



AGENDA

SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, 7th May, 2008, at 10.30 am

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

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

Telephone **(01622)
694289/694367**

Refreshments will be available from 10.15 am in the meeting room

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

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

1. Substitutes
2. Declaration of Interests by Members in items on the Agenda for this meeting
3. Minutes - (a) 19 March 2008 (b) 2 April 2008 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Proposed Change of Age Range for Green Park Community Primary School, Dover (Pages 7 - 34)
5. Schools Applying for Foundation/Trust Status (Pages 35 - 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
28 April 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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KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting of the School Organisation Advisory Board held on Wednesday, 19 March 2008 at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone.

PRESENT: Mrs V J Dagger (Chairman), Mr R B Burgess (Vice-Chairman), Mrs C Angell, Mr C J Capon, Mr A D Crowther, Mr M J Northey, Mr A R Poole, and Mr M J Vye. Mr R Bristow (Director of Education, Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education) was also present

OFFICERS: Dr I Craig (Director – Operations), Children, Families and Education Directorate; Mrs A Osborne, Area Education Officer, Canterbury and Swale; and Mr G K Mills (Legal and Democratic Services).

CABINET MEMBER: Mr M C Dance, Cabinet Member for Operations, Resources and Skills (CFE) was in attendance.

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Minutes of the Meeting held on 7 February 2008

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2008 are correctly recorded and that they be signed by the Chairman.

2. Repton Park (as known as Templar Barracks, Ashford) Proposed new primary school provision - Outcome of Consultation

(Item 4 – Report by Director - Operations)

(Kendra Stanley-Berridge was present for this item)

(1) This report set out the results of the public consultation on the need for a new primary school in Ashford and sought the views of the Advisory Board on the issuing of a competition notice. Before the commencement of discussion, a letter from a local Member, Mrs Elizabeth Tweed, was read to the meeting in which she expressed the view that if children were educated where they lived, that not only promoted better community cohesion, but had wider implications (e.g no more having to jump in the car to get to school). The Repton Park Development could well be an example of how things can be done – already a mini high street was planned, plus a surgery, fitness centre etc. To rule out a primary school would definitely be a retrograde step.

(2) Dr Craig said that the Education and Inspections Act 2006 now required local authorities to undertake a competition to find a promoter for any new primary school. However, before such a competition was undertaken, the local authority was required by statutory guidance to undertake consultation. As part of this consultation the question had to be asked whether or not the community considered that a new school was in fact needed. Full details of the competition process was set out in a report on New Schools Competitions presented to the Board at its meeting on 14 November 2007 but Dr Craig said that he would arrange for Members to receive a copy of the Regulations themselves. During the course of discussion, Members of the Advisory Board raised a number of questions to which officers responded as appropriate.

(3) The Advisory Board agreed unanimously that a competition notice should be issued and noted that there would be a further report following the closing period for the submission of formal representations.

3. Education on the Isle of Sheppey – Outcome of Further Consultation on proposed changes to the school system

(Item 5 – Report by Director - Operations) (The Chairman declared consideration of this item to be urgent for the following reasons. Following a judicial review challenge on the proposal to introduce a two tier system, including an Academy on the Isle of Sheppey, KCC following legal advice under took further consultation. The proposal envisaged a September 2008 change for the primary phase, and September 2009 for the secondary. The last day for responses was 17 March 2008 and therefore the bulk of the report was published prior to the end of the consultation period but without the 5 working days notice. A final analysis of responses was detailed in a separate Appendix which was circulated at the meeting).

(1) Before the commencement of discussion on this item, a further appendix was circulated setting out a summary of the original responses to the public consultation exercise. Members of the Advisory Board had also received a letter from Ms Angela Harrison as one of the local County Members in which she expressed her wholehearted support for the proposal to move from a three tier system of education to a two tier system. In her letter, Ms Harrison also said that she had come to the conclusion that an Academy would give the impetus needed for first class secondary education on Sheppey.

(2) Alison Osborne said that the report which Members had before them was the culmination of a very lengthy consultation process which was why the report was so detailed. Public consultation on the primary phase included 7 public meetings on the detail of the proposals and these were held during March 2007 with the results reported to the School Organisation Advisory Board at its meeting on 16 May 2007. Permission to issue a public notice was given and this was issued on 6 September 2007. There was one letter in response to the public notice and the 4 week statutory appeals period brought no statutory objections and arrangements were made to implement.

(3) Consultation on the proposed for the secondary phase of education for an establishment of an Academy on Isle of Sheppey had been carried out by consultants who were appointed by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. At its meetings on 17 October and 14 November 2007, the School Organisation Advisory Board supported a proposal to issue a public notice to close Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School and to replace them with an Academy conditional upon the School's Minster signing a funding agreement.

(4) However, because there was a legal uncertainty the County Council decided to quash the primary phase notice and to consult further on the proposals for the two-tier system in order to ensure that consultees were fully informed of the proposals for both the primary and secondary phases of education. As a result, two further consultation documents were distributed and the full outcomes of these consultations were detailed in the report which Members of the Advisory Board had before them.

