

**SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT BY LOCAL
AUTHORITY**

**Summary results of the consultations undertaken by
the LA with key stakeholders between 1 June and 14 July**

Consultation meetings (two) with parents of Penhill Primary School held on 9 June

Key issues/questions/concerns raised:

- Will the school remain on the existing site?
- If this proposal does not go ahead, will the same amount of funding still be available to improve the school premises?
- Concerns about whether the new school will look after children with disabilities in the same way that Penhill Primary School currently does.
- Why make changes when Penhill Primary School is working well for the children, with such dedicated teachers?
- Concerns expressed about how well the Academy is operating.
- Will the existing Head Teacher remain if the school becomes part of the Academy and will there be jobs for all the staff? We could lose good teachers we have.
- Instead of one teacher for a class, will there be different teachers for different subjects?
- Education is being run as a business.
- What is there to stop ULT walking away? What could the LA do?
- Why can't the LA increase the budget?
- The Government funds the Academy but a change of Government could mean Academies receiving the same money as other schools.
- Transport to the Academy site is a big issue.
- It is felt that this is considered a sink estate.

Consultation meeting with the Governing Body of Penhill Primary School held on 9 June

Key issues/questions/concerns raised:

- Staff morale is at rock bottom and people are hitting out because they do not understand.
- Concern about ULT's lack of primary track record – where is the proven expertise?
- Timescale is too short.
- Where is the funding coming from and will it be given regardless of whether the School becomes part of the Academy?
- Key issues are motivation, timing and lack of facts
- We want to explore the option of Trust Status

Consultation meeting with staff of Penhill Primary School held on 9 June

Key issues/questions/concerns raised:

- Questioned independence of consultation.
- Why does it have to happen so quickly?
- How can standards be raised within the School when the Academy has such a low opinion of the Penhill parents?
- The LA believed in extending the Academy to raise standards but what happens if they are not raised? It is too early for evidence from the Academy.
- Research shows children do best in a smaller setting, so how is being one of 2,000 better for children? The School's Senior Management Team knows every child.
- Will there be a Penhill football team or do they have to compete for Academy places? What about the Penhill Christmas play?
- The LA failed and will be rid of the School if it becomes part of the Academy.
- This proposal is based only on Ofsted results.
- Why was Penhill not included in the Academy earlier?
- When will Seven Fields and Gorse Hill Schools be part of the Academy?
- Is Trust status going to be looked at alongside the Academy?
- If the School closes, when do we need to resign? The decision to close would be taken after the cut-off date for resignation.
- Under TUPE we can object to going across.

Consultation meeting with local residents/community of Penhill held on 12 June

Key issues/questions/concerns raised:

- Lack of direct consultation with Penhill Forum.
- Academy seen as being run on faith-based lines by ULT.
- Does the Academy have the right to change its admission policy?
- How does breaking up traditional Year groups benefit gifted and less able children?
- Academy has no proven track record.
- How are the Governors chosen and to whom are the Academy staff accountable?
- Who is ULT responsible to?
- Loss of control by local people.
- Concern about the School being open 24/7 to community and youth groups.
- Concern about land and playing fields being sold off.
- Resentment that LA would refurbish building before handing over to ULT.
- Penhill has lacked investment from the LA for many years.
- Why are other options not being considered?

Response forms received

<i>Type of Respondent</i>	<i>Support</i>	<i>Do not support</i>
Parent	17	193
Staff	0	55
Governor	0	9
Local resident	12	99
Other	1	1
<i>Total</i>	30	357

NB:

There were 2,800 consultation documents, including response forms, delivered across Penhill on the weekend of 31 May and 1 June and a total of 3,500 sent to all residents and stakeholders. 387 forms were returned, a response rate of 11%.

Summary of issues and concerns raised on response forms:

- This will take away parents' choice.
- Concerns over Penhill moving to the Pinehurst site.
- Lack of evidence the Academy will raise standards. No time to prove itself.
- Penhill should stay independent of the Academy.
- Proposal is an admission of the LA that they do not have the capacity of aspiration to raise standards of Penhill. LA want to remove Penhill from the tables.
- Lack of Primary focus in Academy.
- Parents have the full support of the headteacher and staff at Penhill.
- Swindon education is below the national average.
- I hear nothing positive about the Academy.
- Penhill is successful and has good levels of education.
- Penhill is at the centre of the community and provides community based services.
- Penhill School has a large number of students with Special Educational Needs (55%).
- Parents are very happy with the teaching methods and the children are working well. Would the Academy provide the same level of support?
- Other options to explore still – e.g. Trust Status?
- Concerns over management and organisation of the Academy.
- The last OfSTED report was a good one.
- I think this will be a good opportunity.
- Land surrounding the school could be cleared for housing.
- Penhill School needs improvements.
- I feel my child will learn more in the Academy.
- Expansion of the Academy should take in Seven Fields and Gorse Hill.
- The Penhill area in general needs money spending on areas and investment.

- The consultation is rushed.
- The Academy will be too large.

Petition

A 432 signature petition was delivered to the Council on 11th July regarding the Academy proposal. It states that:

“We the undersigned do not believe that Penhill Primary School should be closed and become part of Swindon Academy. We would like to remain as our school in our community. We feel we would be seen as the poor relation in comparison to the Academy, as they will have a new build and state of the art facilities. Our children will not benefit from these facilities whilst they are based at the Penhill site”.

Response for Penhill Primary School Governing Body

This was received on 13th July attached as **Annex A**.

Letters from Trade Union and The Academy

Letters received from UNISON, GMB and the Principal of The Academy are attached as **Annex B**.