

From: Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education, Learning and Skills

To: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Education & Health Reform

Subject: Proposal to Change the Age Range of St George's Church of England Foundation School and enlarge the school by adding a 2FE primary provision, creating an all-through school for pupils aged 4-19

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: Identified in the Kent Commissioning Plan determined by Cabinet on 13 October 2014

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member decision

Electoral Division: Broadstairs and Sir Moses Montefiore

Local Members: Alan Terry and Zita Wiltshire

Summary: This report sets out the results of the public consultation on the proposal to change the age range of St George's Church of England Foundation School to create an all-through school for pupils aged 4 to 19 years, adding a 2FE primary provision to the school site from September 2016.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Member for Education & Health Reform is asked to consider the responses to the consultation and decide whether to proceed with the proposal and

- (i) Issue a public notice to change the age-range of the school and enlarge the school by adding a 2FE primary provision.

And, subject to no objections being received to the public notice

- (ii) Change the age-range and enlarge the school
- (iii) Allocate £5.85m from the Education, Learning and Skills Capital Budget.
- (iv) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council
- (v) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts

Should objections, not already considered by me when taking this decision, be received during the notice period a separate decision will be required in order to continue the proposal and allow for proper consideration of the points raised.

This decision is subject to planning permission being agreed.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Thanet district section of the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18 identified a significant pressure in Reception year places. Thanet district was forecast to have a deficit of up to 87 Reception year places in September 2016 and this deficit is expected to continue.
- 1.2 It is proposed to permanently change the age-range of St George's Church of England Foundation School from 11-19 to 4-19 and enlarge the school by adding a 2FE primary provision. It proposed that in September 2016 the school would offer 60 Reception Year places, 30 Year 1 places and 30 Year 2 places. The school would continue to offer 60 Reception Year places each year and the primary school provision would eventually have a total capacity of 420 pupils.
- 1.3 The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18 identified the need for further capacity to serve Margate. The capacity for existing primary schools to expand is limited due to site constraints, and those with the capacity to expand have already been expanded. It has not been possible to identify a site in Margate, at this point in time, to establish a new school. We are therefore planning to commission primary provision on the site of St George's Church of England Foundation School to provide additional places in Thanet that will help to meet demand from Margate and Westwood. Feasibility was undertaken showing that there is sufficient space for a 2FE primary school provision on the school site.
- 1.4 This report sets out the results of the consultation, which took place between 8 September and 6 October 2014. A consultation meeting for parents/carers, governors and members of staff was held on 23 September 2014.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 It is proposed to change the age range of the school and enlarge the school by establishing a primary school provision on the site. The school will have an intake in September 2016 of 60 in Reception Year, 30 in Year 1 and 30 in Year 2, eventually having a total capacity of 420 places.
 - a. Capital – The enlargement of the school requires the establishment of a 2FE primary school provision. A feasibility study was commissioned. The total cost is estimated to be in the region of £5.85m. Appropriate funding has been identified as part of the Medium Term Capital Programme. The costs of the project are estimates and these may increase as the project is developed. If the cost of the project is greater than 10% the Cabinet Member will be required to take a further decision to allocate the additional funding.
 - b. Revenue – Protection will be provided for three academic years on an agreed number of places. For the academic years starting September 2016, September 2017 and September 2018 protection will be provided on 120, 180 and 240 pupils respectively, in consultation with the school these numbers may be varied in relation to actual demand. Protection will be calculated on the number of agreed places times the relevant school funding factors. The sum

of £6,000 will be allocated towards the classroom setup costs for each new class. The school will also receive a one off £50k lump sum.

c. Human – St George's Church of England Foundation School will appoint appropriate staffing for the establishment of the primary provision, and additional staff as the school size increases and the need arises.

3. Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

3.1 These proposals will help to secure our ambition “to ensure every child will 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 ‘Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, 2013-18’ identified the demand for up to 87 Reception Year places within the Thanet district. If capacity is not added, there will not be enough places available to meet demand and parental preference.

4. Consultation Outcomes

4.1 A total of 167 individual written responses were received: 154 respondents supporting the proposal; 5 objecting to the proposal and 8 respondents undecided.

4.2 Thanet District Council welcomed the proposal and members felt it had logical merit and would be beneficial for the children.

