

By:	Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director, Education, Learning and Skills
To:	Education Cabinet Committee, 21 June 2013
Subject	Decision number: 13/00008 Proposed expansion of Ospringe CE (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School, Ospringe, Faversham
Classification:	Unrestricted
Future Pathway of Paper	Cabinet Member decision
Electoral Division	Swale East

Summary:	This report sets out the results of the public consultation.
Recommendation	The Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the decision to issue a public notice to expand Ospringe CE (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School, Ospringe, Faversham

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Swale section of the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2012-17 indicates a need for additional places in the Faversham area.
- 1.2 On 12 September 2012, Education Cabinet Committee recommended to the (former) Cabinet Member for Education, Learning and Skills that a consultation takes place on the proposal to expand Ospringe CE (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School, Ospringe, Faversham.
- 1.3 This report sets out the results of the public consultation, which took place between 15 April 2013 and 24 May 2013. A public meeting was held on 9 May 2013.

## 2. Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed to enlarge Ospringe CE Primary School by 15 reception year places, taking their PAN to 45 (1.5 FE) for the September 2014 intake. Successive Reception Year intakes will offer 45 places each year and the school will eventually have a total capacity of 315 pupils.

## 3. Bold Steps and the Kent Commissioning Plan

- 3.1 This proposal will help to secure our ambition, "to ensure every child can go to a good school where they make good progress and can have fair access to school places" as set out in Bold Steps for Kent.
- 3.2 The Swale section of the Commissioning Plan indicates a need to commission additional primary capacity across the whole of Swale, including the Faversham locality.

#### **4. Outcomes of the Public Consultation**

- 4.1 A total of 30 responses were received with 18 objecting to the proposal, 9 supporting the proposal and 3 undecided.
- 4.2 A summary of the comments received during the consultation period are given in appendix 1.
- 4.3 A summary of the views and comments given at the public consultation meeting is attached as appendix 2.

#### **5. Views**

##### **5.1 Local Member**

The local member is Mr Andrew Bowles

##### **5.2 Governing Body**

The Governing Body of Ospringe CE Primary School unanimously supports the proposed expansion of the school.

“During recent years, the numbers of children attending the school have gradually increased as a result of increasing popularity, more children in the locality, and the inclusivity of the school. This proposed expansion is a logical next step in securing appropriate provision for our community.

The Governing Body and staff of the school have worked with local residents, parents, the Parish Council and the Local Authority over the years to attempt to alleviate issues relating to traffic flows and parking in Water Lane. We shall continue to do so in order to mitigate any additional pressures which may arise directly or indirectly from expansion.

Our school is a good school, working towards becoming an outstanding one. Increasing the intake and provision will enable us to complete that journey successfully for the benefit of all local stakeholders”.

##### **5.3 Area Education Officer**

This is a popular and successful school that is regularly oversubscribed. Increasing pupil numbers in the Faversham area, including in the vicinity of Ospringe, mean that expansion is necessary to ensure sufficient school places for local children. We will work closely with the school on the provision of additional accommodation and the planning for the works on site in order to ensure that this supports the smooth running of the school, is in keeping with the vision that the governing body has for Ospringe CE Primary School and provides for a permanent solution for September 2014. The school at that time would also produce a new travel plan in liaison with Highways and taking into consideration the views of the local residents.

#### **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment was carried out at the start of this consultation and is available via the following link:  
<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/OspringeSchool/consultationHome>  
The conclusion following the public consultation is that the presumptions made in the initial assessment still remain and that it is not necessary to initiate a further Equality Impact Assessment.

## **7. Recommendations**

- 7.1 The Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the decision to issue a public notice to expand Ospringe CE Primary School.

## **8. Background Documents (and links to them)**

COMMISSIONING PLAN FOR EDUCATION PROVISION 2012-17

[http://kent590w3:9070/documents/s34295/FINAL%20VERSION%20Kent%20Comm%20Plan%20Ed%20Prov%202012-](http://kent590w3:9070/documents/s34295/FINAL%20VERSION%20Kent%20Comm%20Plan%20Ed%20Prov%202012-17%20attached%20to%20WEB%20SITE%2020%20SEPT.pdf)

[17%20attached%20to%20WEB%20SITE%2020%20SEPT.pdf](http://kent590w3:9070/documents/s34295/FINAL%20VERSION%20Kent%20Comm%20Plan%20Ed%20Prov%202012-17%20attached%20to%20WEB%20SITE%2020%20SEPT.pdf)

Education Cabinet Committee report – 12 September 2012 Primary Commissioning - Swale District

<http://kent590w3:9070/documents/g4880/Public%20reports%20pack%2012th-Sep-2012%2010.00%20Education%20Cabinet%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

The public consultation document is available via the following link:

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/OspringeSchool/consultationHome>

### **Lead Officer Contact details**

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**The Proposed Expansion of Lansdowne Primary School from 210 pupil places to 420, increasing the PAN from 30 to 60.**

**Summary of written responses**

Consultation documents (hard copies) distributed: 350  
Responses received: 30

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers	6	3		9
Governors				
Members of Staff				
Interested Parties	3	15	3	21
Total	9	18	3	30

**In support of the proposal**

**Parents**

- Ospringe has had and still has a very good reputation within the local community and I support the proposal.
- I have no objections to the proposal but have concerns volume of traffic this expansion will generate. Could there be a one way system or a new access route from the farmer's field which runs behind the school.

