

## **Consultation meeting 7<sup>th</sup> February 2019 6.30pm**

Hosted by Caroline Sice (CS) Headteacher.

CS asked trustees to introduce themselves.

CS advised for no recordings to be taken as we didn't give our permission.

CS opened by giving history of Lanesend.

Became academy 2014 - reasons - giving freedom to innovate and give our children what they need. We do what we can for every child. Changes to LA and giving parents a different choice. We are funded by Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) not Local Authority (LA). Admissions process is dealt with by LA for us but we make decisions. We do not discriminate/select.

### **Funding**

Lanesend is funded exactly the same as maintained schools. CS is part of schools forum. The ESFA adopt LA formula funding. The formula funding is adopted from the national formula which now gives more funding to secondary schools per child than primary. LA can retain some funds to provide services to us or we can choose to buy in from elsewhere. Lanesend receive PPG, UIFSM, capital funding exactly the same as maintained schools although direct from the ESFA.

We have 441 children on roll but only funded for 370. Had lagged funding for past 9 years since reorganisation, schools are funded on their figures as at October, we won't catch up until September.

Funded exactly the same except when it comes to refurbishment or maintenance. We can apply for Condition Improvement Funding (CIF) which is different to maintained schools. We have 2 bids in, 1 for a new boiler and 1 for an extension. This is the first time we have submitted a bid. All maintenance and alterations have been funded from our budget up until now. We do not receive any money from private investors.

### **What is a significant change?**

Our funding agreement currently states 420 children, which was the number assigned to us under reorganisation by the LA. We are permitted to go over by 30 children without a new funding agreement. We have a waiting list for Year 2 and 4. For us to be able to take these children we need to apply for a change to our funding agreement which is applied for through a significant change application. Last year 17/18 mobility was 63 and was 21 in first term of 18/19. We receive phone calls from all over the island and currently have 25% from outside of the local area. We wish to submit an application to increase our funding agreement to 504. We have to carry out a consultation, the LA have approved the planning permission, which is needed when you submit a significant change application. The internal alterations which took place in the summer were funded by us with full planning permission in place, and were to create more space for our children.

### **Why?**

When our budget was buoyant we had 20 children in a class, it reduced teacher workload, children benefited and we had a small school feel. Budget changes meant this was no longer sustainable so we carried out a survey with our families and they responded with a huge majority to keep small classes. Our vision is to try and maintain that for our children and families. We do not have the right size

classrooms to accommodate 30 children, only 8 of our 19 classroom spaces meet the requirement. To use the space we have we need smaller classes.

Why 72 in a year group – looked at many options to make the budget sustainable, the number is 24 per class. We are not planning to change our PAN but we can go over if we wish.

We have grown, we were 93 children at Love Lane and we were the school no one wanted to go to, empty classrooms, spare places and mixed classes. We have grown by over 300% due to parental choice. 24 in a class will work for us. More houses are due to be built with over half in our local area. In September 2019 there are due to be 180 Year R spaces and the Health Visitors have advised there are 181 births recorded. This doesn't include children outside of Cowes.

### **Place planning**

CS advised she wasn't privy to the place planning meeting and therefore the background detail. There are spaces and there isn't a basic need for more spaces, the spaces were however created by the LA reorganisation and PANs were increased, Love Lane didn't need to increase to 2 form entry but the LA made this decision and these decisions created lots of spare places.

There are spaces in every school. If families are saying they want to come to our school then we want to help those families.

We all choose our children's schools, we will suit some families and not others.

We are not 'taking' children, we have run no publicity whatsoever, people contact us, and we don't canvas families.

It is a privilege if families choose us and we want to say yes, it's hard to say no.

The birth rate is decreasing but is forecast to rise again and with 6,000 houses planned for the IW, there will be extra children.

We currently have 71 children in our school that we are not funded for, which equates to about £200k, we don't take funding from other schools. We will have to wait until September to wait for the funding for those children.

Headteacher of Gurnard – you will get that money though, this is the same for all schools.

CS – yes this is true but on the reverse of this, schools who have reduced in numbers receive funding for a year for children they do not have at their school.

### **Current local concerns**

It is a myth that we receive 'lots of money' for SEN children, for a child with an EHCP we receive £13k approx. the actual cost to us is £23k. This is funded exactly the same as other Island schools. We are currently propping up our budget with a small surplus we had last year, decision made by the trustees.

