PROPOSALS TO AMALGAMATE

WOODLANDS INFANT SCHOOL, Hunt Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 4BB

and

WOODLANDS JUNIOR SCHOOL, Hunt Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 4BB

Introduction
Kent County Council is proposing to amalgamate Woodlands Infant School, Hunt Road, Tonbridge, TN10 4BB and Woodlands Junior School, Hunt Road, Tonbridge, TN10 4BB to become a 630 place all-through community primary school through a linked proposal.

These related proposals are referred to through this document.

Contact Details
The proposals to make prescribed alterations to Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior Schools are being published by Kent County Council, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1XQ. Contact Name and Address: Jared Nehra, Area Education Officer (West Kent), Kent County Council, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ. Tel: 03000 412209

School details
• Woodlands Infant School is a community school for children aged 4 to 7.
• Woodlands Junior School is a community school for children aged 7 to 11.

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation
Should the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform recommend that the proposal can go ahead Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School would close on 31 August 2016. The new community primary school would open for 1 September 2016.

Objectives (including reason for closure of Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School and how the wider proposal would increase educational standards)
The objective of this proposal is to amalgamate Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School of Hunt Road, Tonbridge TN10 4BB to form a 3 form entry community primary school for children aged 4 to 11 years. This is a linked proposal which would be achieved through the formal closure of Woodlands Infant School which currently provides education for pupils between the ages of 4-7 and Woodlands Junior School which currently provides education for pupils between the ages of 7-11, with effect from 31 August 2016. However, this proposal is related to other proposals that would also see the establishment of a new all-through community primary school by 1 September 2016.

Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School are two separate schools serving the Higham Ward of Tonbridge. Both schools are popular community schools. Currently Woodlands Infant School has 270 pupils on roll and the Woodlands Junior School has 382 pupils on roll.
The schools occupy adjacent sites with a single vehicular entrance point and both schools have pedestrian entrances. A Nursery known as Roselands Pre School Highamwood Ltd, have a lease of a large area within the Infant School site. The Nursery have erected their own demountable building on site, and have been granted a 25 year lease of the site they occupy, together with rights to use other areas within the Infant School site.

Woodlands Infant School is judged by Ofsted as a ‘good’ school (January 2014). Overall teaching is good across the school, and some is outstanding, with pupils across the school making rapid progress in all subjects. Woodlands Junior School is judged by Ofsted as ‘Outstanding’ (May 2011).

School summary data gathered in the Autumn Term 2015 is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Woodlands Infant School %</th>
<th>Woodlands Junior School %</th>
<th>Kent %</th>
<th>National %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Eligible for Free School Meals</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% SEN with Statements</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% SEN without Statements</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% Pupils with EAL</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*IMD Score – January 2014</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IMD Rank (out of 447, 1 is the most deprived)</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>401</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ofsted outcome</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For * Index of Multiple Deprivation (based on pupils' home postcodes) ** IMD score for Kent is as at January 2014

The Governing Bodies of both schools view this proposal as a natural progression, which will further secure benefits for staff and pupils. The Kent Commissioning Plan’s recommendation for linked Junior and Infant schools is “when the opportunity arises the local authority will consider the possibility of either amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools into a single primary school or federation of the schools.” Link to the 2015-19 Kent Commissioning Plan: http://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/16236/Commissioning-plan-for-education-provision-in-Kent-2015-2019.pdf

The new Commissioning Plan (covering the period 2016-20) will be considered by Cabinet before the end of March 2016 and published shortly after on the KCC website. Following a request from the Governing Body of the two schools, Kent County Council’s Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform agreed to proceed to public consultation on these proposals.

The new primary school will be able to use the existing buildings more effectively as a single school. The primary school would admit up to 90 pupils into the reception year each September, as the infant school does now, and the school would have a total of 630 places.

