

Statutory proposal to close Hampton Community College (and replace it with an academy)

Full collation of consultation responses

Introduction

On Friday 11 September 2009, the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames published a notice and prescribed information of the proposal to close Hampton Community College on 31 August and replace it with an academy on 1 September 2010, with responses requested by a closing-date of Monday 26 October.

Simultaneously, but separately, Appleyards, the DCSF-appointed project management company, undertook wide-ranging consultation on the details of the academy proposal, as outlined in a brochure and on the www.richmondacademies.org website. In addition to the meetings listed below, Appleyards undertook consultation with pupils who attend the each of the schools listed.

Earlier, less formal consultation had previously taken place in the summer of 2008 and between March and June 2009 with a wide variety of local people.

Consultation methods

The notice was published outside the school entrances, in the Richmond and Twickenham Times and on the Council website. The prescribed information was also published on the Council's website and available in hard copy. Copies of a leaflet summarising the details and implications of the proposal were distributed to staff, governors and all parents of children at Hampton Community College, to parents of children at its formally linked and other feeder primary schools, to the five neighbouring local authorities and the four diocesan boards of education. The leaflet was also widely circulated in public libraries and other council buildings. The notice and the leaflet invited responses to be emailed or posted to Matthew Paul, Deputy Head of Commissioning, by 26 October.

Consultation meetings, for parents, staff and governors, were held jointly with Appleyards and Kunskapsskolan, as listed below. Part of each meeting was devoted to responses to the Council's proposal to close the school and the other part of each concerned responses to the details of the academy proposal.

Primary Headteachers' Forum	16 September
School Admissions Forum	16 September
Forge Lane Primary (Hounslow)	17 September
Edgar Road Support Group	22 September
Hampton Junior	24 September
Hampton Community College	28 September
Hampton Hill Junior	29 September
Secondary Headteachers' Forum	30 September
Stanley Junior	5 October
Oriel Primary (Hounslow)	6 October
Buckingham Primary	7 October
Governors' Voice	13 October

The total attendance at those meetings was 293. At each junior school listed, parents, staff and governors of its attached infant school were also invited to attend. Members of the public with no direct connection to any of the schools concerned were invited to attend any of the meetings at the schools. At each school listed, Appleyards undertook separate consultation on the academy proposals with pupils. In total, 26 separate meetings were held to discuss the Hampton Academy proposals, culminating in a meeting of the HCC Governing Body meeting on 22 October, at which the Governors voted in favour of closing the school and replacing it with a Kunskapsskolan-sponsored academy.

Number and types of respondents to the Council's consultation

45 responses were received, which can be broken down by type of respondent, as follows:

▪ Local councillors	16
▪ Diocesan boards of education	1
▪ HCC Governing Body	1
▪ Other schools' governing bodies	1
▪ HCC Governors	2
▪ Ex-Chair of governors at HCC	1
▪ Parents of children at HCC and/or its linked/feeder schools	13
▪ Teachers at HCC	1
▪ Governors of linked/feeder schools	1
▪ Other residents*	8
▪ Local group	1

* I.e. those who could not be identified within any of the other categories.

Responses are given below:

