

Report on Henlow Church of England Academy's
Consultation to Extend the Age Range to a
Single-Phase Secondary Provision
2020-2021



Introduction

The Governing Body of Henlow Church of England Academy is now in a position to report on the outcome of the consultation and make a representation to the Secretary of State regarding:

Henlow Church of England Academy's consultation to extend the age range to a single-phase Secondary provision 2020-2021.

Henlow Church of England Academy is situated at Church Road, Henlow, SG16 6AN.

The Academy Ofsted URN is 138027.

The DfE number for Henlow Church of England Academy is 823/4503.

Brief History

Henlow Church of England Academy is a popular, over-subscribed middle school which has always delivered high-quality teaching and learning for pupils. At its last Ofsted inspection in July 2018 it was deemed to be 'Good' and 'Outstanding' in the SIAMS inspection of 2017.

In October 2016, Henlow Academy's governing body stated its intention to extend the age range of the school upwards. Conversations and meetings with Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and the Department for Education (DfE) took place with the outcome being that any change should be part of a co-ordinated approach across the area. In August 2018, Central Bedfordshire Council agree to support schools and clusters that want to work towards a primary and secondary model, considering that:

- the appropriate resources are in place to do so;
- change is coordinated; and
- change supports improvements in educational outcomes.

This change of age range will secure the future of the Academy and ensure the continuing delivery of high-quality teaching and learning in a Christian context.

This proposal has the support of CBC which is evidenced by Appendix C.

Proposal

It is proposed that Henlow Church of England Academy will extend its age range from a 9-13 years Middle School to a 9-16 Secondary School. This change is a move towards a primary/secondary model.

The proposed change would provide an alternative secondary provision for parents; especially those wishing for a church-school option, and bring diversity to the locality in order to meet the needs of all children and young people.

Implementation

The proposal will be implemented on 1st September 2020.

- In September 2020 – Year 8 children who have opted to remain at the Academy will become the new Year 9.
- In September 2021 – Year 9 children will remain at the Academy and become new Year 10.
- In September 2022 – Year 10 Children will remain at the Academy and become new Year 11.

Capacity

The current capacity of the school is 720 pupil places.

Following implementation, the proposed capacity will level at approximately 900, however we are aware of the need to remain flexible with regard to years 5 & 6.

Objectives

- Focus on community, which is one of our core principles as a Church of England academy. Strong programmes and initiatives are in place to support pupils in becoming proactive community members. Our core Henlow values of Honesty, Enthusiasm, Nurture, Love, Originality and Wisdom underpin this ethos and are really lived by the pupils as they are woven into the fabric of the school through our collective worship programme, curriculum and extra-curricular offer, leadership and governance. Henlow CE Academy will be the only secondary Church of England school in the area and the only stand-alone academy.
- Continue to rejoice in our foundation as a Church of England Academy – ‘A Christian and nurturing community where relationships are strong (Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools, 2017). The Christian ethos of the school is both distinctive and embedded into the soul of the community it serves. The academy logo and Henlow values, which were designed in collaboration with the entire school community, provide the structure for a truly Christian experience.
- Extend our approach across the whole secondary age range: prepare pupils effectively for their future, including transition to 6th form, through our values and the wide range of curricular and extracurricular opportunities designed to develop fully rounded individuals.
- Continue close liaison with our feeder schools including our robust transition programme in years 4 and 6 according to each school’s needs and those of the pupils.
- Ensure our most vulnerable pupils and those with SEND continue to flourish by continuing the support of visits/tasters currently valued by families.
- Ensure our approach flourishes throughout all of the secondary years - Ofsted (2018) refers to the pupils’ ‘impeccable behaviour’ and notes that ‘pupils have a positive attitude to learning’.
- Continue to achieve high academic standards across the key stages. Henlow CE Academy's progress and attainment trend at KS2 demonstrates the high standards

Consultation

A formal consultation process was carried out between 7th May 2019 and 11th June 2019.

We informed and invited comments from a wide range of stakeholders and wider community through a number of approaches. These included emailing stakeholders, posting on social media, publicising in local press and the school website.

Public meetings were held for parents and stakeholders on Thursday 16th May at 2.30 pm and 6 pm. Approximately 100 people attended across the two meetings.

A meeting for staff was held on Tuesday 7th May 2019 to which Union and HR Representatives were invited.

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) and the Diocese were invited to all meetings. The Diocese and members of Henlow CE Academy's Governing Body attended all meetings.

There was a presentation by the Head Teacher at all of the meetings followed by an opportunity for questions both formally and informally. Slides from the presentation can be found on the school website.

An additional meeting was added at the request of one of the feeder lower schools (All Saints Academy, Clifton). This meeting was well attended by 22 families and representatives of the All Saints Governing Body.

