



AGENDA

SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, 2nd April, 2008, at 2.30 pm

Ask for: **Geoff Mills/Karen
Manning**

**Darent Room, Sessions House, County Hall,
Maidstone**

Telephone **(01622)
694289/694367**

Refreshments will be available from 2.15 pm in the meeting room

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

(During these items the meeting is likely to be open to the public)

1. Substitutes
2. Declarations of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting.
3. Proposed Closure of Axton Chase School and its Replacement with a Government Funded Academy (Pages 1 - 14)
4. Schools Applying for Foundation/Trust Status (Pages 15 - 36)

EXEMPT ITEMS

(At the time of preparing the agenda there were no exempt items. During any such items which may arise the meeting is likely NOT to be open to the public)

Geoff Mills
Democratic Services
(01622) 694287
25 March 2008

Please note that any background documents referred to in the accompanying papers maybe inspected by arrangement with the officer responsible for preparing the relevant report.

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By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 2 April 2008

Subject: PROPOSED CLOSURE OF AXTON CHASE SCHOOL AND ITS REPLACEMENT WITH A GOVERNMENT FUNDED ACADEMY.

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report presents the results of a public consultation on the proposal to close Axton Chase School and replace it with a government-funded Academy. It seeks the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on the issuing of a public notice.

Introduction

1. (1) The School Organisation Advisory Board, at its meeting on 7th February 2008, supported a recommendation to consult on the proposal to close Axton Chase School and replace it with a government-funded Academy. The report is attached as Appendix 1.
- (2) This report sets out the results of the public consultation.

Background and Accommodation Issues

2. (1) Axton Chase school is an 11-18 mixed, non-selective Community high school with a roll of 935 for Years 7 to 11 and 105 post 16 students.
- (2) The school serves both rural and urban communities located in the Dartford district. Pupils attend the school from two of the most deprived wards in Dartford, Temple Hill and Swanscombe.
- (3) In Axton Chase school, the socio-economic profile of the student intake is below the national and Kent average overall. The proportion of students with a statement of Special Educational Needs is 6%, above the Kent (2.8%) and National average (2.2%). The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is 10%, which is below the National average of 13.6%, yet above the Kent average of 7.9%.
- (4) The vision for the Axtane Academy is that it will develop a new first class approach to education. The Academy will instil a pride in and a love of learning. This will motivate students to aim high and become skilled and flexible learners. The ethos will be to provide the best possible avenue of development for these young people to become socially, emotionally and behaviourally confident citizens, employees and employers. The Academy will have a particular focus on vocational education, creating a mix of academic and vocational experiences.
- (5) It is planned that the Academy will specialise in Science and the Creative and Expressive Arts, with a bias towards technology based programmes. It will also have a specialist centre for students in the autistic spectrum.

(6) The Academy will be part of a hard federation with the Leigh Technology Academy. The Leigh Technology Academy Trust will be the sole legal body responsible for both Leigh and the new Axtane Academy.

The Proposal

3. (1) It is proposed to close Axton Chase Community Secondary School on 31st August 2008.

(2) It is proposed that a new government funded Academy will replace Axton Chase School, opening on 1st September 2008. The name of the Academy is likely to be The Axtane Academy. The Academy will be federated with the Leigh Technology Academy, which is the lead sponsor with co-sponsors Kent County Council (KCC) and the University of Kent.

(3) It is proposed that the Academy will open on the existing site and premises with a Published Admission Number of 180, and a capacity of 900, plus up to 200 post 16 places. The new buildings are expected to be completed in September 2010 on the same site, adjacent to the current premises.

The Consultation

4. (1) The consultation process began on the 12th February 2008 and finished on the 24th March 2008.

(2) A consultation document, a copy of which is attached as Appendix 2 was circulated according to the County Procedures for Review. This circulation included Local Members, Dartford Borough Council, local libraries, the Member of Parliament and all Dartford Primary and Secondary School head teachers. Axton Chase School was sent enough copies for all staff, governors, parents and carers to receive one. Attached to the consultation document was a reply form for respondents to express their views. Approximately 1500 copies of the document were circulated

(3) The document can be viewed on the KCC website at:
<http://www.kent.gov.uk/publications/education-and-learning/soab-axton-08.htm>

(4) A public meeting was held at Axton Chase School on 25th January 2008. Mrs Valerie Dagger, Chair of SOAB, chaired the meeting. In attendance were Dr Ian Craig, Director Operations. Mr Simon Webb, Area Education Officer for Dartford & Gravesham. About 15 members of the public attended.

Responses to the Public Consultation

Written Responses

5. (1) 19 responses have been received, of which 18 are in favour, and 1 is undecided.

(2) A summary of written responses is attached as Appendix 3.

Public Meeting Responses

(3) A summary of the points, questions and comments made at the public consultation meeting is attached at Appendix 4.

Views of Local Members

6. The Local Member for the County Division where Axton Chase School is sited is Mr Bertie Bassam. Mr Bassam is also the Chair of the Governing body of Axton Chase School. Mr Bassam has been informed of the proposal and is fully supportive.

Views of Local Member of Parliament

7. The Local Member of Parliament is Dr Howard Stoate. Dr Stoate has been informed of the proposal and has no comment to make at this stage.

Views of Dartford Borough Council

8. Dartford Borough Council has been fully informed of the proposal. No reply has been received.

Views of the Governing Body

9. The Governing Body of Axton Chase School is fully supportive of the proposal.

Views of the Pupils

10. The headteacher of Axton Chase School has kept the pupils and their parents informed and involved through the school newsletter. The pupils are all looking forward to the school becoming an Academy.