We received no external funding for the internal alterations.

'Other schools subsidise us' - we spend our budget how we choose, we do things differently to other schools, we don't have a large leadership team, it is just myself and Mr Cooper, we don't have LSAs in every classroom.

'Money is top sliced from other schools' – this simply isn't true.

'Lanesend is a special needs school' – We have a reputation for doing SEN well. We are 33% SEN, this does bring more paperwork and work so we want small classes to support this. We don't say no to any need we want to support all children.

'Lanesend can't cope' - we do, children do leave our school and we know we are not the right school for every child.

'Small feel lost' – I want to keep the small school feel, I still know all the children's names, we have a family feel and open policy, and we are a family. Smaller classes will allow this to continue.

Parking – all schools have this problem. We have a flexible start to the day 8.25am to 8.45am so families don't all arrive at the same time. We could introduce this for afternoon pick up too, we can adapt our school day.

Collaboration – I sit on Schools Forum, we are part of the Island Teaching Alliance and we are very open to working with other schools.

HT of Cowes Primary – Caroline you were present at the presentation about place planning and I fed back about the meeting. You were aware of the birth rate figures. You are aware of the place planning strategy that is a focus for the Island.

CS – yes I was but as I said earlier I wasn't aware of the details, I was aware of the birth rate figures, as I mentioned in the presentation.

HT of Cowes Primary – Cowes Enterprise has reduced its PAN and we have too to help with spaces.

CS – We are seeing a need at our school.

'Inappropriate actions' – We know people won't be happy, we are doing this for our families and our children and we see a need for our school.

### **What next?**

We know small classes work for our children, we do have classes of 30 and they are doing brilliantly but 24 will do even better.

HT of Gurnard Primary – the issue is you are already going over and now you are requesting a further increase at a time when the birth rate is falling, where are these children coming from? There is concern about the bigger picture and how it may affect the Island. Where are the children coming from when numbers are reducing?

CS – Families are choosing us, we don't advertise, it is down to parental choice.

HT of Gurnard Primary – you could say no, why do you want more?

CS – because families want to come here.

HT of Cowes Primary – We now have a waiting list and we have said no, I look to support colleagues and other schools, we have a responsibility to children across the Island. It does come to a point where you have to say no. You would then be able to take 30 per class so over 600 children.

CS – we are asking for a change to have 24 per class. And it's your choice to say no.

CS asked Carrie Almond (CA) to explain the process Lanesend would have to follow.

CA – we have to complete an enquiry form to the ESFA at least 3 months before you wish the proposed change to occur. This has been submitted.

We then have to hold a consultation which is open now and ends 5pm on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2019. I will then pull together the emails and minutes from the consultation responses and send off with the application form. As part of the application we have to have the planning permission in place, which we do. The application is submitted and the Regional Schools Commissioner will either make a decision, pend to request further evidence or escalate to the Secretary of State for a decision. There is no timeline for the decision process. We have followed all the processes required.

CS – This is not about us increasing pupil number and our PAN, it is about changing our funding agreement. Trustees do you have anything to add?

Karen Herbert-Duff Chair of Trustees Lanesend Primary (KHD) – this decision is driven by the needs of our children and families. We want to provide an opportunity for children to come here if they want to.

Headteacher of Northwood Primary – You are not the school of choice, we get phone calls on a daily basis too, we have a waiting list and we say no.

CS – We know we are not the school of choice. It's your choice to say no.

Headteacher of Northwood Primary – I want to work with the whole Island.

Belinda parent at Lanesend – I have concerns about the school getting bigger and bigger, how will communal areas be able to cope with the extra numbers. What has been proposed?

Member of audience – plans and bids have been submitted – it is a done deal.

Natasha parent at Lanesend – yes lunch is a shambles.

Belinda – I do support smaller classes

CS – Plans are for one classroom at the back and large Year 5 class to be extended and split into 2.

Belinda – so we will lose whole school activities

CS - we would adapt, we are already running 4 lunch sittings, we are changing and have asked kitchen to do double service

Headteacher at Gurnard Primary – what are the guarantees for long term sustainability of classes of 24? Once you have 21 classes of 24 how do we know that you won't apply to go up again?

