

By: Rosalind Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families and Education

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 9 November 2010

Subject: PROPOSAL TO AMALGAMATE KINGSMEAD (COMMUNITY) PRIMARY SCHOOL AND DIOCESAN & PAYNE SMITH CE (VOLUNTARY AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL BY CLOSING BOTH SCHOOLS AND ESTABLISHING A NEW 2 FE PRIMARY SCHOOL, WITH MAINTAINED NURSERY UNIT, ON THE CURRENT KINGSMEAD SITE, AS A VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL

Classification: Unrestricted

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Summary: This report seeks the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on the proposal to undertake a joint public consultation with the Diocese of Canterbury on the amalgamation of Kingsmead (Community) Primary School and Diocesan & Payne Smith Church of England (Voluntary Aided) Primary School conditional upon the establishment of a new Voluntary Controlled school on the current Kingsmead Primary School site, to replace both schools.

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## Introduction

1. (1) The possibility of a new school to replace Kingsmead Primary School and Diocesan & Payne Smith CE Primary School has been discussed for several years.
  - Over a decade ago it was recognised that there was an urgent need to replace Diocesan & Payne Smith Church of England Primary School because of the cramped conditions and failing stonework making the building unfit for 21<sup>st</sup> Century education.
  - There have been many health and safety concerns regarding the state of Diocesan & Payne Smith's buildings.
  - Kingsmead Primary School is housed in accommodation that is desperately in need of refurbishment and reorganisation.
  - Falling rolls have resulted in surplus accommodation at Kingsmead.
  - Both schools' buildings have continued to be a drain on budgets.
  - In 2005 both governing bodies agreed in principle to amalgamate as a Voluntary Controlled school.
  - Negotiations began with Canterbury City Council to establish the new school on the Stadium site.

- In December 2007 the Canterbury Diocese received consent from the Secretary of State to publish proposals for a new Church of England Voluntary Controlled school without a competition on the Stadium site.
- Negotiations continued between Kent County Council and Canterbury City Council but were unsuccessful and in 2010 the idea of establishing the new school on the Stadium site was finally abandoned.

(2) A solution to the unsatisfactory accommodation issue for both schools has continued to be sought. This proposal is now being brought forward for consideration as an achievable solution, conditional upon funding being made available.

## Background

2. (1) Kingsmead Primary School and Diocesan & Payne Smith CE Primary School are both city schools and form part of a primary education provision serving the inner city and localities just outside. There are 10 schools in this area. Table 1 shows roll numbers for the Canterbury City primary schools as at September 2010.

**Table 1.**  
Canterbury City Primary Rolls – September 2010

School	PA N*	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total	Net Cap**
The Canterbury Primary School	30	16	19	22	23	20	21	21	142	210
Diocesan & Payne Smith CE Primary School	29	30	30	25	23	27	23	17	175	203
Kingsmead Primary School	30	28	26	21	12	17	12	12	128	192
Parkside Community Primary School	30	13	25	16	15	14	15	11	109	210
Pilgrims' Way Primary School	45	35	39	32	34	33	36	32	241	315
St Peter's Methodist VC Primary School	30	31	30	30	28	27	30	29	205	210
St Stephen's Infant School	90	88	85	88					261	270
St Stephen's Junior School	90				83	91	96	81	351	360
St Thomas' Catholic Primary School	30	30	28	28	25	30	24	30	195	210
Wincheap Foundation Primary School	60	59	54	48	56	44	52	52	365	420
<b>Total</b>									<b>2172</b>	<b>2600</b>

\* Published Admission Number

\*\* Net Capacity (physical capacity of the school)

(2) Primary rolls have fallen slightly over recent years and Table 2 gives historic total roll numbers for the Canterbury City primary schools.

**Table 2.**

Canterbury City Historic Primary Rolls - January Data

<b>2005</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>2007</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>
2316	2273	2260	2225	2164	2204

(3) Rolls tend to fluctuate in some schools because of social mobility in the area.

#### Maintained Nursery Unit and Pre-school Provision

(4) Diocesan & Payne Smith CE Primary School has a maintained nursery that is well supported by the local community. The nursery offers 26 part-time places for 2 sessions each day (total of 52 places). As part of this proposal a maintained education nursery unit would be established with the new school on the Kingsmead site.