Type of respondent	Comments
Local Councillor	<p>In accordance with your Statutory Notice to close Hampton Community College, I wish to register my formal objection for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The closure of Hampton Community College will mean that there is no choice for parents in the whole of the Hampton and Whitton area of Twickenham, except for schools run by Kunskapsskolan. 2. Kunskapsskolan has no experience of the English National Curriculum, or the English Examination system. 3. Their method of education is progressive with much reduced classroom teaching and pupil interaction. Good classroom teaching is the essential component of good secondary education. 4. Only three or four subjects are to be taught as subjects. The remaining subjects are to be taught as “themes”. 5. Kunskapsskolan schools in Sweden are small, catering for only three or four hundred pupils compared with Hampton Community College which will be catering for over one thousand pupils. 6. There is no guarantee that funding is available for the necessary rebuilding required to accommodate Kunskapsskolan unique style of education.
Local Councillor	<p>In accordance with your Statutory Notice to close Hampton Community College, I wish to register my formal objection for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. There is no evidence that the residents of my Ward support this proposal, indeed the Governors of Buckingham School, in the Ward, have put on record their opposition to handing over HCC to Kunskapsskolan. 2. There is support for HCC in the local community. 3. The preferred sponsor has no experience of English education or of anything even vaguely comparable to our examination system. 4. The style of education proposed e.g. the small amount of classroom teaching, the large amount of private study, which means that students would not benefit from social and educational interaction, the teaching of so many subjects by “themes” which are not an adequate preparation for GCSE, the philosophy of the sponsor, are all approaches to which I object. 5. As the sponsor has indicated that they cannot deliver their style of education in the existing buildings there will be a minimum of five years of disruption for students which will prejudice their education. 6. The high degree of uncertainty resulting from the present state of the public finances means that there cannot be any categorical guarantee that money will be available for the necessary re-build, thus throwing

	7. Parents in my Ward who object to the style of education offered by the sponsor will have no realistic alternative as the proposal equally is to close Whitton School and to hand it over to Kunskapsskolan. <i>This denial of choice is totally unacceptable.</i>
Local Councillor	I am opposed to its closure and deplore the failure to include a 6th form in its replacement.
Local Councillor	I wish to register my objection to the closure of Hampton Community College and the lack of any future 6th Form.
Local Councillor	I am opposed to the closure of Hampton Community College and, in particular, the fact that there will be no sixth form if Kunskapsskolan take over the running of the school.
Local Councillor	I would like to register my opposition to the closure of Hampton Community College. I have three principal objections: - by giving away two schools in the area to Kunskapsskolan, I don't believe parents are being given enough choice in the area - there is opposition among parents, and I don't think there has been a proper consultation to verify the scale of the opposition and the wishes of parents for the school - I believe strongly that a sixth form should be part of the plans
Local Councillor	I am strongly opposed to the closure of Hampton Community College as I believe this will lead to a reduction in choice for the local community.
Local Councillor	I would like to object to the closure of [Hampton Community College] because I believe that it will limit my choice of schools available for my child to go to.
Local Councillor	I am opposed to the closure of HCC on the grounds of lack of choice for parents, lack of 6 th form which parents have asked for, lack of the Swedes' knowledge of our curriculum and no guarantee that funds will emerge to cover building costs
Local Councillor	I wish to express my opinion against the closure of Hampton Community College. In today's educational system I think it is really important to have a Sixth Form. Also, it does not seem democratic that parents in the Hampton and Whitton areas will not have a choice of schools except those operated by Kunskapsskolan, which is Swedish based. Surely the Swedish based education system is completely at odds with the English culture? Can we be assured that Kunskapsskolan will deliver the promised improved outcomes? How can we be sure?
Local Councillor	I am most unhappy at the type of consultation employed which I feel has been totally inadequate from start to finish. This is too important an issue to be rushed through and parents need to examine all the alternatives. As a class teacher of many years I know that the most important factor in the quality of education is the commitment and expertise of the teachers. I argue that a new building and an imported type of schooling will make a substantial amount of difference. Indeed many inner city schools have been turned round by a charismatic and focussed group of teachers in the same buildings. Much has been made of the fact that we will lose the money to rebuild the school if we do not go along with this plan. New buildings in this case are an irrelevancy as the present building is fit for purpose. What are needed to turn the school round are the best

