



SEATON VALLEY FEDERATION OF SCHOOLS

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Chair of Governors: Susan Dungworth

Executive Headteacher: John Barnes

SVF Governor's response to the consultation regarding the proposed merging of Seaton Sluice Middle School (SSMS) and Whytrig Middle School (WMS).

The governing body of the Seaton Valley Federation (SVF) have met with Sue Aviston and other officers of the local authority. We have also had feedback from the Executive Headteacher John Barnes and the Chair of Governors has spoken to the Heads of the 2 middle schools.

Following these discussions and reviewing the documentation shared by the officers of the local authority with regard to the proposal, we believe that it is still the correct option and stand behind the plan. We have also listened to the voices of the community, but at this moment in time we do not feel that it is right to amend the proposal or ask that the proposal be dropped.

If we had received any assurances from the LA that there would be finances available for rebuilding, or even making the necessary repairs and alterations to SSMS to provide the same level of facilities as will be available for pupils of WMS, we would not have even contemplated this merger proposal. However, it has been made very plain to us that there is no additional finance available for SSMS, meaning that we would have to continue to use school funds, just to keep the building safe and secure and not able to address any of the design issues.

We appreciate the emotions and concerns raised by the proposed closure of Seaton Sluice Middle School, but we are firm in our belief that it is the best educational option available to us with regard to the new building. We would also pose the question why would we not do this? Purely on educational grounds why would we not take this opportunity?

What moral right is there for saying to one third of our federation community that they cannot access the same facilities and opportunities that the new buildings will bring to the other 2 schools? We are also acutely aware that should the proposal not go ahead, that in future years' parents of pupils who would attend SSMS may choose to send their children to the new build WMS and this could be financially and educationally detrimental to the future of SSMS.

Therefore, taking all things into account: our original position, the views of the staff of all 3 schools especially SSMS, the views of the SVF senior leadership team, the potential future financial position for SSMS and most importantly the educational benefits for present and future generations of all SVF pupils, we feel that the proposal should go ahead.

Signed the SVF Full Governing Body

23 November 2021



