Education Consultation

Five Acre Wood School, Boughton Lane, Maidstone ME15 9QF; and Holmesdale Technology College, Malling Road, Snodland ME6 5HS

- Proposal to increase the designed number of places offered from 275 to 330 places for 4 January 2016.

- To establish a Satellite provision at Holmesdale Technology College, Malling Road, Snodland ME6 5HS for 70 students with moderate to severe learning difficulties for 4 January 2016.

- To alter the lower age range at Five Acre Wood School, Boughton Lane, Maidstone ME15 9QF to include nursery provision for 1 September 2016.

Why are we consulting on proposals for Five Acre Wood School?

We undertook a statutory process last year to increase the designated number of places offered at Five Acre Wood School to 275 places. This statutory process provided for the establishment of the Satellite provision at East Borough Primary School for 15 pupils with moderate learning difficulties. Pupils at the satellite are on the roll of Five Acre Wood School and their statements of Special Educational Needs or Education, Health and Care Plan names Five Acre Wood School.

An exciting proposal is now being put forward to establish a Satellite provision at Holmesdale Technology College to provide full continuity of provision for all age ranges offered by Five Acre Wood School. The new provision would incorporate up to 30 Key Stage 3 and 4 places and up to 40 places for Key Stage 5 pupils aged 16 and over. This will increase the choice of provision open to students and their families and provide continuity of a mainstream based placement for pupils that are educated in the Satellite at East Borough Primary School.

It is proposed that the post-16 pupils currently educated by Five Acre Wood School at Aylesford School - Sports College will transfer to the new Satellite provision at Holmesdale Technology College. It is further proposed to establish up to 15 full time nursery places at Five Acre Wood School to enable younger children with additional needs to be supported by the special school.

Background

As the strategic commissioner of school provision, the Local Authority has a duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places for the residents of Kent. This duty applies to special school provision, as well as mainstream settings. These proposals reflect KCC’s aspirations to increase the number of SEN school places across the County, as set out in the

The numbers of children with profound, severe and complex needs (PSCN) is increasing which has resulted in pressure on places in Kent. Equally, the numbers have continued to increase at Five Acre Wood School which indicates strong parental preference. Capacity constraints at the school have restricted its ability to grow. KCC is investing in a significant capital project to update the existing facilities and expand the school. It is intended that the expansion of Five Acre Wood School would happen over a period of three years with the number on roll growing incrementally over this time.

KCC recognises the significant importance given to parent/carer views in the Students and Families Act reforms of SEN and Disabilities which came into force from September 2014 and has looked to ensure they are involved in shaping and influencing strategic decisions that affect their students and young people.

Therefore, we are consulting with parents at Five Acre Wood School, Holmesdale Technology College and a full range of stakeholders on the proposals to (i) increase the designated number of places offered by Five Acre Wood School from 275 to 330 places for 4 January 2016; (ii) create a Satellite provision at Holmesdale Technology College for 4 January 2016; and (iii) to alter the lower age range at Five Acre Wood for September 2016. As part of this consultation we are testing various assumptions and are taking on board views gathered to inform our future plans.

We hope the following information will explain, in more detail, what we are intending to do at Five Acre Wood School and Holmesdale Technology College.

Proposal to increase the designated number of places offered by Five Acre Wood School from 275 to 330 places from January 2016

In order to enable our two related proposals we need to increase the total designated number of places offered at Five Acre Wood. This does not mean that 330 places will be solely based at the Five Acre Wood School site in Maidstone. These proposals would enable the school to formally operate from three sites in West Kent and increase the offer to its students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Provision</th>
<th>Number of places</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4-16 year olds at the Five Acre Wood Maidstone site</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursery provision at the Five Acre Wood Maidstone site</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satellite for KS1 &amp; KS2 Pupils at East Borough Primary School</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS3/KS4 places at Holmesdale Technology College</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS5 places at Holmesdale Technology College</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>330</strong></td>
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Proposal to alter the lower age range at Five Acre Wood School, Boughton Lane, Maidstone ME15 9QF to include nursery provision for 4 January 2016

Unlike other district PSCN schools pupils are only able to be admitted to Five Acre Wood School at statutory school age. In order to address this issue and provide early identification and support KCC is proposing to expand the age range to include nursery provision. Five Acre Wood School also provides outreach support to schools in the Maidstone area and thereby increasing the age range of the Five Acre Wood School will provide a broader range of advice and specialist offer.