(5) During the course of a wide and very detailed discussion, Members of the Advisory Board raised a number of detailed questions. Mr Vye said that at one stage he was against going out to consultation because at that time, there was no clear view as to the exact provisions of the secondary phase. Members of the Advisory Board now had before them a comprehensive report and he was now able on the basis of the information now available to support the proposals as detailed in the report. Mr Crowther said that he fully supported the proposals and spoke about their importance in relation to the future of Sheppey. He said that the proposals were supported by the majority of the teaching staff and governors and it was relevant to note that whilst there may appear to be a slight of number of residents against the proposals, they had to be seen in the context of the very low number of responses which had been received. Indeed some 92½% of those who had a right to express a view had chosen not to. Mr Crowther also said that both local Members supported the proposals and both were against the establishment of one large school. He was therefore pleased with what was now being proposed.

(7) Mr Bristow said that he believed that community cohesion was a key element of these proposals and he believed that establishing an academy would provide the best opportunity to achieve that objective in the longer term. He said he believed that the Academy would be in safe hands and that the momentum was in favour of its establishment. Mr Burgess spoke in support of the proposals and thought it was right that KCC should be closely involved in the day-to-day running of the school.

(8) Mrs Angell said that she supported the changes proposed in the report to go to two tiers of education. She said that in recognising the views in respect of an academy, it was important to consider and take into account the views of everybody and to establish the reasons why some 49.6% of those who responded to consultation wanted to retain the existing system. She also said there were a number of staffing issues which needed to be considered carefully in taking these proposals forward.

(9) Mrs Osborne said that the 3 middle schools had made it clear that they wish to maintain the status quo but that that could not be achieved and also implement a two tier system. She said she believed that the rationale for not wanting change was in part about not wanting change itself. She said she also believed that part of the support was based on the fact that some people were fond of the schools and wished to see them retained as they were. However, the overwhelming message was that a two tier system of education should be established and that secondary provision should be way of an academy as described in the report.

(10) As to staff, Mrs Osborne said that informal meetings had already been held and would continue to take place with involvement of professional associations and the Trade Unions. The County Council had already sought co-operation from governing bodies to ensure that transition arrangements operated smoothly. The Schools' Personnel Service had drawn up a Code of Practice for the recruitment of staff and professional development needs had been identified and training and development days arranged. Also the proposals meant that staff could benefit from career development opportunities arising from these changes. In addition, the Academy Project Group had set up meetings at the Middle Schools and Minster College with the agreement of Headteachers, so they could have the opportunity to meet and consult staff. Mrs Osborne said that TUPE Regulations would apply but it had to be recognised that staff may not get offered exactly the same job that they currently had but their employment was protected.

(11) Following further debate the Advisory Board agreed :-

(a) to the issuing of linked public notices to establish the primary and secondary phases of education on the Isle of Sheppey-

- The change of age range for the first schools and St George's CE Middle School
- The addition of provision for Eastchurch CE Primary School to be located at Warden Bay
- The closure of Minster College, Cheyne Middle School and Danley Middle School to be replaced by an Academy on the Minster College and Cheyne Middle School sites, subject to the funding agreement; and

(b) subject to approval of the proposals following the end of the representation period, the resources necessary to implement the scheme be provided on the basis identified in the report.

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

SCHOOL ORGANISATION ADVISORY BOARD

MINUTES of a meeting of the School Organisation Advisory Board held on 2 April 2008 at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone.

PRESENT: Mrs V J Dagger (Chairman), Mrs C Angell, Mr C J Capon, Mr A D Crowther, Mr M J Northey, Mr A R Poole, Mr F Wood-Brignall (substitute for the Mr R B Burgess) and Mr M J Vye.

OFFICERS: Dr I Craig (Director – Operations), Children, Families and Education Directorate; Mr D Hart, Education Support Officer, Dartford and Gravesham and Mr G K Mills (Legal and Democratic Services).

UNRESTRICTED ITEMS

1. Proposed Closure of Axton Chase School and its Replacement with a Government Funded Academy

(Item 3 – Report by Director – Operations)

(1) Prior to discussion of this item the Director of Operations circulated a paper which updated Members of the Advisory Board on the summary of written responses.

(2) He also circulated a paper which replaced paragraph 14.1 of the published report. The amended paper confirmed that there were no capital costs to KCC connected with the closure of Axton Chase School. Part of the site was due to be sold with the subsequent receipt being used to support the Academies and Building Schools for the Future Programme. The Academy would take on the rest of the site. Running cost for the Academies would be paid for by the Government and the sponsors with the Academy also formulating its own staffing strategy. Should there be any redundancies then these costs would be borne by the Local Authority.

(3) During the course of a wide ranging and detailed debate Members of the Advisory Board asked officers a range of questions related to these proposals. Dr Craig confirmed that the Capital Receipt could only be used for a purpose related to the Academy. Dr Craig also said that whilst it was standard procedure to invite the teaching unions to attend consultation meetings, it did appear that on this particular occasion, they had not receive such an invitation. Mr Hart said that the Headteacher of Axton Chase School had confirmed there had been on site meetings with Union representatives and that the appointed Consultants had arranged a meeting with the unions and this would be taking place on 23 April 2008.

