

Cabinet – 9 January 2020

**Written question from Jill Cowley to the Leader, Isle of Wight Council**

As Shalfleet Primary School is a Voluntary Controlled, maintained school with the right sized school population for a base for the planned school at Freshwater;  
as many of its children already live in Freshwater and travel further than to Yarmouth which is bad for the environment;  
as it occupies a dangerous main road, corner site with very limited parking;  
as it has no history of community interaction but travels to Yarmouth for community events;  
as the IWC does not own surrounding land for expansion;  
as Ningwood, where it is situated, has no shops which would be affected ;~  
as the Governors of the Federation of Shalfleet and Yarmouth have already agreed in principle, the relocation of a school;  
as the Local Authority of a VC school can make the decision to relocate/move such a school;  
as this proposal has been put forward by many people ( see consultations) for consideration, from September onwards,

**will the Cabinet and Local Authority please adjust their plans and relocate Shalfleet Primary School to the All Saints site.**

No account has been given to justify properly why this should not happen, except that money has been invested in the site (as indeed it has at Yarmouth which raised match funding). Should you turn down this proposal, I look forward to receiving your justifications.

## ***Response***

The council has fully considered the option of relocating Shalfleet, it is not an option the council supports for the following reasons;

- Shalfleet CE Primary School supports a distinct set of rural communities, to relocate the school would have a significant detrimental impact on those communities and their children's education.
- The relocation of the school would increase the cost of Home to School Transport for the council. Home to School Transport costs are an area where the council must find savings over the next few years.
- Over the past two years £1.6 million has been invested in to Shalfleet Primary School by the council, making the school a modern welcoming learning environment for children. This investment would in all likelihood be lost if Shalfleet Primary was to relocate.
- The school supports a popular and successful pre-school, the relocation of the school would in probability see the loss of this local and much needed facility.
- With a published admission number of 24 the school is sustainable given the decreasing primary numbers across the West Wight.
- If required in the future the school could take additional pupils as it has sufficient accommodation to offer up to 30 places per year group. Shalfleet is far in excess of the two miles allowed to relocate a school without following the Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools as issued by the Department for Education (DfE). To start this process at this point after many months of consultation on managing surplus capacity across the West Wight would lead to continuing uncertainty for large numbers of families across the area.