4.3 A summary of the comments received is provided at Appendix 1.

4.4 A summary of the views and comments given at the consultation meeting is attached at Appendix 2.

5. Views

5.1 The view of the Local Member:
The Local Members are Ms Zita Wiltshire and Mr Alan Terry, who have been consulted.

5.2. The view of the Headteacher and Governing Body:
St George's Church of England Foundation School is passionate about its children; this proposal offers a unique opportunity to extend that passion to 4 – 11 year olds. It is unique and special. We have a special opportunity to bring our value education to these young people. The Diocese is committed to the school and its values, has seen what St George's plan to do and welcome this opportunity.

We are in a very fortunate position that the school does have a great deal of land. The initial feasibility work has identified that the primary school provision could be built in the area of the site known as the depot field, therefore having least impact on the space and will not result in any loss of sports facilities. In addition, the entry to the proposed primary school provision site would be a considerable distance away from the secondary school site entry and could include a drive in and drive out facility minimising the impact on traffic congestion within the area.

St George's delivers good education but it is the way it is delivered that is very important. We would like to take this opportunity to assure parents/carers that the present standards would be upheld and, indeed, the leadership team would be expanded to reflect the increased responsibility of taking on a primary phase.

St George's Church of England commends the proposal, which will offer an exciting opportunity to educate our young children which will make a difference to our community.

5.3 The view of the Diocese of Canterbury

The Diocese of Canterbury regards the expansion of St George's Church of England Foundation School to include a Primary Phase as a very positive and forward-looking proposal. We have complete confidence in the capacity of the leadership and governance of the school, and in its ability to deliver very strong educational outcomes across the expanded age range. We welcome the collaborative and helpful dialogue with the Local Authority, and support their plans to commission these places in order to provide for anticipated need.

5.3. The view of the Area Education Officer:

The report to Education Cabinet Committee on the 27 September 2013 on the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-2018 identified the need for further primary school capacity to serve Margate and recommended that consultation should take place with local schools in order to identify a solution. The Commissioning Plan for Education provision 2015-2019, which was considered by Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee on the 24 September 2014 prior to approval by Cabinet on the 13 October 2014, identified the need to commission a new 2FE provision on the site of St George's Church of England Foundation School by September 2016. The capacity for existing Thanet Primary Schools to expand further is limited due to site and Highways constraint. This is particularly the case in Margate. It has not been possible to identify a site in Margate suitable for a new school at this point in time, particularly with the requirement to have places established by September 2016. We are therefore proposing the commissioning of primary places in Thanet that will help to meet the demand from Margate and Westwood. Feasibility was undertaken showing that there is sufficient space for a 2FE primary school provision on the school site.

6. Proposal

6.1 The proposed establishment of a 2FE primary school provision on the St George's Church of England Foundation School site, creating an all-through school for pupils aged 4 to 19 years, will increase the value of KCC's property portfolio by adding value to the school buildings.

6.2 The proposed establishment of a 2FE primary school provision on the St George's Church of England Foundation School site, creating an all-through school for pupils aged 4 to 19 years, is subject to KCC statutory decision making process and planning.

6.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the consultation.

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

To date no comments have been received and no changes are required to the Equality Impact Assessment.

7. Delegation to Officers

- 7.1 The Officer Scheme of Delegation; under Appendix 2 part 4 of the Council's Constitution, provides a clear and appropriate link between this decision and the actions needed to implement it. For information it is envisaged, if the proposal goes ahead, that the Director of Property & Infrastructure Support will sign contracts on behalf of the County Council.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 Forecasts for the Thanet district indicate an increasing demand for primary school places. This enlargement will add an additional 120 primary school places (60 Reception Year, 30 Year 1 and 30 Year 2) in the first year and 60 Reception Year places to the capacity per year, thereafter, in line with priorities 3, 4 and 9 of 'Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework' and the 'Commissioning Plan for Education – Kent' (2013 – 2018).

9. Recommendation(s)

Recommendation(s): 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:

- (i) Issue a public notice to change the age-range of the school and enlarge the school by adding a 2FE primary provision, conditional upon obtaining planning agreement for the additional accommodation required.

And, subject to no objections being received to the public notice

- (ii) Change the age-range and enlarge the school
- (iii) Allocate £5.85m from the Education, Learning and Skills Capital Budget.
- (iv) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council
- (v) Authorise the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts

Should objections, not already considered by me when taking this decision, be received during the notice period a separate decision will be required in order to continue the proposal and allow for proper consideration of the points raised.