(4) Dr Craig said that should the recommendation before the Advisory Board be agreed then the formal consultation process would commence and the Unions would be consulted as to their views as part of that process. In answer to other questions raised by Members, Dr Craig said that until the work of the consultants had been completed, it would not be possible to say what exactly would be provided in terms of facilities on the site. Dr Craig also said that although KCC was a sponsor of the Academy proposal, it could not itself decide how the school should be organised. In relation to the timing of the planning application, Dr Craig said that its determination

did not in his view pre-judge the Academy proposals and that nonetheless the school was in urgent need of re-building. Also, it was acknowledged that Axton Chase was at the heart of the community and a range of extra curricular activity took place within the surroundings of the school. The Academy would be able to build and enhance those uses and continue to act as community hub. In answer to a question relating to the costs to local people of using the school facilities, Dr Craig said that, that would be a matter for the Governing Body as it was for them to determine the charging policies relating to extra curricular uses.

(5) With regard to issues relating to staffing, Dr Craig said that the new Academy will be federated with the Leigh Technology Academy. The two schools would be operated separately in terms of staff but would have one overarching Governing Body which would be responsible for determining all staffing issues. In response to further concerns expressed about the availability of the school facilities for community uses and the affordability of those uses, Dr Craig said that KCC as a sponsor of the Academy proposals would be in a position to influence the Governing Body in the way that the school was operated. However, it had to be recognised that at the end of the day it was for the Governing Body to run the school. Having said that he fully understood the views which Members were expressing on this issue and said he would forward these on to the Consultees.

(6) Following further discussions, the Advisory Board agreed to the proposal to close Axton Chase school and for it to be re-opened as a Government funded Academy and that a public notice be issued accordingly. Mrs Angell asked for it to be recorded that in agreeing to these recommendations, it was important to ensure that the teaching unions were fully consulted on these proposals. This was agreed

By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 7 May 2008

Subject: PROPOSED CHANGE OF AGE RANGE FOR GREEN PARK
COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL, DOVER

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report sets out the results of the public consultation on the proposal to change the age range for Green Park Community Primary School and the closure of the maintained nursery unit.

Introduction

1. (1) The School Organisation Advisory Board, at its meeting on 7 February 2008, supported a recommendation to consult on the proposal to change the age range for Green Park Community Primary School and the closure of the maintained nursery unit. The report is attached as Appendix 1.

(2) This report sets out the results of the public consultation which was undertaken in March and April 2008.

Background and Accommodation Issues

2. (1) The Schools Adjudicator approved the proposal to close Melbourne Community Primary School and the Powell School with effect from 31 August 2007 and to establish a newly amalgamated school from 1 September 2007. At that time the Adjudicator made a modification to the proposal, requiring that the new school should operate initially on split site locations. This was to allow time for appropriate improvements and adaptations to be made to the Powell site. The original proposal was that both schools should be consolidated onto the site of The Powell School and the school would have an age range of 4-11. The proposal therefore encompassed the closure of the existing nursery unit on the Melbourne site.

(2) It was agreed by all parties that consolidation onto a single site would be deferred until September 2008. A further modification to the original published proposal was made determining that the age range of the new school should be 3-11 allowing the nursery unit to continue until the Melbourne site was closed.

(3) The maintained nursery unit was opened in September 2004 and since that time has always been significantly under-subscribed. There are currently 14 children occupying part-time places. The nursery has the capacity to provide 52 part-time places.

(4) When Green Park Community Primary School consolidates in September 2008 onto the Powell site, it will become difficult and impractical for the school to continue to manage the maintained nursery.

(5) There is already a pre-school provision (Kid Ease) located next door to the Powell site.

(6) Initial discussions have therefore taken place with Umbrella, the current Children's Centre provider, about the possibility in principle of relocating to the maintained nursery unit accommodation.

(7) The relocation of the pre school provision to the Melbourne site, would ensure that the excellent facilities afforded by the maintained nursery unit would continue to be available to the local community. The accommodation would provide an improved environment for the pre-school children attending Umbrella which is currently located in St Nicholas Church hall (Appendix 2).

The Proposal

3. (1) The proposal is to change the age range of Green Park Community Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11 and to close the maintained nursery unit currently operating on the site of the former Melbourne Community Primary School.

(2) The implementation date for the proposal would be 19 October 2008, which is the end of Term 1 in the next academic year.

(3) The relocation of the Umbrella nursery provision would not technically form part of the statutory proposal. Initial discussions with Umbrella have been positive and Umbrella would guarantee a place for any child currently attending the maintained nursery unit, if and when the provision comes under their management.

Consultation Process

4. (1) The consultation process began on 13 March 2008 and the final date for written comments is 6 May 2008.

(2) A consultation document (Appendix 3) was distributed to staff, governors and parents at the school, County Councillors, Member of Parliament, the Diocesan Authorities, local libraries, the District Council and others in accordance with the agreed County policy. The document was also posted on the KCC website.

(3) Approximately 600 copies of the document were circulated, which included a form for written responses.

(4) A public meeting was held at Green Park Community Primary School on 1 April 2008. Mr Robert Burgess, member of SOAB, chaired the meeting. In attendance were Martyn Doole, Area Education Officer and other KCC officers. 12 people attended the meeting including Mr Newman, one of the Local Members.

Responses to the Public Consultation

Written Responses

5. (1) A summary of written comments will be tabled at the meeting on 7 May 2008 (Appendix 4).

Public Meeting Responses

(2) A summary of the main points made at the meeting is attached as Appendix 5.

Views of Elected Members

6. (1) The local members are Mr Bill Newman and Mr Gordon Cowan.

(2) Mr Newman has commented as follows:

“I am disappointed at the possible closure of a Kent County Council run nursery unit on the Melbourne site of Green Park Community Primary School, in an area that had benefited and needs to continue to benefit from nursery provision.