	<p>teachers to support Dr Demont. If the Council ensures that this happens it will cost a fraction of the price of a new building. Finally we have a chance to introduce a sixth form at HCC which is what the majority of parents want. Why do we not listen to parents? The advantages of following on your education with teachers who know your strengths and weaknesses are obvious. Younger children in the school are not deprived of studious role models as they grow up. At a time when the behaviour of teenage children is the subject of much hand-ringing, it seems strange to me that the move from sixth forms to sixth form colleges has not been identified as one of the reasons for poor behaviour in the 11-15 year group. I am sure it is mutually advantageous for both 11-15 and 16-17 year olds to be educated together.</p>
Local Councillor	<p>Please take this email as an indication of my support for the closure of the two schools, HCC and Whitton, and their transmogrification into Academies. While my preference would have been to carry on supporting comprehensive education I acknowledge the need for capital investment in these schools, and in Shene too for that matter, and that the only way that this can be achieved is to accede to the Government's Academies programme. Having said that, I welcome wholeheartedly Kunskapsskolan sponsorship of the two Academies. I think that their brand of personalised learning will be extremely beneficial to the pupils, and will improve educational standards while providing our children with a renewed interest in learning. This can't be understated. A major problem with the transition from secondary to tertiary and university education is the difficulty that pupils have in coming to terms with doing the work unsupervised, and I have great hopes that Kunskapsskolan's approach will pay dividends in this respect.</p>
Local Councillor	<p>Here is my official response to the consultation on the closure of HCC and Whitton Secondary Schools. I think that is a well thought out idea and I approve of the closure of the two schools and the re-opening of them as Academies. The most important thing is that it will raise standards in the schools by giving access to a top Swedish education provider. What many residents have told me is that they wish to have a choice of secondary education locally that will help their children achieve good results. It will also bring much needed capital investment to HCC and Whitton.</p>
Local Councillor	<p>After speaking to a number of constituents and attending assorted meetings re the proposed Academy, I would like to support the formal closure of HCC so that it can be reinvigorated as an academy.</p>
Local Councillor	<p>In my dual roles of ward councillor for Hampton and governor for Hampton Community College I wish to express my view that HCC should be closed and re-opened as a Kunskapsskolan Academy. I have been impressed with Kunskapsskolan throughout the consultation process and believe that this academy will add value to the education of young people in Hampton.</p>
Local Councillor	<p>This email is to confirm that I support the proposal. During the many years I have spent as a governor of the various Hampton feeder schools, it has been my wish and that of the governing bodies and local residents, to see the results and value added performance of Rectory school and then latterly Hampton Community College, improve. Even with the efforts of many talented people this has proven very difficult to accomplish. I welcome this innovative approach and wish it success.</p>
Archdiocese of Southwark Commission for	<p>We will not be making any objections to these proposals and wish you well with them.</p>

Schools and Colleges	
HCC Governing Body	<p>I am writing to confirm the response of the Governors of Hampton Community College following the formal consultation process to close Hampton Community College at the end of August 2010 and for it to re-open as a Kunskapsskolan Academy on 1st September 2010. The decision of the Governors is that by a majority decision they support the closure of the College and its re-opening as an Academy. All Governors welcomed the appointment of Dr Sue Demont as the Principal Designate.</p> <p>Issues raised during the meeting:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The Governors were unhappy about making a decision regarding the future of the College without having the benefit of any building plans or written proposals related to the Building Programme; 2) Governors were concerned about the security of the funding for the proposed Academy; 3) The impact of the building programme on the provision of sport; 4) Questions were raised regarding the three house system and the effect on teaching; 5) Queries related to Tutor Time, Thematics for KS3 and Targets were raised; 6) It was felt that there was insufficient parent and community representation for the proposed Hampton Academy governing body. Also, the proposed model did not take into account the significant amount of valuable knowledge and expertise within the current governing body of Hampton Community College, which would be lost upon closure of the College.
Governing Body of a linked primary school	<p>HHJS relies on the good reputation of HCC for its intake and retention of pupils and therefore would be adversely affected if the conversion of HCC to an academy were not seen by local parents as a success from day 1. We would like to see the following commitments made in the Feasibility stage and subsequent contracts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continuation of improvement to academic results with effective incentives and measures to address any drop in performance. ▪ Continuation of development in HCC's excellence in art and drama. <p>HHJS GB supports the appointment of Dr Sue Demont as the Head of the new academy in order that she can continue with her work to improve results. Communication plans include parents of children of all local at primary schools. This would include details of what changes are being introduced and when, as we understand that the new approach and full model will be introduced gradually. Although it seems sensible to introduce change gradually to get basics right, this could be confusing for prospective parents who will want to know how things stand when their children join. It is unclear how reliant the success of the Academy will be on</p>

