



Consultation

23 April 2018

To Students, Parents, Staff, Governors and Stakeholders

Kent Catholic Schools Partnership (KCSP, the Trust), the Governing Body of St Gregory's Catholic School and the Diocese of Southwark are seeking views on a proposal to expand St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Tunbridge Wells, TN4 9XL by extending the school buildings within the confines of the existing school site to accommodate additional student numbers.

1. Why are we considering an expansion at St Gregory's Catholic School?

The Trust, the Governing Body of St Gregory's Catholic School and Kent County Council (KCC) would like to expand St Gregory's Catholic School to help provide more high quality school places for children locally. Three out of the four other Tunbridge Wells secondary schools are similarly expanding the number of students and their buildings to provide additional places.

Tunbridge Wells is experiencing a significant increase in the demand for secondary school places and there is an urgent need for additional secondary school provision within the town centre area of the Borough. KCC as the Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places are available and has asked St Gregory's to consider providing additional places by expanding the school from 6 to 7 forms of entry (from 180 to 210 Year 7 places each year). St Gregory's has already assisted in the provision of additional places by admitting up to 30 students over its Published Admission Number (PAN) of 180 in 2015, 2016 and 2017. St Gregory's will further assist the Local Authority by providing an additional 60 students over the planned admission number for 2018 and 2019, increasing from seven to eight forms of entry, and has increased its PAN from 180 to 210 permanently thereafter.

The future need for education provision for the County is detailed in the County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2017-21, which is a five year rolling plan that is updated annually. The Plan details the following for Tunbridge Wells:

	2016-17 capacity	2016-17 (Actual)	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2023-24 capacity
Year 7	1,550	133	113	-121	-155	-124	-144	-245	-183	1,550
Year 7-11	7,883	706	721	392	86	-155	-437	-795	-857	7,966

The forecast data outlined in the tables above highlights the increasing demand for secondary school places, which cannot be met locally without increasing provision within the town centre area. Highlighted in red is the shortfall in places as demand outstrips the number of places available in schools. However, it must be noted that the forecast data outlined above does not account for pressures arising from new housing developments under the emerging Local Plan.

Housing/Demand for School Places

The Tunbridge Wells Borough's Strategic Housing Market Assessment identified a need for 12,960 houses (648 per year) in Tunbridge Wells between 2013-2033. The emerging requirement is more than double its current target of 300 homes per year.

In the light of these likely developments, and irrespective of which specific option or combination of options is ultimately chosen, there will continue to be a rising demand for secondary school places in the town which will need to be met.

Why Expand St Gregory's Catholic School?

St Gregory's has been rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted since 2013, and has been ranked the second highest performing non-selective secondary school in Kent, according to GCSE examination results from 2017. St Gregory's is a highly popular school with a total of 846 applications for places in Year 7 for September 2018, of which 234 were first preferences against a PAN of 180.

St Gregory's is among the top schools nationally for progressing students beyond the academic expectations set at the end of primary school. Right across the ability range students are nurtured and challenged to the very best of their abilities with many outperforming their grammar school peers. Most students move on to the school's Sixth Form which offers a broad range of subjects and excellent support to enable students to progress into higher education, apprenticeships and employment.

Founded in 1966 and now part of the KCSP multi-academy Trust, St Gregory's is welcoming of all faiths and none with a strong family ethos based on Christian values which helps young people succeed, not just academically but as a well-balanced individual.

The school's mission is to provide a world class Catholic education through an outstanding and inclusive Christian approach. Students are empowered to be their very best, making a positive difference in society. The school's vision is that St Gregory's students make the world a better place.

The expansion of St Gregory's with an extension to the school buildings is necessary to meet the forecast increase in demand for secondary school places within the Borough. The Trust of which St Gregory's is part, together with KCC, carried out a public consultation on the proposal to expand the school's PAN permanently to 210, and it was agreed that the proposal should go ahead. As a result, the Trust is now consulting on the proposal to extend the school buildings to provide the additional accommodation required to enable the school to expand.

2. Are there plans to show how this expansion will be delivered on site?

KCC and the school are working together to establish how they can best provide additional accommodation and infrastructure to serve all students. Stakeholders, including local residents, will have an opportunity to view the plans, ask questions and make comments. This will enable the design team to take into consideration all views before developing final plans for approval.

The plans are in a formative stage with a large amount of detail yet to be decided but the school is keen to help meet the high local demand for places at St Gregory's now and in the future.

The first phase of the proposed development would be to create a new building on the existing playground with additional hard playground, social space and car parking. The new building would be two storeys, incorporating a sports hall, classrooms and laboratories. This proposal will not only provide the additional classroom space needed to accommodate more students but will also improve the school's science facilities and indoor PE space. It is anticipated this phase would start in January 2019.

The second phase of development is to demolish the School House near the Reynolds Lane pedestrian entrance and to create a larger dining hall space. It is anticipated this phase would start in Easter 2019 with completion of both phases by December 2019.

In the interim, in order to meet demand for places in 2018 and 2019 and before the new build is completed, we would be supported with temporary classrooms.