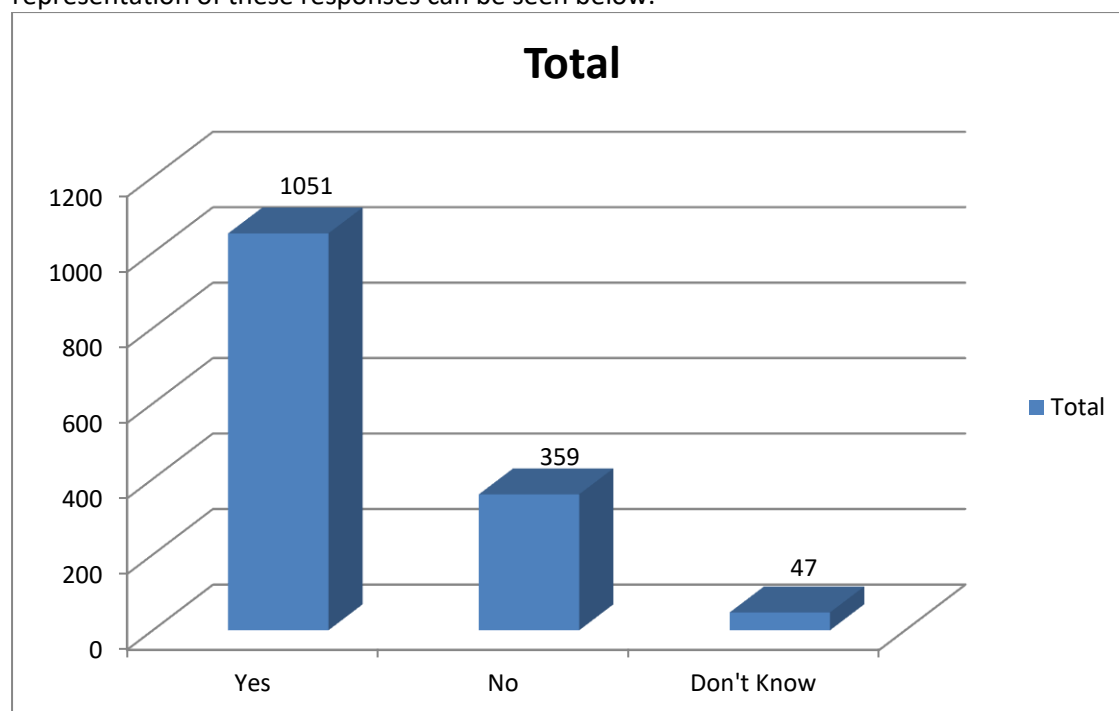
Members of the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body were available for informal discussions at school events such as the Fun Run and Working Together days.

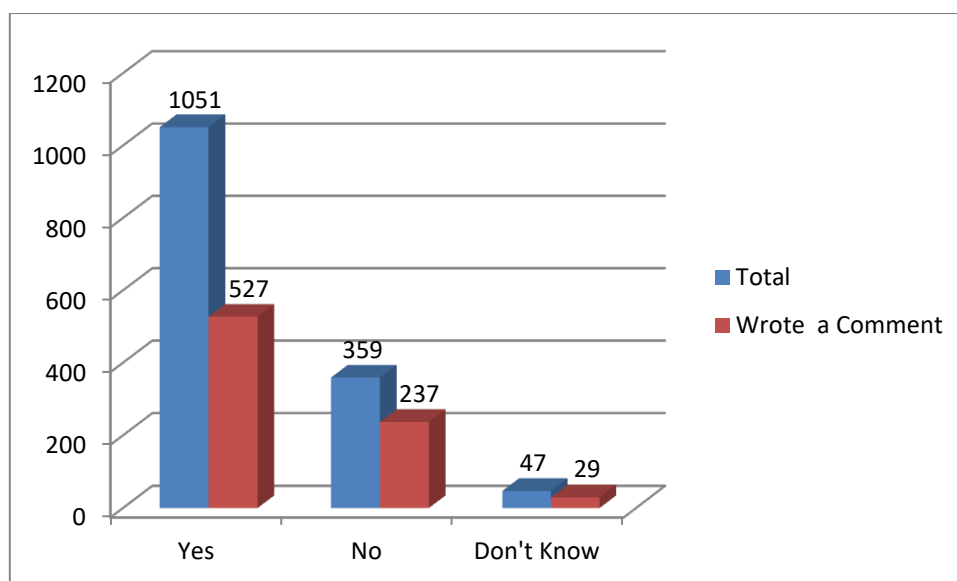
A copy of the consultation was emailed to:

- Registered parents/carers of school pupils
- School Staff
- School Governors
- Trade Union Representatives
- All neighbouring local authorities
- Governing bodies of all schools in Central Bedfordshire
- The Diocese of St Albans
- Local MP
- Parish Council

Summary of Responses

A total of 1457 written/email responses were received in response to the proposal. A graphical representation of these responses can be seen below.