I wish to be assured that any change of provider of nursery provision at the Melbourne site maintains the highest possible standards of provision for all the children involved and no less than that provided in the past and that access would be assured as a priority in the future to all those children entitled to such provision in the Melbourne area and the Buckland estate should they wish to take up such provision.

In the context of what is happening at the maintained nursery unit on the Melbourne site it would appear reasonable that Green Park Community Primary School change their age range from 3-11 to 4-11.

I am pleased that Kent County Council would still have some oversight of the provision should this go forward, as it is the provider for the Buckland Children’s Centre”.

(3) At the time of writing a response had not been received from Mr Cowan.

Views of the District Council

7. Dover District Council was consulted but a response has not been received.

Views of the Local Member of Parliament

8. The Local Member of Parliament, Mr Gwyn Prosser was consulted but a response has not been received.

Views of the Governing Body

9. The Governing Body support the proposal as being the logical conclusion to the amalgamation and the new school consolidating on the site at The Linces in September.

Views of the Cluster Board

10. The public consultation document was made available to all schools in the Dover cluster. The Cluster Board meets on 6 May and their views will be tabled at the meeting on 7 May.

Views of the Area Education Officer

11. (1) Given the consolidation of Green Park Community School on a single site at the Linces from September 2008 it would be impractical for the school to continue to manage the maintained nursery from that time.

(2) Changing the age range of Green Park Community School from 3-11 to 4-11 and closing the maintained nursery unit is therefore a sensible and pragmatic response in the current circumstances.

(3) The maintained nursery had been significantly under-utilised since its inception. However, it does provide superb facilities which should continue to be available for the local community.

(4) Facilitating the relocation of the private provider will retain the use of a superb facility and enhance significantly the quality of accommodation available to children attending the pre-school provision within the Children's Centre.

Transport, Admissions and Community Impact

12. (1) The continued use of the maintained nursery unit accommodation is not expected to have any transport implications.

(2) Children currently attending the maintained nursery unit would be able to have a place with Umbrella should parents wish.

(3) The nursery unit is under-utilised and its closure should not impact adversely on the local community with the continued use of the maintained nursery unit accommodation through an alternative provider. There is a range of alternative pre-school provision available in the locality.

Resource Implications

Capital & Revenue

13. (1) Retention of the nursery unit within Local Authority ownership has ongoing implications for maintenance of the building. Any agreement entered into with Umbrella would generate regular income sufficient to offset these costs.

Human

(2) Green Park Community Primary School has been working with the Schools Personnel Service on the process of restructuring the staff ready for consolidation onto the one site from September 2008. The staff who are currently working within the maintained nursery unit have been included in this process.

Equality Issues

14. Continuing access to high quality provision on the former Melbourne site should avoid any detrimental impact.

School Improvement Implications

15. Maintaining continuity of provision through an alternative provider should ensure that there are no adverse implications for school improvement.

Proposed Timetable

16. (1) If it is decided that a public notice should be issued in respect of this proposal, the following timetable could apply.

Issue public notice	13 June 2008
End of representation period	25 July 2008
Decision by Kent County Council	August 2008
Implementation	19 October 2008

(2) Should the Public Notice not be determined by the Local Authority or if there are statutory appeals to a decision to implement the Public Notice, the outcome would be determined by the Schools Adjudicator.

17. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on:
- (a) changing the age range of Green Park Community Primary School and closure of the maintained nursery unit on the former Melbourne site with effect from 19 October 2008.
 - (b) if agreed, the issuing of a public notice to change the age range of Green Park Community Primary School.

Martyn Doole
Area Education Officer
Thanet and Dover
Tel: 01227 284407

The Local Members are Mr Bill Newman and Mr Gordon Cowan

Background Documents:

None

Previous Committee Reports:

School Organisation Advisory Board – 7 February 2008

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By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 7 February 2008

Subject: PROPOSED CHANGE OF AGE RANGE FOR GREEN PARK COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL, DOVER

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report explains the need to bring forward a proposal to change the age range of Green Park Community School, Dover and to close the maintained nursery unit with effect from 19 October 2008.

Introduction

1. (1) On 14 March 2007 the Schools Adjudicator approved the proposal to close Melbourne Community Primary School and The Powell School with effect from 31 August 2007 and to establish a newly amalgamated school from 1 September 2007.

(2) The original proposal was that both schools should be consolidated onto the site of The Powell School with effect from 1 September 2007 and that the school would have an age range of 4-11. The proposal therefore encompassed the closure of the existing nursery unit on the Melbourne site.

(3) The Adjudicator modified the proposal published by the Local Authority. The proposal to amalgamate the two schools with effect from 1 September 2007 was approved. However, the Adjudicator determined that the newly amalgamated school should initially operate on split site locations. This was intended to allow time for adaptations to The Powell site to be properly planned and implemented and for the needs of the children with physical disability, including those in the Physical Disability Unit at the Melbourne School to be taken into account.

(4) In consultation between the Local Authority, the headteachers of the two existing schools and the Adjudicator it was agreed that the consolidation onto a single site would be deferred until September 2008. Following discussion with the Local Authority, the Adjudicator therefore made a further modification to the originally published proposal by determining that the age range of the new school should be 3-11 and not 4-11, effectively allowing the nursery unit to continue until the Melbourne site was closed and mainstream provision consolidated on the site of the former Powell School.