Views of the Cluster Board

11. The Cluster board has been informed of the proposal and is fully supportive.

Views of the Area Education Officer

12. The Area Education Officer considers that this is an innovative proposal, designed to enhance the life opportunities of young people in the Dartford district and is therefore fully supportive of the proposal.

Transport, Admissions and Community Impact

13. (1) There is no change in the location of the site. There is a possibility that the Academy will attract pupils from slightly further afield, but overall there is no change to the transport situation.

(2) The Academy will receive advice and support from the local authority to produce a new travel plan.

Resource Implications

Capital

14. (1) There are no capital costs to KCC connected with the closure of Axton Chase School.

(2) There is no capital receipt. The Academy will take over the whole site.

Revenue

(3) Running costs for Academies are paid by the government and the sponsors.

Human

(4) The Academy will formulate its own staffing strategy. If there are to be any redundancies, these costs will be borne by the local authority.

Equality Issues

15. PLASC data for Axton Chase School records a low percentage of pupils with an ethnicity that is not White English or Other White British. *Assessment: Low.*

School Improvement Implications

16. The Academy will be at the core of the community and will be characterised by:

- (a) creating an environment that automatically has high expectations for all;
- (b) having the highest standards of behaviour and commitment;
- (c) developing an enthusiasm for learning by creating a curriculum that incorporates the Sciences and the Creative and Expressive Arts as a rich strand running throughout all aspects of education;
- (d) creating a culture of continuous improvement;
- (e) developing its distinctive approach to creating excellence in education by working in close partnership with the Leigh Technology Academy enabling a greater proportion of young people to achieve the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for our knowledge Society.

Proposed Timetable

17. It is proposed that planning for the building work will commence after a decision has been reached.

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 7 Feb 2008 | SOAB |
| 12 Feb 2008 | Start of Consultation |
| 25 Feb 2008 | Public Meeting |
| 25 Mar 2008 | Close of Consultation |
| 2 Apr 2008 | SOAB |
| Apr 2008 | Cabinet Member Decision |
| Apr 2008 | Public Notice issued, if agreed by Cabinet Member |
| Jun 2008 | End of Statutory Representation Period |
| 31 Aug 2008 | Axton Chase School closes |
| 1 Sep 2008 | New government funded Academy opens |

Recommendation

18. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on
- (a) the proposal to close Axton Chase School and reopen as a government funded Academy; and
 - (b) the issuing of a public notice.

Simon Webb
Area Education Officer
Dartford & Gravesham
Tel: 01732 525110

The Local Member is Bertie Bassam

Background Documents:

None

Previous Committee Reports:

Report to School Organisation Advisory Board 7 February
2008

By: Director – Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 07 February 2008

Subject: PROPOSED CLOSURE OF AXTON CHASE SCHOOL AND ITS REPLACEMENT WITH A GOVERNMENT FUNDED ACADEMY.

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report seeks the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on a proposal to undertake a public consultation, in conjunction with the governing body, on the closure of Axton Chase School and its replacement with a government-funded academy.

Introduction

1. (1) Axton Chase school is an 11-19 mixed (non-selective foundation) high school with a roll of 935 for Years 7 to 11 and 105 post 16 students. Attached as Appendix 1 is a map showing the location of the school.

(2) The school serves both rural and urban communities located in the Dartford district. The school draws from an area which includes three of the most deprived wards in Dartford, pupils attend from two of them, Temple Hill and Swanscombe.

(3) In Axton Chase school, the socio-economic profile of the student intake is below national and Kent average overall. The proportion of students with a statement of Special Educational Needs is above 6% the Kent 2.8% and National average 2.2%. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is 10%, which is below the National average 13.6%, yet below the Kent average 7.9%.

(4) The vision for the Axtane Academy is that it will establish an outstanding Academy that will develop new first class approaches to education. The Academy will instil a pride in and love of learning, motivating students to aim high, become skilled and flexible learners and develop into socially, emotionally and behaviourally confident citizens, employees and employers. The Academy will have a particular focus on vocational education creating a mix of academic and vocational experience.

(5) The Axtane Academy will specialise in Science and the Creative and Expressive Arts, with a bias to technology based programmes. It will also have a specialist centre for students in the autistic spectrum.

(6) Axtane Academy will be part of a hard federation with the Leigh Technology Academy. The Leigh Technology Academy will be the sole legal body responsible for both Leigh and Axtane Academies.

Academy Proposal

2. (1) It is proposed that the Academy will replace Axton Chase School and will be known as Axtane Academy. The Axtane Academy will be federated with the Leigh Technology Academy, who are the lead sponsors with co-sponsors Kent County Council (KCC) and the University of Kent.

(2) It is proposed that the Axtane Academy will open in September 2008 on the existing site and premises with a Published Admission Number of 180, with a capacity of 900 with up to 200 post 16 places. The new buildings are expected to be built for completion in September 2010 on the same site, adjacent to the current premises.

(3) The academy will be at the core of the community and will be characterised by:

- (f) creating an environment that automatically has high expectations for all
- (g) having the highest standards of behaviour and commitment
- (h) developing an enthusiasm for learning by creating a curriculum that incorporates the Sciences and the Creative and Expressive Arts as a rich stand running throughout all aspects of education.
- (i) creating a culture of continuous improvement
- (j) developing its distinctive approach to creating excellence in education by working in close partnership with the Leigh Technology Academy
- (k) enabling a greater proportion of young people to achieve the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for our knowledge Society.

Resource Implications

Capital

3. (1) KCCs contribution is £1 million to the Academy Endowment Fund. This will supplement the funding received from the DCSF.

Revenue

(2) The academy will receive its revenue funding directly from the DCSF each year. It will be funded at a rate equivalent to other Kent specialist schools.

