

## APPENDIX 2 - Representations Received

### Representation 1

Road  
Portsmouth

08<sup>th</sup> September 2016

REF:AJ007 Change in designation of Redwood Park School – statutory consultation

To Janet Andrews

Hello my son [REDACTED] started Redwood Park yesterday.

I have been shocked and disappointed regarding the letter I received yesterday (his first day at the school) ref:AJ007 dated 1<sup>st</sup> Sept 2016.

I chose Redwood over Mary Rose as I was informed that Mary Rose was for more physical and complex needs, and that [REDACTED] would be correctly placed at Redwood, I even made a point of speaking to the Head teacher at Cliffdale to make sure.

I'm unsure as to why we would need another school for more complex needs as Mary Rose already offers this, and this proposal seems to benefit the majority SLD and ASC and ignore the minority MLD.

My son did attend mainstream up until approx. 2 years ago.

The main reasons I decided to change his school, firstly his home tutoring was cut back, and then stopped within a very short time. This then left his whole education in the hands of Langstone Juniors. He did have a one to one, with a very nice lady, but she didn't have the qualifications to teach [REDACTED] and although in [REDACTED] statement he should have had an hour a day of qualified teaching this just didn't happen, and with all the will in the world the teacher just wouldn't of had the time to do so in such a full busy class. My son's grades just didn't move and was still at a P level when he left the school. I felt like I didn't have a voice and that he was stuck. The school didn't even have the facilities for PE lessons and at one point my son was told by a sports tutor I have a job for you [REDACTED] you can hold the pencils and paper during the PE lesson, my son told me what had happened after school the same day, I did contact the school about the matter. Over the months I saw changes in my son, he would come out of school very lethargic, as if he hadn't been educationally stimulated all day and wouldn't really tell me much about his day. I again called yourselves and spoke with [REDACTED] on several occasions, I tried to get [REDACTED] into Cliffdale but was told, no space available at the time and then I could appeal, which I did. Because things were getting desperate [REDACTED] mentioned about outreach teachers going into langstone to help and support the teachers, a lady called [REDACTED] came out to Langstone and on the same day I have a call to say that [REDACTED] needed to be in Cliffdale. Hope this gives you a rough account of things.

The whole of point of writing to you, is finding out what happens to the children like my son with MLD. As reading your letter tells me that you be closing the doors on the children like my son and moving them into mainstream. (Which we are living proof it just doesn't work)

Your letter reference AJ007 states Redwood park school pupils will continue to be placed at the school and will continue to have all their educational needs met.

However the proposal states that pupils would continue to be placed there as long as the school continues to meet their educational needs. (THESE ARE TWO DIFFERENT SENTENCES WITH TWO DIFFERENT OUTCOMES) .

So what you are stating is when you have enough pupils with SLD and ASC the school will not meet children with MLD needs and move them out to mainstream as the school will not meet their educational needs.

At present [REDACTED] class has eight children, how will this work with the changes will the school place children into his class with more complex needs.

I feel like I have been completely kept in the dark about these changes and on the first day have this proposal which has obviously in the pipeline for some time, It should have been discussed and mentioned on the open day, all I have told that it was changing to an academy.

So within less than two months (1st November 2016) this could all be implemented.

So what are you proposing for my son [REDACTED] that is not mainstream?

Please feel free to look at my son's statement.

A worried parent.

[REDACTED]

### *Response to representation 1*

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**Director of Children's Services**

01 September 2016

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Guildhall Square  
Portsmouth  
PO1 2EA  
Phone: 023 9284 1226  
Ref: AJ007-2

Dear [REDACTED]

**Re: Change in designation of Redwood Park School - statutory consultation**

Thank you for your letter regarding the proposal to change the type of need that Redwood Park caters for.

The proposed change in the designation of Redwood Park School to a school for children with complex needs and autism has been put forward partly because the children who are already attending the school have more complex special educational needs and are more likely to have autism spectrum conditions than when the school was originally designated.

Mainstream schools are funded, supported and skilled to educate the vast majority of children, including many with special educational needs. Around half of the children with an Education Health and Care Plan will continue to be educated within a mainstream school and most will make good progress in these settings.

I am sorry to hear that your son's experience of mainstream was not a positive one.

At each annual review of any Education Health and Care Plan it is important to consider whether the educational placement remains appropriate, however I want to reassure you that we are not seeking to move any children who are currently placed at Redwood Park School, just because of a change in designation of the school.

The school will continue to offer education suitable to meet the needs of pupils with a variety of special educational needs.

Yours faithfully

## Representation 2

Dear Ms Andrews

Regarding the above. Having read the paperwork sent out to parents early in September my overriding feeling is that this has been handled very secretively. I can understand the council feels the need to change the designation and the reasons behind it, even if they are misguided but the way in which this consultation has been handled is very disappointing. The first Redwood parents knew was one and a half days before the end of the summer term with a letter coming home (from those children who manage to bring a letter home intact) then no mention all summer holidays, with plenty of time for parents to stew about it all then as soon as school starts (year 7 parents!) who won't have known anything about it would have been very shocked to receive your letter. There has been no attempt by the School to offer any explanations or discussion.

I read that the proposal is inexorably linked to Redwood becoming an academy under Solent Academy Trust but bearing in mind parents WERE consulted about that, it's very underhand to say now, that it's inexorably linked when this would have been known all along.

Cliffdale, I'm reliably informed, has not been part of the consultation, therefore I can only assume the council sees no need to prepare parents for what's ahead, which again is secretive.

The fact is that many mainstream schools are woefully ill prepared for an influx of MLD children and to state that they are is I feel just wishful thinking.

After everything that families have been through this last year or so with the disruption, rumours and upset that has been Redwood, we were starting to feel at last things were being turned around in a positive manner. I feel the way this consultation is being handled is a big step back and will only serve to make parents distrustful of the Portsmouth special schools system. I'm afraid this an opportunity missed to build trust.

Yours sincerely

 Redwood parent and  
Co-chair of Empowering Children and Families Forum