This decision is subject to planning permission being agreed.

10. Background Documents

10.1 Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

http://www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/priorities_policies_and_plans/priorities_and_plans/bold_steps_for_kent.aspx

10.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-2018

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s43253/ItemD3KentEducationCommissioningPlan20132018final.pdf>

10.3 Education Cabinet Committee report– 27 September 2013

<http://kent590w3:9070/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=746&MId=5033&Ver=4>

10.4 Consultation Document and Equalities Impact Assessment

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

11. Contact details

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Proposal to Change the Age Range of St George’s CE Foundation School and enlarge the school by adding a 2FE primary provision, creating an all-through school for pupils age 4-19

Summary of written responses

Consultation documents (hard copies) distributed: 1,600
Responses received: 167

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
Parents/Carers	51	5	8	64
Governors	3	0	0	3
Members of Staff	99	0	0	99
Student	1	0	0	1
Total	154	5	8	167

A summary of the main points:

In support of the proposal

Parents:

- I agree that providing a seamless education for young people from the start of their schooling through to 6th form will be a positive thing.
- It would be ideal if all our children attended the same school. Continuity of their education within St George’s, in my opinion, will only enhance their education experience.
- I think it is an excellent proposal as it would provide a seamless education to a high standard which I think can only benefit the students as they develop.
- It will be nice for a child not to be anxious about changing of schools, offering a better and more stable time for the child.
- In terms of educational continuity I think it is a great idea and the area needs a new primary school.
- Children spend as much, if not more daytime hours with school, as much as at home during term times. This makes school and staff and pupils almost like a family. Add to this the goodness of religion and I think having and nurturing children from 4-18+ gives a child stability, continuity and reliability. All things children need to reach their full potential. I wonder if pick up points and school buses for Thanet would ease the traffic flow problem.
- Are there any plans to look at how to manage the school traffic? Palm Bay has a good system of a drive through drop off.
- There will have to be a crossing patrol as the road is always busy with cars, etc and will be difficult for Mums with buggies to cross with small children.
- We recently moved to Broadstairs and my 4 year old has had to attend a school local to our old address as there were absolutely no places in Broadstairs. The primary schools in Broadstairs are hugely oversubscribed so there is a real need for a new school. We would definitely be applying if the proposal goes ahead.
- With all the new houses being built in the area Thanet needs more schools to accommodate the children moving into the area.

- With the struggles of finding school placements when I moved here, I think it's a great idea.
- A new church school will be welcomed in our parish.
- I think building a primary school at St George's is a great idea. It would benefit the children both academically and emotionally to have continuity of care. It would also create job opportunities for the wider community.

Staff:

- From a teaching and learning perspective, I think having an all through school from KS1-KS5 is an excellent idea. Children often regress in terms of attainment when they begin a new school as they have to adapt to their new surroundings and make new friends. An all through school will minimise this disruption and should lead to higher attainment in the long term. It is an excellent idea because secondary teachers are generally specialist in their field, i.e. history, geography, mathematics, etc, whilst primary teachers have a much broader general knowledge. By working closely together we will have the subject knowledge to be able to deliver outstanding lessons all the time. In addition, when students start secondary school there is often a dip in the presentation of their work in books. By working closely with their Year 6 teachers we can ensure a high standard is set and maintained when they move up the school. We are already an inclusive school, having students of all abilities both academically and physically. I believe that having an all through school will further nurture their caring and considerate attitude towards each other. I am confident that there will be plenty of volunteers (both male and female students), who will be happy to work with younger students and pass on their skills, and I believe the skills the older students will learn in this process will be invaluable. As teachers, I believe we can learn a lot from each other. So much now rests on the judgement of Year 6 teachers in terms of student progress, I think that having an all through school will enable us to work together to ensure that the judgements are accurate and therefore students will have realistic but challenging targets for the rest of their academic career.
- St George's would be the perfect location for such a build. Ensuring students receive the same quality of education/teaching all the way from primary to 6th form.
- There will be chances for staff to develop a career and also to work far closer with parents to support them and their children throughout their school lives. It will allow our sixth form students to work closely and support primary students with their literacy and numeracy as well as being mentors and role models.
- I believe that for staff there will be new and interesting roles and responsibilities that will have a positive impact on the education of children at the school. Much research shows that nations with all through schools have produced better outcomes for children at different ages.
- The primary school will enable children to grow and develop in the same learning community throughout. This will create a positive and stable future.
- An opportunity to ensure young children can develop in the same environment and benefit from the school's Christian values. The school is situated in an area which is accessible by all other areas in Thanet and has the space available to ensure children have a safe and secure future.
- Better relationships with students can be formed and students can get used to a solid routine that stays with them until they leave.
- It will be fantastic for the primary school teachers to have specialist teachers on hand to help with subject knowledge. This can only raise achievement especially in core subjects. We will be able to teach our morals to much younger students so when they reach secondary years they will be embedded and expectations will be high.

