

Meopham School

A Member of Swale Academies Trust

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Dear Parents/Carers,

As you will be aware there has been a considerable national debate recently regarding the expansion of Grammar School provision. The Secretary of State Justine Greening has stated government plans to:

"... look at how we can relax the rules on expanding selective schools, allow new ones to open and non-selective schools to become selective where there is a demand".

As you are aware, standards of attainment have risen significantly in recent years at Meopham and results for 2016 place the school as one of the top performing non selective schools in Kent.

Meopham School currently has a very high number of bright and able pupils who are already being challenged and pushed to perform at and, in many cases, exceed that which would be expected in a Grammar School setting. We also have a completely new and exciting set of buildings currently being built ready for occupation in 2017 with high quality specialist provision which will cater for the most able.

We understand from our knowledge of the local community that there is a need for additional Grammar School places in the area. We also believe many parents would welcome the opportunity to have a local mixed Grammar School provision as an alternative to the current single sex Grammar schools.

In light of this I am writing to seek your views on converting Meopham School to a mixed entry Grammar School for new entrants from September 2018.

Specifically we are seeking your views as to whether you would:

- a) support in principle converting Meopham to full mixed sex Grammar School status from September 2018 subject to the necessary legislation being enacted and further more detailed consultation to follow.*
- b) oppose the proposal.*

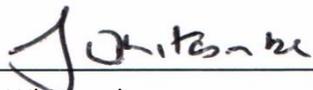
It is important to stress that, were this proposal to occur, those students currently in the school who have not passed the Kent selection test would continue to be taught and supported to achieve their full potential. However, from 2018 entrance would be via the Meopham Selection Test.

Swale Academies Trust recognises that this is a potentially contentious issue. However, it is important to stress that this proposal is at the very earliest stages of development and that we are actively interested in ensuring a thorough and balanced discussion over what is right for the school and the community prior to any decision being taken.

ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN A RURAL SETTING

Parents can respond to this proposal via this link <https://goo.gl/aj1jXl> . The closing date for responses to this initial consultation is 28th September 2016.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Whitcombe', written over a horizontal line.

Jon Whitcombe
Trust Principal
Swale Academies Trust