Human

(3) Consultation will take place in accordance with the requirements of TUPE. Costs of new staffing (TUPE applies to current staff) and costs associated with TUPE, including any valid redundancies of staff who cannot transfer or be deployed elsewhere in Kent schools, are borne by the DCSF.

Transport and Road Safety Implications

4. Early discussions will take place with Dartford Borough Council and Kent Highways. They will be fully consulted as part of the design and development phase of the new Academy and it is also expected that a travel plan will be produced prior to the opening in 2008.

School Improvement Implications

6. (1) The closure of the current school and the setting up of the Academy would allow for new facilities, flexibility of curriculum and recruitment of high quality staff. It is intended that the investment in facilities, curriculum and funding flexibility that the academy would bring, would have the positive impact on standards that are required for the students of the Dartford and for improved life opportunities in the local communities.

(2) Axton Chase school was last inspected in November 2007 when it was found that *'the education provided was satisfactory overall, with particular strengths. The sixth form were found to be confident, purposeful and ready to take on responsibilities both within the school and beyond. The curriculum needs greater breadth and cohesion in order to serve all students well.'*

Views of the Governing Body

7. The governing body of Axton Chase School and the Leigh Technology Academy Board are in full support of this proposal.

Views of the Area Education Officer

8. The Area Education Officer considers that this is an innovative proposal, designed to enhance the life opportunities of young people in the Dartford district. It is, therefore, appropriate to conduct a public consultation for the closure of Axton Chase School.

Proposed Timetable

9. Should public consultation be agreed, the following timetable is proposed:

| | |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| School Organisation Advisory Board | 07 February 2008 |
| Publication of consultation document | 12 February 2008 |
| Public meeting | w.c. 25 February 2008 |
| Closing date for responses | 24 March 2008 |
| Report to School Organisation Advisory Board | April 2008 |
| Cabinet Member decision | April 2008 |
| Issue public notice | May 2008 |
| End of public notice period | June 2008 |
| Implementation | 1 September 2008 |

10. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on the proposal for a public consultation to be undertaken in conjunction with the governing body on the proposal for the closure of The Axton Chase School and its replacement with a government funded academy.

Simon Webb
Area Education Officer
Dartford and Gravesham
Tel: (01732) 525110

Background Papers:

None.

**PROPOSED CLOSURE OF AXTON CHASE SCHOOL AND ITS REPLACEMENT
WITH A GOVERNMENT FUNDED ACADEMY**

SUMMARY OF WRITTEN RESPONSES

Consultation documents distributed: 1500
Responses received: 19

| | Support | Against | Undecided | Total |
|------------------------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------|-------|
| Parents/Carers of pupils at Axton Chase School | 13 | | 1 | 14 |
| Members of staff at Axton Chase School | | | | |
| Governors of Axton Chase School | 4 | | | 4 |
| Members of Staff at other schools | | | | |
| Interested Party | 1 | | | 1 |
| Total | 18 | | 1 | 19 |

In support of the proposal:

- The new academy will benefit children already at the school as well as future pupils.
- Will make a good school into an even better Academy.
- It will bring facilities that will provide greater development to all future students.
- Improved facilities can only benefit pupils and staff.
- Only concern is that the Academy is not overpowered by Leigh.
- Existing premises is run down and poorly heated.
- The school has a fantastic team of staff and they should be given this wonderful opportunity.
- If Axton Chase does not get academy status, this will be devastating for students as they are all so excited.
- I am very happy with the leadership of Mr Stokes.
- New building needed, but not at the sacrifice of education for children.
- The school will benefit from the extra funding
- This will benefit the school and the community

Undecided Comments

- Noted that standards slipped at Swanley School, when there was a fundamental change in the leadership team and ethos

PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

Proposal to close Axton Chase School and replace with a new Government Funded Academy

Summary of the public meeting on 25 February 2008
held in the Hall at Axton Chase School

| Issue or Comment | Response |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| Approximately 15 people attended the public meeting including headteachers, staff governors and parents. | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Area Education Officer set out the case for closing Axton Chase School and opening a Government funded Academy. • The Area Education Officer assured the meeting that all comments received would be carefully considered and used to develop the proposals further. • The proposal is that the Axton Chase School will close and in its place a Government funded Academy will open. The new Academy will be known as Axtane Academy. • The Axtane Academy will be federated with the Leigh Technology Academy, who are lead sponsors with co-sponsors being Kent County Council and the University of Kent. • New Axtane Academy will open in September 2008 on the existing site with a Planned Admission Number of 180. • Following this consultation, the outcomes will be reported to the School Organisation Advisory Board on 2 April 2008. • A decision will be made on whether to take the proposal forward. • If so, a Public Notice will be published for a further 6 weeks. • Further representations can be made | |