(5) There are currently 344 children aged from 0-4 in the Northgate ward and 149 children who are aged 3 and 4. There are 222 places providing funded early education for 3 and 4 year olds.

#### **The Proposal**

3. (1) The proposal is to amalgamate Diocesan & Payne Smith CE Primary School and Kingsmead Primary School by closing both schools and immediately opening a newly amalgamated school with effect from 1 September 2012. The new school would be a 2 FE Voluntary Controlled school and would be established in refurbished Kingsmead Primary School accommodation.

(2) The Diocese would again apply to the Secretary of State for permission to publish proposals for a new Voluntary Controlled school outside of the competition process. If exemption was not granted the Local Authority would be required to run a competition to seek proposers for the new school. These two options are outlined in the timetable below.

(3) At the point of amalgamation in September 2012 there would be an estimated 291 pupils on the combined roll of both schools. The number of pupils entering Year R in future years is expected to rise in the Canterbury City locality and a new 2 form entry school to replace Kingsmead and Diocesan & Payne Smith would be appropriate to meet future need.

(4) The Kingsmead site is sufficient for a two form entry school plus maintained nursery unit. Planning the refurbishment and reorganisation of the accommodation would run along side the consultation process.

(5) A shadow governing body would be appointed, consisting of governors from both schools, to plan for the transfer of both schools into the newly refurbished accommodation. Together KCC and the shadow governing body would ensure that any impact on the children's education was kept to a minimum.

#### **Site Issues**

4. (1) Kingsmead Primary School

The main building is c1903 with additions in 1939 and 1960. There is around £400k of maintenance works noted across the site including £190k of priority work and a similar

amount of less urgent work. The priority 1 work mostly lies around windows and doors, electrical services and external areas. A further £200k could be spent on window replacement work not included in these figures. To achieve a school of 2 FE it is likely that the Family Centre will need to be relocated and a classroom extension built, possibly to include new nursery accommodation. In addition, the site itself is difficult to access and has a number of disused buildings associated with it. The future use / existence of these buildings will need to be considered to ensure the site is secure, safe and economically utilised.

(2) Diocesan & Payne Smith CE Primary School

The school was built in 1860 and includes a horsa hut. There is a maintenance backlog of around £720k across the site including £90k of priority 1 works outstanding. The priority 1 work mostly lies around doors and windows, mechanical services, roofs and external areas. The school had to close at one time for a few days to allow urgent repair works to be carried out because of falling masonry. The school has more recently undergone a period of essential building work to ensure the safety of the fabric of the school. The maintained nursery unit is situated a few minutes walk from the main school and is reached by crossing a main road.

(3) An initial feasibility has confirmed the viability of the proposed development of the Kingsmead site. Further more detailed work will be undertaken in consultation with both schools to determine the best way of using available resources to provide the best possible learning environment for all students and to improve the general appearance and ambience of the site.

## **Resource Implications**

### *Capital*

5. (1) The refurbishment and any new build on the Kingsmead site would be funded by a contribution of up to £2m from KCC (funding previously ring fenced for acquisition of a new site) and the proceeds of the capital receipt from the sale of the Diocesan & Payne Smith site which would be contributed by the Canterbury Diocese.

### *Revenue*

(2) The new school from the amalgamation of Kingsmead and Diocesan & Payne Smith would be eligible for reorganisation funding based on both schools' current pupils numbers and would also include curriculum protection. This would total approximately £87,000.

(3) There would be a reduction of revenue costs, especially as the current maintenance costs for both schools continue to escalate.

### *Human*

(4) The new school would have a single governing body and a single headteacher. The shadow governing body would appoint the headteacher designate who would then work with the shadow governing body to establish a staffing structure for the new school.

(5) Staff from the existing schools who would stay in post at the point at which the new school came into being would have the right to transfer to the new school under the provisions of TUPE. At this stage it is not possible to specify the precise implications for

existing staff which are dependent on decisions yet to be made by the headteacher designate and the shadow governing body.

