The Governing Body of Whitfield Aspen School would like to hear your views on a proposal to expand Whitfield Aspen School, Dover, to a four Forms of Entry (FE) school over two sites.

Why do we need to expand Whitfield Aspen School?
Whitfield village has seen additional homes built during the past few years. Recently, planning consent has been granted for 1050 further houses in the village. These represent the first phase of a much larger proposed expansion of the village, which may see as many as 6,000 new homes may be built over the next 30 years.

The village is currently served by Whitfield Aspen Primary School. This School is full, and is regularly oversubscribed, due to its popularity in the local area and the good quality of education that it provides. The Aspen provision within the School delivers high quality education and support for pupils with Profound, Severe and Complex Needs. Aspen is also full; indeed in 2014 we supported the opening of a satellite of this provision in Aylesham Primary School in order to continue to meet the needs for places within the Dover community. There is a need to open additional primary school places in Whitfield to meet the increasing population of the village, and also to expand the capacity of Aspen to ensure that children in the District of Dover can attend a school as local to their homes as possible.

What exactly is being proposed?
As part of the planning agreement for the 1050 new homes, the developer is providing a site for primary education, together with a financial contribution to the cost of a school building on the site. We proposed to expand the current Whitfield Aspen School via a split site solution. The second site is located on the edge of Whitfield Village off Archers Court Road, about 500m from the present School site.

The proposed expansion is expected to be completed in three phases. Phase one will see an additional 26 Reception Year places being offered in each September 2016 and 2017. There is also a need for up to 16 places for pupils in the Aspen unit. Temporary accommodation would be located on the existing site for a short period to provide four class bases. Phase two will see the creation of a new school building on the site off Archers Court Road. This will provide up to 1FE including Aspen provision. It is expected that this satellite building will be opened for September 2018. The temporary accommodation will be removed from the Mayfield Road site at this point. Phase three will be for the final one FE expansion taking the School up to 4 FE. The date of phase three will be dependent on the rate of house building.

Are there any plans to show how this expansion will be delivered on site?
Not yet. Phase one will be via two double classroom modular buildings which will be located as close to the current School building to ensure the children do not feel isolated and playing area is not eroded. Subject to the outcome of this consultation, Kent County Council will appoint a design team to develop plans for school building on the Archers Court Road site. This will be designed to meet the needs of all Whitfield Aspen pupils. It will be a permanent building that provides appropriate primary school facilities, and the specialist facilities for pupils who attend the Aspen provision.
It is intended that the Archers Court Road building is constructed in a way which minimises the disruption when it is expanded under Phase three. This means that the initial design for Phase two of the build will incorporate the infrastructure and facilities for a two FE school but only enough classrooms for a 1 FE expansion. The design will allow easy addition of classrooms, expanding the School by the final FE as and when the Phase three development is required. There will be a separate consultation on the design and layout of the Archers Court Road building once Kent County Council have worked up the detail. The Governing Body will ensure you have the opportunity to comment on this. Kent County Council’s Property Department will hold a pre-planning drop-in event at the School, where parents/carers, staff, governors, local residents and other interested parties will have an opportunity to view the plans, ask questions and make comments. This will enable the design team to take everyone’s views into consideration before submitting final plans to the Governing Body for approval.

How will the School operate across two sites?
Currently the School operates two parallel classes in each year group. This means that the two class teachers in each year group plan together to deliver the same curriculum and learning opportunities to the pupils in both classes. As the School expands, the same thing will happen, but initially with three teachers planning together, and then four. The School will deliver the same curriculum and learning opportunities across both sites. The School’s leadership team will lead both sites, and quality assure the work of the School across both sites in much the same way they do now. Some staff, such as the Headteacher and SENCO will operate across both sites on a daily basis. Others, like classteachers, will continue to work with their own class on a daily basis.

Once the Archers Court Road site is built how will the pupils be split across the sites?
A final decision on how the proposed School will operate and how pupils may be split has not been decided upon. The School’s leadership team, which includes Governors, feel that parents will need to be consulted further on this matter. The leadership team will set out their ideas once they know what the School will look like and the budget to which they are working too.

How will the School deal with increased traffic?
The intention behind this proposal is to minimise travel distances by enabling children to attend a local school. This affords greater opportunity for families to make the journey by means other than car. The forecasts show that there will be a shortfall in primary school places locally even before the expansion of Whitfield Aspen School takes place. If pupils are unable to attend schools locally they will need to travel to school further afield, indeed pupils who require the support of a provision like Aspen would have to travel to schools outside the Dover district, something that places pressure on a wider road network.

As there will be more vehicles coming onto the School site until the second site is completed, extra parking will be provided on the School site to mitigate the extra staff needed for the temporary classrooms. However, this is a short term pressure. Once the second site opens the traffic pressures will become split. Also, the School’s travel plan will be updated. Kent County Council and the School are working together to promote independent travel where this is appropriate for the pupil.

Will the School need to close during the building work?
No. All the work to locate the temporary accommodation will be planned carefully and contractors will work with the School to ensure that works are scheduled to keep disruption to an absolute minimum. If possible this will take place in the summer holiday period. The building site will be a secure area to ensure the health and safety of the children, staff, parents and visitors to the School. Clearly, the Phase two site is away from existing pupils.

Will there be access to the temporary accommodation for the Aspen pupils?
The ethos of the School is to integrate all pupils. The temporary accommodation will be as
accessible as possible to all pupils.

