

The proposed Academy Conversion of Camden Junior Primary School

Consultation report

July 2013

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1. Introduction

The Department for Education (DfE) has identified the Harris Federation as its preferred sponsor Camden Junior School converts to an Academy.

The DfE believes that the Harris Federation possesses the necessary blend of expertise, values, capacity and local knowledge to sustain improvements in standards at Camden Junior School over time.

The DfE asked the Harris Federation to develop proposals for how they might support Camden Junior School if the Secretary of State approved the conversion of the School to an Academy under the sponsorship of the Harris Federation, and to consult on these proposals with Camden parents and staff.

This report sets out the scope and timing of the consultation, the methodology used and key issues identified as part of an open and impartial consultation process.

2. Scope and timing of Stakeholder Consultation

The Harris Federation devised and implemented a consultation exercise that sought the views of consultees on whether the School should convert to an Academy under the sponsorship of the Harris Federation, on the aspects of the existing school that stakeholders wanted to retain, suggestions for improvements and the elements of the Harris Federation's proposals that were both most important and least important to respondents.

The consultation period opened on 3rd June and closed on 19th July 2013.

In an unconnected exercise The Greenshaw Education Trust also sought the views of the community on its proposals to Sponsor Camden Junior School, having recently been approved by the DfE as an Academy Sponsor.

3. Methodology

In May 2013 the Harris Federation produced a detailed consultation document including a questionnaire which was issued to all stakeholders connected to the School.

Governors, Staff and Parents were invited to meet with the Harris Federation at a number of meetings on 10th June 2013 at which they received a presentation on Harris Federation's history and track record, vision for Camden Primary School and plans for conversion. They were also given the opportunity to ask questions.

All consultees were encouraged to complete and return the questionnaire to contribute their views to the consultation exercise by the 19th July.

The Harris Federation's Consultation Letter to parents is included as Appendix A to this report, whilst the consultation brochure is attached as Appendix B.

In addition to this further materials were issued as part of this consultation exercise which included a DfE Statement on Camden Junior School which enclosed as Appendix C.

4. Consultation Meeting Chronology

Consultation meetings were scheduled on the following dates and times;

- 10th June 9am Session 1 Parents/Public
- 10th June 4pm Session 2 Staff Meeting 1
- 10th June 7pm Session 3 Parents/Public
- 18th June 3.30 pm Session 4 Staff Meeting 2

The parent/public session followed the same structure (outlined below) to ensure a consistency of message;

- Opening address – by Representative of the Governing Body
- Reasons why the DfE has asked the Harris Federation to sponsor Camden Junior School – by DfE Education Advisor
- Background on the Harris Federation – by Harris Federation Chief Executive
- Harris Primary Academies – by Harris Federation Primary Director
- Next Steps/Questions – by Harris Federation Primary Director

Each of the public sessions was attended by representatives from the Department for Education.

Session 1 was attended by 61 people, Session 2 by 16 staff, Session 3 by 94 people and Session 4 by 20 staff

The presentation that underpinned the above structure is attached as Appendix D to this report.

A full set of the questions and answers asked at all of the above meetings is included as Appendix E to this report.

5. Completed Questionnaires and Data Validation

The staff and parents associated with Camden Junior School should be thanked for their efforts in completing and returning 545 survey forms prior to the end of the consultation period.

22 anonymous forms were returned. These were accepted in good faith and included in the analysis of the 545 final forms. In addition to this 26 respondents included their name on the consultation form but no other details.

The forms which identified the respondent by stakeholder group/interest were sent in by 8 different sections of the community, the break-down of which is as follows;

1 Member of staff at Camden Junior School
5 Governors at of Camden Junior School
6 Representatives of Wandle Valley School
7 London Borough of Sutton Councillors
22 Anonymous
26 Named
35 Friends/relatives of pupils at Camden Junior School
117 Local residents
326 parent of pupils at Camden Junior School, Infant School and Nursery

In addition to the completed and returned consultation forms 19 letters, including 1 from Tom Brake, MP for Carshalton and Wallington.

