

Maple Tree
Lower School



Sandye Place Academy
Achievement Through Partnership

Report on the outcomes of the
Consultation on options for
education provision
in Sandy by the Governors of
Maple Tree Lower School and
Sandye Place Academy

11th July 2017

Report on the outcomes of the consultation held by governors at Maple Tree Lower School and Sandye Place Academy

Introduction

From 24th April to 5th June 2017 the governors of Maple Tree Lower School and Sandye Place Academy held a consultation on a proposal for the two schools to join and adopt a primary plus model.

This consultation came on the back of other significant changes to the way schools are structured in Sandy - details of which are available in the original consultation proposal which is available on the website of both schools.

The proposal mentioned other options that had been considered by governors but not deemed viable and presented the option of the primary plus model to the community for their consideration and feedback.

How the consultation worked

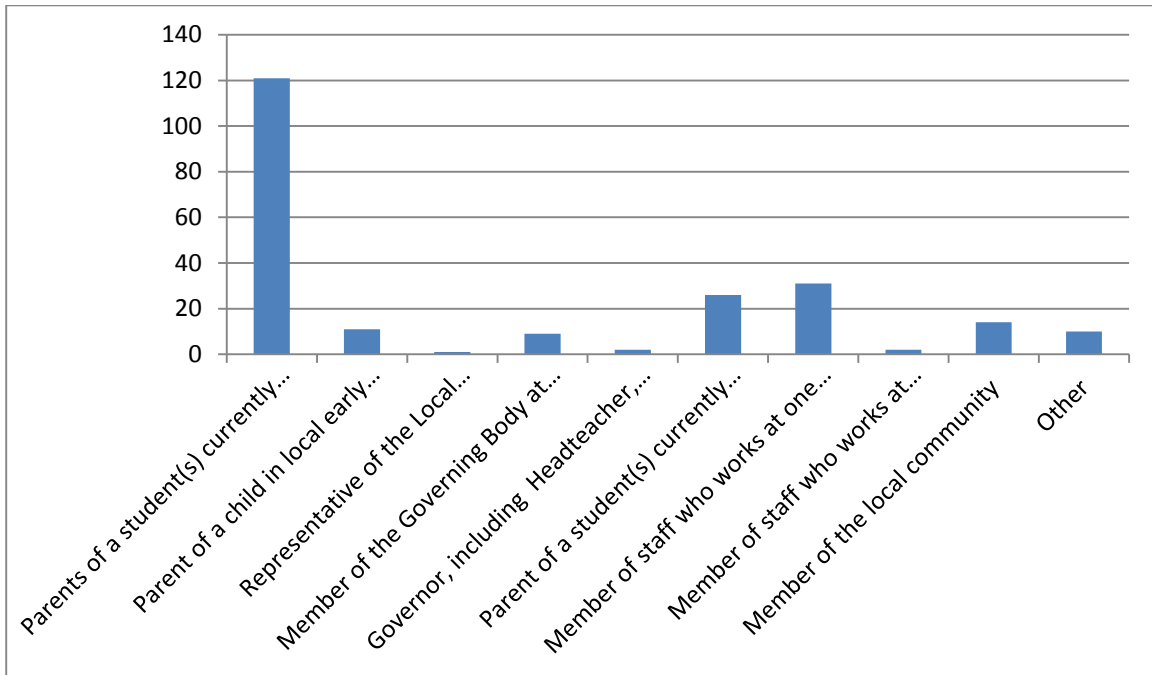
Two consultation meetings were held for members of the community to come and hear more about the proposal and to ask questions of the leadership team and governing bodies of both schools; we had 118 people in attendance across the two nights.

In addition to these formal consultation meetings led by the two schools, there was a further meeting organised by the parents of Maple Tree Lower School to explore the proposal further. This meeting was attended by 39 parents from Maple Tree, the results of which were shared with the two schools and have been included within the responses to the consultation.

The formal response mechanism for the consultation was primarily made available via an online survey platform but hard copies of the questionnaire were also made available from both schools.

In total 178 responses were received online and 17 written responses were received in addition. This was a fantastic response; there were more responses to this one consultation than all the other consultations run by schools within the cluster this year put together.