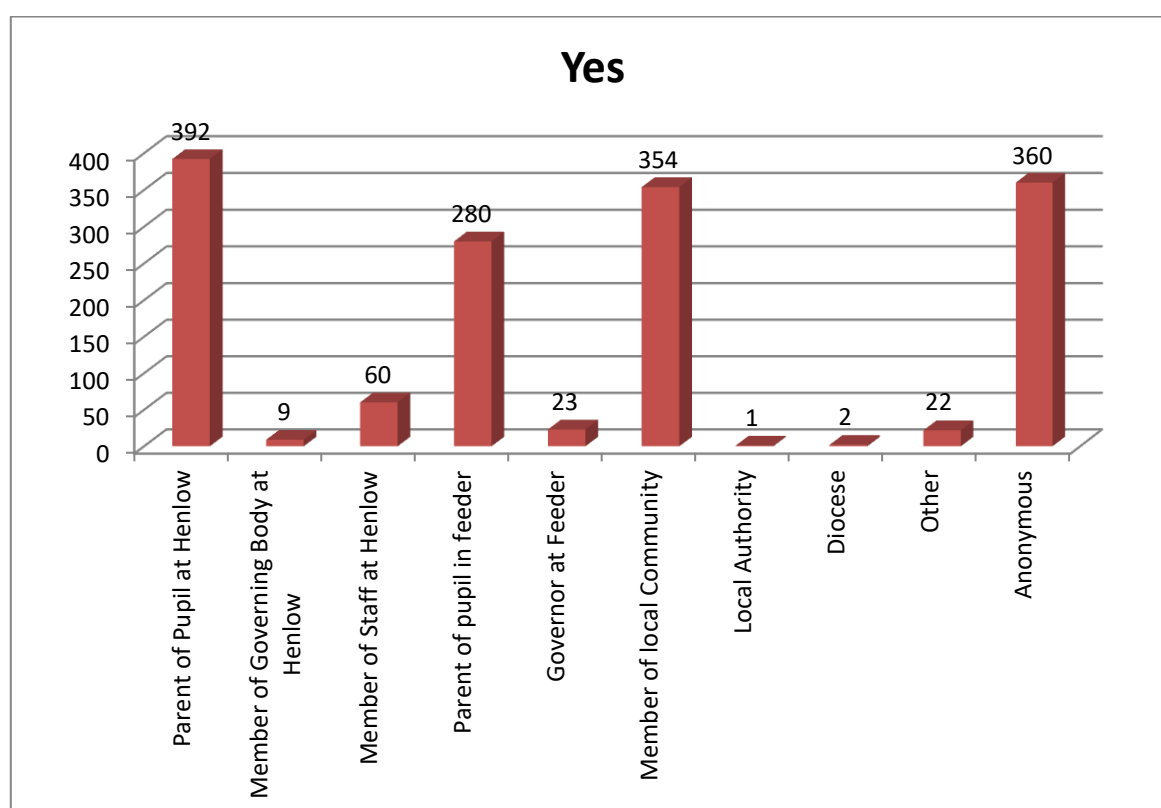




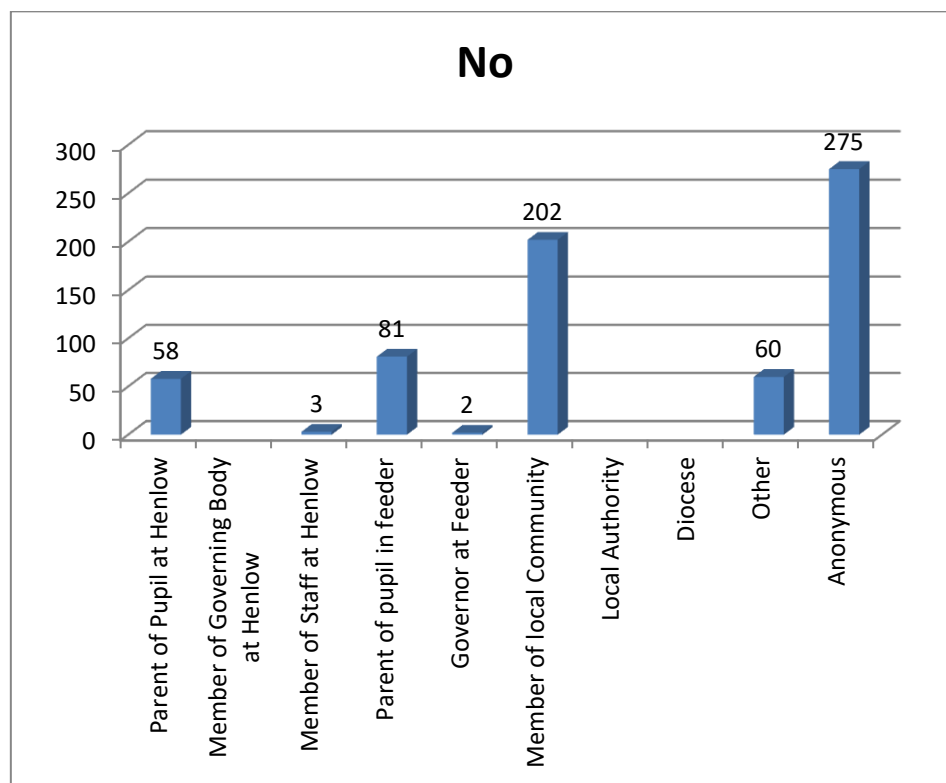
It is clear to see that a majority of respondents are in favour of the proposal which equates to 72.13% of the total. Half of these 'Yes' votes wrote a comment.