**Other interested parties**

- I am aware that there are insufficient school places in Faversham and therefore I am pleased to see that a proposal for permanent expansion is in place for Ospringe Primary.

**Against the proposal**

**Parent**

- Pupils would suffer due to larger class sizes and the confusion of mixed years.
- The road is dangerous enough as it is without all the extra cars and traffic and I believe we would see a rise in traffic accidents.
- I don't want my child's education to suffer due to the school overextended its resources to accommodate the extra pupils.

**Other interested parties**

- There does not appear to be any consideration in the proposal to address obvious increase to the amount of traffic that will want to use what is a very narrow lane.
- Clearly expansion of the school cannot take place unless a solution to the vehicle problem is found.
- There is the issue of air quality. Heavy use of the junction of Water Lane and the A2 results in queuing traffic along the A2 resulting in high levels of pollutants.
- We do not agree to the proposal to increase the intake and would welcome a reduction. We would also encourage the school to take responsibility for the negative impact that they have on the local environment and deliver a step change improvement to the traffic and parking issues that result from their operation.

- The only solution for the school is to relocate.
- Children and families currently trying to get to school are often put at risk as cars mount the pavement to pass, and expansion of pupils accessing the school will put more children at risk.

### Undecided

#### **Other interested parties**

- Our main concern for the expansion is the traffic congestion and parking problems in Water Lane. Provided these problems are addressed and resolved we support the expansion.
- I am unable to support the proposal unless the residents' parking problem is sorted out at no cost to the residents.

### **Response from the Diocese of Canterbury**

The Canterbury Diocesan Board of Education confirmed their full support for the proposal to permanently expand Ospringe Church of England (Voluntary Controlled) Primary School as outlined in the public consultation document.

### **Response from Ospringe Parish Council**

The Parish Council commented as follows:

- The problems in Water Lane and on the A2 mainly related to the vehicular movements to and from the school during the daily school run.
- The increased traffic flow would lead to even more traffic congestion.
- Poor air quality standards as a result of traffic congestion have already been identified by Swale Borough Council who are monitoring the situation.
- Local residents have to contend with damaged cars and having their driveways blocked.
- Any plans to ameliorate these issues and to expand the school outside of its current plot by using land currently used as paddocks or allotments or other land in this rural area will be strenuously opposed by the parish council.

### **Response from Faversham Town Council**

The Town Council is, in principle, supportive of expansions to Faversham primary schools and therefore wishes to give in principle support to the expansion of Ospringe CE Primary School. The Town Council is concerned about the build up of traffic at the significant traffic hotspot as this adversely impacts on residents and wish to see more details in due course as to how KCC intends to improve traffic flow at school start and finish times.

**The Proposed Expansion of Lansdowne Primary School from 210 pupil places to 420, increasing the PAN from 30 to 60.**

**Summary of the public meeting held on Monday 30 April at Lansdowne Primary School**

The meeting was chaired by Mr Gary Cooke and was attended by approximately 24 people including parents, staff, governors and local residents.

A short presentation outlining the proposal for expansion was given Marisa White, Area Education Officer.

Amanda Ralph, Headteacher spoke in support of the proposal explaining that the school had slowly expanded and if this proposal went ahead that expansion would continue. The school had taken more children including those with disabilities. At the last ofsted inspection the school had been judged as good and the school was now working hard to progress that to outstanding. The school was aware of the concerns coming from the local residents and although this consultation is about the education of the children, it was important to keep sight of other issues particularly traffic. Ideas were being looked at to build into the plans that would help to manage the issue and the school would continue to work with the local residents to ensure that it served its community.

Views, questions and comments are listed below:

- Had the local authority looked at whether new housing would secure a site for a new school and would enter into discussions with developers for contributions to build a new school.
- Has KCC given consideration to building a new school given that the numbers are increasing and the schools proposed for expansion are increase where access will be an issue.
- The issue of air pollution was raised as Swale Borough Council regularly monitors air quality along the A2 including Ospringe.
- Congestion on Water Lane and the access to the road from the A2 is very bad and with the historical building on the corner it would not be possible to widen the road.
- Would it be possible for all the residents in Water Lane to be provided with dropped kerbs to improve parking.
- There will be an increase in staff needing to park on the street.
- Parents queried whether the school would be teaching in mixed aged classes all through the school.
- If the expansion goes ahead will Teddies Nursery have to move?

The questions raised were responded to including the fact that Highways would want to be fully assured that mitigation was in place and that they would object to any planning until the requirements were met. Additional parking on the site will be investigated as part of the planning process and a revised school travel plan would commit to reducing the number of car journeys to the school. Alternative places for parking would be investigated that would provide a shorter walking journey.

Teddies Pre-school would be remaining on the school site and would be exploring staggering start times to reduce traffic.