

## Appendix 3

### Responses to consultation on East Sussex County Council's proposed admission arrangements for 2019/2020

We asked for views on the following:-

1. Proposal to merge the community areas for Hankham Primary School and Stone Cross Primary School to form one community area serving both schools
2. Proposal to include the community area formerly served by Rodmell CE Primary School in the community area for Iford & Kingston CE Primary School following the agreed closure of Rodmell CE Primary School
3. Proposal to include the villages of Ditchling and Streat in the community area for Chailey Secondary School to create a shared area with Priory School
4. Proposed Admission Numbers
5. Proposed Co-ordinated schemes

41 people completed the survey online. The results are as follows:

#### Appendix 3a)- Hankham and Stone Cross

##### **1. Is the proposal to merge Hankham and Stone Cross schools into one area acceptable?**

Yes – 38 (92.7%)

No – 3 (7.3%)

#### Comments received (6)

- 1) We don't think that this will have a negative effect on intake as long as we are not restricted to this proposed new area and that we can still accept pupils from a wider area, as currently.
- 2) The Authority should encourage parents throughout Stone Cross and Hankham to see each school as a neighbourhood school with a shared catchment area thus encouraging the concept of the "local" primary school. The number of pupils in this area over the next few years will increase with the number of houses being built throughout Stone Cross and Westham.
- 3) As the previous Headteacher of Stone Cross School, I fully approve of the proposed merger of the two areas as it will, as stated, ensure that the children in the new developments will be able to access places at their local schools.
- 4) It will allow local children to attend their local school rather than travelling to other schools as children from Shinewater/Langney have filled spaces, although children who live much closer are sent further away.
- 5) As a mother of one child who has just started at Stone Cross school (2017) and another who is due to start at Stone Cross in 2019, I am concerned that I may end up with one child at Stone Cross and another at Hankham, despite us living within the catchment area and being far closer to Stone Cross than Hankham. This is because the change to catchment will presumably mean that a significantly higher number of children will fall under the new catchment area. I would like some reassurance that

siblings of either of the two schools living within the catchment area will have priority over those that don't.

- 6) I would agree with the proposed merger as long as the children living in Stone Cross have the first priority over another child living in Hankham to attend Stone Cross School.

Hankham primary school may have a PAN of 20, but it is still under-subscribed. I would support an extension to the school to make a PAN of 30.

## Appendix 3b) Iford and Kingston CE School

### 2. Is the proposal to include the community area formerly served by Rodmell CE Primary School in the community area for Iford & Kingston CE Primary School acceptable?

Yes – 35 (85.4%)

No – 6 (14.6%)

### Comments received (4)

- 1) What are the exact boundaries for the proposed new community area for the school - is there a map, what about Northease?
- 2) While I can see that it is necessary to merge these i'd like to point out that although the school has recently increased in size there has been NO improvement or solution to the parking situation at the school. It was bad 2 years ago but gets incrementally worse EVERY term. Parents from Rodmell will drive their children in to schools and there just isnt space. It is dangerous for the children and frustrating and annoying for local residents and businesses. If you have a solution for this in mind it would be good to let the local populace know.
- 3) Widening the catchment area increases traffic on all routes to the school as well adding to the often dangerous position outside school during peak times.

Surely the green strategy should consider the impact of this move as well as helping communities keep local and help support local village communities rather developing a commuter culture for children commuting to school, commuting to see their friends. The local villages since loosing Rodmell should be supported in helping the children from the local area only.

- 4) We moved our child from a class of 30 plus where she was struggling with her education to the smaller village school of iford and Kingston where class sizes were significantly smaller with an increase in teachers and assistants per child. She has thrived at this school but the increase has caused some issues already. Particularly with the support in the class room where funding reductions and class increases are having significant knock on effects for some of the children. We pay for an external maths tutor, drama lessons to help with her lack of confidence thanks to her previous school and she participated in music which has really helped support her personal well being and mental health after bulling at her previous school so that she is not an additional burden on the school. The school previous had a two tier class room system rather than just single year groups which was a huge benefit to our daughter. You simply cannot increase numbers and decrease funding at the same time. There are other local schools that could also share in the transfer of pupils from rodmeell but increasing the funding would be of the best thing for both the school and the current and future pupils. The school will I am sure cope but you are robbing current pupils of the support that they need that makes them happy well rounded educated children.