(5) Plans are now in place to make appropriate improvements and adaptations to the former Powell site to enable consolidation to take place from September 2008. It is therefore necessary to bring forward a proposal to change the age range of the newly established Green Park Community Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11, thereby closing the maintained nursery on the former Melbourne site.

Background

2. (1) The maintained nursery unit was opened in September 2005. Since that time it has always been significantly under-subscribed. There are currently 14 children occupying part time places out of a potential capacity for the nursery of 52.

(2) With mainstream provision consolidated on the Powell site, it would become difficult to maintain a nursery unit, managed by the school, on the Melbourne site over the long term.

(3) The nursery unit is accommodated in excellent facilities in a detached building on the Melbourne site. The intention has always been that these facilities should remain available as a valuable community resource with considerable amenity value. Over the past few months, consideration has therefore been given to the potential for retaining pre-school provision on the former Melbourne site while addressing the practical implications arising from the relocation of the mainstream school provision onto the former Powell site some 0.7 miles away.

(4) Pre-school provision, including both nursery and full day care provision is already available locally through the provision made by the Umbrella private nursery, which is part of the offer available through the Buckland Children's Centre. The Umbrella provision currently offers morning and full day care provision for up to 45 children. The private provision is currently delivered in St Nicholas Church Hall on the Buckland Estate. The quality of the accommodation and facilities available are inferior to those available within the existing maintained nursery unit. Umbrella have been looking for alternative accommodation. Use of the facilities on the former Melbourne site would meet a pressing community need and enhance the facilities available to local pre-school children.

(5) Preliminary discussions have taken place with Umbrella about the possibility in principle of relocating to the former Melbourne site. These can now be taken further into more substantive and detailed discussions, subject to the potential availability of the nursery building in the light of decisions to be taken by Members. Umbrella has a Service Level Agreement (SLA) with KCC to deliver their part of the Children's Centre offer. This would need to be renegotiated to take account of any relocation.

(6) As part of the discussions to be had with the current Children's Centre provider the Local Authority would secure a guarantee that all pre-school children currently attending the Green Park nursery unit are guaranteed a place if and when the provision comes under the management of a private provider.

The Proposal

3. (1) The proposal is to change the age range of Green Park Community Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11 and to close the maintained nursery unit currently operating on the site of the former Melbourne Community Primary School.

(2) The implementation date for the proposal would be 19 October 2008, which is the end of Term 1 in the next academic year. This would allow statutory procedures to be completed and relocation of Umbrella managed effectively.

(3) The relocation of the Umbrella pre-school provision would not technically form part of the statutory proposal. However, subject to the consultation proceeding, discussions would be developed with this alternative provider to ensure continuing use of the excellent facilities available for the benefit of the local community.

Site Issues

4. (1) The mainstream provision will be consolidated onto the site of the former Powell School with effect from 1 September 2008. Plans have been drawn up to adapt and enhance the site accordingly.

(2) From that time, the existing site of the former Melbourne School will be surplus to requirements and potentially available for alternative community use or for disposal depending on decisions to be made by elected Members. The nursery building is detached from the mainstream school site and continuing use of the nursery facility should not in anyway impede alternative use/development of the school site.

(3) There is insufficient space and accommodation on the former Powell site to house a maintained nursery unit. There is also a private provider (Kidease) with 40 places located next to the former Powell site.

(4) The current minimum age for admission to the maintained nursery unit is 3 years old. Umbrella need to offer provisions for babies and younger children, if they are to fulfil the requirement as the Children's Centre provider. Currently, they cannot offer places to this very young age group, given the restrictions imposed by their existing accommodation. Relocation to the maintained nursery unit site would provide them with suitable accommodation. Modest adaptations to accommodate baby changing facilities etc. would be required. The costs would be met from the Sure Start Sustainability Funds.

Resource Issues

Capital & Revenue

5. (1) Retention of the physical infrastructure of the nursery unit within Local Authority ownership has ongoing implications for maintenance of the building. However, it is proposed that any agreement entered into with an alternative provider would generate a regular income sufficient to offset these costs.

Human

(2) Green Park School is currently working with Schools Personnel Service (SPS) to address the staffing issues at the school which will need to include the implications of a future closure of the nursery unit.

School Improvement Implications

6. Maintaining continuity of provision through an alternative provider should ensure that there are no adverse implications for school improvement.

Equality Issues

7. Continuing access to high quality provision on the former Melbourne site should avoid any detrimental impact.

Transport & Environmental Impact, Including Community Implications

8. Continuing access to on-site provision should avoid adverse impact on the environment, the community and any adverse transport implications.

Proposed Timetable

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|----|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 9. | SOAB 1 Seeking permission to consult | 7 February 2008 |
| | Public Consultation Period | 25 February to 7 April 2008 |
| | Public Meeting | w/c 10 March |
| | SOAB 2 Report back on consultation | 7 May 2008 |
| | Cabinet Member decision | End of May 2008 |

If not called into Scrutiny

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| | Public Notice issued | 6 June 2008 |
| | End of Public Notice period | 18 July 2008 |
| | Determination by Local Authority | 25 July 2008 |
| | End of four week period for appeals | 22 August 2008 |
| | Implementation from | 19 October 2008 |

If called into Scrutiny

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| | Public Notice issued | 4 July 2008 |
| | End of Public Notice period | 15 August 2008 |
| | Determination by Local Authority | 22 August 2008 |
| | End of four week period for appeals | 19 September 2008 |
| | Implementation from | 19 October 2008 |

Views of the Local Members

Mr Newman's Views

10. (1) Mr Newman has been consulted over the proposal and has agreed to forward his views to the Area Education Officer who will table these at the meeting on 7 February.

