

By: Ian Craig, Director - Operations

To: Mark Dance, Cabinet Member for Operations, Resources and Skills, CFHE

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

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: The Cabinet Member is requested to agree to the issuing of a public notice to change the age range for Green Park Community Primary School, Dover and the closure of the maintained nursery unit.

Introduction

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, Dover and the closure of the maintained nursery unit.

The Proposal

2. (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.

Responses to the Public Consultation

Written Responses

3. At the end of the consultation period 9 written responses were received, all were in favour of the proposal.

Views of the Local Members

4. (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 Governing Body

5. 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

6. The public consultation document was made available to all schools in the Dover cluster. The Cluster Board discussed the proposed change of age range for Green Park Community Primary School at its meeting on 6 May and agreed to fully support the proposal. The Cluster Board also supported the idea of Umbrella Nursery relocating to the maintained nursery accommodation and considered it to be a good outcome for the local community.

Resource Implications

Capital & Revenue

7. 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.

Views of the School Organisation Advisory Board

8. At its meeting on 7 May 2008, the School Organisation Advisory Board unanimously supported the proposal to issue a public notice to change the age range of Green Park Community Primary School and closure of the maintained primary school..

Recommendation

9. The Cabinet Member is requested TO AGREE to:
- (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:

Reports to the School Organisation Advisory Board – 7
February and 7 May 2008