6. Findings from the Public Consultation Questionnaires

The table below contains the break-down of all of the consultation questionnaires across all of the above categories and across the range of responses for questions 1 to 4.

Table 1 – Frequency of Questionnaire Responses by Stakeholder Group (Q1-4)

Consultation Question	Answer	Parents	Residents	Friends/ Family	Named	Anonymous	Borough of Sutton Councillors	Wandle Valley	Governors	Staff	Total	Check
Should the conversion of Camden Junior School into an Academy take place?	Yes	302	113	34	26	18	2	4	3	1	503	545
	No	19	4	0	0	4	3	2	0	0	32	
	Other/ Blank	5	0	1	0	0	2	0	2	0	10	
If you agree, do you think the Harris Federation should sponsor Camden if the Secretary of State makes a final decision to proceed with the Academy proposal?	Yes	5	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	7	545
	No	317	116	35	26	20	7	6	5	0	532	
	Other/ Blank	4	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	6	
If not do you think another Sponsor organisation should sponsor Camden if the Secretary of State makes a final decision to proceed with the Academy proposal?	Yes	319	116	35	26	20	7	6	5	0	534	545
	No	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	5	
	Other/ Blank	4	0	0	0	1		0	0	1	6	
Do you think Camden Junior School remain a local authority maintained school?	Yes	70	37	2	11	6	4	-	2	-	132	545
	No	232	77	32	13	13	2	6	3	1	379	
	Other/ Blank	24	3	1	2	3	1	0	0	0	34	
Total Returned Questionnaires	545	326	117	35	26	22	7	6	5	1		

The table below replaces the actual frequency of returned forms in the table 1 above with the percentage of returned forms (based on the number of replies within each category group.)

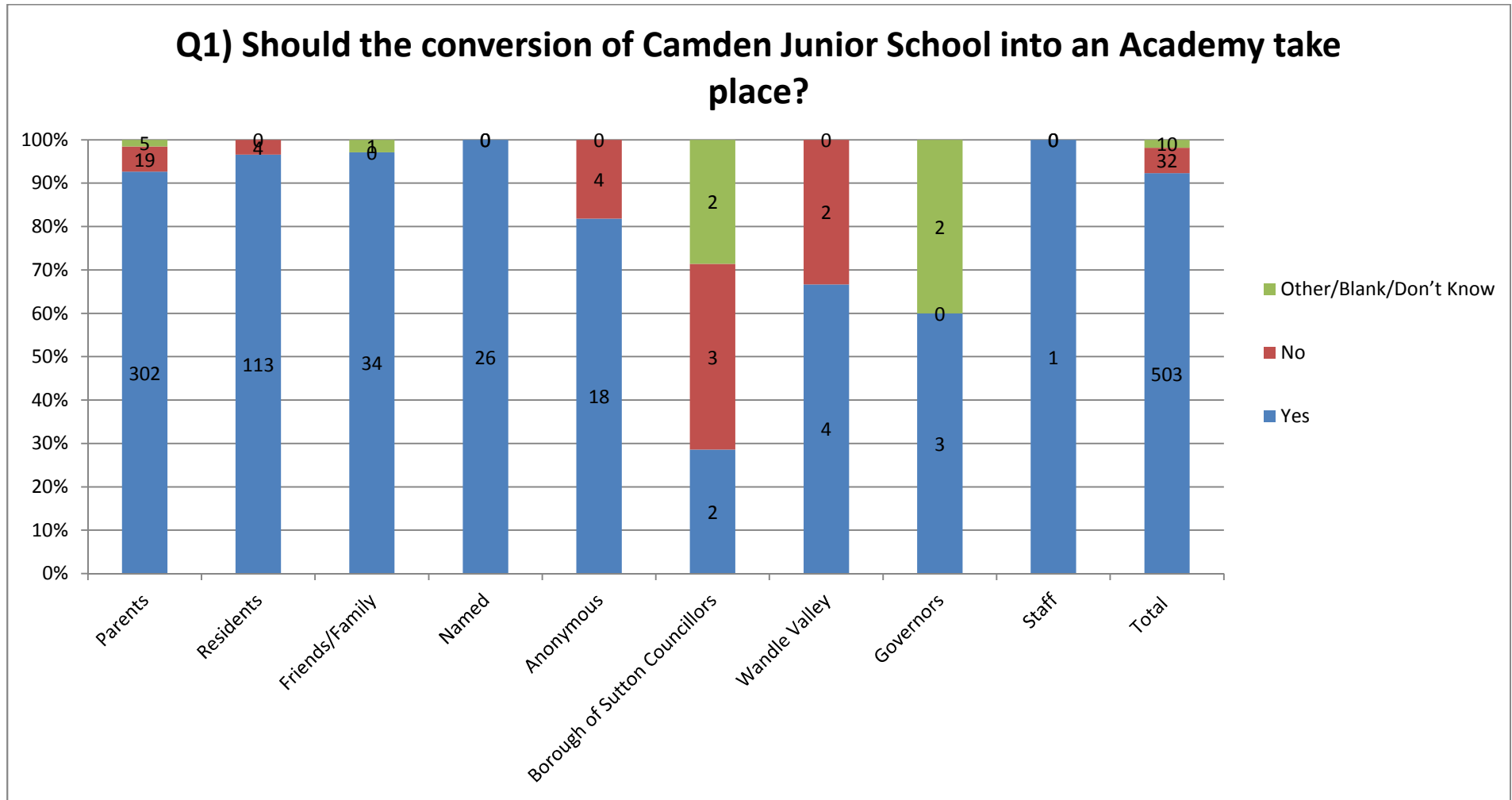
The percentages calculated are accurate to 2 decimal places.