Mr Cowan's Views

- (2) Mr Cowan has been consulted over the proposal and has agreed to forward his views to the Area Education Officer who will table these at the meeting on 7 February.

Recommendations

11. Members are asked to give their views on whether there should be a consultation on the possible change of age range of Green Park Community School, Dover and the closure of the existing maintained nursery unit on the former Melbourne site with effect from 19 October 2008.

Martyn Doole
Area Education Officer
Thanet and Dover
Tel: 01227 284407

The Local Members are Mr Bill Newman and Mr Gordon Cowan.

Background Documents:

None

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Green Park Community
Primary School -
Melbourne site

Kid Ease Day
Nursery

Umbrella Day
Nursery

Green Park Community
Primary School - The
Linces site

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Public Consultation Document
GREEN PARK COMMUNITY
PRIMARY SCHOOL



Date of Public Meeting: Tuesday 1 April, 7.00 p.m.

**Venue: Green Park Community Primary School
(former Melbourne site)**

Kent County Council would like to hear your views on the proposed change of age range for Green Park Community Primary School and the closure of the maintained nursery unit with effect from 19 October 2008.



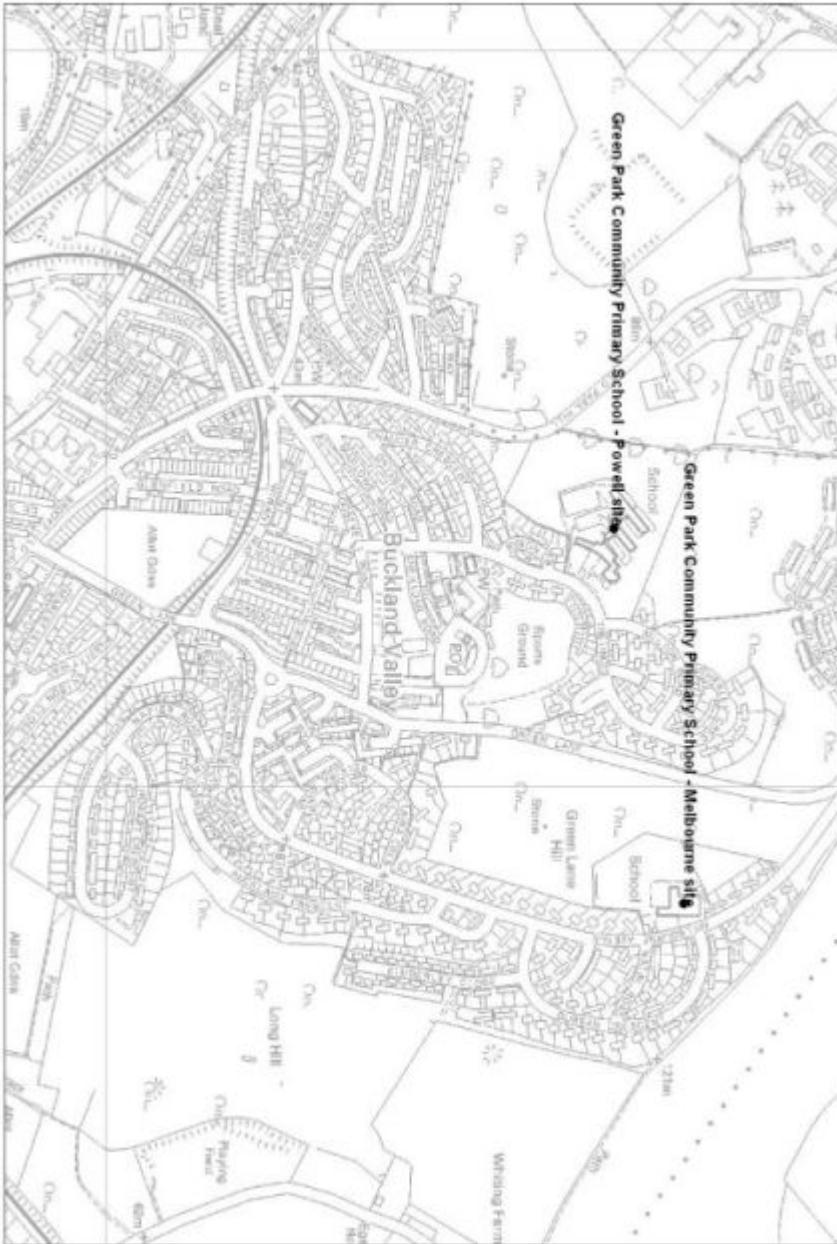
Dear Parents/Carers

Kent County Council consulted you in 2006 on the proposal to amalgamate The Powell School and Melbourne Community Primary School. It was proposed at that time that the newly amalgamated school would provide for children aged 4 to 11 and not include a maintained nursery unit. Following the Adjudicator's decision to modify the proposal it was agreed that the nursery unit would remain open while the Melbourne site remained in operation and Green Park Community School would therefore provide for children aged 3 to 11.