Proposal to establish Satellite provision at Holmesdale Technology College, Malling Road, Snodland ME6 5HS for 70 students with moderate to severe learning difficulties for 4 January 2016

It is anticipated that the second part of this proposal will, in part, provide continuity of provision for primary aged children who would have benefitted from the establishment of the Satellite provision at East Borough Primary School.

A significant number of Five Acre Wood students have been taught in accommodation at Aylesford School – Sports College. However, this facility does not offer the physical capacity to host Key Stage 3/4 provision nor is able to offer any increase in numbers of post-16 students as the demand for Five Acre Wood School increases.

Holmesdale Technology College is recognised as ‘good’ by Ofsted. It is a trust school and technology college which brings a wealth of opportunity to enrich students’ learning. Holmesdale offers a full range of GCSEs and ensures that all its students are well placed to realise their aspirations. KCC undertook a statutory proposal last year to create a Specialist Resource Base Provision (SRBP) for pupils with a Statement of Educational Needs or Education Health and Care Plan for Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The Local Authority recognises that the school has already invested in developing its staff expertise to create an inclusive environment across the whole school.

Creating a Satellite provision at Holmesdale Technology College will provide provision from Years 7 to post-16 from one location. It is anticipated that this proposal will enable KCC to establish a high quality hub which can encompass leadership and management from Five Acre Wood School as well as class bases.

A statutory proposal was undertaken in 2014 to establish a SRBP for up to 12 children with a statement of SEN or Education, Health and Care Plan equivalent for ASD. The proposals set out in this paper do not affect the SRBP and there are no plans to transfer pupils from the roll of Holmesdale Technology College to Five Acre Wood.

What is Holmesdale Technology College offering and how does it relate to the Five Acre Wood Proposal?
Holmesdale is being asked to provide accommodation including access to specialist teaching areas which means it will act as a host to a new Satellite provision for 70 students with moderate to complex learning difficulties. It is anticipated the structure will be as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Stage (KS)</th>
<th>Numbers</th>
<th>Classes</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KS 3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS 4</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KS 5</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
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</table>
The sixth form provision will move in its entirety from Aylesford School – Sports College. We will be writing to the parents of all students currently educated by Five Acre Wood School at Aylesford School – Sports College offering them the opportunity for discussions about their young person’s specific needs.

Although classes will be set up straight away we envisage that pupils at Five Acre Wood School will benefit as primary aged pupils can make the transition to Secondary provision.

The school Principal and Governing Body at Holmesdale Technology College are happy to host the Satellite and are confident that staff from Five Acre Wood School will bring the relevant expertise and skills to meet the needs of the children, for the benefit of both schools.

**When will the Satellite open?**
It is intended that the Satellite will be in place for January 2016.

**What type of Needs do you mean?**
The Key Stage 3 and 4 students attending the Satellite provision will be those pupils on the roll at Five Acre Wood School who are identified as most suitable for accessing mainstream provision. The identified students will have moderate to severe learning difficulties. The post-16 pupils will have a greater range of needs reflecting Five Acre Wood School's designation as a PSCN school.

**Tell me more about Satellite Provision**
Satellite provision enables a limited number of special school students to benefit from placement on a mainstream campus, where this is suitable for meeting their needs. In this instance, the proposed Satellite will provide students with learning difficulties access to specialist teaching areas and sports facilities not normally available in special schools.

**How will you work out which students will attend the Satellite?**
Five Acre Wood School will determine which students will meet the criteria and benefit from use of the specialist teaching areas on the secondary school site.

**What will the Satellite at Holmesdale Technology College look like?**
The Satellite will have its own area within Holmesdale Technology College where students can receive some individual and small group teaching and help. Through use of timetabling and coordination, the students attending the Satellite will have access to the specialist teaching areas and sports facilities available at Holmesdale Technology College. We aim to have in place provision which offers a flexible match to the needs of students.

Internal adaptations to provide specialist toileting facilities will be required and we will also want to increase some of the exterior perimeter fencing.