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>to the proposal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A determination will then be reached on whether the proposal progresses. • June 2008 will mark the end of Statutory Representation period. | |
| <p>A parent felt the consultation had been very “last minute”, with the Public Consultation document only being received shortly before the mid term break and the Public Meeting being ‘hastily’ organised immediately after the holiday. He and other parents felt the timings unfortunate. There also appeared to be several factual errors within the Public Consultation document, which he felt should be rectified and resent.</p> | <p>The Area Education Officer felt the documents had been distributed within a reasonable time and was in line with the normal procedures for Public Consultations. Apologies were made for the errors contained within the Public Consultation document, however it was felt that they did not detract from the general message</p> |
| <p>The same parent was also concerned about the link-up with the Leigh Technology Academy, with reports in press/media about class sizes of up to 60 children.</p> | <p>The Executive Principal of Leigh Technology Academy understood parents may have concerns regarding the reported class sizes at the new academies and in order to allay any fears, extended an invitation for small groups of parents to visit and observe lessons at the Academy.</p> |
| <p>As a Governor of a local Primary School he sought clarification on the position of the Governing Body and whether parents will have an opportunity to oversee what happens in both of these schools.</p> | <p>The Executive Principal of Leigh Technology Academy explained that there was a strong, active Parents Council in operation at the Academy, which offered a forum for parents to discuss education provision of students within the community.</p> |
| | <p>The Director of Operations explained that a definitive answer could not be given with regards to class sizes, as it was up to the Governors to make that decision as and when the new Academy is established. By grouping 60/90 students together in a ‘lecture style’ environment will free up teaching staff to assist in other specialised areas.</p> |
| | <p>The headteacher at Axton Chase School felt that by joining a hard federation with the Leigh Technology Academy, in so far as the Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team were concerned, lessons could be learnt from the experiences of Leigh becoming an Academy. Both he and the Executive Principal at Leigh were looking forward to working collaboratively to offer the best opportunities for students.</p> |

| | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>A parent enquired whether a new school was finally going to be built, as planning permission for the new development had been granted sometime ago.</p> | <p>It was explained that although outline planning permission had been granted, as the opportunity for Axton Chase to become an Academy materialised, it was felt more expedient to seize that opportunity for a number of reasons, including additional funding. It is also about ensuring that what is built is appropriate for learning in the 21st century</p> |
| | <p>The Director of Operations explained that KCC were not in a position to rebuild schools, therefore, in order to get £20-25m required to build a new secondary school, they would need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sell land b. Wait for Government funding c. Jump the queue of Building Schools for the Future programme. |
| <p>The Area Education Officer reiterated the procedure to make comments.</p> | |
| <p>Meeting closed at 8pm.</p> | |

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By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 2 April 2008

Subject: SCHOOLS APPLYING FOR FOUNDATION/TRUST STATUS

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: To inform Members of SOAB of the current situation regarding Foundation/Trust proposals

FOR INFORMATION

Background

1. (1) A paper was presented to SOAB on 17 October 2007 informing Members of the Government's encouragement of all schools to consider Foundation/Trust status, and of the 'fast track' procedures to achieve it. These procedures require a governing body to consult 'interested parties' (including the LA) over a minimum of a four week period, before determining themselves.

(2) Unless there are very good reasons not to do so, the change of status will be approved.

(3) At SOAB, it was agreed that as the consultation period will not normally allow the LA time to prepare paperwork for SOAB for a view, that:

- (a) Unless there are very good reasons to the contrary the presumption will be that the LA will not oppose any governing body wishing to move to Foundation or Trust status;
- (b) The Director (Operations) will consult with the Cabinet Member and local Member(s) before responding to a consultation on Foundation or Trust status;
- (c) Responses will be reported to the next available SOAB.

Determinations

2. (1) Since the last report to the Board there has been one new determination reported to the local authority. On 7 March 2008 a letter was received from **King Ethelbert's School, Birchington**, advising us that following full consultation, including a Public Notice process, the governors had decided to change category from Community to Foundation with effect from 1 September 2008. The local member, Mr Charles Hibberd was informed.

(2) There are now 59 Foundation schools in Kent (13 Primary, 45 Secondary and 1 Special) and 91 Aided schools (78 Primary and 13 Secondary) – a total of 150 and in addition, 7 Academies = 157 (91 Primary, 65 Secondary, 1 Special).

(3) For the sake of simplicity, Aided schools should be considered as having

the same status as Foundation/Trust schools.

Consultations

3. Since the last report no new schools have informed us that they have begun consultations.

Recommendations

4. Members are asked to note the report.

Ian Craig
Director (Operations)
01622 694173
ian.craig@kent.gov.uk

Background Documents:

- School Standards and Framework Act; DFES 1998
- Education and Inspection Act; DFES 2006
- Changing Category to Foundation; DCSF 2007
- School Organisation; Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools in England Regulations; DCSF 2007
- Schools Applying for Foundation/Trust Status;
SOAB - 17 October 2007/14 November 2007/10 January/7 February 2008

By: Director – Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 07 February 2008

Subject: PROPOSED CLOSURE OF AXTON CHASE SCHOOL AND ITS REPLACEMENT WITH A GOVERNMENT FUNDED ACADEMY.

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report seeks the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on a proposal to undertake a public consultation, in conjunction with the governing body, on the closure of Axton Chase School and its replacement with a government-funded Academy.

Introduction

1. (1) Axton Chase school is an 11-19 mixed (non-selective foundation) high school with a roll of 935 for Years 7 to 11 and 105 post 16 students. Attached as Appendix 1 is a map showing the location of the school.

(2) The school serves both rural and urban communities located in the Dartford district (see Appendix 2 for pupil distribution). The school draws from an area which includes three of the most deprived wards in Dartford, pupils attend from two of them, Temple Hill and Swanscombe.

(3) In Axton Chase school, the socio-economic profile of the student intake is below national and Kent average overall. The proportion of students with a statement of Special Educational Needs is 6%, above the Kent (2.8%) and National average (2.2%). The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is 10%, which is below the National average 13.6%, yet below the Kent average 7.9%.

(4) The vision for the Axtane Academy is that it will develop new first class approaches to education. The Academy will instil a pride in and love of learning, motivating students to aim high, become skilled and flexible learners and develop into socially, emotionally and behaviourally confident citizens, employees and employers. The Academy will have a particular focus on vocational education, creating a mix of academic and vocational experiences.

(5) The Axtane Academy will specialise in Science and the Creative and Expressive Arts, with a bias to technology based programmes. It will also have a specialist centre for students in the autistic spectrum.