From September 2008 the school will consolidate onto the one site at The Lincs. It is therefore now necessary to bring forward a proposal to change the age range of Green Park Community Primary School and to close the maintained nursery unit.

This document contains full details of the proposal and you will see on page 9 how you can respond to this consultation. I can assure you that all comments received will be carefully considered before decisions are made.

Dr Ian Craig
Director (Operations)
Children, Families and Education



MANAGED BY INFORMATION
 SERVICES
 KENT COUNTY, DE

CURRENT LOCATION OF GREEN PARK COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL (2 SITES)

DEVELOPED BY
 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL, 1/22/2008

1. INTRODUCTION

On 14 March 2007 the Schools Adjudicator approved the proposal to close Melbourne Community Primary School and The Powell School with effect from 31 August 2007 and to establish a newly amalgamated school from 1 September 2007. The original proposal was that both schools should be consolidated onto the site of The Powell School from that time. The new school would have an age range of 4 to 11. The proposal therefore encompassed the closure of the existing nursery unit on the Melbourne site.

The Adjudicator modified the proposal published by the Local Authority. The proposal to amalgamate the two schools with effect from 1 September 2007 was approved. However, the Adjudicator determined that the newly amalgamated (Green Park) school should initially operate on split site locations. This was intended to allow time for adaptations to The Powell site to be properly planned and implemented and for the needs of the children with physical disability, including those in the Physical Disability Unit at the Melbourne School to be taken into account.

In consultation between the Local Authority, the headteachers of the two existing schools and the Adjudicator it was agreed that the consolidation onto a single site would be deferred until September 2008. Following discussion with the Local Authority, the Adjudicator therefore made a further modification to the originally published proposal by determining that initially, the age range of the new school should be 3 to 11 and not 4 to 11, effectively allowing the nursery unit to continue until the Melbourne site was closed and mainstream provision consolidated on the site of the former Powell School.

Plans are now in place to make appropriate improvements and adaptations to the former Powell site to enable consolidation to take place from September 2008. It is therefore necessary to bring forward a proposal to change the age range of the newly established Green Park Community Primary School from 3 to 11 to 4 to 11, thereby closing the maintained nursery on the former Melbourne site.

2. BACKGROUND

The maintained nursery unit opened in September 2005 and since that time has always been significantly under-subscribed. There are currently 14 children occupying part time places although the nursery has the capacity to provide 52 part-time places.

There is no space to accommodate the maintained nursery unit on the former Powell site. Moreover, the nursery unit is under-used and there is private pre-school provision (Kidease), located next to the former Powell School. To retain the maintained nursery unit on the Melbourne site would pose significant management and logistical difficulties for the headteacher and staff of Green Park School, once the mainstream school had vacated the former Melbourne site from September 2008.

Apart from the Kidease private nursery which offers 40 pre-school places, pre-school provision, including both nursery and full day care provision is already available locally through the provision made by the Umbrella private nursery, which is part of the offer available through the Buckland Children's Centre. The Umbrella provision currently offers morning and full day care provision for up to

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BACKGROUND cont.....

45 children (a maximum of 24 at any one time) and is located in St Nicholas Church Hall on the Buckland Estate. The quality of the accommodation and facilities available are inferior to those available within the existing maintained nursery unit. Umbrella has been looking for alternative accommodation. Use of the facilities on the former Melbourne site would meet a pressing community need and enhance the facilities available to local pre-school children.

The current minimum age for admission to the maintained nursery unit is 3 years old. Umbrella currently provides for children from age 2 years. Umbrella, as the provider for the Children's Centre, needs to offer provision for babies and with modest adaptations to the maintained nursery unit (to provide baby changing facilities, etc) they would be able to provide for children aged 0 to 4.

3. THE PROPOSAL

The proposal therefore is to change the age range of Green Park Community School from 3-11 to 4-11 and to close the maintained nursery unit with effect from 19 October 2008 (end of Term 1).

Subject to that proposal being agreed, discussions would be progressed with the Umbrella pre-school provider to ensure that the excellent accommodation currently used by Green Park nursery remains available for use by Umbrella as part of the local Children's Centre offer. This would secure continuing use of this excellent facility for the benefit of the community and there would continue to be pre-school provision on the former Melbourne site. Technically however, this alternative use of the nursery building does not form part of the statutory proposal to change the age range of Green Park Community School.

4. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THE STAFF AT THE EXISTING MAINTAINED NURSERY UNIT?

There is only one teacher currently working in Green Park nursery unit in addition to three part-time teaching assistants. The school is already undertaking a staff restructuring in preparation for the move to a single site from September 2008. The intention is that the nursery teacher will be redeployed within the mainstream school from that time.

The teaching assistants supporting the existing nursery are included within the overall restructuring taking place at the school. As a result of the restructuring there may be a need to reduce hours for teaching assistants. However, there will be no compulsory redundancies for teachers or teaching assistants at the school or in the nursery.

5. WHAT WOULD HAPPEN TO THE CHILDREN CURRENTLY ATTENDING GREEN PARK NURSERY UNIT?

From September 2008 Umbrella has guaranteed to provide a place to any of the existing pre-school children attending Green Park nursery who may need a place from that time.

6. WHAT IMPACT WOULD CLOSURE OF THE NURSERY UNIT HAVE ON THE AVAILABILITY OF PRE-SCHOOL PROVISION?

There would be an overall reduction in the number of places as the 52 part time places offered at the maintained nursery would no longer be available. However, the majority of those places have not been taken up and the existing nursery is seriously under-utilised.

