

Final version to be tabled at the meeting

**The Amalgamation of Walmer Science College (Community School)
and Castle Community College (Academy)**

Summary of written responses (received by 7 November)

Consultation documents (hard copies) distributed: 2,500
Responses received: (by 7 November) 458

Parents

In support of the proposal

- This proposal will bring increased chances and a wider variety of opportunities for the young people in Deal/Walmer
- Bringing the two schools together will put a stop to the 'them and us' mentality in the area.
- The proposal should go ahead to raise standards for all students in Deal and Walmer.
- Walmer Science College is currently not fit for purpose.
- There will be some, very regrettable but inevitable, disruption in the short to medium term but the alternatives would create an even more desperate situation for the pupils attending Walmer Science College
- The staff of Walmer Science College deserve the opportunity to prove, that, with the right leadership, they can perform to the standards which the pupils deserve.
- Another main entrance would be needed for Castle Community College when the school is rebuilt. A bigger entrance in Brunswick Terrace /Hamilton Road.

Against the proposal

- The situation is due to change in the next five years or so as the very large intake currently stretching primary schools to the limit will feed through.
- Parents in Deal and Walmer have for decades been able to exercise choice between the two schools and it is plainly wrong that this should be withdrawn.
- Walmer Science College should be allowed to go it alone as an Academy if it is not possible to leave it just as it is.
- A federation arrangement could be made with other schools allowing Walmer to remain intact and with a great degree of autonomy.
- I feel if the school becomes bigger the individual care these children need will be overseen because they will be numbers in a vast school.
- We value what is here right now and we want investment to be in the two sites, not in creating one large new school.
- The students would be working in an unsettled and difficult environment, which will lead to a drop in performance.
- If this happens there will be animosity and conflict between the students of the two schools leading to bullying.
- Walmer Science College has had a lot of money spent on it recently improving the school and facilities, including the Maritime Centre. Will this not be a complete waste if this goes ahead?
- Our children have already had to go through a primary school merger and we do not want to put our children through this again.

- Walmer Science College has improved dramatically in the last year and should be allowed to continue to do so.
- This proposal is all about saving money.

Students

Against the Proposal

- We need two schools within this area as it gives both parents and students an option as to where they would like to study.
- There will be lots of fighting because Walmer and Castle students have always been rivals.
- The intake at Walmer will be a lot higher in 2013 due to our Maritime Studies Centre and new facilities which are much better than Castle's.
- There will be many staff redundancies – this will cause big problems and will have such a negative effect on peoples' lives.
- Please listen to the students and not only put Kent First, but Kent's Youth.
- Walmer Science College managed to come out of special measures in one year, so the school must be doing something right.
- The staff have worked very hard to improve Walmer.
- The transport and new uniform will cost our parents a fortune.
- I have grown comfortable in Walmer and sometimes refer to it as my second home.
- If the proposal goes ahead there will be too many pupils in a class.
- This will interfere with our GCSE's because of the stress of moving around and learning new things.
- I am worried about how this will affect my education as teachers that have planned my courses would have to leave.
- When we were visited by Her Royal Highness Princess Anne, she was very pleased with our school and the students but mostly the new Maritime Centre.
- It is good to have the two separate schools if only you would give us a chance. Just give us a couple of more years as we are on the path to becoming great again.
- If the merger does happen, please don't allow the school to have the Castle name and uniform.
- With planned new housing in Sholden, the population of Deal is only going to rise.
- There will be vast amounts of disruption and larger classes, especially whilst the new proposed building is under construction.
- You may 'promise' that there are no plans for the Walmer site to become a housing estate but we cannot believe there is no ulterior motive.
- The Maritime and Engineering courses might stop if the merger goes ahead.

Staff

For the Proposal

- Walmer Science College is not financially viable and cannot offer the standard of education to which students and parents are entitled.
- When the opportunity for success at one small school is shrinking and at the other soaring, it is against good judgement for the merger not to happen.
- It will provide the community with fantastic opportunities in the future.
- I have seen the benefits of bringing the two schools together for the sixth form and the students have integrated without issue.
- The proposal offers equal opportunities for all young people of Deal.
- Better facilities will be provided for staff and students and there will be a further feel of "community".

Against the Proposal

- Staff will lose their jobs.
- Small schools are better, less children in classes.
- Reduced staffing will mean that class sizes will increase significantly.
- Taking choice away is a big negative for the community.
- The access to Castle is appalling, with increased numbers of pupils, this can only cause massive disruption and congestion to traffic.
- Losing staff from one school and not at the other doesn't seem fair.
- The pupils at Walmer have had enough disruption over the last few years, and have come through it admirably, but they don't deserve any more.
- Very short-sighted, with not much thought for staff or students at Walmer.

Other Interested Parties

For the Proposal

- Neither of the current schools is educationally viable and even with a future increase of pupil numbers coming through from the primary phase, one, properly staffed and equipped secondary school will meet the town's needs far better than two small schools.

Against the Proposal

- Reducing to one school leaves no room for major expansion or allowance for an increase in school population.
- Merging the two schools will create problems in Mill Road and become unbearable for people living in the road.
- Both small schools should be kept, as a small school can help foster an understanding and appreciation between teachers and pupils and supports the well disciplined and courteous behaviour of the students.
- Creating one school definitely deprives parents of choice.
- With an academy there will be no controls of the syllabus or administration of the school.
- Suggested option if the merger goes ahead: Year 7 and 8 should be sited at Castle – where the children could be given greater pastoral care and be nurtured more. Year 9 onwards should be sited at Walmer – where they will have grown wings to fly, offering a wide range of courses and activities.