Stakeholder Group Responses

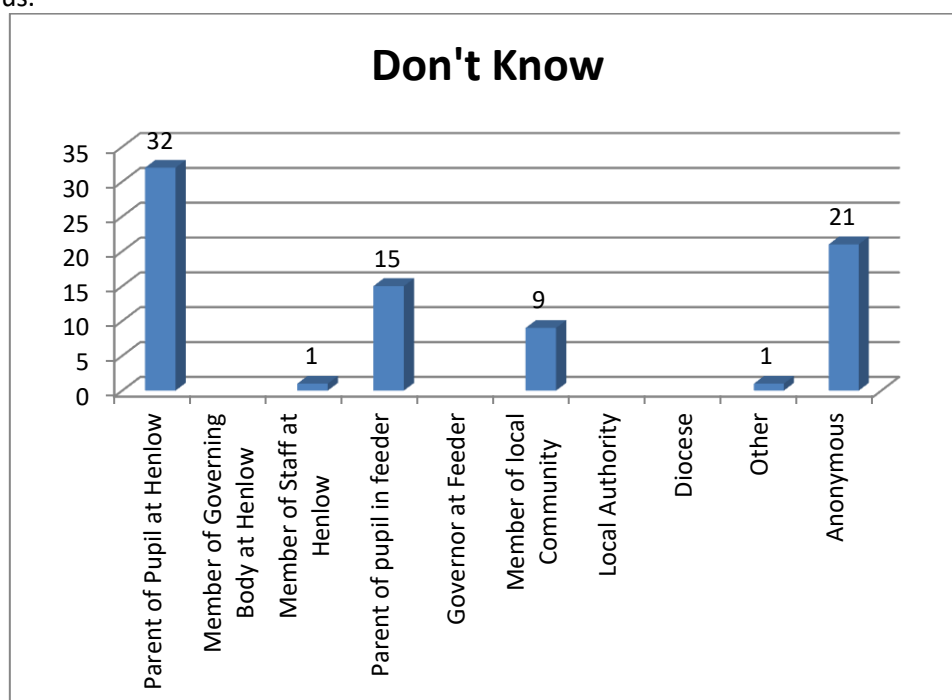
The graph below shows a breakdown of the Yes votes by stakeholder group. Please note that the total will not equate to the same as the total Yes vote as some individuals have identified as belonging to more than one stakeholder group. 34% of these respondents remained anonymous.



The graph below shows a breakdown of the No votes by stakeholder group. Please note that the total will not equate to the same as the total No vote as some individuals have identified as belonging to more than one stakeholder group. 77% of these respondents remained anonymous.



The graph below shows a breakdown of the Don't Know votes by stakeholder group. Please note that the total will not equate to the same as the total Don't Know vote as some individuals have identified as belonging to more than one stakeholder group. 45% of these respondents remained anonymous.



Key Themes from Responses to the Consultation

The consultation on the proposal to extend Henlow Church of England Academy's age range to admit year 9 in September 2020 received an unprecedented 1457 contributions with an overwhelming 72.13% of respondents in favour of the proposal. 24.64 % were against the proposal and 3.23% responded 'don't know.' 793 of respondents (54.43%) chose to add a comment alongside their decision. In light of the high number of comments, the following is a summary of the main themes which emerged from this consultation:

Over 250 respondents noted Henlow Academy's ethos as a key strength that could be built upon across the increased age range:

Unique. A real community. All pupils cared for. Pupils reaching their potential. Strong teaching. Meaningful values. Pupils thrive and enjoy learning. Strong academic and pastoral support. Meeting a wide range of needs. A good school. Effective links with lower schools.

'The friendly, caring ethos promotes a positive framework for both education and the skills to live in the modern world.'

Member of local community

'The school team places personal development on a par with academic outcomes.'

Member of local community

'The school know her strengths and embrace and stretch them. They know her weaknesses and guide and support them. They know her worries and help her to cope with them. I feel this knowledge will help her to achieve her full potential at GCSE level in a school that has high quality teaching in an environment that cares and nurtures.'