### **Views of the Local Member**

6. The local member, Graham Gibbens, supports the proposal and is looking forward to the opportunity to receive the views of other stakeholders as expressed through the public consultation process.

### **Views of the Diocesan Board of Education**

7. (1) Diocesan & Payne Smith is a Voluntary Aided Church of England school which serves its local community extremely well and is making a positive difference in an area of significant challenges. Through its good leadership the school has built up a deservedly good reputation with parents and it is a very popular school. The school manages to deliver a high quality of education despite the cramped site, lack of playing fields and terrible state of the buildings. Over the last four years the Diocese has spent over £750,000 on the building and we are still left with a building that is unable to provide the kind of education needed for the children of the school. Such high level of capital investment has seriously limited our ability to support other Voluntary Aided schools in the county.

(2) The case has already been made, and accepted, for the need to rebuild the school but proposals have not been able to progress due to the inability to find a suitable site. The latest proposal to establish a brand new school out of the two predecessor schools of Kingsmead and Diocesan & Payne Smith, located on a greatly enhanced Kingsmead site, will enable us to bring the best practice from both schools and create a Church of England school which serves the whole community. Given the position of Canterbury within the worldwide Anglican Communion, it would seem incongruous for there to be no Church of England school in the city and since Diocesan & Payne Smith is the only Church of England primary school in Canterbury we hope to establish the new school as a Church of England school outside of competition.

(3) Part of the success of Diocesan & Payne Smith has been its clear Christian character. It received an 'outstanding' for its denominational inspection; parents value the Christian ethos which underpins the whole school and plays a vital part in the life of the school and its place in the community. It is proposed that the new school should be a Voluntary Controlled school which will allow the community to feel a real sense of local ownership and involvement whilst enabling the school to continue to thrive as a distinctive Church of England school. As a Voluntary Controlled school it will have the same admissions policy as all other Voluntary Controlled and Community schools and will continue to serve the local community.

### **Views of the Governing Bodies**

8. The governing bodies of Diocesan and Payne Smith CE Primary School and Kingsmead Primary School have expressed a willingness to support the further exploration of this proposal through the public consultation process.

## School Improvement Implications

### 9. (1) Diocesan & Payne Smith CE Primary School

This is an average sized school with a very high percentage of children eligible for free school meals and a higher than average percentage of pupils from ethnic minority groups and pupils with English as an Additional Language. There is a very high percentage of pupils with SEN, very high pupil mobility and substantial levels of social deprivation.

(2) The school was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2008 when the school's overall effectiveness and its capacity to improve were both judged good. Although standards were broadly in line with the national average, the inspectors said that children made good progress from low starting points. The extent to which pupils enjoyed their education and the quality of the school's work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being were both judged outstanding. The school's Key Stage 2 results dipped in 2010 reflecting a cohort that had a particularly high level of special needs.

(3) The school works very hard to meet the needs of its children and ensure that children are ready to learn – with very good PSHE provision, very good behaviour management strategies and a multi-sensory approach to learning. Teaching and learning is now very good with some outstanding features, and good pupil tracking systems ensure that all children make progress and any dips are quickly acted upon.

### (4) Kingsmead Primary School

Kingsmead is a small primary school with high numbers of pupils eligible for free school meals and a higher than average proportion of pupils from ethnic minority groups many for whom English is a second language. There is a very high percentage of pupils with SEN. There is significant pupil mobility and substantial social deprivation.

(5) The school was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2008 and Kingsmead was judged satisfactory with good capacity to improve. Standards and progress were both found to be satisfactory. The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage was judged good as was care guidance and support and most aspects of pupils' personal development and well-being. However, the school has been below the floor targets for L4+ in both English and mathematics at Key Stage 2 for more than five years and results in 2010 were particularly low. The school is therefore at high risk of attracting a negative Ofsted judgement when it has its next inspection.

(6) Both schools are working in very challenging circumstances and doing their very best for the children in their care. Both are very committed to inclusion. There are many similarities in their approaches, but also some differences from which there could be mutual benefit by bringing the two schools together.

