

## Notes from school review workshops

---

### Woodlands School: Workshop held on Thursday 1 February 2018

The following notes are not verbatim. We have not included comments which may identify an individual who is not a Council Officer.

#### Discussion Group One

Item	Discussion / Comments
<p><b>CCHS Relocated</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Should Woodlands move too?</li><li>• What would this mean for Woodlands community?</li><li>• What opportunities are there?</li><li>• What risks are there?</li></ul> <p><b>CCHS Remains on Site</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What could be improved?</li><li>• What opportunities are there?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continuing to promote links between Woodlands and Currie Community High School and other mainstream schools is important.</li><li>• Concerns were raised that parents of pupils at Woodlands were not fully aware of the links with Currie Community High School.</li><li>• The difficulties linking Woodlands parents were discussed.</li><li>• Concerns were raised that moving Woodlands School to a new, larger school would require starting relationships from scratch.</li><li>• It was felt that relocating from the existing Woodlands School building would be a waste given how new it and the pitches are.</li><li>• It was stated that staff, parents and pupils at Woodlands School have worked hard in recent years to create strong links with the Currie community in which it is located.</li><li>• The consistent presence of the Head Teacher has been key in developing these relationships.</li></ul>

- Pupils at Woodlands School often feel more a part of the Currie community than they do their home community.
- The relationship Woodlands School has with Currie Community High School, both in terms of its place within the Currie community and its physical location means that it is easier to manage the differing integration needs of pupils.
  - An example of the type of integration promoted is the use of Currie Currie Community High School's music classes.
- The idea of a separate campus was widely rejected. The current model whereby Woodlands School is part of a campus – but not part of the same building – was felt to offer the best model.
- More pupils in a school would potentially be scary or overwhelming for both mainstream pupils from Currie Community High School and especially for pupils from Woodlands School.
- Concerns were raised about noise in a larger school; children getting lost and the impersonal feel.
- Children are individuals with differing support requirements. Some children need and cope well with exposure to mainstream education while others do not.
- In some cases, Woodlands School provides pupils with the best chance to progress.
- Links between Woodlands School and mainstream benefits both pupils from Woodlands School and mainstream schools.
- Any form of integration, be it in a large school or a smaller one needs to be structured to benefit everyone.
  - The example of the primary school language units was given where smaller numbers of pupils in the classes has been key to integration.

- While it was acknowledged that a bigger school may not mean bigger classes, it was felt that the relationship that staff have with pupils was critical and that it would be more difficult to form these relationships in a larger school with more pupils.
- It was stated that attainment is not dependent on the size of a school and that there is research to argue both cases, however, it was felt that a smaller school would provide a more nurturing, “family” environment.

#### **Engagement**

- There was demand for pupils to be given a voice in the process and that this needs to be more than a token gesture. The pupils are passionate about their school.
- It was also stated that the views of staff should be sought before any decisions are made.
- Engagement with Woodlands School parents is difficult because of childcare issues and their distribution across the city.
- It was agreed that a questionnaire should be created with open ended questions inviting parent’s views on what the Council’s proposals might mean for Woodlands School. Robbie Crockatt will work with the Parent Council to prepare some questions.
- It was also suggested that a workshop or drop-in event held in the city centre (perhaps City Chambers or a central school?) may be beneficial. Robbie Crockatt to make arrangements with the Parent Council.
- An apology was given for not engaging with Woodlands School from the outset of the informal consultation process.