officers

Ref.	Point Raised	Response
1	Would the amalgamation affect the good standard of education in the existing schools	Yes. The intention is that by amalgamating the schools we will build on the strengths of both the existing schools, and the outcomes and opportunities for children in the new school would be even higher than in the individual schools.
2	Will the new school be properly funded?	Yes. The funding allocation for the new school will be based on the same formula as that used for existing primary schools of the same size. The special education needs of the children in the school will continue to be recognised through additional funding. During the transitional period, additional planning support will be available from Shropshire County Council services, such as the Advisory Service.
3	What will happen to the buildings?	Officers from Shropshire County Council will work with the temporary governing body to prepare a development plan for the buildings. This is likely to include elements of remodelling and refurbishing existing accommodation, and perhaps elements of new build. However, the important factor will be to ensure that the new building meet the educational aims of the new school.
4	How will you ensure that the new school is set up in a fair manner?	It is proposed that the legal process to underpin amalgamation would be to close both schools and open a new school. This means that a temporary

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		<p>Governing Body will be set up, drawn from members of the existing Governing Bodies.</p> <p>The temporary Governing Body will be in charge of preparing policies and setting a budget (including the staffing structure) for the new school. One of their important early duties will be to select the new headteacher, who will then work with both schools to allocate staff to posts in the new structure.</p> <p>This approach has been supported by a joint meeting of both Governing Bodies, and, following consultation, by the Director of Education for the Diocese of Lichfield.</p>
5	<p>What difference would Church of England religious character make to the staff and pupils at the Infant School?</p>	<p>There would be very little change to daily practice for pupils and staff. The new school would continue to accept all children in its catchment area and, subject to there being sufficient places, any other children whose parents expressed a preference for the school.</p> <p>Church of England schools, whether Voluntary Aided, Voluntary Controlled or Foundation in category welcome pupils and staff of all faiths or none, and have a strong caring ethos which supports all pupils.</p> <p>As a Voluntary Controlled school, a proportion of governors will be appointed by the Diocese. This already happens in the Junior school.</p> <p>The new school would continue to teach the same religious education syllabus and staff will continue to be employed by Shropshire County Council as at present.</p>