Table 2 – Percentage of Questionnaire Responses by Stakeholder Group (Q1-4)

Consultation Question	Answer	Parents	Residents	Friends/ Family	Named	Anonymous	Borough of Sutton Councillors	Wandle Valley	Governors	Staff	Total	Check
Q1) Should the conversion of Camden Junior School into an Academy take place?	Yes	92.64	96.58	97.14	100.0	81.82	28.57	66.67	60.0	100.0	503	545
	No	5.83	3.42	0.00	0.00	18.18	42.86	33.3	0.00	0.00	32	
	Other	1.53	0.00	2.86	0.00	0.00	28.57	0.00	40.0	0.00	10	
Q2) If you agree, do you think the Harris Federation should sponsor Camden if the Secretary of State makes a final decision to proceed with the Academy proposal?	Yes	1.53	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.0	7	545
	No	97.24	99.15	100.0	100.0	90.91	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.00	532	
	Other	1.23	0.85	0.00	0.00	4.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	6	
Q3) If not do you think another Sponsor organisation should sponsor Camden if the Secretary of State makes a final decision to proceed with the Academy proposal?	Yes	97.85	99.15	100.0	100.0	90.91	100.0	100.0	100.0	0.00	534	545
	No	0.92	0.85	0.00	0.00	4.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5	
	Other	1.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	4.55	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.0	6	
Q4) Do you think Camden Junior School remain a local authority maintained school?	Yes	21.47	31.62	5.71	42.31	27.27	0.00	0.00	40.0	0.00	132	545
	No	71.17	65.81	91.43	50.00	59.09	100.0	100.0	60.0	100.0	379	
	Other	7.36	2.56	2.86	7.69	13.64	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	34	
Total Returned Questionnaires	545	326	117	35	26	22	7	6	5	1		