All parties would like the amalgamation to take place as soon as possible to enable the benefits of amalgamation to be achieved across the primary age range, thereby meeting the requirements in relation to the curriculum contained in section 78 of EA 2002(a). This is why the consultation document has said that the amalgamation should take place by 1 September 2016.
Kent County Council and the Governing Body of the Woodlands Schools believe that the proposed changes will promote the following benefits:

- strong leadership and governance
- promotion of high educational standards
- high quality, good teaching as a minimum
- consistency of approach to learning policies, curriculum planning and behaviour management
- stability of staffing and improved staffing structures and opportunities for staff development
- improved use of facilities – specialist teaching spaces, reception areas, outdoor area

Woodlands Infant School Clubs: start active, Tae Kwon Do (paid), French (paid), recorders, guitars, multi sports (paid), gymnastics (paid), cheerleading (paid), stay active, Beavers (paid).

Woodlands Junior School Clubs: athletics, basketball, junior choir, senior choir, Computers Y3, computers Y4, craft (cost), cross country, eco-club, engineering, football, knitting, netball, panto, play leaders, poetry, sewing, school band, art, chess, lego, recorders, ukulele, Tae Kwon Do (paid), homework

Breakfast and After School Clubs (paid) – shared between the schools

It is anticipated that the extended school provision would be enhanced in an all-through primary school by an increased range of clubs and offer as the expertise of the staff would be greater and some clubs could be open to Key Stage 1 and 2 children, rather than individually.

**Pupil numbers and admissions**

The number of pupils on roll at Woodlands Infant School as at 18 January 2016, of which 133 are boys and 137 are girls. A breakdown of these pupils by age groups is provided in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Group</th>
<th>YR</th>
<th>Yr 1</th>
<th>Yr 2</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. on Roll</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Woodlands Junior School currently has 382 on roll, of which 177 are boys and 205 are girls. A breakdown of these pupils by age groups is provided in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Group</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. on Roll</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Kent County Council will be the admission authority for the primary school and will set the admission arrangements, as it does for the existing schools. This proposal does not change the number of pupils admitted across the 4-11 age range or the current class structure of the school. The amalgamation would not result in changes to the admission arrangements at reception and year 2 children would automatically move into year 3 in the primary school. As there would be a single primary school, parents would no longer need to complete an admission form for entry to Year 3.
**Displaced pupils**

It is anticipated that the pupils leaving the roll of Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School as a result of discontinuance will transfer to the roll of the all-through community primary school. Should parents not wish their child to transfer school in the way described above, then it would be open to them to apply for an alternative place.

The school places that are discontinued as a result of this particular proposal are immediately replaced through related proposals to establish a primary school on the sites of the existing Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School.

**Description of alteration and evidence of demand**

In accordance with section 15(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 notice is given that Kent County Council intends to discontinue Woodlands Infant School, a community school, Hunt Road, Tonbridge, TN10 4BB on 31 August 2016. All pupils attending Woodlands Infant School at the time of the closure will be transferred to the roll of the new Community Primary School.

In accordance with section 15(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 notice is given that Kent County Council intends to discontinue Woodlands Junior School, a community school, Hunt Road, Tonbridge, TN10 4BB on 31 August 2016. All pupils attending Woodlands Junior School at the time of the closure will be transferred to the roll of the new community primary school.

In accordance with section 11 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Kent County Council intends establish a new community primary school through the linked proposals to discontinue Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School, Hunt Road, Tonbridge TN10 4BB. The Executive Headteacher and Temporary Governing Body proposed that the new school would be named Woodlands Primary School.

Pupil number forecasts indicate that the new community primary school would require as many classes as there are currently at Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School.

**Impact on the community**

It is not anticipated that these proposals would impact adversely on the community. Woodlands Infant and Woodlands Junior School already work closely together and there is an admissions link between the two schools. Pupils currently at Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School would automatically transfer onto the roll of the new primary school that is being created through related proposals (notwithstanding a parent wishing to seek a place at a different school). Table 1 below sets out all schools within a two mile radius of Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior Schools.