	reconstruction of the buildings and whether there is firm the commitment to fund this. We would welcome clarification on reconstruction requirements in the development of the Feasibility and explanation of what the impact would be if funding were delayed. The Governing Body is concerned that the retention of the link system between primary and secondary schools reduces parental choice in our particular part of the borough. Parents will effectively have no choice but to send their child to an Academy regardless of their wishes in this regard.
HCC Governor	I write to oppose the proposal to close Hampton Community College and re-open it as a Kunskapsskolan Academy. HCC has made big improvements over the last two years under Dr Demont's leadership - indeed this is acknowledged in the Kunskapsskolan consultation brochure - and I have strong reservations regarding Kunskapsskolan's ability to make further improvements that Dr Demont and her staff would not achieve on their own. Firstly, the Kunskapsskolan system of independent learning is an alien concept to the English education system which is based on classroom teaching and significant pupil interaction. I am unconvinced that Kunskapsskolan will be able to introduce their system with positive effect at HCC. Secondly, Kunskapsskolan has no experience of the English education system. They operate a thematic approach to the 11-16 curriculum and intend to adopt this with KS3. However, due to the English examination system, this approach will not work at KS4 and so, at a crucial time, pupils will be required to make the transition from a flexible, informal way of learning to a more structured, rigorous approach in order to meet the requirements of the English examination system. Thirdly, integral to the Kunskapsskolan system is that every pupil has a personal tutor with whom they meet on a one-to-one basis every a week. Yet Kunskapsskolan intend to phase in this part of their system, with weekly meetings only for Year 7. Other years will receive only "regular" meetings; "regular" is undefined. In addition, Kunskapsskolan have failed to explain how they will prepare teachers to ensure that these meetings are used effectively to contribute to a pupil's overall achievement. Finally, the Governing Body at HCC has traditionally made a significant contribution to the College. It has also ensured that HCC is a "community" school. However, under Kunskapsskolan, community representation on the Governing Body will be lost; indeed even parent representation is reduced to just one. I believe this will be detrimental to the school in the future. I should be grateful for the above to be taken into consideration regarding the proposal to discontinue Hampton Community College.
HCC Governor	I am writing to object to the above proposal to close Hampton Community College for the following reasons: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I do not consider that there was sufficient evidence or reasons given to choose Hampton Community College as suitable for turning into an academy. The college had been showing consistent improvement under the current leadership of Dr Demont & the governing body, after a period of decline under the previous leadership. Stability had been restored, recruitment of well qualified teaching staff was being successful and results were starting to improve. The reputation of the school was growing in the community and the intake was beginning to expand. 2. The proposal for an academy served to introduce a period of uncertainty, when clarity was needed. The process undertaken by the local authority was poorly executed and badly communicated, compounding the uncertainty. 3. The choosing of an untried and untested sponsor in the English education system likewise caused much