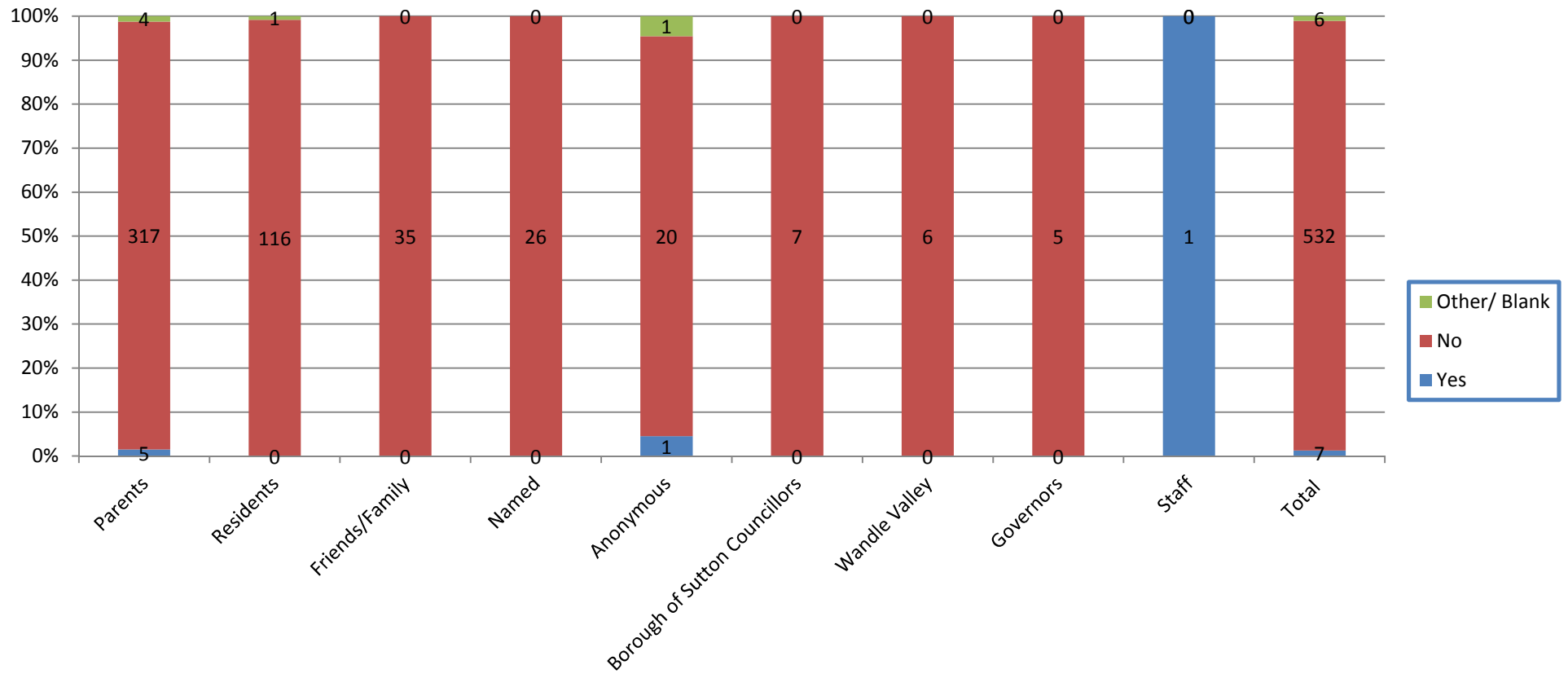
The following sections take extracts from the aggregated results in table 1 above and illustrate the distribution of responses graphically.

