Kent County Council would like to hear your views on a proposal to transfer the Bower Grove secondary satellite provision to St Augustine Academy, and redesignating the number of pupils admitted to Bower Grove School.

Date of Public Meeting:
Tuesday 1 October 2013 at 7pm at The Bower Grove Secondary Satellite Provision based at St Augustine Academy, Oakwood Road, Maidstone ME16 8AE

www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations
1. Summary

Bower Grove is a Community Special School for children and young people aged 4-16 with Behaviour and Learning needs. Bower Grove School currently educates 216 pupils, via its main site and through its two satellite provisions.

There are two aspects to this proposal – to transfer the secondary satellite, which operates at St Augustine Academy, from Bower Grove School to the Academy to create a new mainstream resource based provision, and to change the designated number of Bower Grove School from its current 146 to 183 to reflect the current number of pupils on roll. (NB: this number assumes the secondary satellite transfers).

We are currently undertaking a public consultation to seek the views of the wider community on this proposal. The public consultation period will run from 11 September 2013 to 21 October 2013. There will be a public meeting on 1 October 2013 which will give you the opportunity to make your views known and to ask any questions you may have.

This document gives you details of the proposal, information on the background to it, and outlines the current position. There is a form at the end which we ask you to complete and return to us by 21 October 2013.

2. Background to the Proposal

Transfer of the satellite

In October 2004 Bower Grove’s satellite provision was set up in the grounds of The Astor of Hever Community School providing places for up to 12 secondary aged pupils in the Maidstone district with statements of Special Educational Needs and a diagnosis of an Autistic Spectrum Disorder. The provision is currently run and staffed by Bower Grove School and all pupils are on the roll of Bower Grove School.

In September 2011 The Astor of Hever Community School became St Augustine Academy, sponsored by Woodard Academies Trust.

Following discussions with Bower Grove School, St Augustine Academy and Woodard Academies Trust, KCC proposes to transfer the running of the Bower Grove secondary satellite provision from Bower Grove School to St Augustine Academy. The Academy will, subject to the consent of the Secretary of State, become a “mainstream resource based provision” for up to 12 children with statements of Special Educational Needs for Autistic Spectrum Disorder.

Change in designated pupil number

Bower Grove School is designated to admit 146 children. This includes both the main building and the two satellite provisions. Since 2009 the school has had around 200 children on roll, with the roll now standing at 216. The County Council and Governing Body need to formally change the school’s designated number to better reflect current admission patterns and school capacity. The change will not affect any pupil currently on roll. The school’s Governing Body and KCC do not wish to see the roll of the school rise any further. We propose to change the designated number of the school to 195 (183 if the proposal to transfer the secondary satellite to St Augustine Academy is agreed). We recognise that there will always be individual cases which may mean the County Council asks the school to admit beyond the designated number, but this should no longer be a regular practice.

3. The proposal

KCC proposes to increase the designated number of Bower Grove School from 146 to 183, with effect from 1 September 2014.

KCC proposes to transfer the satellite provision from Bower Grove School to St Augustine Academy to create a new mainstream resource based provision with effect from 1 September 2014.

St Augustine’s mainstream resource based specialist provision will cater for at least 12 pupils with statements for Autistic Spectrum Disorder. This provision will operate on a very similar basis to its current operation, with pupils spending as much time as possible in the mainstream setting, with support from specialist staff. There will be a “homebase” for times when pupils cannot be in the mainstream setting.

In liaison with the families with children in the satellite, and those seeking admission for September 2014, KCC will undertake annual reviews of their children’s Statements of Special Educational Needs, to consider amending the named provision to St Augustine’s Academy with effect from 1 September 2014, or earlier with agreement of parents.

The Headteacher of Bower Grove School and the Principal of St Augustine Academy will work together to develop arrangements for future joint working and support for pupils with ASD.

Staff employed at Bower Grove School, whose main role is providing the education and support to the pupils currently in the Bower Grove satellite provision will be transferred from KCC to Woodard Academies Trust.

1 Satellite provisions are based at Westborough Primary School and St Augustine Academy. Pupils who attend are on the roll of Bower Grove School, but integrate into the host mainstream schools for much of their education, supported by staff from the satellite.

2 Mainstream resource based provisions are specialist provisions in mainstream schools which support pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. The mainstream school receives revenue funding from the County Council to enable it to staff and resource the provision.

3 Except with their parents’ agreement, children in the secondary satellite will transfer to the role of St Augustine Academy.

4. What happens next?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 Nov 2013</td>
<td>Following the consultation, all views received, either by post, e-mail or at the Public Meeting, will be reported to the Education Cabinet Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Notice:</td>
<td>The Cabinet Member decides whether to continue with the proposal. If so, a Public Notice will be published in a local newspaper, at the school and in public places like the library. During this time comments and objections can be made about the proposal. The Public Notice will run for 6 weeks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Jan 2014 – 16 Feb 2014</td>
<td>The Cabinet Member considers all responses made and decides whether to go ahead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar 2014</td>
<td>The Cabinet Member considers all responses made and decides whether to go ahead.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Sept 2014</td>
<td>Implementation if the proposal is agreed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. How to give your views

There are a number of ways you can let us have your views:

- Complete and return the response form overleaf to:
  Jared Nehra, Area Education Officer, West Kent Office, Pink Zone, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, Kent. ME19 4QG. Fax: 01732 525480.

- Come to the Public Meeting: at the Bower Grove Secondary Satellite Provision based at St Augustine Academy, Oakwood Road, Maidstone ME16 8AE on 1 October 2013 at 7pm.

- Email your comments to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

- View and respond to the consultation online at: www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations

(We will note all you say, but will not be able to respond individually to response forms, letters or emails).
Public Consultation Response Form: Bower Grove School

Please return no later than 11am on Tuesday 21 October 2013

You can also email your views to: school.consultations@kent.gov.uk

Do you agree with the proposal to:-

Transfer the satellite provision to St Augustine Academy?  
☐ Yes ☐ No

Change the designated number of Bower Grove School?  
☐ Yes ☐ No

I am: *A Parent / Carer; Member of Staff; Governor; Pupil of Bower Grove Special School / Bower Grove Secondary Satellite Provision / St Augustine Academy OR - Other interested party

........................................................................................................... please state). * Please delete as appropriate

Name:

Address:

Your comments ...

We have completed an Equality Impact Assessment to see if the proposal could affect anyone unfairly. We welcome your views on the assumptions we have made and the conclusions we have drawn.
To view the document, go to www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations or contact school.consultations@kent.gov.uk