4. The proposals for Kunskapsskolan to introduce their model of education into the English system were not sufficiently thought through. They have no experience in delivering an exam based system in this country and their lack of expertise has become evident by the considerable input they have required from the current senior leadership team and questioning by the governing body. This has led to the sponsors having to make significant changes in their proposals, which does not inspire confidence in their ability to implement their proposals and take the college forward further.
5. The requirement of the sponsors for so much input from the college and the governors has been a drain on all concerned and as a governor I have been concerned about its potential negative impact on the college's current performance. The appointment of Dr Demont as head of the potential academy was a very astute move by the sponsors as she has built up good support within the community, they are confident in her. However the reverse side of this is taking some of her focus away from the college as it currently functions, and this may have a negative impact on performance.
6. Many of the proposals by the sponsor are in effect already happening in the college, the personalisation of the curriculum, the themed approach to learning in Key Stage 3, for example. In addition Hampton Community College excels in areas that are poorer in Sweden, such as our Performing Arts specialism and ICT expertise.
7. The proposals from the sponsor do obviously contain ideas that are interesting and worth considering, including the development of more individual tutor periods. However these are ideas that can be developed by the college as it moves forward. I am also concerned that the timetable is for a shorter college day.
8. The evidence has not been provided by the sponsor that they are capable of raising standards and that they have the ability to take over the college and implement a new system. The current leadership have proof of their ability to raise standards and this is being reflected in the college's improving results and rising intake. One has to ask the question "why take the risk with these young people's education?"
9. The current intake and those arriving over the next few years are going to be subjected to an experiment during their school career that you cannot guarantee will work. They only have one chance at their education and we have a responsibility to make sure they get the best opportunity for success.
10. The promise of extra resources primarily in the form of new buildings is attractive but a re-build is not essential for the college to carry on with the improvement that is already underway. As is widely agreed a school is primarily about the people in it and those in place now are doing a good job.
11. The academy will change the governance arrangements for Hampton Community College, taking away real parent, staff and community representation, and this will become very token. A public resource is no longer answerable to its community and is delivered into the hands of an unaccountable organisation. The argument that the local authority has representation on the governing body is not good enough, and this is not substantial. The loss of the expertise of a varied and skilful governing body will be significant, as its benefits to the college have been considerable over the last 5 years. This also creates a situation whereby this school and its community will have unequal rights compared to the other schools still under local authority control.

Ex-Chair of Governors of HCC	As a former Chairman of Governors at HCC I write to register my objection to the Council's proposal to close our community school and hand it over to a Swedish company with no experience of English education.
Parent of a child at a linked school	I have always felt that the Kunskapsskolan way of teaching/learning is dynamic and refreshing. It's something the staff at HCC as professional educators should be able to take forward and with Sue Demont as Head I feel we have the best possible chance of making it work in conjunction with the Trust that will be set up to run the school. I've been to several meetings now and heard what has been said by both sides. Every time I hear Steve Bolingbroke speak about teaching/learning I can only feel positive. I am at the stage now where I feel I have to move on from constantly questioning whether it will work, how it will work and feeling suspicious about Kunskapsskolan's involvement. I am now placing my trust in Steve, the LA and Sue Demont to make it work for my child. I do have misgivings about the re-build but was reassured at the HJS meeting when Steve said nothing will be done in a hurry. I just hope my child, being Year 8 when this all kicks off, actually gets some of the benefit of the academy style teaching/learning. One concern is the approach which focuses on Y7 and Y11 could leave the others slightly 'at sea'. Again, it's a matter of trust in the school doing it right. I accept it's not going to be perfect - nothing is. However I am handing over trust in all involved to get it as right as they possibly can. My daughter only has one chance to achieve a reasonable secondary education. She's currently doing her best in the current school and from what I've seen the collective school are doing theirs. So that's it. I don't feel there are grounds to oppose the plans to turn HCC into Hampton Academy. Yes the school is improving however I feel the overall improvement to the school through these plans will accelerate and build on this and can only be a good thing. Go, Hampton Academy, go!
Parent of a child at HCC	I should point out straight away that I am fully supportive and feel that the proposal to make HCC an academy is an excellent move. Indeed parents, teachers and pupils should see this opportunity as a fantastic chance to move the school into a new era of outstanding performance and fulfilment for the children and the school as a whole. Last night's meeting [at HCC on 28 September] was, in my opinion, far more positive towards the proposal than other meetings I have attended previously and without doubt the buy-in from Sue Demont has been warmly welcomed by many. Without her I feel sentiment would have remained lukewarm, so this is a real turning point in the process. I also feel the canvassing of students' opinion has been sensible as they are the ones that will benefit most from the changes. Currently, I have a child in year 8 at HCC and another that will start primary school next year. My eldest will be ready to leave Hampton Academy just as my youngest starts and it is crucial to me that the both receive solid educations. As Richmond is so far down the table as far as new school investment is concerned, the academy plan gives Hampton a once in a lifetime chance of further raising standards towards the goal of making it a highly performing school.
Parent of children at HCC	I have two sons at HCC, one in Year 11 the other in Year 7. My husband and I have both been very happy with the education our elder son has received at HCC, he is happy and doing well academically. We have seen many positive changes and developments during that time due to the management of Dr Demont. Consequently, my initial reaction to the academy proposal was anger and anxiety. I continue to have reservations although the gradual introduction of Kunskapsskolan's ideas will probably mean that my younger

