

**Consultation on the proposed change of date
for the closure of Brewers Hill Middle School**

Queries / comments raised at meeting with staff –
held at Brewers Hill Middle School on Tuesday 3
November 2015 at 6.00 pm

**Central
Bedfordshire**

Meeting led by –

Helen Redding - AD School Improvement, CBC
James Hughes – Head Teacher, Brewers Hill Middle School

Note taker - Sue Barrow – Information Manager

Helen Redding welcomed three parents to the meeting and talked through the proposal to bring forward the closure date of the school and the reasons for it

| <u>Queries raised / comments</u> | <u>Response</u> |
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| Parents appreciate that there are not enough children within the school to sustain it. | |
| The main reason for placing our children at the school was because of Barnfield's proposal to offer education through to age 16. It was a shock when Barnfield withdrew their support for the school. | |
| BHMS has improved this year, despite being in a deprived area. The school has always had a bad reputation. | The bad reputation is historical and it is unjustified. |
| We know that our children have been spoilt here. | It is a very artificial situation here, due to the low numbers, and has been for the past year. |
| Children within the school are very upset and do not want to move to another school. | Queensbury has had year 7 for over a year so are over the initial 'hump'. If you have any concerns regarding your children's move to secondary school please share these with their new form tutor. |
| The overall standard will have dropped in Dunstable schools by this time next year. Our children will suffer. Why does the Council allow this to happen? | The Council is responsible for standards within its area and outcomes are very important to us. The Council is no longer the decision maker for school organisation. All |

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| | <p>schools and academies can propose change, including an extension to their age range, and although the council is a consultee in for each proposal, it is not the decision maker.</p> <p>We commission school to school support where it is needed. We also provide advise to academies and to the Regional School Commissioner when we believe that intervention within an academy is necessary.</p> |
| Parents were promised a choice but were hoodwinked and now feel powerless | |
| Lancot is bursting at the seams and is building wooden huts but BHMS will be left empty. | |
| We fell sorry for the year 5's who left Beecroft to come to here and will have to go back. Could Beecroft move over into BHMS? | |
| The school will be subject to vandalism once it is empty. | |
| Will the staff be looked after? | <p>Staff were advised in September of the situation. Some staff have transferred to Beecroft and others may follow. Some schools have 'head hunted' BHMS staff. We now need to focus on helping our teaching assistants. But we need to maintain staff until the school closes</p> |
| The Head teacher at BHMS is known to all of the children and parents – this will not be the case in a large secondary school | <p>If BHMS was full, with 600 children, the Head would not be able to have the same level of contact with parents.</p> |
| Parents appreciate the help that has been provided by the Council's School Admission's Team regarding the process to be followed in order to apply for an alternative school place. | |

Helen Redding confirmed that communications regarding the school's closure will be maintained, including notification to the school and parents of the Executive's decision on 1 December.

**Consultation on the proposed change of date
for the closure of Brewers Hill Middle School**

Queries / comments raised at meeting with staff –
held at Brewers Hill Middle School on Monday 2
November 2015 at 9.00 am



**Central
Bedfordshire**

Meeting led by –

Helen Redding - AD School Improvement, CBC
David Waller – HR Policy & Implementation Manager, CBC
James Hughes – Head Teacher, Brewers Hill Middle School

Note taker - Sue Barrow – Information Manager

Attendees –

Ken Richards – Unison
Tim Ramsden - NASUWT

Helen Redding welcomed all to the meeting and introduced colleagues to the group.

Helen Redding gave a presentation regarding the proposal, during which David Waller spoke about TUPE and staff transfers

| <u>Queries raised / comments</u> | <u>Response</u> |
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| Staff at Ashton and Streetfield Middle Schools have had more time to look for jobs than BHMS staff. In view of the later closure date, BHMS staff have not been looking. | Jobs are continuingly becoming available and are advertised on the Central Beds Children's Trust website. |
| Staff will lose their redundancy payment if they take up a post within a month of being made redundant. It will be an uneasy decision for staff regarding whether to stay in school until the closure. | This is correct, but the situation for each staff member will be different so 1-1's with HR are important. |
| It is not as easy for support staff to find work. Wages are low and some support staff are based locally and unable to drive so transport costs are key. | Posts for teaching assistants are frequently advertised. Support staff would also qualify to be included in the council's redeployment process |
| Will there be a loyalty bonus available | This would be the governing body's |

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| for those staff who stay until the end? | decision as this would impact upon the school's budget. Ashton and Brewers have also been looking into this |
| This is a big upheaval for some staff more than others | Speak to HR and your union rep, they will be able to help. |
| What will happen to the school and the site after closure? | There are currently no plans but it will be retained for educational use and will have to be offered initially to the Secretary of State for use by a free school provider. There is no intention to sell the land. With the Creasy Park connection there is the community resource to be considered. |
| When will we know the Executive's decision? | The Executive will consider the report regarding the proposed early closure, which will include all of the concerns and issues raised by staff and parents during this consultation process, on 1 December. We will advise the school as soon as we have the decision |
| What will happen after the decision? | If the Executive approve the early closure HR will commence the process for staff after Christmas. |

Helen Redding reiterated that this closure has always been about numbers and not about the quality of the education at the school. The School Improvement reports have always been positive and it will be difficult emotionally for all involved to see the school close.