**Table 1 – Schools within a two mile radius of postcode TN10 4BB**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DFE</th>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>School Type</th>
<th>Designation</th>
<th>Distance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2661</td>
<td>Cage Green Primary School</td>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4009</td>
<td>Hadlow Rural Community School</td>
<td>Secondary School</td>
<td>Free School</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5450</td>
<td>Hillview School for Girls</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Academy</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5431</td>
<td>Hugh Christie Technology College</td>
<td>High School</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2662</td>
<td>Long Mead Community Primary School</td>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>Foundation</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7051</td>
<td>Ridge View School</td>
<td>Special School</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2155</td>
<td>Slade Primary School and Attached Unit for HI</td>
<td>Primary School</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) (England) Regulations 2013
The proposed amalgamation is likely to bring benefits including:

- Avoiding transferring at the end of Year 2 and any worries children may have about moving to a different school
- Consistency of approach to teaching and learning policies, curriculum and planning, behaviour management, equal opportunities and special educational needs;
- Monitoring pupil progress from 4-11 years of age enables staff to build up a comprehensive profile of individual children and build consistently on their achievements;
- Planning and delivery of a continuous and coherent curriculum

**Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision**

There are 6 pupils on roll at Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School with an Education, Health and Care Plan/ Statement of Special Educational Needs equivalent.

Should further EHCPs or equivalent statements of special educational needs be issued before the implementation date, then those pupils would have their statements reviewed should the proposal to close Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School be approved. It is anticipated any such pupils would transfer onto the roll of the new community primary school should the related proposal to establish a new community all-through primary school on the existing sites be approved.

The overarching aim of Kent’s SEND strategy is to improve the health, well-being, attainment and progress, and the quality of provision, for children and young people with special education needs and/or disabilities. An important aspect of this is to develop the capacity of special schools – defining their existing offer and building in capacity to respond to future need, ensuring that the needs of Kent children are able to be met within their locality. KCC’s SEND Strategy can be obtained from the following link:

http://www.kelsi.org.uk/pupil_support_and_wellbeing/targeted_support/sen_and_disabilities/send_strategy.aspx

The bringing together of staff from both schools will enhance the quality of education provided through the sharing of skills and expertise, enable the curriculum to be broadened and enhance the extra-curricular opportunities.

**Travel**

This proposal is close Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School is dependent upon the proposal to establish a new community all-through primary school upon the existing sites. Therefore, there will be no displacement of pupils as places at the new primary school would automatically be offered to children on roll at Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School. There is likely to be little (if any) impact upon the length of journeys between home and school as a result of the implementation of these related proposals.

There are a variety of alternative school places available to parents (should they be wish to seek one as a consequence of these proposals) which fall within a radius of two miles.
Therefore alternatives are likely to be within a reasonable walking distance to school. A distance of two miles is usually accepted as reasonable for a primary aged pupil, accompanied by an adult as necessary.

There is no forced displacement of any Woodlands Infant School or Woodlands Junior School pupils and sufficient places exist within a two mile radius to allow local families to continue to walk, cycle or use public transport to attend a different school to the all-through primary created through related proposals. Home to school transport will be provided in accordance with Kent County Council’s published policies with individual cases being considered on their merits.

**Consultation**

All applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to these proposals have been complied with. A public consultation was carried out by the Local Authority from 4 December 2015 to 20 January 2016. A consultation document was produced which included the dates of the public meetings. A copy of this document together with a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment can be obtained from KCC’s website: www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations

The consultation document was distributed to statutory stakeholders, including but not limited to the following groups:

- The parents of all pupils attending Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School via their children’s schools, staff and governors
- The Department for Education
- The Diocese of Rochester, Canterbury and Southwark
- Elected Members (Kent County Council, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council)
- Tonbridge and Malling Parish Councils
- Local MP
- Trade Unions
- Local Children’s Centres and pre-school providers
- Schools in Tonbridge and Malling
- Local Libraries in the Tonbridge and Malling area
- All stakeholders were able to access copies of these documents on the KCC website.

