

Change of School Category

Submission of Prescribed Information

To

Buckinghamshire School Organisation Committee

From

The Governing Body, Hawridge and Cholesbury Church of England School

School Name:	Hawridge and Cholesbury Church of England School
Local Education Authority:	Buckinghamshire County Council
Diocese:	Oxford
Proposals published by:	The governing body of Hawridge and Cholesbury Church of England School
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Hawridge and Cholesbury Church of England School
Change of School Category

Introduction

Hawridge and Cholesbury School was founded in 1874. Under the terms of the trust deed which created the school, it was founded '... for the education of children and adults or children only of the labouring manufacturing and other classes in the Parishes of Hawridge and Cholesbury respectively in the County of Bucks and for no other purpose whatsoever and it is hereby declared that the school shall always be in union with and as far as is or may be consistent with the provision for its being used as a Public Elementary School as aforesaid shall be conducted according to the principles and in furtherance of the ends and designs of the National Society for the education of the Poor in the principles of the established Church throughout England and Wales...'. In 1944 it became a voluntary controlled school. In 1971, the permanent buildings were significantly extended. In 1975 the church school in St Leonards (a neighbouring parish) was merged with Hawridge and Cholesbury School. The reserved area encompasses the civil parish of Cholesbury cum St Leonards (which incorporates the three church parishes of Hawridge, Cholesbury and St Leonards) and part of the civil parish of Bellingdon. The school has always maintained close links with St Mary's Church, Hawridge and the other two churches within its reserved area. It is the only school (and therefore the only Church of England School) within a 2-mile radius. A change to Voluntary Aided status would consolidate the school's strongly Christian ethos, whilst allowing it to continue working closely with Buckinghamshire LEA and the Chesham area schools.

Consultation

Following discussions between the Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Headteacher, Danny Sullivan (Director of Education, Oxford Diocese) was invited to a meeting of the Governors on 8th February 2001 to outline the differences between Voluntary Controlled and Voluntary Aided. At that meeting the Vice Chairman and the Headteacher outlined the benefits to the school of changing status. Following this meeting, the consideration of Voluntary Aided status was added to the School Improvement Plan for the year 2001/2002. After further analysis, in June 2001, Governors agreed to begin the informal consultation process. Continuing the analysis of the impact of a change of status, Governors met with the Chairman of Governors of another school going through the process at the General Purposes Working Group meeting on 8th October 2001.

Following the Governors meeting in 20th November 2001, an information leaflet outlining the impact of the change was developed. This Information Leaflet (see Appendix 1), along with an invitation to a meeting at the school, was distributed, in January 2002, to all parents, staff, primary schools whose catchment area abuts that of Hawridge and Cholesbury, Buckinghamshire LEA, the local nursery and playgroup, the Cholesbury cum St Leonards Parish Council and the Parochial Church Councils for Hawridge, Cholesbury, St Leonards and Chesham. A public meeting was held on 4th February 2002 at the school with Mr Sedgewick (representing the Diocese) and Mr Ayres (representing the LEA). Five letters were received and about 20 parents and local residents attended the meeting. Parents asked about a range of detailed issues. Three letters were supportive of change; the LEA requested governors ensure no alteration in admissions arrangements; the fifth letter indicated no comment. All letters and notes of the questions raised in the meeting are held on file by the governing body.

Hawridge and Cholesbury Church of England School
Change of School Category

During the Summer of 2002, questions that the staff had raised, concerning changes in contracts and procedures that would follow a change in status, were investigated and resolved. At the Governors Meeting of 13th June 2002, it was resolved to move forward to the Formal Consultation stage.

Capacity of other local schools

There are no other schools within a 2 mile radius.

A map is attached (Appendix 2) showing other primary schools in the Chesham area and the attached table (Appendix 3) shows the capacity and forecast numbers on roll for these schools.

Cost of change

The school consists of two main buildings – the original school building housing two classrooms and the main building, constructed in 1970, housing six classrooms, the hall, the library and other facilities. The school is generally in a good state of repair. Through self-finance the toilets were refurbished in 1999. Also through self-finance, the play facilities were renovated and extended, having been in an ‘imminent project’ state on the LEA lists since 1980. A redundant sewage works in the grounds was removed in the last year. The roofs of the old school building have been replaced in the last 5 years. The outside of the building was repainted in 1998 the school having bought into the County Scheme. Subsequent external maintenance costs will transfer to the governing body. The school would anticipate raising the 10% of any costs. The latest LEA conditions survey is attached (appendix 4).

The school was able to raise funds in 1999/2000 of around £86,000 to renovate and significantly extend the playground and play facilities; the governors do not anticipate any concerns over raising the 10% of any maintenance costs.

Full and part time provision

The school currently provides full time places for all pupils from the term of their fifth birthday. It also provides part time provision, during the Spring term, for those children whose fifth birthday falls in the Summer term.

Inspection under section 10

The school was inspected under section 10 of the Schools Inspection Act 1996, in September 1998. A summary is attached (appendix 5). The inspectors indicated the school had ‘many strengths and a few weaknesses’ and provided good value for money. Areas highlighted for praise included the leadership of the school, the curriculum and assessment procedures and the teaching. The main recommendations were, with an indication of how the school has addressed them:

- Provide an appropriate curriculum for all children under 5. This has been addressed by significant investment in the facilities for the reception class including an enclosed outdoor play area. Since the report the government has introduced further changes to the under 5 curriculum all of which have been implemented.

Hawridge and Cholesbury Church of England School
Change of School Category

- Provide appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils. The range of differentiated tasks has been expanded in teachers planning. Recent work on higher order questioning has extended this further although this area is still being developed.
- Implement systematic procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning. Tracking of children's attainment throughout the school has been implemented and evaluation, using both internal and external data, is now a key part of the planning cycle.
- Improve provision for pupils' spiritual and multi cultural development. Various changes in areas like assemblies and the implementation of circle time have addressed this issue. There have also been changes to address the topic of spiritual development.
- Continue to seek ways of improving the quality and use of the accommodation and hard play area and the cleanliness of the building. Since the report an additional classroom has been built, the location of the classes reorganised, a computer suite has been constructed within the old school building, the playground has been renovated and extended and play equipment introduced. A dedicated caretaker now carries out the cleaning instead of the contract company in use at the time of the report.

The class sizes have also been reduced as throughout the school governors have now achieved their aim of introducing single year group classes at all levels.

Inspection under section 23

This was also carried out in September 1998 and highlighted the school's caring and friendly atmosphere with good support from parents and governors and strong links with the local parish.

Intervention by the LEA or Secretary of State

There have been no outside interventions in the running and management of the school.

Land Tenure

The site of the school is of freehold nature with part held on trust for the school by trustees and part held by the LEA; conveyancing of the remaining land to the trustees is yet to be completed.

The Trust Deed

A copy of the trust deed is held at Diocesan House.

Signed:



Date:

9th December 2002

Andrew Brown,
Chairman of Governors,
Hawridge and Cholesbury Church of England School