7. FREE NURSERY PROVISION ENTITLEMENT

Children aged 3 and 4 have an entitlement to 12.5 hours of free pre-school nursery provision per week (soon to rise to 15 hours per week). Subject to the availability of places this could be accessed through the private provision (Umbrella) which it is planned to relocate to the existing nursery facility.

There is already a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between Kent County Council and Umbrella in relation to the services which Umbrella contributes to the Children's Centre offer. The SLA would be reviewed to ensure that it affords protection to parents seeking to access their minimum statutory entitlement and that they would not be disadvantaged in doing so. Umbrella offers full day care provision. Parents wishing to access additional services beyond their statutory entitlement would pay for any additional services which they require.

8. HOW TO GIVE YOUR VIEWS

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

- **Complete and return the response form to:**
Martyn Doole, Area Education Officer
East Kent Education Office, Clover House
John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way
Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ
(forms must reach us by 6 May 2008)

- **Come to a public meeting at Green Park Community School (Melbourne site) on Tuesday 1 April at 7.00 p.m.**
 - ◇ 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 views to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk**

9. 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 during which 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.

CONSULTATION AND DECISION MAKING TIMETABLE

Consultation period begins	13 March 2008
Public Meeting at the school * (former Melbourne site)	1 April 2008 7.00 p.m.
Final date for written comments	6 May 2008
School Organisation Advisory Board*	7 May 2008 10.30 a.m.
Cabinet Member decision to issue a Public Notice	End of May 2008
Approximate dates of Public Notice period	13 June to 25 July
Determination by Local Authority	August 2008
Adjudication if required	Sept/October 2008
Proposed implementation	19 October 2008

* **These meetings are open to the public.**

The School organisation Advisory Board meeting is held at County Hall and can be watched by Broadband via the kent.gov.uk website.

Public Consultation Response Form

Proposal to change the age range of Green Park Community Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11 years by closing the maintained nursery unit.

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN 6 MAY 2008

To: Martyn Doole, Area Education Officer
East Kent Education Office, Clover House
John Wilson Business Park, Thanet Way
Whitstable, Kent CT5 3QZ
Fax: 01227 772290

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

Do you agree with the proposal?

Yes

No

The parent/carer of a pupil at the school

A parent/carer of a pupil at the maintained nursery unit

A governor of the school

A member of staff at the school

Other interested party (please state interest)
.....

A member of staff at the maintained nursery unit

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:

This document is available on:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-learning/about-education-service/consultations/>

If you require this document in another format, please contact your local school.

**PROPOSED CHANGE OF AGE RANGE FOR GREEN PARK
COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL AND THE CLOSURE OF THE
MAINTAINED NURSERY UNIT**

**Summary of the Public Meeting held on Tuesday 1 April
at Green Park Community Primary School**

Headteacher – Richard Hawkins

The school has been planning for the consolidation onto one site for the past year. It was known that it would not be possible for the school to manage effectively the nursery unit once the amalgamation has been completed. He welcomes the proposal for the continuation of the nursery through its use by a private provider.

Comment	Response
<p><u>Local Member</u> In principle he is opposed to the closure of state maintained nurseries but he can see the reasons for the proposal.</p> <p>Can he be reassured that there will be no diminution of service with the new provider. He does not want the children in a worse provision.</p> <p>He has visited the site and spoken with the private provider and he is aware that there is a commitment there.</p> <p>He is not pleased in one sense but it was better to have a going concern than straight closure.</p>	<p>It is not a practical proposition for Green Park to continue managing the facility as the site at the Linces is somewhat removed from the site of the unit.</p> <p>Children will be no worse off; the private provider which is a successful organisation will offer additional services to those currently provided.</p>
<p><u>Umbrella Nursery</u> The private provider assured the meeting that they will take any child in September who had planned to come to the state maintained nursery, and that no one will lose out.</p>	
<p><u>Governor</u> The proposal was already decided two years ago when the amalgamation was agreed. It is a logical proposal which he supports.</p>	

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By: Director - Operations

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 7 May 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 have been three new determinations reported to the local authority.

(2) On 26 March 2008 we were informed that both **Canterbury High School** and **Beauherne Primary School** would become Trust schools wef 1 April 2008. This is through 'fast track early adopter' procedures via the DCSF. We had been made aware of their schools' interest in 'early adopter' procedures, but were not informed by the DCSF of an agreement.

(3) On 7 April 2008 a letter was received from **Highsted Grammar School, Sittingbourne**, 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 21 April 2008. The local Members, Mrs Simpson and Mr Truelove were informed.

(4) On 24 April 2008 a letter was received from **Borden Grammar School, Sittingbourne**, advising us that following full consultation, including a Public Notice process, that their governors also had decided to change category from Community to Foundation with effect from 21 April 2008. The local Members, Mrs Simpson and Mr Truelove were again informed.

(5) There are now 61 Foundation schools in Kent (13 Primary, 47 Secondary and 1 Special), 2 Trust schools (1 Primary and 1 Secondary) and 91 Aided schools (78 Primary and 13 Secondary) – a total of 154, and in addition, 7 Academies = 161 (92 Primary, 68 Secondary, 1 Special).

(6) 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 2008/7 February 2008/2 April 2008