A public meeting was held at Woodlands Junior School on 6 January 2016. The outcome of the consultation was reported to KCC’s Education and Young People’s Services Cabinet Committee on 21 January 2016. The Education Cabinet Report on the outcome of the consultation, including summaries of the public meeting and responses received, is available from KCC’s school consultation website. The link: www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations

**Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved:**

**Capital**

It is proposed that the proposals can be implemented without the need for capital expenditure. Should the proposal proceed, Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School would close and a new primary school would operate all-through school on the existing Infant and Junior School sites.
Nursery: A Nursery known as Roselands Pre School Highamwood Ltd, have a 25 year lease in the site they occupy. The lease will expire in March 2024, though it can be terminated by either party subject to 6 months prior written notice. The lease is granted in KCC’s name as landowner to the two Schools, which are specified as Woodlands Infant and Junior School respectively. Should the proposal proceed, the schools’ name change would be appended to the Lease and Roselands Ltd would be notified. A variation of the lease would only be needed if there were material changes to the terms and conditions of the lease, due to changes on site and/or operating procedures.

**Revenue**

As a result of the proposal, the school will continue to be funded on through the Delegated Grant according to existing rolls.

The financial arrangements governing school amalgamations are set out in the Schools Revenue Funding 2016 to 2017 Operational guide July 2015. Included in Kent’s funding formula is a lump sum for all Kent primary schools regardless of their size. Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School currently each receive lump sum funding as separate schools. Should the amalgamation proceed the ‘new all-through School’ would eventually receive one lump sum. Funding protection will be applied for two years to enable the school to achieve the economies of scale from being one larger primary school.

For example, if an amalgamation takes places for 1 September 2016:

- In the year of the amalgamation the two schools keep their lump sums 2 X £120,000
- In the year after the amalgamation April 2017 to March 2018 – the school will get 85% of the combined lump sum = £204,000.
- From April 2018 to March 2019 the school will get 1 lump sum £120,000

**Staff, Site and Resources**

It is proposed that all teachers and support staff employed at Woodlands Infant School and Woodlands Junior School (at the time of the proposed amalgamation) will transfer to the primary school.

The freehold of the site will remain with Kent County Council.

Over time, economies of scale will result in savings from combined procurement and shared curriculum resources.

**Ethos & Vision**

The Executive Headteacher and Temporary Governing Body proposed that:

Woodlands Primary School will be driven by enthusiasm and a desire to achieve. We will aim to bring learning alive, making it exciting and stimulating and giving our children a thirst for learning that continues with them throughout their future school experiences and lives.

Woodlands Primary School want children to:

- Feel safe and valued as part of a caring community that celebrates success
- Be independent thinkers/learners who are able to seek solutions creatively and cooperatively
- Be inspired to develop an ‘enquiring’ mind and ask questions
- Be confident enough to take risks in their learning
- Experience and actively participate in a relevant, enjoyable curriculum that meets the needs of all
- Be able to listen and articulate responses showing consideration to others
• Be polite and courteous
• Be proactive in their responsibilities towards the community, society, the environment and economy, linking ‘real life’ with their learning
• Understand and respect diversity
• Be aware of and recognise their own learning needs and be involved in planning future steps
• Develop a sense of self-esteem - to be well balanced and healthy individuals

**The procedure for responses: support; objections and comments**

A public notice was published in a local newspaper on 19 February 2016. The notice is displayed at all main entrances to the schools, in Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council’s reception area and in local libraries. It is also available on KCC’s website: [www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

Within four weeks from the date of publication, any person may send in a response supporting, objecting or commenting on the proposal to Jared Nehra, Area Education Officer (West Kent), Kent County Council, Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone, ME14 1XQ. Tel: 03000 412209; or email school.consultations@kent.gov.uk. The final date for sending in written representations is 18 March 2016.