

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Education
Date of Decision:	20 January 2016
Decision Title:	Amalgamation of Vigo Infant and Vigo Junior schools
Decision Reference:	7117
Report From:	Interim Director of Children's Services

Contact name: Chris Holt – Programme Manager, Children's Services

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1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. This paper reports on the outcome of the public consultation on the proposal to amalgamate Vigo Infant and Vigo Junior Schools to form a primary school, through the closure of the junior school and extending the infant school's age range to form a primary school for ages 4-11.
- 1.2. The proposal came about following a request from both schools' governing bodies to consult with the schools' community and other interested parties on the creation of a primary school from the existing infant and junior schools.

2. Contextual information

- 2.1. Vigo Junior School was inspected by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted) in October 2012 and was judged to require improvement in the achievement of pupils, the quality of teaching and in leadership and management. The latest inspection by Ofsted in October 2014 judged the school to require special measures as it was failing to provide an adequate education for its pupils. Successive monitoring visits by Ofsted in May and October 2015 concluded that the school is not improving rapidly enough.
- 2.2. Vigo Infant School was inspected by Ofsted in July 2013 and judged to require improvement in the achievement of pupils, the quality of teaching and in leadership and management. The latest inspection in April 2015 judged the school to be good in all aspects.
- 2.3. In July 2015 the Chair of Governors of both Vigo Infant and Vigo Junior schools wrote on behalf of both governing bodies to the Executive Member for Education. The letter from the junior school governing body acknowledged that the school has been underperforming for a number of years and set out the governing body's view that a fresh start was needed through the creation of an all through primary school. The letter is attached at Appendix 1

- 2.4. The letter from the infant school governing body referred to the latest Ofsted judgement of “good” and expressed the view that it would make sense to have an all through primary school. The letter set out a number of perceived advantages and is attached at Appendix 2.
- 2.5. Under the leadership of the infant school headteacher the school has moved from an Ofsted judgement in July 2013 of “requires improvement” to a judgement of “good” in April 2015. The infant school headteacher took up the post of executive headteacher of both Vigo Infant and Junior Schools in June 2015.
- 2.6. Both Vigo schools were recently enlarged from 2 forms of entry (fe) to 3fe for September 2015 admissions and beyond. The schools are co-located in joined buildings.
- 2.7. Both Vigo Infant and Vigo Junior schools have specialist resourced provision for children with speech language and communication needs. This provision would continue in an amalgamated primary school.
- 2.8. Current and forecast pupil numbers at the schools are:

Year	Vigo Infant			Vigo Junior				Total
	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	
2015/16	76	59	60	84	60	60	60	459
2016/17	67	82	62	57	88	62	65	484
2017/18	72	71	83	59	60	89	66	499
2018/19	76	77	74	79	64	62	94	526
2019/20	84	82	81	71	84	67	68	539
2020/21	88	88	83	78	73	85	70	565

3. Consultation

- 3.1. The letter to consultees containing the schedule of meetings and drop-in sessions is attached at Appendix 3. The list of consultees is attached at Appendix 4.
- 3.2. The two consultation meetings were attended by six parents and one grandparent of children at the Vigo schools, together with three governors. The two drop-in sessions were attended by four parents and one governor.
- 3.3. There were no written responses to the consultation.
- 3.4. In an effort to engage parents the executive headteacher of Vigo Infant and Vigo Junior schools canvassed parents at drop-off and pick-up times as to whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposal to amalgamate the

schools. Of the 98 parents approached 87 were in favour of the proposal 1 was against and 10 were unsure.

- 3.5. As stated in sections 2.3 and 2.4 both Vigo Infant and Vigo Junior Schools' governing bodies are in support of the proposal to amalgamate the schools to form a primary school through the closure of the junior school and change in age range of the infant school.

4. Summary of issues and comments raised by consultees (c) and responses (r)

- 4.1. (c) One parent queried how a primary school would work in practice. Would there still be separate letters to parents for infant and junior age children? Would there be separate playgrounds? If the junior school closes what happens to the children on roll at the time of closure and to the children in the infant school who are due to join the junior school?

(r) There will be one office. Parents with children of both infant and junior age at the all-through primary school would receive a single letter in matters relating to the whole school.

