

Kent County Council News Release

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Surprise and disappointment at Building Schools for the Future announcement

Paul Carter, the Leader of Kent County Council, has spoken of his surprise and disappointment at Michael Gove's announcement in the House of Commons that the Building Schools for the Future programme has been stopped, as well as putting a number of new academies 'under discussion'.

Paul Carter said:

"I have been surprised and disappointed by the scale of the announcement, which brings to an end the Building Schools for the Future programme for 40 secondary schools and means significant uncertainty for eight new academies. I am enormously disappointed for these schools, teachers, pupils and parents which will not see new schools built."

Kent had the largest Building Schools for the Future programme in the country and had been at the forefront of building new academies. The announcement will come as an enormous shock to the 48 secondary schools (40 secondary schools and eight academies), including pupil referral units and special schools, in the county that would have benefited from being substantially rebuilt or refurbished.

To date, 11 secondary schools have been, or are in the process of being, rebuilt and seven new academies have been completed or are underway. Kent County Council has overseen in the region of £400million of public money spent on new and refurbished schools.

Mr Carter added:

"We have played by the rules with the Labour government, being successful in attracting significant government funds into education in Kent. We must now work with the coalition government to help them bring the public finances of this country under control. At the same time, we will work with them to make sure Kent receives as much as possible from a more limited capital programme to improve school facilities across the county.

"I appreciate that all those involved in the project, from headteachers to contractors, will also be disappointed. We need time to take stock of our position and reflect on the announcement. I would like to see all the people involved coming together to talk about innovative ways of revitalising secondary schools. We stand ready to offer any assistance to the government's review panel."

Mr Carter said there was hope in George Osborne's emergency budget speech last month.

Mr Osborne said:

"Well-judged capital spending by government can help provide the new infrastructure our economy needs to compete in the modern world. It supports the transport links we need to trade our goods, the equipment we need to defend our country, and the facilities we need to provide quality public services."

Building Schools for the Future was launched by the previous government in 2003. The aim of the £55 billion government programme was to rebuild or renew every secondary school in England. Kent was expected to benefit from £1.8 billion worth of investment for new schools.

...ends...

Notes to Editors:

The following schools have been rebuilt or are under construction. All these schools will be completed:

- Charles Dickens School, Broadstairs
- Community College Whitstable, Whitstable
- Dane Court Grammar School, Broadstairs
- Herne Bay High School, Herne Bay
- The Ifield School, Gravesend
 - The Ifield School was rebuilt as part of Kent's Special School Review, but is funded through Building Schools for the Future. The school is also receiving the ICT Managed Service provided by Kent's ICT Partner, Northgate Education.
- King Ethelbert School, Birchington
- Northfleet School for Girls, Gravesend
- Northfleet Technology College, Gravesend
- St George's CE Foundation School, Broadstairs
- St John's Catholic Comprehensive School, Gravesend
- Thamesview School, Gravesend

(Cornwallis Academy, Maidstone; Longfield Academy, Dartford; Marsh Academy, Romney Marsh; New Line Learning Academy, Maidstone and Spires Academy, Canterbury are unaffected and building work will be completed).

The following schools will be reviewed on a school by school basis:

- Dover Christ Church Academy
- Isle of Sheppey Academy
- Skinners Kent Academy, Tunbridge Wells
- The Astor of Hever Community School, Maidstone
- The Duke of York's Royal Military School, Dover
- The John Wallis C of E Academy Ashford
- The Knole Academy, Sevenoaks
- Wilmington Enterprise College, Dartford

The following schools have been stopped:

- Abbey School, Faversham
- Astor High School, Dover
- Borden Grammar School, Sittingbourne
- Brockhill Park Performing Arts College, Hythe
- Brook Education Centre, Folkestone
- Castle Community College, Deal
- Challenger Centre Pupil Referral Unit, Sittingbourne
- Chatham House Grammar, Ramsgate
- Clarendon House Grammar, Ramsgate
- Dover Grammar School for Boys
- Dover Grammar School for Girls
- Foreland School, Broadstairs
- Foxwood School, Hythe
- Fulston Manor School, Sittingbourne
- Gravesend Boys Grammar
- Gravesend Girls Grammar
- Grosvenor House Pupil Referral Unit, Herne Bay
- Harbour School, Dover
- Hartsdown Technology College, Margate
- Hereson School
- Highview School, Folkestone
- Laleham Gap, Margate
- Meadowfield School, Sittingbourne
- Meopham, Gravesend
- Northwood Centre Pupil Referral Unit, Ramsgate
- Pent Valley School, Folkestone
- Portal House, Dover
- Queen Elizabeth Grammar School, Faversham
- Sandwich Technology School
- Sir Roger Manwood's School, Sandwich
- Sittingbourne Community College
- St Edmund's Catholic School, Dover
- St Georges C of E School, Gravesend
- St. Anthony's, Margate
- Stone Bay School, Broadstairs
- The Folkestone School for Girls
- The Harvey Grammar School, Folkestone
- Ursuline College, Westgate
- Walmer Science College, Deal
- Westlands School, Sittingbourne

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