	<p>son will not experience the full impact of the changes until his final year at the school. It is sensible, and inevitable given the required building programme, that the transition will take several years but early in the process Malcolm Eady claimed that his reason for recommending the academy was that he was not prepared to wait for years for HCC to improve to an acceptable level. I queried at the time how he thought Kunskapsskolan could make such improvements any more quickly, with no satisfactory response. The appointment of Dr Demont as Principal Designate was a shrewd decision as much of the feeling against the academy was centred around her assumed removal as Principal. It has certainly reassured us that should the academy be approved we can have confidence that changes will be implemented in a realistic and sensible manner. I should also say that Steve Bolingbroke has been consistently impressive in his presentations and has always been straightforward and honest in his answers. It was pleasing to see at the meeting at HCC in September how much more detailed the proposal now is, previously we were all working in ignorance on many issues. It is difficult to give you my definitive view on this proposal. I realise that it's the only way for HCC to get an injection of funds but as that is limited to capital expenditure I'm not sure of its long term benefit. I would be happy for HCC to carry on as it is, making the gradual improvements that we have been seeing, but can see that under Dr Demont's leadership Kunskapsskolan's ideas may make a positive difference to the way the local community perceives the school. Hampton and Hampton Hill need a secondary school in which all parents can have confidence, if Hampton Academy can become that school it is probably worth taking the chance.</p>
<p>Parent of children at HCC</p>	<p>I am a parent of two children who are both students at HCC. I have a daughter in Year 11 and a son in Year 9. I am writing to say that I am in favour of the Academy and believe it will offer an excellent way forward for HCC. However, I would like to stress the importance of building on the good practice, expertise, work and progress already made at the school. The views of Dr Demont and her leadership team should be respected and incorporated into the Kunskapsskolan vision. In my view the most important focus must be to raise academic standards and to improve GCSE results. Outstanding teaching and learning is what we should be aiming for and not state of the art buildings. My other concerns are that the transition should be well planned and that any building work is organised to minimise disruption to current students.</p>
<p>Parent of children at HCC</p>	<p>I am opposed to the closure of HCC on 31 August 2010 and it reopening on 1 September 2010 as an academy. I feel that the reason why Richmond Council has gone down this route is so that it can get its hand on a large amount of capital funding and not because it believes that it is in the best interest of the students. Kunskapsskolan (KS) have never been responsible for a school in the UK and, as such, are untested. The term 'guinea pigs' has come up many times in the course of this process and I still believe that the education of many students over many years could be adversely affected by this 'experiment'. HCC is an improving school and, as Mr Whitfield said at the meeting in April, the school is not failing and we do have a CHOICE. I believe that the Council should have been showing more support to HCC over recent years. Under Dr Demont's leadership the school has made great improvements and various changes, resulting in improved results and Ofsted reports. She has done an amazing job to continue to run the school as 'business as usual'. She and her staff should be congratulated for not letting the academy process detract from the most important issue, the teaching and learning of the pupils in the school. I believe that many of the changes, such as independent learning, are already being implemented at HCC and that it is unnecessary to rebuild a vast amount of the building just so</p>