## Appendix 3c) Ditchling and Streat villages (secondary school area)

### 3. Is the proposal to include the villages of Ditchling and Streat in the community area for Chailey Secondary School to create a shared area with Priory School acceptable?

Yes – 35 (85.4%)

No – 6 (14.6%)

#### Comments received (14)

- 1) Chailey School already works closely with Ditchling as part of a group of local schools. We provide G and T maths, sporting competitions and other curriculum enrichment. Children are used to us, our buildings and some of our staff. We do draw some children from this area already. there is direct transport from the villages to us.
- 2) As the primary school for Streat Lane is Plumpton it makes sense for the option for all families to consider Chailey or Downlands. This will keep the cohort together.
- 3) It is vital that this proposal is adopted in order to provide student choice (and the consequential transport links for children in Ditchling. There are already strong ties between Chailey and Ditchling (e.g. sports competitions, G and T maths etc.) so not adopting this proposal would be detrimental.

Additionally, the area is currently a shared area between Priory and Downlands Schools but there is not a direct public transport route for students to get from the Ditchling area to Priory.

- 4) However lots of children at Ditchling still need to be within Downlands catchment in Hassocks as it enables them to walk to school. I would answer no if this meant it affected children from Ditchling not having priority in distance for Downlands.
- 5) Ditchling Primary School falls into the grouping of Newick, Plumpton, Chailey St Peters, Fletching, Barcombe, Wivelsfield, Forest Row, Hamsey and Danehill. They share primary sports leadership from Chailey School and high achieving Maths students in Y6 from Ditchling come on Friday mornings to an able maths group alongside other primary children from the cluster. Yet, when it comes to secondary schools they are not given a travel supported option to go to Chailey.
- 6) Very important that Ditchling students are supported (by transport?) in their desire to attend Chailey School. It has a distinctive ethos and being a smaller-than average secondary school is the preferred and most appropriate choice for many families. There should be no barriers preventing them choosing Chailey especially if it incurs extra costs on parents.
- 7) In the last few years no child who attended Ditchling (St Margaret's) CE Primary school has attended either Priory (or Chailey) Secondary schools. Priory is further away from Ditchling and Streat than either Chailey or Downlands. It does not make sense for parents, for reasons relating to time, social grouping, transport, cost or environmental factors, for their children to go to Priory. Priory have made no attempt to advertise their school in Ditchling for a number of years; my understanding is that they are already oversubscribed. Ditchling (St Margaret's) already works in partnership with Chailey secondary who provide curriculum support/activities for schools' in the cluster within which Ditchling works closely. This means the children have some experience of Chailey which would ease transition if they were to attend this school.
- 8) My son started at Chailey in September 2017. We live in Ditchling and are strongly in favour this change. Lewes Priory is much further away. If my son were to attend an after school club and I needed to come and collect him, this would be an hour's round trip, where it is half that for me travelling to Chailey. Logistically very difficult. We feel part of Chailey community, as this school provides so much support for the surrounding rural primary schools.