6.1 Q1 Should the conversion of Camden Junior School into an Academy take place?



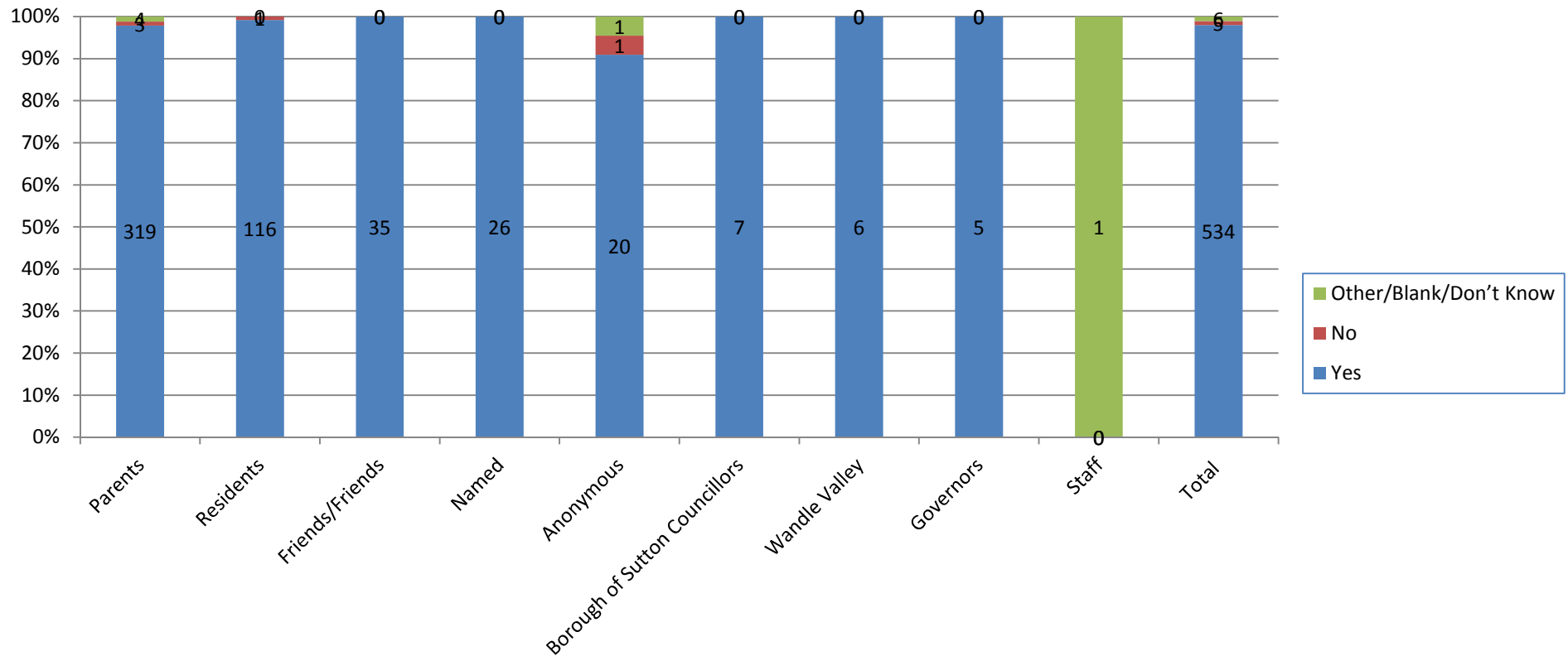
6.2 Q2 If you agree should the Harris Federation sponsor Camden Junior School?

Q2) If you agree, do you think the Harris Federation should sponsor Camden if the Secretary of State makes a final decision to proceed with the Academy proposal?