3. How will the school deal with any possible increased traffic and congestion?

Traffic and parking assessments will be carried out as part of the design and planning process. The school's travel plan will be re-developed to encourage families to reduce the number of car journeys by travelling to school by foot, cycle or public transport.

4. Will this adversely affect the school's operation during the building work?

All of the building works will be planned carefully and contractors will work with the school to ensure that works are scheduled to keep disruption to an absolute minimum. The building site will be a secure area to ensure the health and safety of the students, staff, parents and visitors to the school. There are a number of examples locally where major building projects have been carried out whilst the school and community continue to function safely with as minimal inconvenience as possible.

5. How will the expansion happen and how many children will there be at the school?

The expansion would happen incrementally, with 30 additional Year 7 places offered in each year, so that the school would grow over a period of five years until it reached a total of 1,080 Year 7-11 places. The table below shows the phased increase proposed for the overall capacity of the school, with 30 additional Year 7 places permanently available each year from 2019-20. As noted above, the school has already admitted up to 30 students over its PAN to assist KCC in to meet the high levels of demand for places at the school. This has been implemented successfully with minimal disruption.

Published Admission Number Planned Increase

Academic Year	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Total
2019-20	240	240	210	210	210	1,110
2020-21	210	240	240	210	210	1,110
2021-22	210	210	240	240	210	1,110
2022-23	210	210	210	240	240	1,110
2023-24	210	210	210	210	240	1,080

6. Will there be enough recreational space?

Part of the development will be to ensure that there is sufficient hard surface outdoor recreational space for the larger number of students. The building plans allow for additional hard surface outdoor space as well as additional indoor sports facilities. In addition, the school has recently installed a new 3G artificial grass pitch.

7. What additional funding will St Gregory's Catholic School receive?

The school will be entitled to Growth funding protection for the permanent expansion. The Year 7 intake will be protected on the additional places commissioned at the KS3 basic entitlement rate for the first three years of the expansion. Rising roll funding will then be payable for the remaining two years of the expansion for the incoming Year 7 cohort, funded at the KS3 basic entitlement rate.

For each additional classroom, resulting from the expansion, the sum of £6,000 will be allocated towards classroom set up costs.

8. The consultation process – indicative timeline

Date	Activity
Tuesday 24 April 2018 to Tuesday 22 May 2018 (midnight)	Public consultation period
Monday 14 May 2018 16.30-19.00	Public meeting – a 'drop-in' session to be held at St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 9XL.
8 June 2018	Outcome of the consultation to be reported.
June 2018	The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education will consider all comments and decide on changes to be made to the proposals and whether to continue with the proposals.
July – September 2018	If the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education decides to proceed with the proposals a public notice will be displayed at the school and available on the schools, KCSP and

	KCC websites. During this time comments and objections can be made about the proposal. The public notice will run for a period of four weeks.
September 2018	The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education considers all responses made and decides whether to confirm the decision.
September - October 2018	Statutory stakeholders have four weeks to appeal the decision
September 2019	Subject to no objections, the proposals are implemented.

9. How can you give your views?

There are a number of ways you can give your views on this proposal:

- By emailing: consultation@sgschool.org.uk
- By handing your response form into St Gregory's Reception
- By sending the response form by post to Ms J Almeida, Chair of Governors, c/o St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 9XL.
- A 'drop-in' information session is being held at the school on Monday 14 May from 16.30 to 19.00 where there will be the opportunity to ask questions and complete a response form.
- All responses must be received by midnight on Tuesday 22 May 2018.

10. What happens next?

The consultation period runs from Tuesday 24 April 2018 to Tuesday 22 May 2018. If you are intending to contact us with your views, please do this by midnight on 22 May 2018. The outcome of the consultation will be discussed at the Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee in May or June. We will also pass all your comments to the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education 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 2018, which will run for four weeks.

Whether the proposals for expansion go ahead or not will also be dependent on a decision of the Board of KCSP and the outcome of the statutory planning process. Subject to agreement from each party, a business case will be submitted to the Education and Skills Funding Agency for a final decision on the proposal to expand.

The additional accommodation required for the proposals will be subject to separate planning requirements which will include further public consultation.

J Almeida

Chair of Governors

ST GREGORY'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL - CONSULTATION RESPONSE FORM

Please complete and return this response form no later than **midnight on 22 May 2018**. Please return it:

- By email to: consultation@sgschool.org.uk
- By handing your response form into St Gregory's Reception
- By sending the response form by post to Ms J Almeida, Chair of Governors, c/o St Gregory's Catholic School, Reynolds Lane, Tunbridge Wells, Kent, TN4 9XL.

Do you agree with the proposal to expand St Gregory's Catholic School, by extending the school buildings to accommodate the increased numbers of students.

Yes

No

Undecided

Which of the following best describes you?

Parent/Carer

Member of Staff

Governor

Student

OR

Other interested party (please state interest).

Name Address.....

.....

COMMENTS BOX

Please provide your comments overleaf if necessary

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

St Gregory's Catholic School is a data controller under the Data Protection Act 1998 and will comply with the requirements of the Act at all times. KCC will ensure 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.

KCC has 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

You can view Kent County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2017 to 2021 at: http://www.kent.gov.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/66990/Kent-Commissioning-Planfor-Education-Provision-2017-21.pdf