Parent of a pupil attending Henlow CE Academy/Parent of pupil attending traditional feeder school

Over 100 respondents specifically mentioned that they would welcome the availability of Church of England secondary provision beyond year 8 in the area and Henlow Academy's Outstanding SIAMS report (2017) is referred to:

'With my children having previously attended Church of England lower schools I appreciated the continued connection with the diocese and the Christian ethos it supports and thus was delighted to hear of the potential opportunity to extend this through to KS4.'

Parent of pupil attending Henlow CE Academy

The Diocese of St Albans supports the proposal and has submitted a positive letter to this consultation:

'As there are approximately six forms of entry of Church of England provision in the pyramid at lower/middle age range the Board believes that this proposal is proportional to local need.'

'Pupil admission data clearly indicates that Church Schools in the area are a popular choice for parents, so this proposal is aligned with parental choice and preference.'

More than 100 respondents referred to the move from 3 tier to 2 tier in the area with the vast majority either welcoming or accepting this and acknowledging the national norm. (Less than 15 respondents expressed a wish to retain the 3 tier system.)

Housing growth was alluded to as a contributing factor to the need to change now alongside the benefits for pupils of less transition, more stability, continuity and maintaining strong relationships.

Henlow Academy's knowledge of pupils and recognition of them as individuals was cited frequently as a reason for pupils to be given the opportunity to flourish across the secondary years:

'Parents and pupils need choices to meet their individual emotional, social, educational needs and Henlow's proposals offer this.'

Parent of pupil attending traditional feeder school

'The reason I chose Henlow as a middle school for both my children after evaluating all the available options at the time was the level of focus and pride demonstrated in ALL their pupils and not just the few.'

Parent of pupil attending Henlow CE Academy

30 respondents drew attention to the positive possibilities associated with a local secondary school for Henlow village with the advantage of local pupils across the wider age range walking and cycling. (15 respondents referred to the traffic congestion at key times of the day):

'I think this would be fantastic as Henlow Academy is a fantastic school and it will give the children the best start to life. It will also be great for the environment as a huge batch of children would be walking to school rather than being driven.'

Parent of pupil attending traditional feeder lower school.

Parental choice and the need to establish a diverse offer was a popular area for comment – close to 200 chose to raise this. The majority of these respondents focused on parents being able to choose from a diverse range of schools at secondary level with the opportunity for Henlow Academy to become one of the age 9 to 16 choices. Over 60 respondents specifically requested an educational offer not linked to the local MAT, with the word 'monopoly' repeated frequently. (40 respondents noted concerns regarding other schools.)

Over 80 respondents mentioned possible threats to the viability of other schools- over 30 directly mentioning RBA and some referring to SWA with direct quotations from the letter circulated by BEST and sent formally to the consultation (Appendix B).

Letters circulated by the individual academies within BEST during the consultation were not submitted to the consultation directly but respondents have referred to them or given direct quotations from them in their submissions.

Comments cite a possible threat to RBA alongside their wish to expand the age range of RBA. In total, over 120 respondents (15% of those who added comments) used words, phrases or 'cut and paste' sections directly from the letters.

Over 20 respondents wished to directly register their consternation regarding the same letters circulated by BEST and individual academies within BEST during this consultation mentioning *'the extent to which this MAT considers that they can control the narrative and agenda of education in this cluster.'*

Parent of pupil attending Henlow CE Academy

Over 60 respondents reflected on or posed questions relating to funding and drew attention to the need for further investment in facilities and training for staff with regard to GCSEs at Henlow Academy.

30 respondents were appreciative of a smaller secondary school as part of the local offer and some were keen to be given further information regarding option subject possibilities. A few acknowledged a slight apprehension to being the first year through, alongside excitement regarding a new venture:

'Our daughter is also excited about staying at Henlow beyond Year 8 which we believe is a true reflection of how happy she is.'

Parent of pupil attending Henlow CE Academy

'The staff are passionate about expanding and it is clear to see that they would be able to continue to offer the excellent standard of education and pastoral care that they already do.'

Parent of pupil attending Henlow CE Academy

Examples of Henlow Academy's recent developments are cited to demonstrate evidence of the leadership skills already displayed that will be required during the next stages:

'The leadership of Henlow has demonstrated in recent years its ability to implement large scale initiatives within tight timeframes. I have the utmost faith and confidence in their abilities to make a huge success of this transition programme while maintaining and enhancing the opportunities offered to its pupils.'

Parent of pupil attending Henlow CE Academy

Respondents referred to housing growth across the cluster area and some felt that more school places were required, citing examples of oversubscription, whilst others questioned whether there was a requirement for more secondary places.

