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Metropolitan South and West School Performance Directorate

# Community Consultation Findings

## Education model at Liverpool Boys and Girls High School

# Findings Summary



## Recommendation



The Department of Education uses the upgrade to Liverpool Boys and Girls High Schools as an opportunity to amalgamate both high schools into one co-educational school.



## Key figures

Responses received			
1,101 responses			
	<b>858 parents and carers</b>	<b>124 high school staff</b>	<b>119 students</b>
<i>Breakdown</i>	1 local childcare 687 partner primary schools 55 Liverpool Boys High School 115 Liverpool Girls High School	57 Liverpool Boys High School 67 Liverpool Girls High School	42 Liverpool Boys High School 77 Liverpool Girls High School
70% of parents and carers have at least one female child		55% of parents and carers have at least one male child	

There is an overrepresentation of respondents with at least one female child in the results. This is also reflected in the higher response rate from Liverpool Girls High School respondents compared to Liverpool Boys High School.

Top three factors influencing high school choice	Bottom three factors influencing high school choice
 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality teaching</li> <li>Closeness to home</li> <li>Preparation for further study</li> </ul>	 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Other (single-sex school)</li> <li>Mix of boys and girls</li> <li>Preparation for employment</li> </ul>

Partner primary school parent and carer attitude to a co-educational model		
56% in favour	26% have no preference	18% not in favour
	82% are in favour or have no preference	
		44% are not in favour or have no preference

High school parent and carer attitude to a co-educational model			
	33% in favour	29% have no preference	38% not in favour
Liverpool Boys HS	49% in favour	33% have no preference	19% not in favour
Liverpool Girls HS	25% in favour	24% have no preference	51% not in favour
		62% are in favour or have no preference	
Liverpool Boys HS		82% are in favour or have no preference	52% are not in favour or have no preference
Liverpool Girls HS		49% are in favour or have no preference	75% are not in favour or have no preference

## Summary

Parents and carers want a good quality, local high school they can send their children to.

High aspiration is reflected in the consultation feedback with preparation and pathways for post-school study ranked in the top three factors for choosing a high school.

Respondents recognised benefits for students attending single-sex schools, although they also acknowledge that single-sex schools can be limiting, particularly with student socialisation, and that this can impact future study and employment. Many respondents commented that society is no longer segregated based on sex, so schools should not be either.

Socialisation was a recurring discussion point amongst student focus groups that was increasingly highlighted as students became older. There were also concerns raised for students who do not 'fit-in' or feel isolated in a same-sex environment.

Comments in favour of single-sex schools reflected how cultural or religious factors are supported in a single-sex environment. Another benefit identified by respondents was the familiarity of same-sex students with each other when dealing with developmental and maturational issues related to growing up, such as the impact of puberty and concerns about body image.

Liverpool Girls High School staff identified positive impact on learning outcomes and to a lesser extent social and emotional outcomes for girls in single-sex schools. Staff from Liverpool Boys High School suggested this was not the case for boys in single-sex schools, with more than half of respondents disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that learning and social and emotional outcomes for boys are higher in single-sex schools.

Whilst the benefits and limitations of single-sex schools were clearly articulated by respondents, overall, the role of single-sex education in affecting high school choice was ranked lowest of nine possible factors that influence parent and carer decisions on where to send their child or children to high school. This was particularly evident in parents and carers of primary school children.

Based on Year 7 enrolment profiles and anecdotal evidence from partner primary school principals, combined with the number of respondents indicating a preference for co-educational schooling, many parents and carers are not choosing to enrol their children at Liverpool Boys and Girls High Schools because of the single-sex educational model. The potential for skewed results in favour of maintaining single-sex high schools among existing high school parents and carers is evident as those responding are more likely to demonstrate a commitment bias to single-sex schools over co-educational schools due to current enrolment.

To overcome any community concerns regarding implementation of a co-educational model, consideration should be given to the viability of a hybrid education model that provides opportunities for same-sex structures within a co-educational setting.