- 9) It is by far the most sensible thing to do to assist Ditchling and Streat children to attend Chailey Secondary. Lewes is further to travel and far more awkward.
- 10) We would like to ensure that the whole of Streat falls in the area for Chailey School. We are not aware of any children in Streat having attended school in Lewes. At present Streat is split across the two areas.
- 11) 1 - The information you are providing above is wrong! A simple google search reveals the distance from Ditchling to Lewes is closer than from Ditchling to Chailey! Ditchling to Lewes = 7.8 miles & Ditchling to Chailey = 8.6 miles. Streat is also nearer Lewes than Chailey...
  - 2 - Currently Chailey always takes children from Ditchling and in 10 years I haven't been aware of a situation regarding Chailey being so oversubscribed that Ditchling kids cannot attend. So this argument doesn't really give any more benefit to residents of Ditchling. If you read between the lines what it is actually happening is the council want to save on transport costs for the children from Ditchling who currently attend Priory. So in my opinion the Chailey situation is not relevant as a reason here for adding it into a shared community area.
  - 3 - Children from a small village like Ditchling benefit hugely from the chance to attend a town school rather than another rural school like Chailey where there is nothing to do after school for teenagers. In Lewes they have access to sports, shops, social activities etc which they don't in their village.
  - 4 - If a school bus was in place for Ditchling & Streat village children to attend Priory (as there was in years previously) many more kids would attend Priory - perhaps this is more cost effective than taxis?
- 12) This should definitely be done!
- 13) In recent years, no children from Ditchling Primary have gone to Priory School, whereas a number have gone on to attend Chailey. The Priory School is not an attractive option for parents, primarily because of the distance and travel difficulties. I understand it is also currently oversubscribed. Ditchling and Chailey schools already work together in a number of areas (curriculum support, sporting activities etc.). The change to the community area would further strengthen this relationship.
- 14) In short it would be helpful if Ditchling became Chailey catchment as transport would then be free.

#### **Appendix 3d- comments on PANs (excluding Robertsbridge) and admission arrangements generally**

##### **4. Comments on Proposed Admission Numbers at any school (10)**

- 1) The Polegate change may have an impact on our intake, as we take pupils from the Polegate area currently.
- 2) The proposed increase at Polegate could adversely affect Hankham as the school has at present, as in the past, pupils living in Polegate.
- 3) All acceptable.
- 4) Ditchling governors should be supported since they know their area and with projected extra housing in the wider area it makes sense to look to the future.
- 5) I would support the Governors in increasing the PAN to 24 of Ditchling (St Margaret's) CE.
- 6) Makes sense having 30 at Forest Row as having previously tried to sort out class structure at Forest Row for over 7 years this will solve many problems.
- 7) I can only assume that the PAN has been increased due to the increased demand by the increased housing that is happening across the county. This seems fair and

reasonable, providing an increase in one school does not strip a neighbouring school of its expected numbers and force closure. This would be a false economy.

- 8) Forest Row CoE Primary School  
I am in agreement with the PAN coming down to 30 - as the Governors and the Head Mistress have agreed. As the Governors and Head Mistress states, "it is a well considered" move at this stage of the schools development. The fact the PAN can be adjusted back to 45 "at any time" in the future is a wise 'fallback'.
- 9) I support the increase in numbers for Ditchling CE primary school. It is a thriving successful primary school and schools in the neighbouring villages of Hassocks and Hurstpierpoint are oversubscribed.
- 10) I support the increase from 20 to 24 at Ditchling Primary.

#### **5. Comments on the co-ordinated schemes (2)**

- 1) All acceptable.
- 2) no, I only really wanted to comment on the school areas proposed merging in Ditchling and Streat.

#### **4. Are the proposed admissions criteria acceptable?**

Yes – 30 (73.2%)

No – 2 (4.9%)

Not answered – 9 (21.9%)

#### **Comments received (4)**

- 7) Straight-line measures of distance are not logical in rural areas. Distance ought to be measured according to viable roads and bus routes. If criteria are too prescribed where is the element of parental choice?
- 8) The "equal preference" system needs more clear explanation to parents when choosing one school over another.
- 9) The shortened application time is crazy as parents struggle to fit in viewings around work as it is.
- 10) I live on the East Sussex side of Ashurst Wood, a village in West Sussex with a Primary School. My eldest child attends Forest Row CoE Primary School in Forest Row, East Sussex and my youngest is due to begin Reception there for 2018/2019. Catchment areas are not clearly defined, especially for the weird geographic situation of my home and nearest school. Therefore, I do not know if we fall under criteria 2 or 4 in the changes you propose.