A range of views were expressed regarding the timing of the proposed expansion of age range at Henlow Academy. Some respondents have cut and pasted a line from one of the letters circulated by an academy within BEST - 'existing cluster-wide plans for a co ordinated approach to move towards two tier in 2023/24' whilst others have referred to 2021. Respondents who predominantly identify themselves as parents expressed their anxiety regarding the lack of clarity surrounding their children's next steps with many wishing the change to happen as soon as feasible.

'The sooner that children can choose to stay at Henlow and have a C of E education across secondary the better.'

Parent of pupil attending Henlow CE Academy/Member of local community

Central Bedfordshire Council have not yet published a plan with dates but have submitted the following statement in support of the timing of the Henlow Academy's age range change and the consultation process:

'The council is supporting this proposal for a change of age range as this would provide phasing towards a primary/secondary model and enable the school to provide Key Stage 3 and 4 education, similar to the surrounding extended secondary schools in the cluster.'

The need for an overall plan is referred to by other respondents alongside questions relating to the role of CBC in the move towards 2 tier. Questions relating to the timings of lower schools ultimately moving to primary and Henlow Academy ultimately moving to secondary are also posed.

3 local lower school Head Teachers (not traditional feeder schools) submitted positive responses in addition to 23 governors from feeder schools. 3 of Henlow Academy's feeder schools submitted positive letters of support:

'It is clear from the proposal that Henlow has prepared extensively for this change and are more than ready to provide strong and varied curriculum provision for all their children up to year 11.' (All Saints Academy, Clifton)

'Continued close liaison with feeder schools to further what we believe is the best transition programme in the area.' (Meppershall Church of England Academy)

'Our support for this proposal is based on the belief that we must maintain choice in the area for parents.' (Derwent and Southill Lower Schools)

Concluding statement:

72.13% of respondents voted positively in favour of Henlow Church of England Academy extending its age range to 9 to 16 beginning in September 2020. The Governing Body made the decision to begin this process in October 2016 and have the support of both the Diocese of St Albans and Central Bedfordshire Council. Respondents to the consultation feel very strongly that the area needs a diverse offer and welcome the Church of England secondary option. The community wholeheartedly appreciate the unique educational offer with a focus on individuals and their fully rounded development. Henlow Academy hopes to be given the opportunity to develop its distinctive ethos and values across the secondary age range whilst working in collaboration with lower schools as the area moves towards 2 tier.

Appendix A –Letters of Support from Feeder Lower Schools

Appendix B – BEST Letter

Appendix C – Local Authority Response

Appendix D – Diocese

APPENDIX A

Dear Mr Huntley,

Re : Consultation on proposal to extend Age Range.

Meppershall Church of England Academy fully supports this proposal.

We believe the implications for our school are positive, and will also ensure that the choice of an education that is inclusive of a Christian ethos is maintained within the area.

Henlow Church of England Academy is a popular, over-subscribed middle school which delivers a high quality and inclusive teaching for its pupils. At its last Ofsted inspection in July 2018 it was deemed to be 'Good' and its SIAMS inspection of 2017 was 'Outstanding'.

There are currently many changes to the education system within the local area with a general shift towards a two-tier system of education.

We are particularly aware that there is a small multi-academy trust in the local area that has an obligation to protect its income and has therefore generally adopted a protectionist attitude, and particularly in their objection to Henlow Academy's consultation. It is disappointing that this is leading to a loss of trust and partnership amongst schools in the cluster.

It is our strong belief that the conversion will only benefit pupils for the following reasons:

- A continuing focus on community; a core principle of being a Church of England academy. This will be secured through Henlow being the only secondary Church of England school in the area
- Extend Henlow's nurturing approach across the whole secondary age range to prepare pupils effectively for their future lives
- Continued close liaison with feeder schools (such as Meppershall) to further what we believe is the best transition programme in the area
- In addition to this Henlow's teachers are already best placed to extend their experience into secondary education. We understand that 70% have taught GCSE level and are Secondary trained including the Head and both Deputy Heads.

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Caroline Sledge, Headteacher.

Mr Graham Jones, Chair of Governors

3rd June 2019

Reference: Consultation on the proposal to extend the age range of Henlow Church of England Academy to a single phase extended Secondary provision for 2020-21

Dear Mr Huntley

We, the Board of Governors for the Federation of Derwent and Southill Lower Schools, write to you to support this proposal. Our support for this proposal is based on the belief that we must maintain choice in the area for parents.

As you are aware, in September 2019 the secondary provision for pupils in the area will be Henlow Church of England Academy alongside four other academies controlled by one multi academy trust. If this consultation is not accepted, then the Board of Governors for the Federation of Derwent and Southill Lower Schools are concerned that Henlow is at serious risk of closing in the longer term. This would mean that education locally becomes a monopoly and will pose the same negative effects on the consumer as a monopoly in any other socio-economic situation. These risks include:

- Restricting output onto the market.
- Restricting choice for consumers.
- Reducing consumer sovereignty.