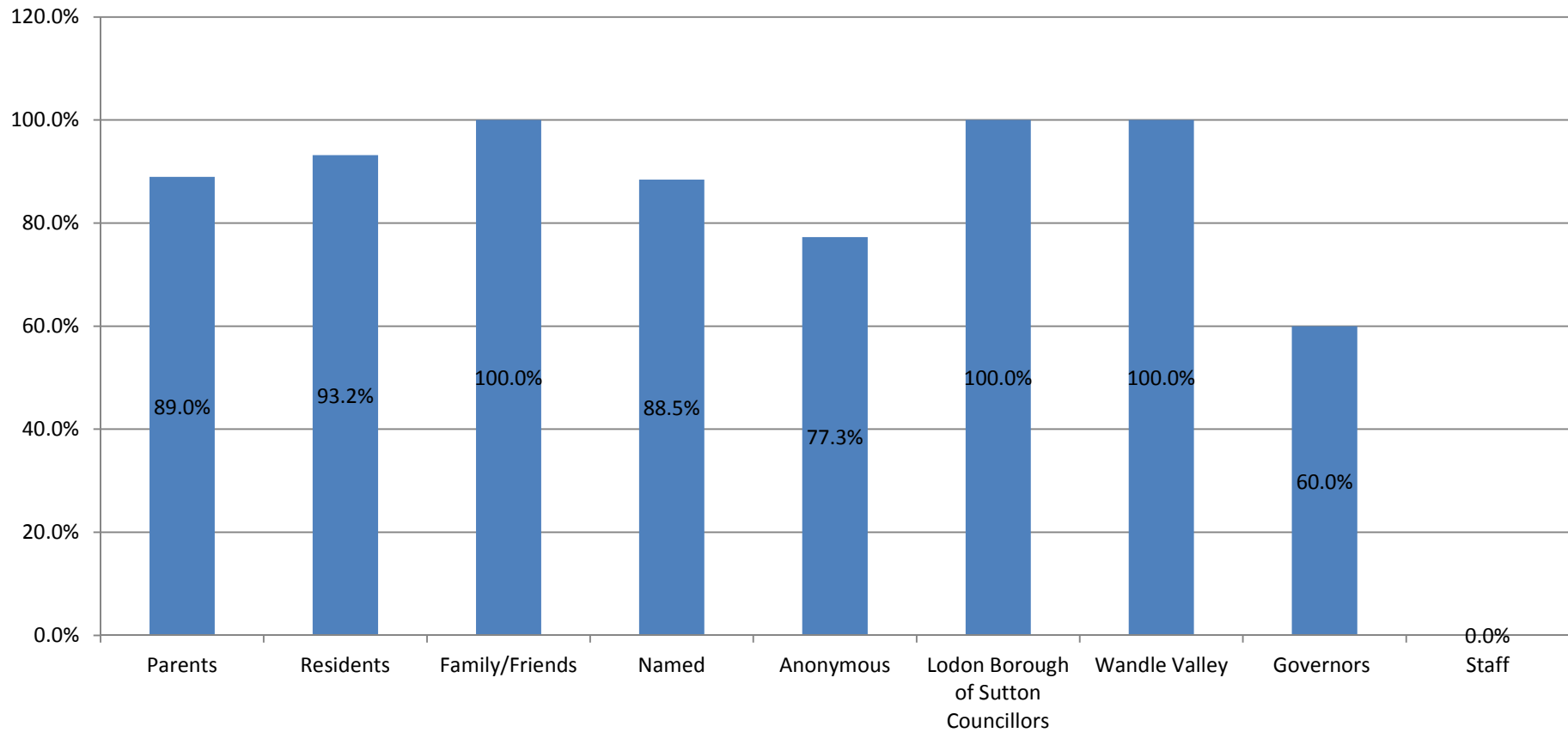


6.3 Q3 if not should another Sponsor Organisation sponsor Camden Junior School?

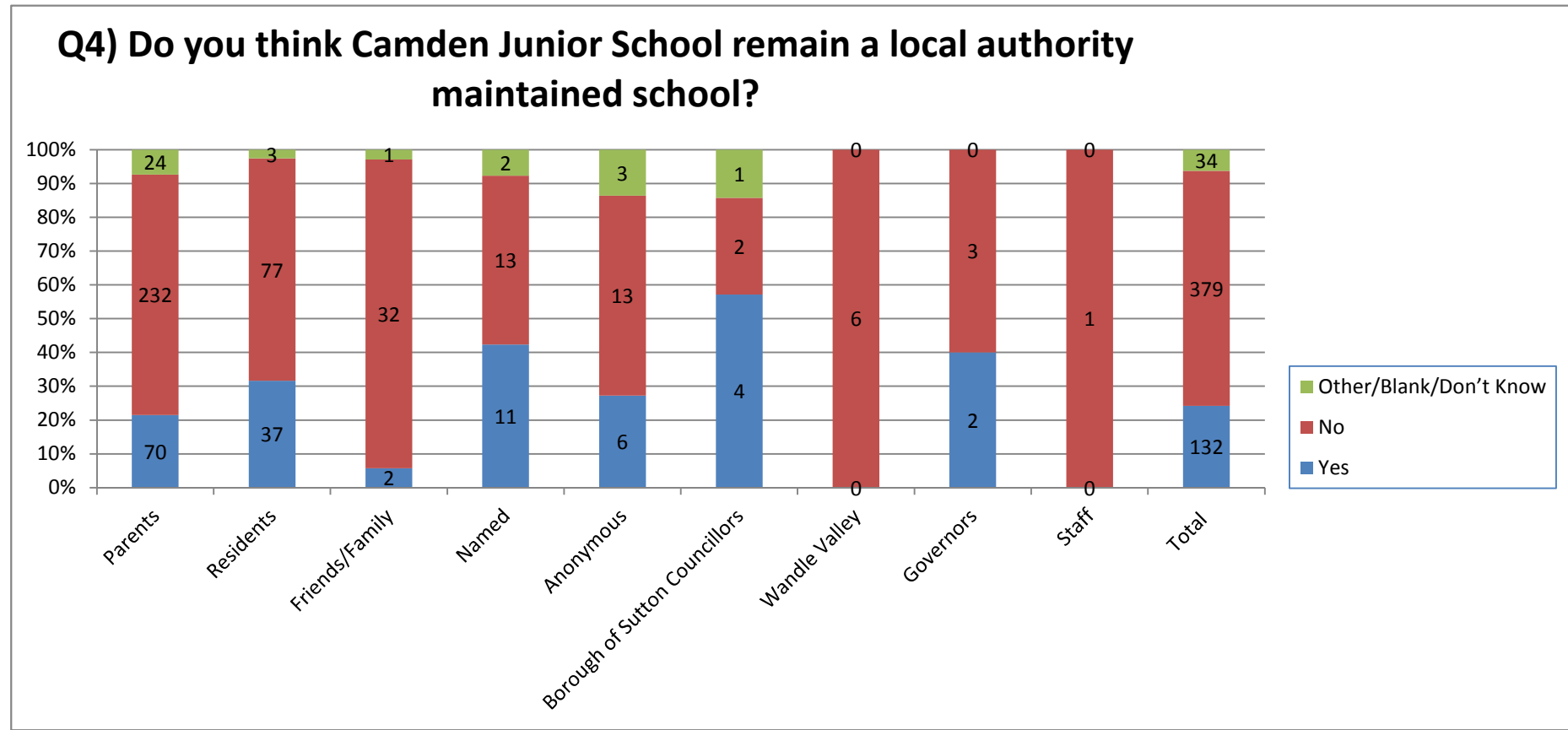
Q3) If not do you think another Sponsor organisation should sponsor Camden if the Secretary of State makes a final decision to proceed with the Academy proposal?



Percentage of respondents from each stakeholder group who named Greenshaw Education Trust as their preferred Sponsor in Question 3



6.4. Q4 Should Camden Junior School remain a local authority maintained school?



6.5 Qualitative Consultation Findings

This section represents some of the most popular qualitative responses to the consultation questions to give a flavour of the comments made by respondents from all of the identified stakeholder groups.

Q1 –Should the conversion of Camden Junior School into an Academy take place?

- I accept that the decision has already been made
- The School is now making significant progress – a bonus for any Sponsor
- It is clear that the Council has failed the school over a number of years
- Only on the basis that no other options are available
- The question is academic, Camden will become an Academy.
- Although progress at Camden is apparent, improvements can still be made
- I would prefer to see the Federation with Victor Seymour continue
- If this gives the School the opportunity to improve
- The School has wasted enough time (and children's education) so something has to change
- But only if I tick no you will disregard the rest of my answers
- So the children can catch up with others in the Borough
- All schools will be academies in the next few years
- Mrs Matt should have been given more time

Q2 – If you agree, do you think the Harris Federation should sponsor Camden if the Secretary of State makes a final decision to proceed with the Academy proposal?