Based on the respondents who identified their role in the community the split of responses is as follows:



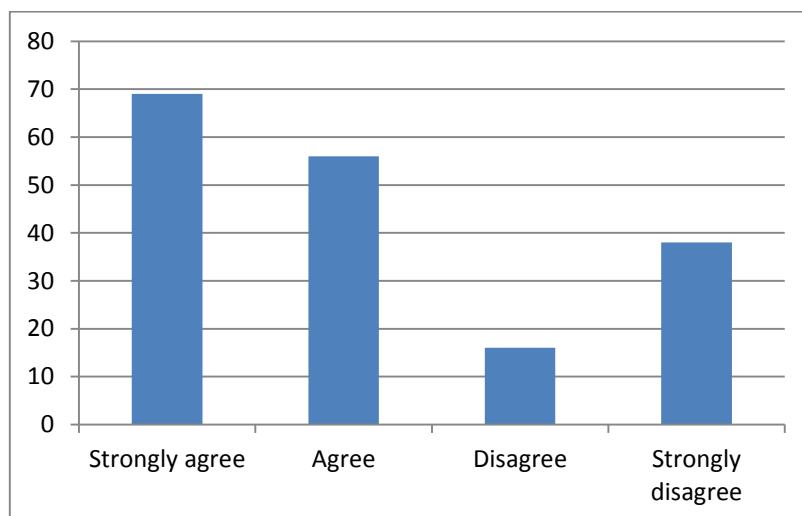
Many very detailed responses were received throughout the consultation and the governors of both schools would like to thank the community for their passion and commitment to ensuring the best possible outcomes for education in Sandy.

Following the meetings but outside of the consultation process a petition was set up by parents to demonstrate demand for a choice of two schools for secondary education in Sandy; this has received 136 signatures.

Summary of results

195 people responded via the formal consultation survey. The results show that 70% of people are in agreement with the proposal for the Maple Tree and Sandye Place to become a primary plus school.

Here is the full breakdown of results (from questionnaires completed online and offline):



However these results cannot be taken in isolation from the written comments. Analysis of the written comments shows that the level of agreement is not as clearly defined as demonstrated in the chart above.

For example, of the 150 parent responses 95 agreed with the proposal. However, 51 of these actively requested something else in their comments despite agreeing with the consultation proposition. Similarly of the 55 parents that disagreed 35 requested something else in their comments.

The most frequently mentioned alternative was for Sandye Place Academy to extend its age range to become a secondary school; mentioned by 68 parents. Of these 38 also expressed a preference for Maple Tree to become a primary school alongside a Sandye Place secondary school.

Of the respondents who disagreed with the proposal, as well as those who wanted an alternative option there were others who disagreed with the proposal due to concerns about having their children move to Sandye Place at year 3. This was based on two main concerns 1) the need to put children on a bus to go into town for school and 2) the age difference between pupils in year 3 (from 7 years old) and year 8 (up to 13 years old).

The response from the Local Authority said that they have 'serious concerns' about the proposal put forward in the consultation citing predictions around pupil numbers given the introduction of the two tier system at other schools in the town. This does not take into account parental choice and preference which was a message that come though strongly in the written responses.

Next steps

Based on the response to this consultation we will not be submitting an application to form a Primary Plus school across the two sites.

Over the next few months the governors and senior leadership teams of both Sandye Place and Maple Tree will continue to hold discussions with the DfE and other educational bodies to explore alternative options that take into consideration the views demonstrated in this consultation.

Sandye Place Academy has a funding agreement in place for years 5 to 8 and will continue to provide education for years 7 and 8 to support the wishes of the community. There are options for upper schools and secondary schools in the area to take year 9 pupils in the short term. Samuel Whitbread and Stratton have recently made changes staying within the three tier system and do not appear to be looking to change in the short term. Sandy Upper School is undersubscribed and according to statistics from the Local Authority, even if Sandy Upper took in the whole cohort within catchment they still would not be oversubscribed so will have places available in year 9.

Maple Tree Lower School and Sandye Place Academy will continue to work closely together to build on the benefits we have seen in the first year of the shared headship.

We will keep you informed of any developments as discussions progress over the next few months.