Ultimately this situation would be exceptionally detrimental to those who are most important in this situation – our children and their families.

The 'Making significant changes to an open academy and closure by mutual agreement' (DfE, October 2018, p 4) document provides advice 'to ensure that additional good quality places can be provided quickly where they are needed'. Considering the risks associated with one academy chain controlling the whole secondary provision in the area, the Board of Governors for the Federation of Derwent and Southill Lower Schools believe that there is compelling evidence to support your proposal for Henlow Academy as it will provide additional good quality places and safeguard choice for parents.

On these grounds, we support this proposal without reservation and strongly recommend it is agreed quickly to ensure the best possible provision for all learners across this part of Central Bedfordshire.

Yours sincerely,

The Governing Body of the Derwent and Southill Federation

Cc: Sue Harrison, Director of Children's Services
Councillor Sue Clarke, Portfolio for Families, Education and Childcare,
Mr Martin Post, Regional Schools Commissioner

24th May 2019

To whom it may concern

RE: Consultation on proposal to extend the age range of Henlow Church of England Academy

We are writing as the Governing Body of Clifton All Saints Academy to wholeheartedly support Henlow in their proposal to change their age range to 9 – 16 years for 2020-2021.

We are a Church of England feeder school to Henlow Academy and highly value the opportunity for our children to continue their education in a Church of England provision, especially one that promotes and demonstrates such strong Christian and moral values and principles.

We work very closely with Henlow Academy to ensure that our children receive continuous provision that builds on the strong Christian ethos that they experience at Clifton All Saints Academy. The children and staff work together in a number of ways through joint CPD, meetings, sports events, special transition days and each supports the other to ensure the very best for their pupils. This proposal can only build on the already evident success of this collaboration and further ensure that the children have continuity of provision and support. As a Lower school we have already agreed to work closely with Henlow Academy with regard to the future provision for Years 5 and 6 with Clifton All Saints Academy working towards becoming a Primary school and retaining their years 5 and 6 at a point in the future. We know that Henlow can continue to receive our Year 5 and 6 until the provision is ready at Clifton All Saints Academy and will work with us to make that part of the transition to two tier as seamless as possible.

This proposal will ensure that parents have a real choice of provision for their children, and as Henlow Academy is the only Church of England provision in the cluster it is vital that it is retained and enhanced for the large number of parents who value the strong Christian ethos that it provides.

Henlow has already proved that they can provide a very high quality education for their pupils through the KS2 SATs results and with 70% of their existing staff having experience of teaching at GCSE level, this can only be seen as providing secure teaching for the extended age-range.

It is clear from the proposal that Henlow has prepared extensively for this change and are more than ready to provide that strong and varied curriculum provision for all their children up to Year 11.

With the future changes to the format of the education system in Central Bedfordshire we commend Henlow for their actions and detailed preparation and fully support this proposal.

Yours faithfully

The Governing Body of Clifton All Saints Academy

APPENDIX B

14 May 2019

Reference: Consultation on the proposal to extend the age range of Henlow Church of England Academy to a single phase extended Secondary provision for 2020-21

Dear Mr Huntley

We write on behalf on the Board of Trustees of the Bedfordshire Schools Trust (BEST) to object to this proposal. BEST comprises of nine Central Bedfordshire schools and two nurseries, providing education to almost 5 000 learners and employing approximately 600 staff.

Our objection to the proposal is that it is not part of an agreed co-ordinated area-wide approach. Consequently, additional pupil places will be introduced into an already surplus pupil places situation. Moreover, local schools will not have the time to adequately respond creating a potential threat to the quality of education across the area (Shefford and Stotfold).

Additional surplus places Central Bedfordshire Council's (CBC's) *'Schools for the Future'* document (October, 2018, p 13) states the need for 650 pupil places in the Shefford and Stotfold catchment area in Y9, for September 2020. This figure is revised down to 599 in models supplied by CBC (April, 2019), with marginal growth creating a need for 624 pupil places in 2021; 582 in 2022; 630 in 2023; and, 700 in 2024.

The current provision of 400 pupil places at Samuel Whitbread Academy, 180 at Etonbury Academy and a further 180 at Pix Brook Academy comfortably accommodates these figures, even allowing for a very generous margin of error. Surplus places of +161 in 2020; +136 in 2021; +178 in 2022; +130 in 2023; and, +60 in 2024 are offered to the community.

Henlow Church of England Academy's (HA's) consultation paper (HA, 2019 p 8) suggests introducing a further 150 pupil places into Y9 in 2020; 205 in 2021; 170 in 2022; 150 in 2023; and, a further 150 in 2024. The impact of this on the Shefford and Stotfold catchment area would be dramatic, creating +311 surplus places in 2020; +341 in 2021; +348 in 2022; +280 in 2023; and +210 in 2024.