- A more stable combined pupil roll will mean better financial planning and security of staff, leading to better continuity and progression.
- The newly refurbished Kingsmead accommodation would bring a much improved learning environment for the children – this would have an advantageous effect on motivation, learning and attendance.
- Specialist non-teaching staff could deal with social issues leaving senior managers with more time to plan for teaching and learning.
- Staff specialisms could be better developed to meet children's needs (e.g. pupils for whom English is a second language).
- Better facilities will remove some of the 'blocks to learning' and enhance the curriculum so that pupils will be better motivated to learn. This will raise standards of teaching and learning, and of behaviour.

- Opportunities will exist for all children to have a wider peer group social base.
- There will be greater challenge for the more able and the larger proportion of higher attaining pupils should have a positive effect on raising standards.
- The headteacher will be able to devote significantly more time to being a 'Leader of Learning' when not being constantly involved with building problems.

## Equality issues

10. (1) Table 3 gives contextual information from the May 2010 Schools' Census and shows that a significantly high percentage of pupils at both schools are considered to have special educational needs. In both schools the proportion of pupils with a first language other than English is much higher than the Kent average (7.2%) and above the national average (16.0%).

**Table 4 – May 2010 Schools' Census**

School	Total Roll	Pupils eligible for Free School Meals	SEN Pupils with Statements	SEN Pupils without Statements	Pupils with EAL**	LAC	Ethnic Minority Pupils
Diocesan & Payne Smith	255*	85 (37.8%)	4	85 (37.8%)	41 (18.2%)	1	35
Kingsmead	106	40 (29.0%)	3	47 (44.3%)	19 (17.9%)	2	35

\* Includes the maintained nursery pupils

\*\* Pupils with English as a second language

## Transport and Environmental Impact including Community Implications

11. (1) The new Church of England Voluntary Controlled school would serve the local population and it is envisaged that community engagement would be a priority for the shadow governing body.

(2) The dot maps attached as Appendices 1 and 2 show that the majority of pupils currently attending the schools live within a one and a half mile radius of the Kingsmead site.

(3) Although it is considered that the majority of pupils would walk to school, transport and parking will have to be carefully considered during the planning stages.

(4) The shadow governing body would work with Highways to produce a travel plan for the new school.

## Proposed Timetable

12.

Report to School Organisation Advisory Board	9 November 2010
Publication of consultation document	22 November 2010
Public meetings	Week commencing 6 December 2010
Canterbury Diocesan application to the	17December 2010

Secretary of State to publish proposals for a new Voluntary Controlled school outside of competition	
Last date for responses to the consultation	14 January 2011
Outcome of the application for exemption from competition	February 2011

**If exemption is granted:**

Report back to School Organisation Advisory Board on the outcome of consultation	3 March 2011
Cabinet Member decision on issuing a joint public notice with the Diocese (LA for closure of existing schools and Diocese to establish a new Voluntary Controlled school to replace them)	March 2011
Issue Public Notice	29 April 2011
End of Public Notice period	10 June 2011
Decision by the Local Authority	July 2011
Appeal Period	4 weeks
Decision by Adjudicator if referred	September 2011

**Competition process if exemption is not granted:**

Report back to School Organisation Advisory Board on the outcome of consultation	3 March 2011
Cabinet Member decision on issuing a competition notice	March 2011
First competition Public Notice issued (invitation to bid)	29 April 2011
End of first competition Public Notice period	12 August 2011
Publish second Public Notice (summary of proposals received in response to the invitation notice, including closure of existing schools)	9 September 2011
Public Meeting	Week commencing 19 September 2011
Second Public Notice expires	21 October 2011
Report back to School Organisation Advisory Board on the outcome of the competition	9 November 2011
Decision by Local Authority	By 21 December 2011

**Recommendations**

13. The views of the School Organisation Advisory Board are sought on a proposal to undertake a joint public consultation with the Diocese of Canterbury on the amalgamation of Kingsmead Primary School and Diocesan & Payne Smith CE Primary School conditional upon the establishment of a new Voluntary Controlled school in refurbished accommodation on the Kingsmead Primary School site.

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The Local Member is Mr Graham Gibbens

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*Background Documents:*

*None*