

From: philgreen [REDACTED]

Sent: 22 February 2023 10:13

To: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Subject: Berwick Schools consultation: response from Belford Primary School governing body

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Dear Sue,

I am having difficulty accessing the response form for the current phase of the consultation about the organisation of schools in and around Berwick.

In any case, it appears that the response form does not lend itself to a collective response from a governing body.

I wish to submit the following response on behalf of the governors of Belford Primary School. This is the unanimous view of our governing body.

"We are of the view that the organisation of schools in and around Berwick is a matter for the schools directly involved and their communities. We have been able to operate effectively as a primary school since the decision was made to close the middle school in Belford and for us to extend our age range from 2 - 9 to 2 - 11. This has been a very successful change for us, for our children and their parents and carers and for our staff. We are more viable educationally and financially as a result.

We therefore do not feel that we should comment collectively as a governing body on the proposals for the reorganisation of schooling in the Berwick area. Individual governors may respond individually to those areas of the consultation about which they may have individual views, but as a governing body we do not feel it is right for us to comment.

We do, however, wish to comment on the proposal for Belford Primary School to become formally a part of the Alnwick Partnership.

We fully and strongly support this proposal. Since we became a primary school in 2018, all our children have progressed to the Duchess Community High School. Very few of them had previously progressed to Berwick Academy and since we became a primary school, in line with the pattern of organisation in the Alnwick Partnership, that trickle has ceased. Becoming

part of the Alnwick Partnership makes great sense from an educational point of view for our children and staff, and transition arrangements with DCHS have improved greatly over the past four and a half years as a result. Our staff have needed to engage with transition and other arrangements relating to teaching and learning with DCHS and have done so willingly in the best interests of our children, and they have also felt obliged to engage with the Berwick Partnership, even though none of our children progress to Berwick Academy. While the latter has some value, it is a further demand on their time.

We also fully support this proposal as it means our parents will qualify for free home-to-school transport from in and around Belford to Alnwick. There has been a demand for this from parents and the wider community for a large number of years, and there is strong support for it from our parents and the wider community. It will be especially welcome given the current financial pressures on many of our families, some of whom are currently paying over £850 per year for home to school transport if they have two children at DCHS."

This response is consistent with the stance we have taken throughout the various stages of this process.

I apologize for this response not being in the format you provided as part of the consultation, but trust you will give it the same consideration as other responses.

I would be grateful if you could acknowledge receipt of this and confirm that it will form part of the summary and analysis of responses in the report to elected members arising from the consultation.

Yours sincerely,
Phil Green
Chair of Governors.