**Will the satellite School accommodate pupils from the Aspen provision?**
Yes. The plan commits to supplying specialist provision classrooms for Aspen pupils across both sites.

**Will there be movement of the pupils between sites?**
Yes. As this will be one School split over two sites we will endeavour to make opportunities for pupils to integrate.

**With a split site how will the admissions arrangements work?**
The process for applying for places will remain the same. Admission to Reception Year will be via the co-ordinated admissions process operated by Kent County Council. Admission to other year groups will continue to be managed through the casual admissions process. However, we would propose a small change to the oversubscription criteria for the School. These criteria are used in the event that there are more applications for a place at the School than there are places available. The minor change would be to the distance criterion. Currently priority is given to those that live closest to the School, as measured between the home address and the School address. We would propose that for September 2018, distance is measured from the home address to the nearer of either the Mayfield Road site or the Archers Court Road site. Admission to Aspen will not change as the School would need to be mentioned on a child’s Education, Health & Care Plan. A separate commissioned number would have to be agreed upon with KCC.

**How will the School be led and managed?**
There will be one Headteacher, supported by Heads of Schools and both sites will be covered by one Governing Body. Assistant Heads, SENCOs, as well as Key Stage leaders would also form part of the leadership team.

**Will Staff be employed on contracts to work across both sites? How frequently will they do so?**
As one School operating on two sites, all Staff will be employed by Whitfield Aspen School and be expected to work across both sites when directed. However, consistency is important to our pupils, so we anticipate that those with classroom responsibility will generally be on one of the sites.

**Will any facilities across the two sites be shared?**
The facilities across the two sites will be used for the betterment of all pupils whichever site is their base. For example the therapy pool will be available to all pupils who require that facility.

**How will the School grow in terms of numbers?**
We envisage a gradual increase in numbers as more houses are built. We will utilise new classrooms so that the children benefit from the new accommodation.

**How will the revenue funding work?**
Kent County Council has a funding formula which applies to all maintained schools. The vast majority of funding is directly linked to the number of pupils on roll, and thus as the pupil numbers rise, so does the funding. The exception to this is for pupils supported through the Aspen provision. Here the County Council annually commissions a number of places and the School receives a lump sum per commissioned place, and then additional funding is provided for each child on Aspen’s roll. Additionally, for the first three years the County Council would provide “guaranteed” funding for the Reception Year pupil numbers, which ensures the School can fund an additional class even if this is not full.
Consultation
This is the early stage of the consultation process and **no final decisions have yet been made.** This process is designed to establish the views of parents/carers, pupils, governors, staff and other interested parties.

The Governing Body will hold public meeting at the School on **23 March 2016** where you will have an opportunity to give your views. Governors the School staff and KCC officers will be able to answer any questions you may have. An indicative timeline is set out at the foot of the page.

**How can I give my views?**
There are a number of ways to give us your views on this proposal:

- A meeting for parents/carers, members of staff and public will be held at the School on **23 March at 7pm**, where you will have the opportunity to ask questions and complete a response form.
- You can send the response form to The Governing Body, Whitfield Aspen School, Mayfield Road, Dover, CT16 3LJ. All written responses need to be received by 11am on **18 April 2016**.
- By emailing: **office@whitfield.kent.sch.uk**

**What happens next?**
This consultation stage closes on 18 April 2016. A report summarising the responses received will be submitted to the Governing Body which will determine whether to proceed with the expansion, subject to Kent County Council agreeing to fund this. Kent County Council’s Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform will also consider the consultation outcome and decide whether to provide funding for the expansion.

**The consultation process – indicative timeline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14 March to 18 April 2016</td>
<td>Public Consultation Period</td>
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<tr>
<td>23 March 2016 7pm</td>
<td>Meeting at the School for parents/carers, staff and governors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 April 2016</td>
<td>The Governing Body considers the consultation responses and determines whether to proceed with the expansion, subject to Kent County Council providing the resources to support this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April/May 2016</td>
<td>Kent County Council’s Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform considers the Governing Body’s decision and the consultation responses and decides whether to make the capital and revenue funding available to enable the expansion to proceed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01 September 2016</td>
<td>Implementation of temporary accommodation (if the proposal is agreed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2018</td>
<td>Permanent expansion of the School (if the proposal is agreed)</td>
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RESPONSE FORM – Whitfield Aspen School

Please complete this response and hand it in at the School office or send it to The Governing Body, Whitfield Aspen School, Mayfield Road, Whitfield, Dover. CT163LJ. Please return no later than 11am on 18 April 2016.

Question 1: Do you agree with the plan to offer an additional 26 reception places on the Mayfield Road site in 2016 and 2017?

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
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Comments

Please continue overleaf if necessary

Question 2: Do you agree to the proposal to expand Whitfield Aspen School in September 2018 via a split site solution as set out in the consultation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
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Comments

Please continue overleaf if necessary
Which of the following best describes you?

* **Parent/Carer** / **Member of Staff** / **Governor** / **Pupil**
* Please delete as appropriate

OR - Other interested party ………………………………………… (please state interest).

Name ………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Address …………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Whitfield Aspen School is a data controller under the Data Protection Act 1998 and will comply with the requirements of the Act at all times, ensuring that your personal information is processed fairly and lawfully and in this instance used only for the purpose of validation, which will enable a fair and just consultation.

- 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 [http://www.whitfieldaspenschool.co.uk/](http://www.whitfieldaspenschool.co.uk/)