(6) Axtane Academy will be part of a hard federation with the Leigh Technology Academy. The Leigh Technology Academy will be the sole legal body responsible for both Leigh and Axtane Academies.

Academy Proposal

2. (1) It is proposed that the Axtane Academy will replace Axton Chase School. The Axtane Academy will be federated with the Leigh Technology Academy, which is the lead sponsor with co-sponsors Kent County Council (KCC) and the University of Kent.

(2) It is proposed that the Axtane Academy will open in September 2008 on the existing site and premises with a Published Admission Number of 180, and a capacity of 900, plus up to 200 post 16 places. The new buildings are expected to be completed in September 2010 on the same site, adjacent to the current premises.

(3) The Academy will be at the core of the community and will be characterised by:

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- (e) developing its distinctive approach to creating excellence in education by working in close partnership with the Leigh Technology Academy
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Resource Implications

Capital

3. (1) KCCs contribution is £1 million to the Academy Endowment Fund. This will supplement the funding received from the DCSF.

Revenue

(2) The Academy will receive its revenue funding directly from the DCSF each year. It will be funded at a rate equivalent to other Kent specialist schools.

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(3) Consultation will take place in accordance with the requirements of TUPE. Costs of new staffing (TUPE applies to current staff) and costs associated with TUPE, including any valid redundancies of staff who cannot transfer or be deployed elsewhere in Kent schools, are borne by the DCSF.

Transport and Road Safety Implications

4. Early discussions will take place with Dartford Borough Council and Kent Highways. They will be fully consulted as part of the design and development phase of the new Academy and a travel plan will be produced prior to the opening in 2008.

School Improvement Implications

5. (1) The closure of the current school and the setting up of the Academy would allow for new facilities, flexibility of curriculum and recruitment of high quality staff. It is intended that the investment in facilities, curriculum and funding flexibility that the Academy would bring, would have the positive impact on standards that are required for the students of Dartford and for improved life opportunities in the local communities.

(2) Axton Chase school was last inspected in November 2007 when it was found that *'the education provided was satisfactory overall, with particular strengths. The sixth form were found to be confident, purposeful and ready to take on responsibilities both within the school and beyond. The curriculum needs greater breadth and cohesion in order to serve all students well.'*

Views of the Governing Body

6. The governing body of Axton Chase School and the Leigh Technology Academy Board are in full support of this proposal.

Views of the Area Education Officer

7. The Area Education Officer considers that this is an innovative proposal, designed to enhance the life opportunities of young people in the Dartford district. It is, therefore, appropriate to conduct a public consultation for the closure of Axton Chase School.

Proposed Timetable

8. Should public consultation be agreed, the following timetable is proposed:

| | |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
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| Cabinet Member decision | April 2008 |
| Issue public notice | May 2008 |
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| Implementation | 1 September 2008 |

9. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on the proposal for a public consultation to be undertaken in conjunction with the governing body on the proposal for the closure of The Axton Chase School and its replacement with a government funded academy.

Simon Webb
Area Education Officer
Dartford and Gravesham
Tel: (01732) 525110

Background Papers:

None.

Public Consultation

Proposal to close Axton Chase School and replace with a new Government funded Academy



Kent County Council would like to hear your views on the proposal.

Kent County Council is considering a proposal to close Axton Chase School and open a Government funded Academy. We would like to hear your opinions.

Please take time to read this important document and let us know what you think of this proposal.

Your views are important and will help shape the future. This document gives you the opportunity to let us know what you think.

I can assure you that all comments received will be carefully considered and will be used to develop the proposal for the school. We will then consult you again with these proposals.

Dr Ian Craig
Director Operations
Children Families and Education
Kent County Council



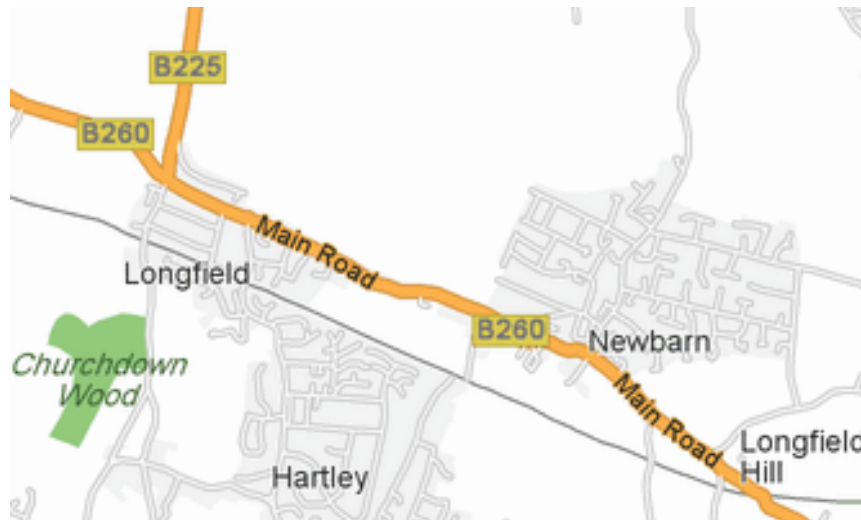
Axton Chase School

Axton Chase school is an 11-18 mixed (non-selective community) high school with a roll of 935 for Years 7 to 11 and 105 post 16 students.

It is a wide-ability secondary school of average size within an authority in which there are grammar schools. It is in a consortium with a local specialist technology college, an academy, two grammar schools and a further education college, focusing on 14-19 provision. The proportion of high attaining students entering Axton Chase is lower than average; the proportion of those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is higher.