CS – we have a budget forecast of 5 years but we can't guarantee.

Headteacher of Gurnard – you are asking for a decision without knowing the future of funding. Prediction is that numbers are going to drop and that budgets are getting tighter.

CS – on our current budget we can sustain 24 children and Hampshire model a budget of 20 per class

Headteacher of Cowes – 27/28 children is quoted as a sustainable average

CS – but we don't run in the traditional way

Audience member – we have 4 great schools in the area, are you happy if other schools close? What happens if you leave?

CS – The LA reorganisation should have addressed the issue at the time. I don't plan on leaving but if I did the decisions will be made by the trustees.

Karen, parent at Cowes Primary – the planning application you submitted says “predominantly local people” you have submitted inaccurate information. 75% in Cowes area is not majority.

CS - 75% is predominantly

Karen – But it isn't

Natasha parent at Lanesend – what is the % of SEN at other schools?

Head of Northwood – 14%

Head of Cowes – 10%

CA – (referring back to Karen's point) 25% wasn't the figure a year ago when we submitted the planning. And 75% is the majority so the application isn't inaccurate.

Headteacher of Cowes Primary – are you required to resubmit the planning?

CA – we are not required to

Karen – parking is dangerous and wasn't raised as an issue. Have you sent leaflets to the local residents?

CA – we are not required to as part of this consultation, this is about our funding agreement.

CS – we already do a flexible drop off and every school has a parking problem

Audience member – I think if highways had been involved they would have taken a different view

CS – we used an architect to submit all our plans and due process was followed, the LA provided us with planning permission

Audience member – have you consulted the public?

CS – we have consulted all we are required to as part of this consultation and contacted all schools.

Audience member – if you get full what will happen in the future?

CS – I can't predict the future

2 Northwood staff – if the school reaches capacity will you keep increasing? How will infant class size legislation impact? What if someone appeals?

CS – we would say no, if appeals panel say we have to then we would

Staff member from Northwood – so you would have to take them?

CS - if that happened we would have to think about changing our structure.

Audience member – would you release figures on statistics? We are 2<sup>nd</sup> largest area of deprivation in the country, this could cause unemployment at other schools if they have to close. All 4 schools are brilliant.

CS – if we grow we would have to employ more people

Audience member – if a school closed you wouldn't be able to employ all

Lisa parent at Lanesend – people are choosing to come here

Karen parent at Cowes – you are impacting on children and helping it along the way, you have taken children from other schools

Parents of Lanesend – we have chosen to come here, Lanesend hasn't 'taken' our children from the other schools

Karen parent at Cowes – I refer to a governor report March 2018 – Karen referred to cuts being made to the budget

Staff member at Lanesend – we are not taking children, we accept children who want to come and I need to defend our Headteacher and team who I believe in

Karen – it (governor report) refers to a marketing budget

CS – we made some cuts to get through 18/19 until our lagged funding catches up, the eventual changes were different to the ones you quote in March 2018. That marketing was for new intake in Year R which all schools do

Audience member – you will become a monopoly if other schools close and then choice is reduced

Headteacher at Northwood – if it is not agreed what is your long term forecast?

CS – we will have to change, we have managed our budget effectively for 9 years

Laura parent at Lanesend – we joined in Year R, we weren't going to consider this school, we chose because of the small classes and want to keep that and if we need more children to do that then so be it. I am so glad my Headteacher is fighting our corner

Karen – do you have a statement from the local authority? I want to see the response from the local authority it's not a proper consultation meeting without viewing the local authority response and you have no plans to view

CS – we spoke with Martin Goff earlier who said the LA wouldn't be attending and they were sending us a written response.

CA – the planning permission has already been agreed and can be seen on the planning website so there is no need for us to display them today as they are not being consulted on.

Headteacher at Gurnard – do you have an independent person going through the consultation

CS/CA – no we are not required to do that and we will ensure that all submissions are sent as part of application

Karen – I don't trust you to do that

Headteacher of Northwood – if you wish you can send to the Regional Schools Commissioner

CS – then concluded the meeting as lots of people started to talk and things were getting a little personal and many questions had been asked and answered

CS reminded audience that they could email their comments to [consultation@lanesendpri.iow.sch.uk](mailto:consultation@lanesendpri.iow.sch.uk)

Meeting concluded 7.50pm