

Appendix 5 – Responses from the Consultation

Two responses were received from the Representation

One from the School governing body and one from the Liberal Democrat Group on the Council. These are outlined below

From the Governing Body

From: Norma McCance

Sent: Monday, May 15, 2023 3:43 PM

To: Edwards, Vilma <Vilma.Edwards@southwark.gov.uk>

Subject: Proposed Closure of Townsend Primary School – Stage 3

Dear Vilma

Proposed Closure of Townsend Primary School – Stage 3

I wish my comments/objections below to be registered as part of the statutory process

1. The LA has proposed the closure of Townsend school in each of the last two academic years. Though the failure of the first proposal was entirely due to the LA, as acknowledged by David Quirke-Thornton, it has caused unacceptable pressure and stress to be placed on our staff by trapping them in this emotionally draining process for two years. While Governors have praised their unfailing commitment and achievements over this period, as the employers of Townsend staff the LA should acknowledge that their duty of care has fallen short of what their employees have a right to expect.
2. Governors disagree with this second proposal to close Townsend school by August 31st of this year because it means our children (and staff who wish to remain in Southwark) will be required to move to other schools with an uncertain future. Lack of strategic planning by the LA means some pupils may be forced to attend 3 primary schools before entering the secondary phase. This is totally unacceptable on educational and well-being grounds, yet no guarantees have been given to parents.

Yours faithfully,
Norma McCance

Chair of Governors
Townsend Primary School

From the Liberal Democrat Group



Liberal Democrat Group Office
Southwark Council
160 Tooley Street
London SE1P 5LX

15th May 2023

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to you in response to the consultation on the closure of Townsend School.

We are very saddened to see the closure of another primary school in Southwark. This is a deeply upsetting event for pupils, families, teachers, supporting staff and the wider community. It is heartening that the children affected should be able to find alternative places at nearby schools due to the availability across the area.

We trust that their families and the teachers will support the children to settle in well to their new schools without too much disruption to their education and friendships. We urge you to take proactive steps to address the wider ramifications that school closures will have on teachers, supporting staff jobs and also the maintenance of the school buildings and sites.

We acknowledge that falling pupil rolls are due to many factors including the squeeze on family budgets and the lack of affordable housing. The gentrification of the area around Townsend Primary School cannot be ignored as a factor in its closure and in fact was highlighted by representatives of the school last year. We are deeply concerned that many areas of Southwark and the capital are becoming hollowed out and not affordable to families. Since 2010, we have lost over 2000 council homes and, since 2016, only 17.6% of homes built in Southwark were social or affordable rent. Providing the affordable housing we need is critical to keeping our communities together and keeping our schools open.

As the opposition group, we remain committed to working on a cross-party basis to address this important issue and to alleviate the impact school closures have upon our communities. We urge you to continue to consult widely with experts on the best way to manage falling school rolls, to join forces with other London boroughs to lobby the Conservative government to ensure that our capital remains an attractive place for families and to be open to genuine scrutiny of decision-making by Southwark Council's cabinet members.

Yours sincerely,

Councillor Rachel Bentley

Vice-Chair of the Education and Local Economy Committee

North Bermondsey Ward
CllrRachel.Bentley@southwark.gov.uk