

PROPOSAL TO ADD A SIXTH FORM TO THE NORTH (COMMUNITY)
SCHOOL, ASHFORD

Summary of Written Responses

Consultation documents distributed 2,000
Consultation documents received as of 27.02.09: 316

	Support	Against	Undecided	Total
• Parents of pupil at The North School	65	1		66
• Members of staff at The North School	106			106
• Governors of The North School	3			3
• Pupil of The North School	105	5	2	112
• Other interested party	18	10	1	29
TOTALS	297	16	3	316

In support of the proposal:

- A sixth form would greatly enhance the school by broadening its curriculum and enhancing the future employment prospects of students.
- The students would benefit by being able to continue into further education in familiar surroundings. This is particularly beneficial for children with Additional Educational Needs and those who are not yet mature enough at age 16 for college or work.
- It will provide more access for post-16 students and more choice to the Ashford area.
- It will encourage the students to aim toward higher education.
- With the growth of Ashford there is a definite need for additional resources for education.
- It will raise aspirations across the whole school and will, in turn, contribute toward an improvement in standards.
- It will provide students with more A level options
- The sixth formers could mentor the Year 7 pupils like at Norton Knatchbull

- North School is unique among the schools in Ashford in the quality of the sport and land-based activities.
- There will be more teachers and more choice on what to do.
- It would give the school a much more professional outlook and a better reputation.
- It would reduce the pressure on other schools to increase the subjects they offer with their restricted facilities.
- The subjects the school propose offering will provide interesting and innovative paths of study to an ever-increasing student population.
- Would benefit 14-19 year olds in the area who may not be able to travel further afield.
- Would enhance Continuous Professional Development prospects of staff as teaching at a higher level can only enhance and reinforce subject knowledge.
- Ashford schools working collaboratively will reduce the NEETs and the drift of students post 16 to Canterbury. The enhanced provision and capacity would also support lifelong learning for the local community.

Against the proposal:

- The school should really focus on improving its GCSE results before embarking on the addition of a sixth form.
- The school is already large enough without adding a sixth form.
- The 6th form provision will impact on all residents in the Essella Road area with increased traffic in an already busy narrow and poorly constructed road.
- Parking in Essella Road and Mabledon Avenue will be an issue with only 40 spaces available in the school.
- More children walking to school will add to an already disruptive amount of students walking to and from school each day.

Neither for nor against:

- There are other schools and colleges in Ashford which could offer the courses which are being proposed.

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**Summary of points raised during the Public Meeting
held on 24 February 2009 at The North School**

Issue or Comment	Response
<p>The North School website is already advertising that the sixth form is going ahead. The prospectus can be accessed.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the moment the school has courses run by Hadlow College and students go on to the roll at Hadlow. If this proposal does not go ahead and the age range is therefore not changed, Hadlow, or any other Further Education provider, could continue to offer courses at post-16. • The prospectus shows the courses that the school currently offers in conjunction with Hadlow. • If the change of age range is agreed the school could offer courses to students aged 16-19. The school would then receive funding for the post-16 courses.
<p>Are there any plans for Christ Church for post-16? If so, what could they offer that would not then compete with a wider range bring offered in the area?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no proposal for post-16 provision at Christ Church. However, there is a proposal (which has yet to receive formal agreement for us to move to the next stage) for the possible closure of Linden Grove Primary School and Christ Church Secondary School and to replace those two schools with an all age academy, which would be for pupils from age 4-18. So we are suggesting that post-16 be added to that provision. • In terms of the courses they may offer that debate has not taken place. We would, however, want to ensure that courses are geared to subject areas supported by the specialisms of that Academy once that's finally decided. • We have a lack of Level 2 post-16 access routes so if pupils are not achieving GCSEs then they struggle to find a pathway post-16 unless they go into the FE sector and that is not always the most appropriate environment for some young people. It would be about broadening choice.
<p>What clashes does your prospectus have with South Kent College? Looking at the College's brochure they offer Creative Art & Media, ICT, Technology and Art & Design – all in Ashford.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Ashford there is a group called the Ashford Curriculum Development Committee who discuss courses running post-16 to ensure that they are viable. The courses that will be on offer at the North School will not be the same as those at the College. For example, Landscape Design, Graphic Design are different courses. There is a demand for two centres to run a Creative Art & Media course at Diploma Level. It might be that the North would deliver Level 2 and that the College would deliver Level 3. • At the moment there is a possibility that South Kent College will merge with West Kent College so we do not really know what courses will be available from September 2009. • We need to ensure that the courses that we can offer

	<p>in all the schools in Ashford are sustainable and we work with the College to make sure that the courses they offer do in fact run.</p>
<p>I am concerned about the number of car parking spaces available for the sixth form students. How many spaces are you allocating for these 185 pupils because they all need to be in the school and not on Essella Road.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot of the students that attend the North School will be walking. This is a community school and the majority hopefully will stay on locally. • There is already parking available (at the left hand side as you come through the gate), plus there will be additional spaces by the Technology Block. • Whilst there may be more sixth formers arriving by car, overall it is hoped that the traffic problem during the morning and afternoon will be alleviated by the fact that a lot of the students who are currently dropped off by parents, will take advantage of the Freedom Pass from June 2009 when they will be able to travel free on public transport. • We will need to have a School Travel Plan that will reflect the fact that the circumstances of the school have changed. The Plan will need to address the post-16 parking issue. • We also need to provide residents with information about the possible numbers of post-16 students who might be driving. Using an age profile some of the students will not be driving until they are in year 13. We can work with Highworth School, Norton Knatchbull School and others to provide residents with some statistical information – showing the proportionate number of students who have cars.
<p>The school traffic creates problems for residents in trying to exit from Essella Road and Mabledon Avenue onto Hythe Road. Turning right into Hythe Road can mean a wait of up to 20 minutes while a stream of cars turns from Hythe Road into Essella Road. Parking by parents causes problems both in reducing visibility and in blocking residents' driveways etc. Increasing the Published Admission Number (PAN) at age 7-11 by 25 places per year, as well as the increase in the sixth form numbers, will make the situation worse.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historically the North School had a PAN of 235. Due to taking some of the buildings out of use that number was reduced. In terms of the rebuild, when we admitted pupils in one academic year not all of the buildings were complete hence the school published an admission number of 200. The original plan was to increase the PAN to 235/240 following the building works. However, the school has not been full for a number of years so a sensible PAN would be 215. In real terms, the only additional pupils will be the 60 pupils in the Vocational Block.
<p>Will any further construction take place? Will there be extra traffic?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The construction going on at the moment is the Vocational Block. There will need to be some tarmac lorries coming on site to build the car park. These works should be completed by September 2009.