- Please try to integrate both schools during certain events to allow the younger ones to have a vision of the future and create aspirations.
- I think that this will be a wonderful opportunity for the young people of Thanet.

Governors:

- Completely agree with these proposals.

Against the proposal

Parents:

- At the moment the traffic congestion problems around St George's School are horrendous and to increase the volume of children would merely add to the problem. Younger children will involve even more cars parked in these roads as they will be too young to get themselves to and from school and so will have to be collected. There simply isn't room for more parked cars in this area. I watch the children darting across the main road at the roundabout, in front of the oncoming traffic and out between the parked cars and how there has not been a serious accident so far is a miracle.
- The school is big enough at its current size. It would soon be overcrowded and to have 4 year olds in the same site/building as 19 year olds seems a strange way of teaching. Sixth form students would be put off attending.
- I'm concerned that this change will be disruptive to current years 7+, that finances, skills and priorities will shift away from the secondary element – certainly in the early days when planning, building and implementation come to the fore with deadlines, budget issues and novelty aspects. I chose St George's Church of England Foundation School carefully, having considered it to be a well-established, settled environment for my daughter.

Undecided

Parents

- My concerns would be the access of children out of area schools for Year 7, (for example Cliftonville). How many places would be made available for these children? Would they be at a disadvantage entering a class of Year 7 who have been together since Year R.? At the moment it is a pretty much a level playing field, with children from many schools coming together, all anxious, all nervous and new. If fewer places are made available at Year 7, will this not put more pressure on alternative secondary schools? Parents may also be at a disadvantage in that they may get the 'less popular' schools, their choice will be limited.
- My concern is my son is in Year 3 at primary school now and I would like him to follow his sister to St George's. Would this mean he will have less chance of getting a place as the younger ones who will be at the new primary provision at St George's are guaranteed a place straight away?
- My concern with this proposal is land. My son chose this school, one of his main reasons being the amount of sports field facilities available as he is a sporty person and obviously being able to compete in outdoor sports is healthy too. I'd be extremely disappointed if to facilitate the primary section of the school the outdoor sports areas were reduced or lost.
- I am concerned how this will affect my daughter with her education with building works, etc.
- It seems unfair for other children that 60 primary pupils can go through to the secondary school when there are already hundreds of applications with the correct criteria not getting a place.

- If this is run as one school, under one head, it would be a massive undertaking and I don't know whether the same standards could be kept up as they are now. It has been found over the years that "big is not beautiful".

Proposal to Change the Age Range of St George's CE Foundation School and enlarge the school by adding a 2FE primary provision, creating an all-through school for pupils age 4-19

**Consultation Meeting for Parents/Carers, Governors and Staff
Tuesday 23 September 2014**

Summary of the Meeting

Panel

Michael Northey	County Councillor – Canterbury South East
Marisa White	Area Education Officer
Simon Foulkes	Assistant Director, Canterbury

The meeting was chaired by Mr Michael Northey, County Councillor and attended by parents, staff and governors.

The meeting was an opportunity for parents/carers, governors and members of staff to ask questions and comment on the proposal.

Mr Northey welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained the KCC decision making process.

Marisa White, Area Education Officer gave short presentation outlining the proposal and explaining why the local authority was bringing forward the proposal.

Revd Simon Foulkes paid tribute to the leadership and staff of St George's Church of England Foundation School and spoke of the Diocese's commitment to the school and its values. Revd Foulkes said this was an excellent opportunity for the school to serve primary aged pupils within the community and commended the proposal.

Kim Stoner, Principal, spoke about the school being passionate about their children and that this was a unique opportunity to extend that passion to 4-11 year olds. She commended to proposal saying that educating our young children is an exciting opportunity that will make a difference to our community.