Impact The impact of creating so many additional surplus places, in such a short time period would be significant on a number of schools and their pupils. Three BEST schools in this situation would be:

- Pix Brook Academy – a Free School, opening a new build for 180 Y9 pupils in September 2020. Current forecasts indicate the school will open into a competitive environment that already possesses +161 surplus places. This will rise to +311 with the expansion of Henlow
- Samuel Whitbread Academy – over time more than 90% of Henlow's pupils transfer to Samuel Whitbread (2017-18: 117; 2018-19: 111; 2019-20: 117). Should this not happen in 2020, Samuel Whitbread would suffer an immediate loss of income of £499 239 pa (£1 663 623 over the 3-year Y9-11 journey) with very little time to respond, whilst also managing a huge PFI debt, currently standing at £950 000 pa and rising annually in line with the RPIX
- Robert Bloomfield Academy – three consecutive Ofsted Outstanding grades/Teaching School, with exceptional pupil outcomes¹ was moving towards Secondary status, as part of

an agreed CBC co-ordinated programme. The expansion of Henlow, in advance of any such approach would inhibit the expansion of other, very successful schools such as Robert Bloomfield.

The 'Making significant changes to an open academy and closure by mutual agreement' (DfE, October 2018, p 4) document provides advice *'to ensure that additional good quality places can be provided quickly where they are needed'*. Considering the pupil outcomes data provided in Appendix One we are sceptical as to the evidence for the former. With regard to the latter, the evidence is compelling that the additional pupil places are not needed. On these grounds, we object to this proposal and strongly recommend an agreed and co-ordinated, area-wide approach to ensure that any expansion takes place on merit to ensure the best possible provision for all learners across Central Bedfordshire.

Yours sincerely
Dr Alan Lee
Mrs I Bond

CEO and Chair
of Trustees

National
Leader of
Education

Cc: BEST Community

Sue Harrison, Director of Children's Services Councillor
Sue Clarke, Portfolio for Families, Education and Childcare, CBC Arlesey,
Shefford and Stotfold and Langford Councillors
Mr Martin Post, Regional Schools Commissioner

APPENDIX C

Local Authority Response

Central Bedfordshire Council – response to consultation launched by Henlow C of E Academy re proposal to extend the age range of the academy to a single phase extended secondary provision for 2020/21

At the meeting held on 7 August 2018, the Council's Executive agreed to support schools and clusters that want to work towards a primary and secondary model and to actively promote any new schools that are to be built will be primary or secondary. The Shefford and Stotfold cluster is supportive of a move to a primary and secondary model and the Council is working with all schools in the cluster to ensure that all proposals are aligned and support our vision to ensure we have the right schools in the right places delivering the best education.

Henlow's proposal is in line with the council and cluster objective which is to move to a two-tier system.

Henlow Academy is moving to establish a change of age range ahead of other schools in the Shefford and Stotfold Cluster. The Council is supporting their proposal for a change of age range as this would provide phasing towards a primary/secondary model and enable the school to provide Key Stage 3 and 4 education, similar to the surrounding extended secondary schools in the cluster.

The change to a temporary extended secondary supports the Council's schools for the future programme and acknowledges that the governing body of Henlow Academy are supportive of the overall intention of the cluster to move from a 3-tier to a 2-tier system.

We recognise the challenges involved with timing the age range changes across the cluster and are committed to working with all schools to mitigate the risks associated with this.

APPENDIX D

Diocese Response

The St Albans Diocesan Board of Education fully supports the desire of Henlow Church of England Academy to become a 9-16 secondary academy.

The reasons for this are:

- 1.** Extension will create a Church of England pyramid of schools serving the Henlow/Shefford/Stotfold area. This will enable pupils to remain in Church of England provision across the whole of their statutory education. As there are approximately six forms of entry of Church of England provision in the pyramid at a Lower/Middle age range the Board believes that this proposal is proportionate to local need.
- 2.** Pupil admission data clearly indicates that Church Schools in the area are a popular choice for parents, so this proposal is aligned with parental choice and preference.
- 3.** The extension of age range promotes diversity of provision at secondary level in the Henlow/Shefford/Stotfold area. This is to be applauded.
- 4.** The significant contribution of Henlow Church of England Academy towards the education of pupils with education and health care plans will be enhanced through its extension to become a Church of England Secondary Academy. Parents of pupils with additional needs will have genuine choice about the nature of provision they wish their children to access from Year 9 onwards.
- 5.** The move to extend is a cost effective means of securing the additional secondary provision the Local Authority requires. The extension plans meet the local authority's need to secure a two tier education system
- 6.** The extension of Henlow CE Academy, at a time of rapid housing growth, will contribute to maintaining the proportion of Church of England school places in the pyramid.