

PROPOSAL TO CLOSE PARK FARM PS AND REPLACE IT AS A
PRIMARY SCHOOL WITHIN THE FOLKESTONE ACADEMY

Summary of Written Responses

Consultation documents distributed 4,000
Consultation documents received as of: 03.04.09 34

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
• Parents/carers of pupil at Park Farm Primary School	9	2	1	12
• Parents/carers of pupil at Folkestone Academy	2	1		3
• Members of staff at Park Farm Primary School	3			3
• Members of staff at Folkestone Academy				
• Governors of Park Farm Primary School	7			7
• Governors of Folkestone Academy				
• Pupils of Park Farm Primary School				
• Pupils of Folkestone Academy		7	1	8
• Other interested party	2	2		4
TOTALS	23	12	2	37

In support of the proposal:

- Support the proposal wholeheartedly. Concerned that the local roads will become busier and would like to see off-street parking made available to enable parents to stop when bringing or collecting students.
- Broadly in favour but would like to know how Folkestone Academy will ensure that objective advice is given to parents so that students are encouraged to sit the Kent test and attend the local grammar schools where appropriate.
- Really excited about this proposal. Children will benefit educationally with all-through education. They will have better prospects.
- Believe this is the way to go for Park Farm.
- The merger of Park Farm and the Academy would benefit both pupils and parents.
- The schools will have an opportunity to share best practice and resources to raise standards of learning and to develop a consistent strategy for education for East Folkestone.
- Seamless transition and cross-phase sharing of expertise will support those most in need.
- The prospect of a new purpose-built school will provide the right environment to support learning.

- With the Academy offering courses in Arts & Sports etc this will benefit those scholars who may not excel academically.
- We are all for the go ahead and think this will be a great opportunity for the children and the town.
- The merger will provide a once in a lifetime opportunity to make a difference to the life choices of children the school serves in Folkestone.
- The merger will go a long way to eradicating the dip in performance and progress that children go through when they move to secondary school.
- Park Farm School has often closed due to problems with the heating system. The link up to the Academy and particularly the prospect of a new building is appealing.
- Park Farm School needs a completely new direction and break from the past, which we believe the link up to the Academy would do.
- Really excited by the proposal. There is a real need for a new school building. Standards have fallen and a new school will benefit the children and all-through education will provide better prospects.

Governors' views (Park Farm):

- Can see very little detrimental effect for the children and very many positives to be gained from the merger.
- The creation of an all age academy would have a positive educational impact for current Park Farm children and for future children coming through the primary phase of an all age academy.
- Super opportunity to use/share really good facilities.
- Sharing of knowledge with specialist teaching eg maths, science, literacy.
- Existing good practice in SEN/AEN at Park Farm should enhance prospects of those with special needs at senior level
- Prospect of new school building for primary pupils.
- Very much in favour but concerned that proposed governance structures may be too far removed from the local community.

Pupil views (Park Farm):

- We will have a new and bigger building and a bigger PE hall. More space.
- New experience.
- New uniform.
- We will be able to learn better and would learn other things.
- We will be able to share equipment and use the playing field.
- We would make new friends.
- Some of us have brothers or sisters at the Academy.

Against the proposal:

- Not convinced that this is the best move forward for Park Farm as unimpressed by the Academy.
- Park Farm needs a new building but I am sure there is another way.
- There is insufficient time for any serious consultation process.
- Not in favour of putting my children through an experimental educational process.
- Re seamless transition – this is also a time that children look forward to with great excitement, a “rite of passage”
- Cannot find any overwhelming argument to support the idea of seamless education being superior to the existing system.
- Strongly disagree with the proposal that 14-19 year olds act as mentors for primary age pupils.

- Proposal appears to be heavily weighted on the benefits that could be provided to the Academy.

Pupil views (Academy):

- Children need to learn to deal with being in a new place with children they have never met. It's an important part of growing up.
- Leave the Academy the way it is.
- The combination of being in a big school and being 4+ would be too scary. Plus secondary age children are very intimidating for small children.
- We find the Behaviour Policy at the Academy very restricting at times and do not feel that a similar Behaviour Policy for primary age pupils would be right.

Pupil views (Park Farm):

- It might be stricter and lessons will be harder.
- Might ruin a good school. Park Farm is Park Farm and people want to keep their memories.
- Too wide an age gap. Don't want to be with bigger children. There might be fighting and bullying.
- No choice of secondary school.
- Don't like the new uniform – wasted resources.
- Might get muddled. Don't want to change.

Residents' views:

- The Academy should not have been built so close to housing and the entrance should not be in Lucy Avenue. The local roads were not built for this volume of traffic. Suggest you close the Lucy Avenue entrance and have all traffic and pedestrians using Park Farm and Kingsnorth which are industrial areas and far more suited to entrances to a school of this size.
- There have been well-publicised issues surrounding current levels of traffic, noise, litter and light pollution directly related to the Academy for residents of Lucy Avenue and Broadmead Village as a whole. If a further school is built on the site then this will make an already unbearable situation worse for residents in terms of current access arrangements.

Neither for nor against:

- Concerned that Park Farm children will be given priority over children from other primary schools which are further afield. These children may therefore have to travel long distances to school.
- Concerned that a daily timetable of 8am-5pm might be imposed on the primary pupils.
- Would not be happy if the provision of breakfast within the Academy were to be compulsory.
- Have concerns re contact with some of the older students in the Academy. Some Academy pupils on their way to school could not be considered a credit to the establishment. Concerned therefore that some of these children could be considered as “mentors” to primary pupils.
- Historically a large number of Park Farm year 6 children have gone to grammar school so the seamless transition would only benefit a small minority of children in Folkestone.