

Stanford Infant and Junior Schools Statutory Notice Period Representations Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the statutory notice period from 24th November 2025 to 21st December 2025, 26 representations were received (14 via email, 12 via Your Voice). 4 were in support of the merger and 22 opposed the merger.

Key concerns centered on requests for financial transparency, two-site operational management, staff wellbeing during transition, and support for federation as an alternative model.

However, the Governing Body has already conducted extensive analysis of federation alongside other options and determined that merger represents the optimal long-term solution for both schools.

FINANCIAL TRANSPARENCY

Multiple representations requested detailed financial modelling showing how the merger would address the £466,000 combined deficit. Respondents sought clarification on how the stated savings of £120,000 would be achieved and whether two-site operational costs had been factored into projections. Some representations called for line-by-line budget comparisons of merger versus other models.

The Governing Body has undertaken comprehensive financial analysis as part of their evaluation of 23 factors, concluding that merger provides the most sustainable financial solution. Detailed financial planning will form part of the implementation phase to ensure savings are realised and two-site costs are managed effectively.

TWO-SITE OPERATIONAL MANAGEMENT

Respondents raised questions about how school leadership would manage two separate locations effectively, including concerns about visibility, availability, and creating unified school culture across split sites. Parents noted logistical considerations around drop-off and collection arrangements.

While these operational considerations are important, they represent implementation challenges to be addressed during the transition phase rather than reasons to reject the merger proposal. Many successful primary schools operate across multiple sites, and careful planning during implementation will ensure effective leadership coverage, communication systems, and practical arrangements for families.

STAFF WELLBEING AND TRANSITION SUPPORT

Several representations expressed concern about staff facing potential changes to their roles, highlighting anxiety and uncertainty during the consultation and statutory notice periods. The representations emphasised the importance of retaining experienced, dedicated teachers and support staff, noting that both schools currently operate with some staffing pressures.

These concerns underscore the critical importance of robust transition planning that prioritises staff consultation, clear communication, and appropriate support throughout the implementation phase. Managing organisational change with care and professionalism will be essential to maintaining staff morale and retaining the skilled workforce that both schools value.

EDUCATIONAL CONTINUITY AND QUALITY

Respondents noted the current high transition rate of 90% from Stanford Infant to Stanford Junior and raised questions about how merger would improve upon this. Concerns included maintaining specialised early years expertise and the nurturing atmosphere that characterises Stanford Infant School, alongside ensuring younger children's needs are not overshadowed by Year 6 priorities. These representations highlight what the community values most about both schools.

The merger proposal aims to preserve these strengths while creating enhanced educational continuity across the full primary age range. Implementation planning will need to ensure that the distinctive qualities of both schools inform the culture and approach of the merged school.

FEDERATION AS ALTERNATIVE MODEL

Multiple representations advocated for federation as an alternative that could achieve administrative and financial efficiencies while maintaining distinct school identities.

The Governing Body has undertaken extensive analysis of federation alongside merger and other options as part of their consideration of 23 factors. Following this thorough evaluation, they have determined that federation would not provide the level of financial sustainability required to address the combined deficit, nor would it deliver the educational benefits of full integration.

The Governing Body's recommendation of merger as the optimal solution reflects their conclusion that this model best serves the long-term interests of both school communities.

GOVERNANCE AND CONSULTATION

Some representations expressed concerns about transparency in the decision-making process and consultation with staff. The collective representation from Stanford Infant School staff emphasised the importance of staff voices being heard in the process.

These concerns highlight the need for continued open communication and consultation as the proposal moves forward. The formal consultation phase, statutory notice period, and decision-making by Full Council ensure appropriate democratic oversight.

CONCLUSION

The 26 representations demonstrate continued opposition to the proposed merger and a strong preference among respondents for exploring federation as an alternative.

However, the Governing Body has already undertaken comprehensive analysis of federation alongside other options and determined that merger represents the most financially sustainable and educationally beneficial solution to address the combined £466,000 deficit.

While the representations raise legitimate concerns about financial transparency, operational management, and staff wellbeing, these largely represent implementation challenges that will require careful management during the transition phase rather than reasons to reject the merger proposal itself. These representations will be considered by Full Council alongside the consultation analysis and the Governing Body's recommendation when making the final decision.