

# 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*



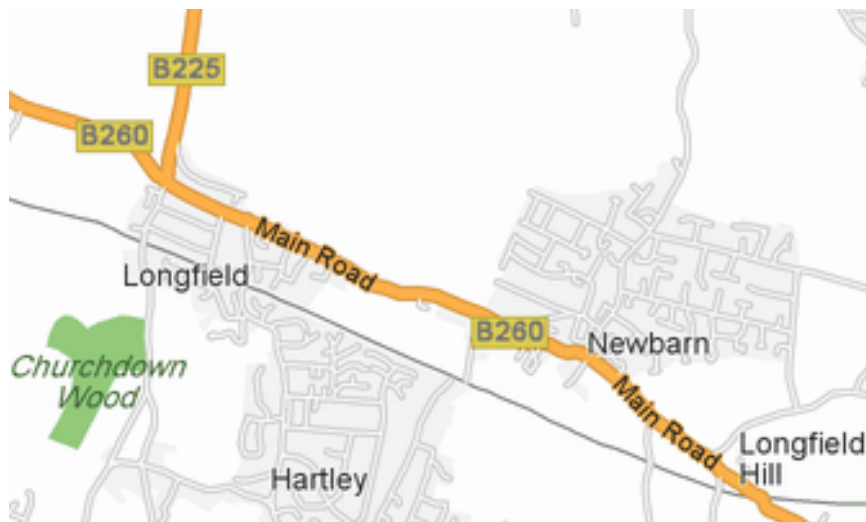
## Axton Chase School

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.

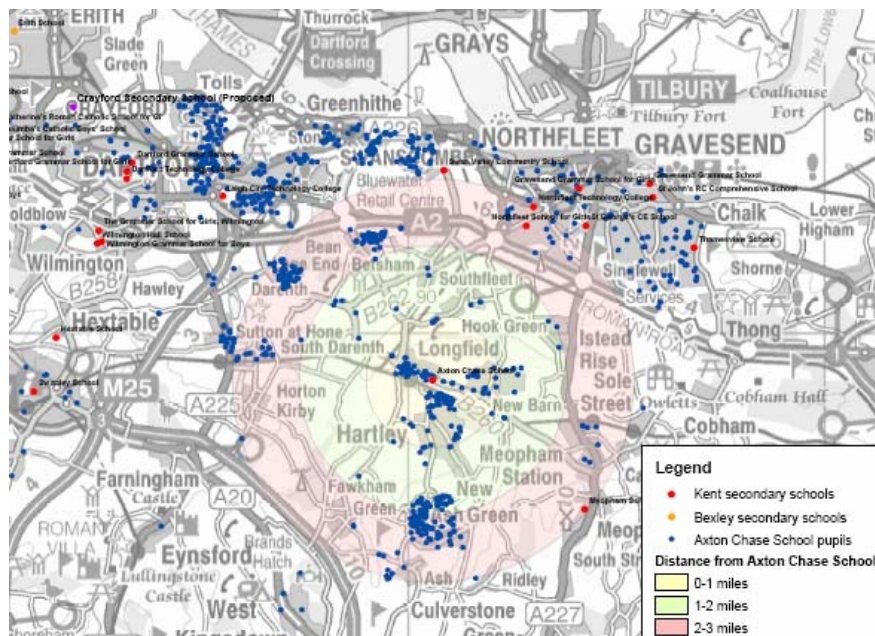
The school includes a special unit for autistic students. It has the following awards: Artsmark Silver, Sportsmark, Eco School Silver, Healthy Schools and Investor in People.

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 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2008	School Organisation Advisory Board meeting to consider a public consultation.
12 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2008	Start of Consultation.
25 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2008	Public Meeting.
24 <sup>th</sup> March 2008	Close of Consultation.
7 <sup>th</sup> 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 <sup>st</sup> 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. 25<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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](mailto:school.consultations@kent.gov.uk)

PLEASE RETURN NO LATER THAN 24<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2008

#### **Do you agree with the proposal?**

<b>Yes</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>No</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Undecided</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The parent/carer of a pupil at Axton Chase School	<input type="checkbox"/>	A member of staff at Axton Chase School	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
A governor of Axton Chase School	<input type="checkbox"/>	A pupil at Axton Chase School	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other interested party	<input type="checkbox"/>	Name of other interested party:			

.....

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 below the text. It is intended for the user to write their comments.