

Meeting: Community Drop-in Session

Date/Time: Tuesday 20 July at 2.45pm – 5.30pm

Venue: Chopwell Primary School

**Present: Sandra Punton – Learning and Children, Gateshead Council
Nicky Wise – inspiredspaces
Vikki Wilson – inspiredspaces
Anita Dowson – Learning and Children, Gateshead Council
(notetaker)**

Attendance: 43

- Problems which arose from Hookergate/Blaydon amalgamation are still in people's minds.
- Parents are now pulling their children out of Chopwell School - closure of Hookergate will have an affect on Chopwell's future too.
- There is a lack of communication among teachers in Hookergate and the school doesn't have the best reputation.
- St Thomas More is closer and easier to get too.
- Where will current year 8 children be Ryton or Hookergate? Will they be at Ryton for 3 years?
- Children have a longer distance to travel.
- Greenside would be a better location as it's in between the two schools.
- By-pass is a worry the proposed site is right beside the by-pass. Will there be fences put up to stop kids getting off site?
- Will children travel on school buses.
- Transport will need to be available for hours outside of the normal school day for out of school clubs etc.
- Children will have to cross the by-pass everyday.

- Ryton has an excellent reputation.
- There are concerns about the class sizes.
- If private sponsors are found will the new school become an academy?
- Children in Hookergate currently don't want to move schools – this will cause trouble.
- It will take 5 years for pupils to settle into Ryton School.
- Will pupils be allowed off-site?
- Concerns that if shared years are put in place – these don't work.
- All comments are ignored – house values will go down in Ryton if Hookergate moves.
- What will happen with the current Ryton site?
- Some parents of Y3 children are taking their children out of Chopwell and have moved them to Ovingham Middle School.
- Don't mind closing schools but don't agree with the amalgamation on the Ryton site. It would be cheaper to build a new school. There are terrible issues with traffic at the current Ryton site especially with infant and junior schools being on the same site.
- What will happen with the Hookergate site?
- Has the land for the new site already been bought?
- Don't see the point in buying more land when land is already owned by Council. Why spend more money? Current site is a beautiful spot.
- There would be concerns about pupils leaving the new site at lunch times.
- Parents of children in the area aren't choosing Hookergate – is that why the numbers are low?
- People don't realise what is at Hookergate and they try to run the school down. 2 children have been through school at Hookergate and both have done well. Need to get kids from the area back into Hookergate rather than choosing other schools.
- Transport is a major issue and needs to be resolved.

- Daughter due to go into post-16 and was told in February that post-16 education would be in Hookergate but now being told that there isn't funding for a 6th form at Hookergate – not impressed with the way this issue has been handled.
- Concerns about the by-pass.
- The bus service overall needs looked at for the area not just for regular school runs but need transport to be available for after school clubs etc too.
- Is the new school still going ahead, is there still funding?
- Will all kids just be sent to Ryton?