



## NORFOLK ASSOCIATION NATIONAL UNION OF TEACHERS

P200-19KG + Q

(24)

### School Organisation in North Yarmouth affecting Alderman Swindell Primary and North Denes Primary Schools.

#### Consultation response

I represent Norfolk NUT, as you may know we have members working at Alderman Swindell Primary School.

My response is in support of maintaining the status quo and firmly opposed to the closure of Alderman Swindell Primary school for the following reasons:

The consultation states that the "overall driving force is ensuring any change to school organisation is in the best interest of the children's education and achievement." The closure of Alderman Swindell Primary School would be to the detriment of the entire school community, including the children and staff, a settled school with consistent staffing provides the best environment for teaching and learning, Alderman Swindell offers this and it will be of no benefit to any of the community to disrupt it.

Alderman Swindell does not have a falling role and is in a stable position to continue. There is no good financial reason to close the school. The capital that would be used to extend North Denes is apportioned at the moment to each site, so this is not a case of funding only being available for one option. The proposal states that to accommodate the children from Alderman Swindell at North Denes the authority will be "building a new larger school building." This gives the impression that there will be an entirely new school, however the answers given at the public meetings indicates that there will only be an extension to the North Denes school. Thus, the argument that the provision will be much better is not substantiated. Nor is that point that the children's pride in the building will be enhanced – the children and staff at Alderman Swindell already seem to take great pride in their building. Equally the stress to staff and pupils if the building work is not completed before they move in will add to the detrimental effect of the whole change. The argument that the move to North Denes will also allow for future expansion is irrelevant as this will always be the case on that site, whether the Alderman Swindell pupils move there or not.

The consultation also states that "diversity of provision" will be taken into account. At the moment parents can choose to send their children to North Denes if they wish to, bringing both schools together - far from offering greater diversity- will limit parental choice.

Importantly, when questioned at the public meetings the authority was unable to offer any guarantee that North Denes Primary will continue to be a County Council School, or that the Alderman Swindell site would remain with the local authority, though this argument was offered at the meetings as a good reason for not building an entirely new school, which the county council could not retain.

In addition, but possibly most importantly, there are no satisfactory answers to what will be done with the vacant Alderman Swindell site if the proposal to close the school should go ahead, although this does seem like the real driving force behind the entire proposal. The likelihood that this valuable site will end up being given to an Academy Trust is extremely concerning.

Vicky Warnes  
Joint Division Secretary  
Norfolk NUT