The various outdoor play areas would be managed to enable younger children to play safely and afford the opportunity for more robust play, such as ball games, to take place safely.

Children on the roll of the junior school at the time of closure would automatically transfer to the primary school and children holding an offer to start in the junior school can attend the primary school.

- 4.2. (c) One parent queried how school start and finish times would operate in a primary school, given the staggered finishing times between infant and junior schools currently in operation to allow parents to pick up children from both schools.

(r) Arrangements will be put in place to enable parents to pick-up their infant and junior age children without the need to be in two places at once.

- 4.3. (c) A number of parents raised the issue of school uniform and queried whether the present arrangement of different colour sweatshirts, badged separately for infant and junior schools, would change as this would be a cost to parents.

(r) Should the amalgamation go ahead it is intended that there would be a different colour sweatshirt for the primary school. This would be provided by the school for current pupils who will be on the roll of the school in September 2016.

- 4.4. (c) One parent asked what would happen with regard to the present Ofsted judgement of the junior school requiring special measures in the event of amalgamation and closure of the junior school.

(r) The school would no longer be in existence along with any Ofsted judgement.

4.5. (c) Another parent queried whether the removal of the Ofsted judgement, as a result of the closure of the junior school, would mean that the support from the local authority to improve key stage 2 pupil achievement would cease.

(r) No absolutely not. The planned support would continue whatever the decision regarding amalgamation. If amalgamation happens, as a newly formed primary school it is expected that it would be inspected within 18 – 24 months of the primary school being established.

4.6. (c) All the parents and governors who attended the consultation meetings and drop-in sessions were of the view that amalgamation of the two schools made sound sense and were in support of the proposal.

5. Views of the local County Councillor

5.1. The local County Councillor believes the amalgamation of the schools to be a logical step, especially given that both governing bodies support it. Concern was expressed regarding crossing the road safely outside the school as parents and children do not all cross the road at the school crossing patrol point. A query was raised regarding the possible extension of the existing kerb railing outside the school, designed to direct people to a single crossing point.

6 Financial impact

6.1. The revenue implications affect both the school and resourced provision budget shares. The two schools will receive a pro-rata budget share for the period 1 April to 31 August 2016. From 1 September 2016, Vigo infant will be issued with a revised budget share that incorporates the junior children, under the name of Vigo Primary school.

6.2. The following information is based on minimal changes to the current funding arrangements. However, it is anticipated that there will be reforms to school funding from 2017/18 with consultations being announced by the DfE in the Spring of 2016. As such the detail regarding any reform is not yet known.

6.3. The largest impact will be the loss of the junior school lump sum, which is currently £175,000 per school. However, as a protection for amalgamating schools and to acknowledge the loss of one of the lump sums, Vigo Primary will receive additional funding for one year in 2017/18 that is equivalent to 85% of the two combined lump sums.

6.4. The infant school is currently in receipt of minimum funding guarantee (MFG), which is a per pupil protection that had arisen due to historical formula changes. The junior school is currently in receipt of a capped gain, which is a reduction in per pupil funding (essentially the opposite to MFG) that had arisen as a result of historical formula changes. However, from 2016/17 both of these will have worked their way out of the budget share and no MFG or Cap will apply to the Primary school (on the assumption of no pupil characteristic changes).

- 6.5. Additional items incurred by the re-organisation (eg. new school signage) will be funded via the re-organisation fund from within the growth fund, as detailed within the Hampshire School Funding Policy Pack
- 6.6. The resourced provision will continue to be funded at £10,000 per agreed place plus top-up funding, payable upon the actual number of pupils
- 6.7. As at April 2015, both schools held a surplus balance; the infant's at £139,000 and the junior's at £104,000. Any surplus of a closing school will follow the pupils and therefore the junior's surplus balance will be transferred to the primary school.
- 6.8. A working party, which consists of Governors from both the junior and infant schools, is shortly due to undertake a review of the staffing structure and opportunities for efficiency savings will be explored.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1. Both Vigo Infant and Vigo Junior schools' governing bodies want the schools to amalgamate to form an all through primary school.
- 7.2. There is a clear consensus amongst parents who have responded to the consultation in favour of the proposal to amalgamate.
- 7.3. Both schools are under the leadership of a single headteacher who has a proven track record of school improvement, having led the infant school from a "requires improvement" Ofsted judgement to one of "good".
- 7.4. Pupils can achieve well in both infant and junior schools and primary schools. However there are many advantages to all through models of primary education such as:
 - A consistent approach to the ways in which children are taught.
 - Removal of the need for parents to apply for a place at the junior school.
 - Greater continuity in planning the curriculum across the stages of education so that pupils make the best possible progress in learning.
 - Removal of the potential disruption to children's education when transferring from infant to junior.
 - Enhancement of teachers' professional development through increased opportunities to teach across a wider age range within the same school.
 - Parents are able to develop a longer term relationship with the school.
 - Gives children the opportunity to work with or alongside younger or older pupils allowing them to put their own learning in context and develop important social skills.
- 7.5. The amalgamation of Vigo Infant and Junior schools and the creation of a primary school is the option most likely to be successful in effectively bringing about rapid improvement in the quality of provision for key stage two pupils.