**Are you just providing classrooms? What about the other spaces pupils need?**
The facilities available at Holmesdale in terms of PE, Science & Technology areas of the curriculum far exceed those usually available to secondary aged pupils in a special school. KCC will work closely with the senior leadership teams at Five Acre Wood School and Holmesdale Technology College to ensure that all appropriate accommodation and facilities are provided to enable them to deliver an effective curriculum in a way that suits the needs of the school and its students. The schools will be able to provide parents with information about how they will organise the school day and any changes they will be considering. For Five Acre Wood School this includes both during and after the expansion.
Will this proposal mean that Five Acre Wood School and Holmesdale Technology College will lose their ethos or lose focus on the quality of education?

Holmesdale Technology College has an inclusive and welcoming ethos. Five Acre Wood is recognised for its expertise in providing outreach support to mainstream schools. There are clear benefits to both schools through a partnership.

Five Acre Wood School is judged as ‘Outstanding’ by Ofsted, with Leadership and management recognised as outstanding. The school meets the need of all groups of pupils and pupils make outstanding progress, their achievement is excellent compared with pupils of the same age in other schools. The school uses its current partnerships with other schools well to extend its range of learning for some pupils, school leaders recognise there is scope to build on this further. The school will recruit additional staff as required to ensure that the high quality of education can be maintained for the additional pupils.

Holmesdale Technology College is judged “Good” by Ofsted and the report acknowledges that the Principal and her leadership team have a relentless drive to continually raise standards. All students are ably guided to achieve their personal best, through carefully tailored mentoring and pastoral care. The school’s ethos is based on traditional values such as respect, and is influenced through qualities such as honestly, kindness, courage and diligence. Through this environment Holmesdale enables students to be self-assured, articulate and polite. However there will be no direct impact on the staffing or capacity of the school as students in the Satellite will be on the roll of Five Acre Wood School.

Will the extra places created at the Satellite be for local children?

Yes, we have planned to ensure that any extra places created are close to the area where there is identified additional need. Our aim is to ensure there are enough places to allow children to attend a local school.

How will the school deal with increased traffic at Five Acre Wood School & Holmesdale Technology College?

The schools’ travel plans are being reviewed to ensure that travel to and from school will be as sustainable as possible. A traffic impact assessment is being carried out as part of the design and planning process for Five Acre Wood School. Consideration is being given to staggered start and finish times with other nearby schools to spread traffic over a longer period. In addition, efforts are being made to maximise private hire and minibus usage to reduce the number of journeys, where pupils’ needs allow for this.

Where can I find out more about what you are putting in place for SEN children?

KCC has produced a Strategy that sets out our plans for children with SEN and Disabilities (SEND). The SEND Strategy shows how we will be creating 209 extra places in special schools and 164 in mainstream schools. It is available on the website at: http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/childrens-social-care-and-families-policies/children-with-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities

I have a question – who can I ask?

If you have any questions please contact either school or email: AEN.resources@kent.gov.uk

You can have your say by:
- Emailing us at school.consultations@kent.gov.uk; or completing a response form which is available on the website: www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations
You can have your say by:

- Writing to Jared Nehra, Area Education Officer for West Kent, Kent County Council, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone. (You can also hand the letter or response form into Five Acre Wood School or Holmesdale Technology College, **no later than midday on 19 June 2015**.

We have updated our 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](http://www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

### Consultation Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>18 May 2015 to 19 June 2015</td>
<td>Public Consultation period. During this period, any person may send in a response supporting, objecting or commenting on the proposal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 June 2015</td>
<td>Parents drop-in/ information meeting at Holmesdale Technology College (4.30 – 5.30)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 June 2015</td>
<td>Parents drop-in/ information meeting at Five Acre Wood School (4.30 – 6.00)</td>
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<tr>
<td>June/July 2015</td>
<td>The Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform decides whether to proceed with the proposal. If so, KCC will publish a Public Notice in a local newspaper and at the school. During this four week period, any person may send in a response supporting, objecting or commenting on the proposal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 January 2016</td>
<td>Subject to no objections not already considered, implementation of the proposal</td>
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### What Happens Next?

The consultation period runs from 18 May 2015 – 19 June 2015. If you are intending to contact us with your views, please do this by midday on 19 June 2015. We will pass all comments to our Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform who will make a decision on whether to proceed with this proposal. If he decides to proceed we will then publish a Public Notice in July 2015, which will run for 4 weeks.

![Signature]

**Jared Nehra**  
Area Education Officer for West Kent  
Kent County Council