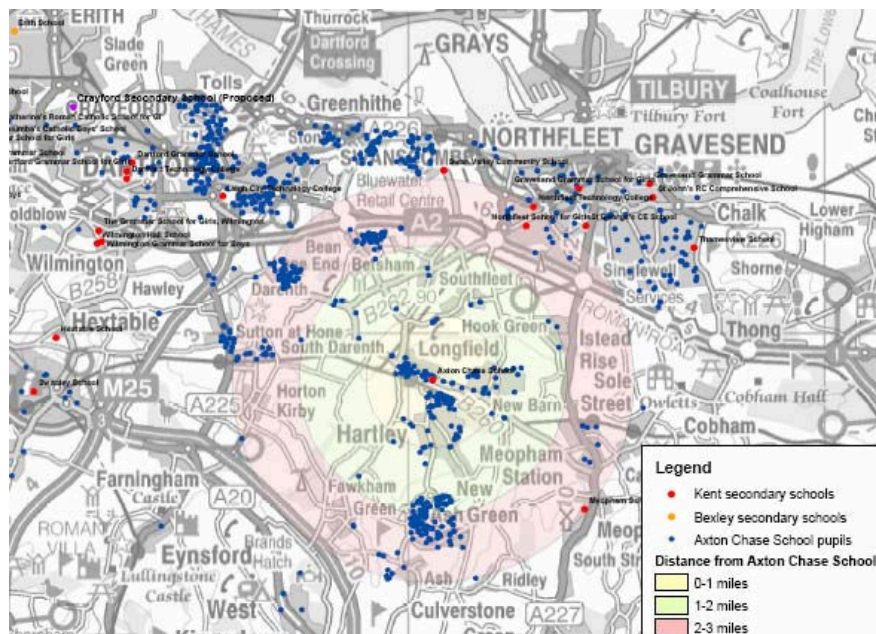
The school includes a special unit for autistic students. It has the following awards: Artsmark Silver, Sportsmark, Eco School Silver, Healthy Schools and Investor in People.

The school is located in the village of Longfield.



The school serves both rural and urban communities in the Dartford district, drawing from an area which includes three of the most deprived wards in Dartford, Temple Hill and Swanscombe.

The following map shows the spread of pupils and the locations of neighbouring secondary schools



Axton Chase school was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2007.

The report stated 'the education provided was satisfactory overall, with particular strengths. The sixth form were found to be confident, purposeful and ready to take on responsibilities both within the school and beyond. The curriculum needs greater breadth and cohesion in order to serve all students well.'

What does this proposal mean?

1. Axton Chase School closes
2. Axtane Academy opens
3. Axtane Academy is federated with Leigh Technology Academy

The proposal is that the Axton Chase School will close and in its place, a government funded academy will open. This Academy will be known as the Axtane Academy.

The Axtane Academy will be federated with the Leigh Technology Academy, which is the lead sponsor with co-sponsors Kent County Council (KCC) and the University of Kent.

It is proposed that the Axtane Academy will open in September 2008 on the existing site and premises with a Published Admission Number of 180, with a capacity of 900 with up to 200 post 16 places. The new buildings are expected to be built for completion in September 2010 on the same site, adjacent to the current premises.



What is an Academy?

Academies are publicly funded independent schools that provide a first class free education to local pupils of all abilities. They bring a distinctive approach to school leadership drawing on the skills of sponsors and other supporters. They give Principals and staff new opportunities to develop educational strategies to raise standards and contribute to diversity in areas of disadvantage.

They are all ability schools established by sponsors from business, faith or voluntary groups working in highly innovative partnerships with central Government and local education partners.

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) meets the capital and running cost for the Academy in full.

Why is KCC proposing this change?

The closure of the current school and the setting up of the Academy would allow for new facilities, flexibility of curriculum and recruitment of high quality staff.

It is intended that the investment in facilities, curriculum and funding flexibility that the academy would bring, would have the positive impact on standards that is required for the students of the Dartford and for improved life opportunities in the local communities.

The Axtane Academy

The vision for the Axtane Academy is that it will establish an outstanding Academy that will develop new first class approaches to education. The Academy will instil a pride in and love of learning, motivating students to aim high, become skilled and flexible learners and develop into socially, emotionally and behaviourally confident citizens, employees and employers. The Academy will have a particular focus on vocational education creating a mix of academic and vocational experience.

The academy will offer greater opportunities for the community and the establishment will be characterised by:

- creating an environment that automatically has high expectations for all
- having the highest standards of behaviour and commitment
- developing an enthusiasm for learning by creating a curriculum that incorporates the Sciences and the Creative and Expressive Arts as a rich strand running throughout all aspects of education.
- creating a culture of continuous improvement
- developing its distinctive approach to creating excellence in education by working in close partnership with the Leigh Technology Academy enabling a greater proportion of young people to achieve the knowledge, skills and attributes needed for our knowledge society.

The Axtane Academy will specialise in Science and the Creative and Expressive Arts, with a bias to technology based programmes. It will also have a specialist centre for students in the autistic spectrum.

Axtane Academy will be part of a hard federation with the Leigh Technology Academy. The Leigh Technology Academy Trust will be the sole legal body responsible for both Leigh and Axtane Academies.

How much will it cost?

Capital

KCCs contribution is £1 million to the Academy Endowment Fund. This will supplement the funding received from the DCSF.

Revenue

The academy will receive its revenue funding directly from the DCSF each year. It will be funded at a rate equivalent to other Kent specialist schools.

Human

Consultation will take place in accordance with the requirements of TUPE. Costs of new staffing (TUPE applies to current staff) and costs associated with TUPE, including any valid redundancies of staff who cannot transfer or be deployed elsewhere in Kent schools, are borne by the DCSF.

