

Federation of Pinvin C of E First
School and St Nicholas C of E Middle
School, Pinvin

Main Street, Pinvin, Worcestershire WR10 2ER

Executive Headteacher Mr Andrew J Best



Dear Colleagues,

Pinvin Federation Governors' Response to the Change in Age Consultation

As Governors of the Pinvin Federation, we have a responsibility to keep an open mind on any change that we believe may improve outcomes for the children in our area. Having reviewed the Avonreach Academy's proposal (to admit students at Year 7 in September 2021 and to extend provision in three of the Avonreach first schools to years 5 and 6), our view is that we **STRONGLY OPPOSE** the change based on the following arguments:

No Strong Evidence that Two-Tier is a Better System

Our view has not changed from the previous proposal put forward by Pershore High School in 2014. At that time, our view was that the educational arguments put forward were not persuasive and that any perceived benefits would be outweighed by educational, organisational and financial impacts on the Pinvin Federation, the Avonreach Cluster and the wider Pershore Pyramid.

The new proposal although slightly different in its format offers no additional research to support a two tier approach. Ofsted has recently submitted an article "Ofsted's findings about the school curriculum" by Sean Harford on the GOV.UK website that challenged whether reducing KS3 to 2 years (to allow an extra year to prepare for GCSEs) is beneficial to our pupils' education.

Further rationale supporting a three-tier system has been included in a separate document submitted by Andrew Best, the Pinvin Federation and Himbleton First School Executive Head, which the governors fully support.

Offering a Choice Does Not Help

Our opinion is that the option to offer Year 7 education at the High School will be counterproductive and will benefit neither the pupils nor other schools outside of the Avonreach Academy. Either, with the risk of losing a place at year 8, parents will choose to send their children to the High School earlier than they would have done, causing organisational and financial impacts to the middle schools. Or, they will not and a further transition will take place in the High School at Year 8 for those that joined in Year 7, causing the educational disruption you were keen to avoid. Either way offering a choice does not offer a beneficial alternative.

Better Options are Available

Our families value St. Nicholas as a vital stepping stone between First and High Schools. They prefer the current 3-tier system; and 98.2% of Federation parents who have submitted a response to the consultation are against the change.

We are satisfied that our Federation, as part of the 3-tier system, already provides strong education and social outcomes for our pupils and we have evidence, through our GL testing, that since the start of the Federation the outcomes for our pupils are improving.

So that we can reduce any disruption to the continuity of learning as pupils move from Middle Schools to the High School, we propose that the starting point should be improved collaboration between the schools in the pyramid to look at options of making this transition as seamless as possible. Clive Corbett, during the consultation meeting at the High School in November, cited a need for the schools to sit down together and discuss the situation. So why don't we start now and consider alternatives before we go down a route that will have significant, adverse impacts on the schools in our pyramid?

We want to spend our time and resources continuing to improve so that as the children move through the first schools and the middle school they are in the best position possible to succeed at high school.

Best regards,

Alison Cartwright
Nick Watkins
Co-chair of Governors, Pinvin Federation