

## **Secondary School Reorganisation – Cabinet meeting 21<sup>st</sup> July 2010**

My name is Martin Powell. I am the parent of two primary school age girls and one boy, as well as being a primary school governor.

Firstly, having spent over a year working with councillors and parents in Brighton on school admissions a few years ago, where the fallout from the local authority shutting a school was different areas of the city at each others throats, I welcome that all the different school campaign groups in Bath have recognised each other's right to fight for a local secondary school in their area.

In fact it was in that spirit that some weeks ago I contacted the head of Culverhay on behalf of the Co Ed Oldfield Group to see if we could find "common cause" as Mr Thomson put it, to keep both our schools open. And whatever the outcome of this process I hope we as parents can all work together to support whatever schools remain, and press the council and government to deliver the best educational services possible for all our children, where ever they live.

Supporters of the Co Ed Oldfield Group have now sent hundreds of letters, and handed in a petition with hundreds more signatures to the Council and to Michael Gove, not to mention Oldfield School itself calling for a Co-ed Oldfield school because this:

- a) Would have huge support in the local community. As a result the school will be filled with local children, thrive, and boost community cohesion.
- b) Would ensure the best geographical distribution of schools. 45% of Bath's children live in the north of the city, having two schools to serve them (rather than just one) will be much fairer to children and parents, and reduce traffic, particularly at key hotspots like the Windsor Bridge.
- c) Would boost choice - shutting Oldfield would mean a large area of the city left with no local school. While we support Culverhay staying open too, if it did shut, the children in that area would at least still have access to a range of nearby schools, as well as Oldfield for those nearer the river. As the officers' report underlines, in terms of admissions, far more children will be disadvantaged if Oldfield School is shut than with the other options under consideration.
- d) Given the school's outstanding Ofsted rating, three specialisms and work supporting less effective schools, having a co ed Oldfield will maximise the number of children getting an outstanding education in Bath.

In short, personally and on behalf of the Co Ed Oldfield Group I urge the Cabinet to support proposals to have a Co Educational Oldfield School. Thank you.