Transport and Road Safety Implications

Early discussions will take place with Dartford Borough Council and Kent Highways. They will be fully consulted as part of the design and development phase of the new Academy and it is also expected that a travel plan will be produced prior to the opening in 2008.

CONSULTATION TIMETABLE

| | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 7 th Feb 2008 | School Organisation Advisory Board meeting to consider a public consultation. |
| 12 th Feb 2008 | Start of Consultation. |
| 25 th Feb 2008 | Public Meeting. |
| 24 th March 2008 | Close of Consultation. |
| 7 th May 2008 | School Organisation Advisory Board meeting to consider issuing a Public Notice |
| May 2008 | Report to Cabinet Member |
| May 2008 | Public Notice issued, if agreed by Cabinet Member |
| June 2008 | End of Statutory Representation Period |
| 1 st Sept 2008 | Axton Chase school closes Axtane Academy opens |

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- Following this consultation, the outcomes will be reported to the School Organisation Advisory Board of Kent County Council.
- A decision will be made on whether to take the proposal forward.
- If so, a Public Notice will be published for six weeks.
- Representations about the proposal can be made.
- A determination will then be reached on whether the proposal is to be implemented.
- In certain circumstances this could include referral to the statutory Schools Adjudicator.
- All views will be considered before a decision is made.

HOW TO TELL US YOUR VIEWS

If you would like to comment on the proposal there are several opportunities available to you.

▶ **Complete and return the response form.**

Send to:

Simon Webb,
Area Education Officer (Dartford & Gravesham)
17 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill,
West Malling
Kent, ME19 4UL
Fax: 01732 525223
(forms must reach us by 24 March 2008)

▶ **Come to a public meeting.**

Axton Chase School
Main Road
Longfield
Kent DA3 7PH

7.00 p.m. 25th February 2008

An elected member of Kent County Council will chair this meeting, at which all interested parties will have an opportunity to put forward their views. Officers from the Local Authority will also be present to clarify points of detail.

▶ **Email your comments**

school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

Public Consultation Response Form

Proposal to close Axton Chase School and replace with a government funded academy

To: Simon Webb,
Area Education Officer, Dartford & Gravesham
17 Kings Hill Avenue
Kings Hill, West Malling
Kent, ME19 4UL

Fax: 01732 525223

You can also email your views to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN 24th MARCH 2008

Do you agree with the proposal?

Yes **No** **Undecided**

The parent/carer of a pupil at Axton Chase School A member of staff at Axton Chase School

A governor of Axton Chase School A pupil at Axton Chase School

Other interested party Name of other interested party:

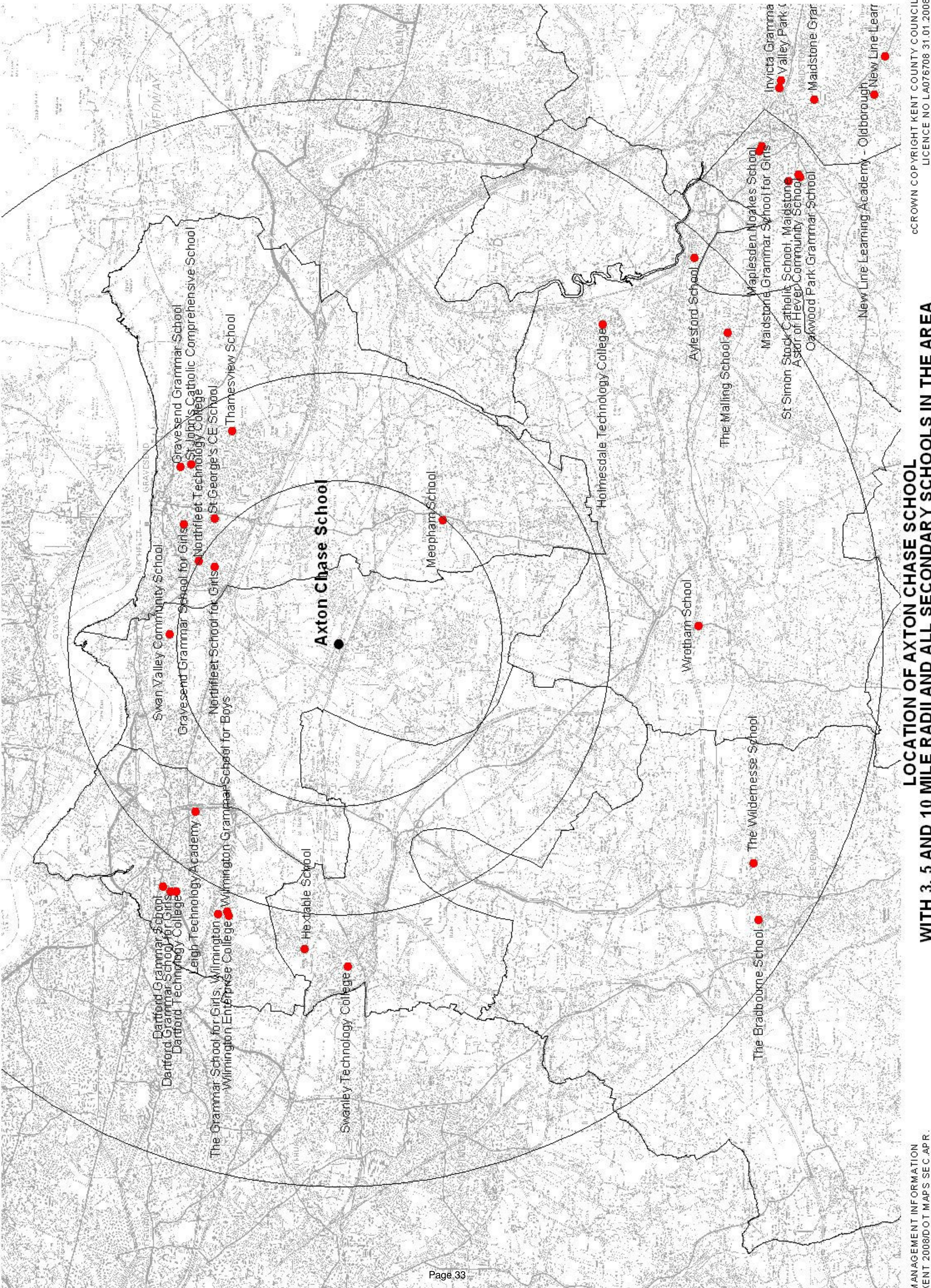
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|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Name: |
| Address: |
| Kent County Council is a data controller under the Data Protection Act 1998 and will comply with the requirements of the Act at all times. We will ensure that your personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and in this instance used only for the purpose of validation, which will enable a fair and just consultation. |

