

Mrs Linden Best
Chair of Governors
Whimple Primary School

Dear Mr Scanlan /The Whimple Victory Hall Committee

Thank you for providing us with the paper on 'The future of Whimple Victory Hall' and the more detailed options paper by Mr Scanlan. The Governors of Whimple Primary School appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposals.

Whimple Primary School was established in 1848, when the original building had just one classroom. As the number of children attending the school increased, a double and a single portacabin were placed in the playground on a 'temporary' basis. Both cabins have remained for many years, and subsequently been refurbished in situ.

The numbers of children at the school have continued to increase. In 2007 there were 90 children and now we have 147, the majority of whom live in Whimple. There are 29 staff in total, in full and part time positions, most of which are also filled by residents of Whimple. In addition, other Whimple people assist the school as volunteers or in support of other activities such as the choir, orchestra, guitars, craft activities and playing the piano at events, all of whom live in Whimple. It is at the heart of our community.

There are also 10 (non staff) Governor positions representing parents, the community and the Local Education Authority. All of these volunteers live in Whimple.

One of the oldest residents of our village who was born in Whimple, went to school here nearly 90 years ago. There are now several generations in families who have all attended the school and utilised the hall.

The school has a 'good' Ofsted rating. It is thriving and many year groups are full. Families looking to buy homes in Whimple enquire as to available places for their children at the school.

Whimple primary school is a Local Authority maintained school, like most primaries in Devon. It is not part of an academy or federated with any other schools. The school also liaises closely with Clyst Vale Community College in Broadclyst and many surrounding primaries to share practice and widen experiences for our students.

The use of Whimple Victory Hall is vital to the school. Our critical affiliation has been appreciated by the school and other associated users over the decades. Apart from classrooms, the school only has space for a small library, craft, IT and storage. No room is big enough to take more than 30 children. We are over the site capacity guidelines originally set by Devon County Council, and, with increased population in East Devon, pressure on school places in the area continues to be high. It is important for many parents that their children is educated locally to them and people have chosen to live in the village in part so their children can be educated in a smaller, community focused, village school.