Questions and Issues Raised	Responses from Marisa White (MW), Kim Stoner (KS), Michael Northey (MN)
Will children still be able to take the Kent Test, even though it would be an all-through school?	MN confirmed that children would still be able to take the Kent Test if parents wished.
Would the local authority and the school consider opening a Year 3 class as well as classes for Years R, 1 and 2 for those who have children at an infant school and could not find a junior school place?	MW – If nearer the time the numbers indicated that there was a need for additional Year 3 places, then this could be considered but not to the detriment of other local schools.
As well as the sibling criteria, will any priority be given to staff at the school applying for a place for their child?	KS – We will follow the current oversubscription criteria which do not include members of staff as it needs to be fair.
I think this proposal sounds like a brilliant idea but I am concerned about the extra traffic.	MW – There are no detailed plans as yet. Part of the planning will include discussions with Highways regarding traffic and access. In depth traffic assessment will take place. There will be

	<p>an opportunity for local residents to be involved in the planning consultation.</p> <p>KS – If it would help the local residents, although there are not drawings available today, it is planned that the primary provision will be built on what is known as the Depot field.</p>
<p>In that case, will the road come in where they are building a new roundabout?</p>	<p>KS – Yes and the fact that there is road reconstruction at Poor Hole Lane will help.</p>
<p>We have a shared driveway which at one time was also access onto the field where the old cricket pavilion was. Would that stay as it is or were you thinking of using it?</p>	<p>KS – there is no plan to use it.</p>

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough,
Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform

DECISION NO:

14/00018

For publication

Subject: Proposal to change the age range of St George's Church of England Foundation School and enlarge the school by adding a 2FE primary provision, creating all through school for pupils aged 4 to 19 years.

Decision:

As Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform I agree to:

- (i) Issue a public notice to change the age-range of the school and enlarge the school by adding a 2FE primary provision.

And, subject to no objections being received to the public notice

- (ii) Change the age-range and enlarge the school
- (iii) Allocate £5.85m from the Education, Learning and Skills Capital Budget

Should objections, not already considered by me when taking this decision, be received during the notice period a separate decision will be required in order to continue the proposal and allow for proper consideration of the points raised.

This decision is subject to planning permission being agreed.

Reason(s) for decision:

The Thanet district section of the Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18 has identified a need for up to 87 Reception Year places in Thanet. Changing the age range of St George's Church of England Foundation School and adding a 2FE primary provision to the school site will help to address these pressures and adheres to the principles of our Commissioning Plan as it increases capacity at a good, popular school. In reaching this decision I have taken into account:

1. the views expressed by those attending the consultation meeting on 23 September, and those put in writing in response to the consultation;
2. the views of the local County Councillor; Governing Body of the school and Staff;
3. the Equalities Impact Assessment and any comments received regarding this; and
4. the views of the Education Cabinet Committee which are set out below

Financial Implications:

It is proposed to to change the age range of St George's Church of England Foundation School and enlarge the school by adding a 2FE primary provision, creating all through school for pupils aged 4 to 19 years.

- a. Capital – The enlargement of the school by establishing a 2FE primary school provision. A feasibility study was commissioned. The total cost is estimated to be in the region of £5.85m. Appropriate funding has been identified as part of the Medium Term Capital Programme. The costs of the project are estimates and these may increase as the project is developed. If the cost of the project is greater than 10% the Cabinet Member will be required to take a further decision

to allocate the additional funding.

- b. Revenue – Protection will be provided for three academic years on an agreed number of places. For the academic years starting September 2016, September 2017 and September 2018 protection will be provided on 120, 180 and 240 pupils respectively, in consultation with the school these numbers may be varied in relation to actual demand. Protection will be calculated on the number of agreed places times the relevant school funding factors. The sum of £6,000 will be allocated towards the classroom setup costs for each new class. The school will also receive a one off £50k lump sum.
- c. Human – St George’s Church of England Foundation School will appoint appropriate staffing for the establishment of the primary provision, and additional staff as the school size increases and the need arises.

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

27 September 2012

The Committee endorsed the Kent Commissioning Plan, which identified a need for additional places in the Thanet District.

Any alternatives considered:

The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-18 explored all options for providing additional primary school places. This proposal to provide primary provision on the St George’s Church of England Foundation School site and change the age range of the school to create an all through school for pupils age 4 to 19 years was deemed the suitable option.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

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Signed

Date