8. Recommendations

It is recommended that:

- 8.1. Public notices be published in accordance with Sections 15 and 10 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to:
 - a) Discontinue Vigo Junior School with effect from 31 August 2016.
 - b) Establish a community primary school for up to 630 pupils by enlarging Vigo Infant School through the utilisation of Vigo Junior School's site and buildings, and extension of Vigo Infant School's age range to form a primary school for ages 4-11, with effect from 1 September 2016.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Corporate Strategy

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	No
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	Yes
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	No
Corporate Business plan link number (if appropriate):	

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
None		
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u>		<u>Date</u>
Education and Inspections Act 2006		8/11/2006

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

Equalities have been considered and no adverse impact identified

- **Impact on Crime and Disorder:**

The recommendations will have no impact on crime and disorder

- **Climate Change:**

How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

No impact has been identified

How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

No specific measures have been identified

Appendix 1

Dear Councillor Edgar

I write on behalf of the governing body of Vigo Junior School, following the second visit by HMI and a subsequent meeting of the governors.

The school has been underperforming for some long while and children have not been best served. It is a school that has been in and out of Ofsted category.

Over the years it has gained an unenviable reputation for failing children.

Following exhaustive discussions, the governors have determined that the cycle of failure must be broken for the sake of children currently at the school and for those yet to come.

Some measures have already been put in place. An executive headteacher has been appointed to drive forward the necessary changes. She is currently the headteacher of the infant school and now has responsibility for both sites. The staffing structure is being adjusted to strengthen the leadership team and staff from the infant school are bringing their expertise to the junior school to try to raise standards of teaching.

These measures are starting to have an impact but they cannot erase the perception of failure that hangs over the school. Therefore governors have come to the conclusion and voted formally that the way forward for the school and the wellbeing of the children would be to create an all through primary school with the infant school.

The prospect of one school, one headteacher and one governing body would represent a fresh start for the school, the children, parents and all other stakeholders. We believe that this arrangement would receive strong backing from parents and the infant school, and we would like to pursue this more formally.

Yours sincerely

Dorothea Georgeson

Chair of Governors – Vigo Junior School

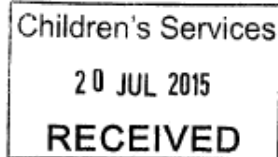


the best place to be

Vigo Infant School

www.vigo-inf.hants.sch.uk

*Response due 31/7
Sent to David Haden
138720*



14 July 2015

Dear Councillor Edgar

I write on behalf of the governing body of Vigo Infant School, following discussions we have held regarding the future of our school.

In a matter of just two years our headteacher, Mrs Perriam, has raised the standard of teaching and the morale of staff to produce a school that Ofsted has judged to be Good. She is now overseeing the improvement of the junior school in her role as interim executive headteacher.

Governors have deliberated long and hard about the future of the schools and have come to the conclusion that it makes absolute sense to have one all through primary school rather than two separate schools.

The advantages would be many and varied and they include:-

- No need for parents to apply for places in year 3
- A smooth transition for children as they enter Key Stage 2
- One governing body overseeing the whole operation
- Economies of scale allowing the school to operate more efficiently.
- One vision of excellence to drive up standards and to steer the school through the entire primary phase.

The commitment that Mrs Perriam has shown to the children of Vigo schools has been evidenced in the improved picture of the infant school. We owe it to our children to continue the good work throughout these vital first years at school, so that they are ready to enter secondary school at the end of Year 6.