- Although Greenshaw has some good ideas, Harris has more experience
- The proposal smacks of a lack of local democracy
- A local school run by local people would be more beneficial
- There is no Ofsted evidence of Harris success at primary level.
- I don't like Harris 'big business' feel
- Keep it local
- We have a local alternative o HF which is more suitable
- Harris is a default choice and not the best choice for Camden
- Harris is not popular and not local
- No private companies in state education

Q3 – If not, do you think another sponsor organisation should sponsor Camden if the Secretary of State makes a final decision to proceed with the Academy proposal?

- Greenshaw/Greenshaw High School or Greenshaw Educational Trust
- Greenshaw is successful and well placed in term of leadership and expertise
- Greenshaw because of their local links and Camden Juniors is a feeder school
- Greenshaw has a proven record of helping local primary schools
- Based on the meetings and literature I strongly believe that the Greenshaw position on supporting the School is more heartfelt
- Both options (Harris and Greenshaw) show potential. Greenshaw should have a fair try

Note – No other Sponsor organisation was suggested by any respondent.

Q4 –Do you think Camden Junior School should remain a local authority school?

- London Borough of Sutton continue to show a commitment to education in the borough
- I have been told that it has to become an Academy

Note – The majority of respondents did not offer a written response to questions 1 to 4 thus the above summary for questions 1 to 4 is drawn from a smaller sample size than the 545 returned forms.

Q5 - What do you feel are Camden's areas of strength that you would not want to lose?

- History of the School in Camden
- Local community feel
- Camden name
- School Senior Leadership
- Relationships between staff and parents
- Close ties with Victor Seymour
- Teaching
- Safe School
- Happy students
- Individual identity of School

Q6 - What would you most like to see change at Camden?

- Behaviour
- Quality of teaching
- Teacher training
- Levels of achievement
- Lower turnover of teachers
- Appointment of a permanent Head Teacher
- Improved SEN
- Improve the quality of buildings
- Consistency of messages given to staff
- End to this period of uncertainty over future of the School
- Ofsted rating

Q7 – Is there anything that you would like to see added to the Harris Federation's proposals?

- Recognition of the hard work staff have put in improving the school to date?
- How Harris will keep the community feel of the School
- How Harris will continue to work with other local schools

Q8 – Which of the Harris Federation's proposals are least important to you?

- Name change
- New uniform
- New logo

6.6. Letters to the Minister

The Minister also received letters from Paul Burstow MP and Tom Brake MP as well as 7 Sutton Schools all in favour of the Greenshaw Educational Trust's proposals

Greenshaw High School sent a formal response to the Harris Federation proposals direct to the Secretary of State for Education for consideration.

All 19 letters received by Callidas Consulting Ltd as part of this consultation exercise were in favour of the proposal put forward by the Greenshaw Educational Trust

7. Greenshaw Education Trust Consultation

The Greenshaw Education Trust also submitted a petition to the Minister containing 1300 signatures in support of its case to sponsor Camden Junior School.

8. Next Steps

This report stands as an independent record of the consultation exercise undertaken to ascertain the views of the Camden community on the Harris Federation's proposals to sponsor Camden Junior School by analysing the number and range of responses from each section of the community and summarising the qualitative responses put forward.

This report will be sent to the Secretary of State for Education and form part of the evidence used to make a final decision about whether Camden Junior School should convert to an Academy, and whether the Harris Federation should be the sponsor.

It should also be shared with the consultees from the local community and placed on the School's website to provide feedback to the School and community on the contributions they made to the process, through their attendance at the 2 public meetings and the completion of the 545 returned survey forms on the future of Camden Junior School.