PLEASE WRITE YOUR COMMENTS OVERLEAF

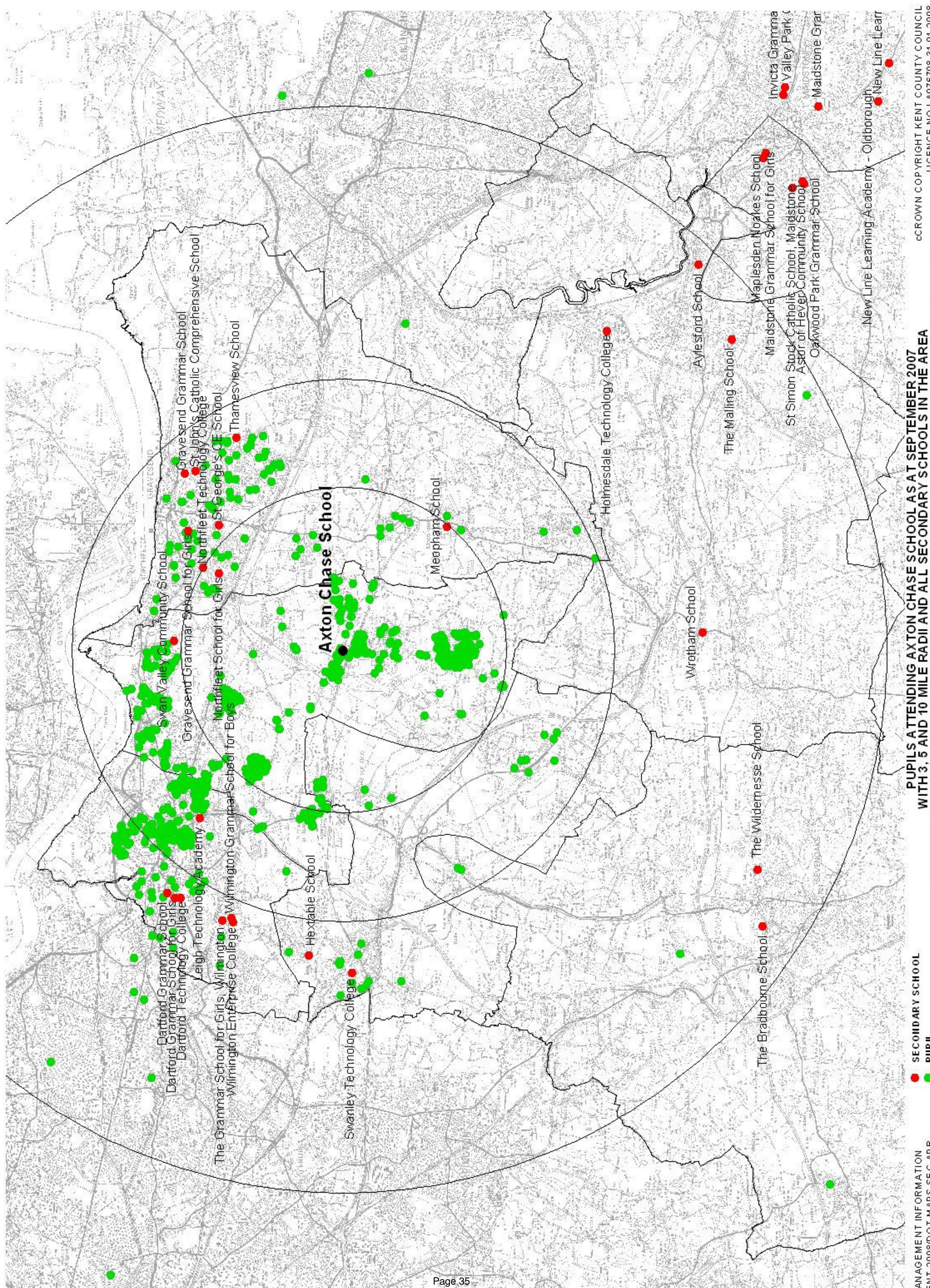
My comments are as follows
(please continue on another sheet if necessary)

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying most of the page. It is intended for the user to write their comments as indicated by the text above it.



**LOCATION OF AXTON CHASE SCHOOL
 WITH 3, 5 AND 10 MILE RADI AND ALL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE AREA**

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MANAGEMENT INFORMATION
 KENT 2008/DOT MAPS SEC .APR.

● SECONDARY SCHOOL
 ● PUPIL

PUPILS ATTENDING AXTON CHASE SCHOOL AS AT SEPTEMBER 2007
 WITH 3, 5 AND 10 MILE RADII AND ALL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE AREA
 There are six pupils at Rainham, Marden, Tonbridge, Greenwich and Beckenham not shown on this map

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