To Parents/Carers, Students, Staff, Governors and Other Interested Parties

1. Introduction
We would like to hear your views on plans for Laleham Gap School. Currently we have a designated number of 170 and specialise in providing both day and residential education for pupils aged 4 to 16 years who have Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with Speech, Language and Communication Needs. All pupils have a statement of special educational need or an Education, Health & Care plan. We currently offer boarding on weekdays as a weekly placement.

2. The Proposals
We are proposing to (a) make changes to the boarding provision and (b) permanently change the age range of the school, which would increase the designated number to 178.

(a) The boarding provision, currently housed in the Phoenix building, is recognised as a first class provision. However, the number of pupils with a residential placement has been in decline over many years and, with this very small number of residential pupils, it is becoming unsustainable. The provision is currently under used and we want to make better use of the building for the benefit of all Laleham Gap pupils.

We are therefore proposing to close the boarding provision, no later than July 2020. This will provide sufficient time for planned transition for the children currently in the provision and their families as well as the staff employed to support and deliver the residential provision. The planned closure date will see all but one child to the end of Key Stage 4.

We recognise that staff currently employed specifically for boarding pupils may seek alternative employment before July 2020 and we will work in partnership with other local schools and agencies to ensure that the boarding provision remains fully functional and pupils continue to receive a high quality residential experience.

If it is agreed, following consultation, that the boarding provision is to be closed, then we will only admit boarding pupils in Year 9 or above whilst the provision remains open (those who would be coming to the end of Year 11 by July 2020).

(b) In parallel with the proposal to close the boarding provision, we are also proposing to permanently change the age range of the school from 4-16 years to 4-17 years by introducing a one-year post 16 provision, for up to 8 students. We will then be able to utilise one floor of the Phoenix building for post 16 and independent living support.

We are aware that the current dropout rate of our year 12 students from college is consistently higher than we wish. The post-16 provision will give these pupils the additional time they may need to more successfully transition into their college placements. It may also allow pupils the chance to retake GCSE exams where necessary.
Kent County Council supports the proposal as it will secure a sustainable future for Laleham Gap School; ensuring young people in Kent will continue to benefit from the outstanding provision offered by the school.

3. How to give your views on the proposals
Attend a meeting on Thursday 8 March at 4.30pm at the school. KCC officers will be in attendance at this meeting. (One to one meetings have also been offered to parents of those children currently using the boarding provision.)

Send the attached response form to The Headteacher, Laleham Gap School, Ozengell Place, Ramsgate CT12 6FH. All responses need to be received by midday on 20 March 2018.

By emailing: secretary@laleham-gap.kent.sch.uk
Visit www.laleham-gap.kent.sch.uk for further information.

A separate consultation will also be held with the staff.

4. What happens next?
This consultation stage closes on 20 March 2018. A decision on whether or not to proceed with the proposals will be taken by the Governing Body of the school. If the Governing Body decides to proceed statutory proposals will be published in the form of a public notice. The public notice would be published in a local newspaper, and for a period of four weeks following the publication date, any person can comment on the proposals.

Following the statutory consultation, and after consideration of any responses received, KCC’s Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education will take the final decision on whether to proceed with the proposals.
Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 March 2018</td>
<td>The last day for sending in a response to the consultation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 April 2018</td>
<td>Following the consultation, all views received, either by post or email will be considered by the Governing Body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 May to 31 May 2018</td>
<td>If the Governing Body decides to continue with the proposals, the school will publish a public notice for a four week period in a local newspaper. During this time comments and objections can be made in writing about the proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29 June 2018</td>
<td>KCC’s Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education considers any responses made to the public notice and takes the final decision on whether to proceed with the proposals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept 2018</td>
<td>Phased Implementation, subject to agreement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We have completed an Equality Impact Assessment to see if the proposals 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.laleham-gap.kent.sch.uk](http://www.laleham-gap.kent.sch.uk)

PLEASE COMPLETE AND RETURN THE FOLLOWING RESPONSE FORM
Response Form

Proposal to make prescribed alterations to
Laleham Gap School

Please return no later than midday 20 March 2018 to:
The Headteacher, Laleham Gap School, Ozengell Place, Ramsgate CT12 6FH.
Email: admin@laleham-gap.kent.sch.uk

Do you agree with the proposals? Yes No Undecided

Which of the following best describes you?

☐ A parent/carer of a child/children currently attending Laleham Gap School
☐ A member of staff at Laleham Gap School
☐ A governor at Laleham Gap School
☐ A pupil attending Laleham Gap School
☐ Other – please specify ……………………………………………………………

Name ……………………………………………………………………………………

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

Please provide your comments below and continue overleaf if necessary:

…………………………………………………………………………………………