We would like permission to extend the age range of the school from 4 – 7 to 4 – 11. And we would welcome your assistance in bringing this move about.

Yours sincerely

D. Georgeson

Dorothea Georgeson
Chair of governors – Vigo Infant School

Five Schools' Campus, Vigo Road, Andover, Hants, SP10 1JZ

Telephone : 01264 365166 Fax : 01264 354299

Executive Headteacher Vigo Infant and Junior Schools : Mrs Anne Perriam : email : A.Perriam@vigo-inf.hants.sch.uk

Admin Manager : Mrs Val Tuffrey : email : V.Tuffrey@vigo-inf.hants.sch.uk

Appendix 3



*Children's Services Department
Elizabeth II Court North,
Winchester
Hampshire SO23 8UG*

Telephone 0300 555 1384
Fax 01962 842355
Textphone 0845 603 5625

Consultees

Enquiries to	Chris Holt	My reference	CH/kmb
Direct Line	01962 845673	Your reference	
Date	19 October 2015	E-mail	chris.holt@hants.gov.uk

Dear Consultee,

Amalgamation of Vigo Infant and Junior Schools – Consultation

The governing bodies of Vigo Infant and Vigo Junior schools have requested that Hampshire County Council consult with the schools' community and other interested parties on a proposal to amalgamate Vigo infant and junior schools to form a primary school. This would be achieved through the closure of the junior school and extending the age range of the infant school from 4-7 years to 4-11 years.

The Consultation

This consultation will run until 4 December 2015. Officers will then take into account all the consultation responses before deciding whether or not to recommend that the proposal should continue to the formal publication stage.

If so a report will be taken to the Executive Member for Education for approval to the publication of a statutory notice setting out Hampshire County Council's intention to close Vigo junior school and extend the age range of Vigo infant school to form a primary school. The anticipated implementation date would be 1 September 2016. Should a notice be published there will then be a four week period during which representations can be made. Any representations will then be taken into consideration before the County Council decides whether or not to proceed with the amalgamation of Vigo infant and junior schools.

*Deputy Chief Executive & Director of
Children's Services*
John Coughlan CBE

Further information /How can my views be made?

Consultation meetings have been arranged as follows:

6pm on 2 November at Vigo Junior School

3:15pm on 3 November at Vigo Infant School

where Hampshire County Council officers, the Chair of Governors and the Headteacher will set out the reasons for the proposal and receive questions and comments.

Drop-in sessions have been arranged as follows:

6pm on 9 November at Vigo Infant School

3:15pm on 10 November at Vigo Junior School

where you will be able to discuss the proposal with officers.

There is also a website setting out the details of the consultation at the link below:

www.hants.gov.uk/vigoinfantandjunior-consultation

If you are unable to attend any of the consultation meetings/drop-ins or visit the above website and wish to make a comment, then please write to Chris Holt, Children's Services Department, Ell Court North, Winchester, Hampshire, SO23 8UG or email: chris.holt@hants.gov.uk by **4 December 2015**.

Yours sincerely



Chris Holt
Programme Manager
Children's Services Department

Appendix 4 - Vigo consultees

Abbots Ann Primary School
Amport Primary School
Andover Primary School
Anton Infant School
Anton Junior School
ASCL (Regional Official)
ATL (Assistant Secretary)
ATL (Regional Official)
Balksbury Infant School
Balksbury Junior School
Cllr for Andover West
Clatford Primary School
Endeavour Primary School
GMB representative
Grateley Primary School
Hatherden Primary School
Cllr for Andover South
Hurstbourne Tarrant Primary School
Director of Education Portsmouth and
Winchester Diocese
Knights Enham Infant School
Knights Enham Junior School
Longparish Primary School
Local MP
NAHT representative
NASUWT representative
NUT representative
Pilgrims Cross Primary School
Portway Infant School
Portway Junior School
Cllr for Andover North
Roman Way Primary School
Smannell and Enham Primary School
St John the Baptist Primary School
TLP representative
Chief Executive TVBC
Unison representative
Unite representative
Interim Director of Schools Catholic
Diocese of Portsmouth
Vernum Dean Gillums Primary School
Voice representative
Wherwell Primary School
Vigo schools' parents and staff