	<p>that the KS model can be introduced. I am not convinced that the cost of extra staff time needed for the tutorials and small group sessions can be accommodated within the tight revenue budget. It was suggested at the September meeting at HCC that extra staff would be needed - how can this be afforded when schools already have great difficulty managing a tight budget? I believe that the 15 minute weekly tutorial will take up such a lot of teaching time, not only the tutorial itself but the inputting of the information on the system so that it can be accessed by parents. It was suggested that by having a tutor the need to see each subject teacher would become unnecessary - how can the tutor know how each individual pupil is performing in each subject and be able to set meaningful targets for subjects that they themselves do not teach? As a parent I would still want to have an annual meeting with all the subject teachers. The rebuilding programme cannot avoid disrupting the teaching of many students over a period which is estimated to take 18 months (likely to coincide with my younger daughter's GCSE years (10 & 11)) but could turn out to be longer especially as it has to be accommodated on such a small site. I am worried that some teaching will be compromised if specialist areas are rebuilt (e.g. technology) or if the astroturf is used for portacabins (as has been rumoured). The building design would be very unique for the KS teaching requirements and could become a useless asset if the new arrangements failed. I am still unsure what the timetable would look like and I understand that it would change from week to week. I feel that pupils find the regularity of a set timetable reassuring and communicating changes with pupils will prove rather difficult. Communication, in my experience, is a big problem and a failing in many organisations, not only schools. The suggestion that lecture style teaching would be introduced for large groups of students makes me worry about discipline. Teachers have enough trouble keeping 30 children engaged in a standard lesson. There is a significant difference between university lectures of large groups of students and the teaching of students in a secondary school - that is, that the university students all want to learn and have the choice whether they attend or not, secondary pupils do not. Having a child currently in Year 10 would mean that I would need to buy new uniform for her for just over 2 terms. Not only would this be a waste of money but the old uniform would become redundant which is environmentally unsound. Rebranding of any institution has been shown to be incredibly expensive (both financially and environmentally). I am not happy about the level of involvement of the parents and community by replacing the current governing body (which comprises a good balance and number of governors in several areas - parent, staff, LEA and co-opted / community governors) with an Academy Council which is a KS dominated body. HCC is a community school and should remain so.</p>
<p>Parent of a child at HCC</p>	<p>Having closely followed (and attended) the whole process, I have, like many people, I suspect, very mixed views. Like many I know, I was very sceptical about the reasons for proposing academy status; I understood the Council's great difficulties financing local schools, but did not feel this was a good enough reason to cause such upheaval on a school that was improving continually - especially replacing it with such a massively different system, untried in this country. Some of my concerns have been allayed, at least to a degree, by the willingness KS has shown to adapt rather than impose their educational model, so that the clear aim on all sides now appears to be to combine the best of what they can offer that would be appropriate in our setting to what already works well at HCC. A huge factor in restoring confidence, certainly for existing parents, is of course Dr Demont's appointment as Principal Designate, not least because of her frank admission that she had been won round from initial opposition to the idea - and the knowledge that she continues to 'argue' and debate</p>

	<p>hard over the detailed outworking of the proposal. Thus I am happy to see that the school would remain within the Richmond 'family' of schools and develop existing links, e.g. with RUTC and other local schools etc, as well as retaining the current admissions policy. With the demise of the Governing Body in its present form, I would want to be sure that parents would have an equivalent opportunity to raise any concerns in an EFFECTIVE MANNER - under the academy system, I am not clear whether or not this is the case. I credit KS with goodwill in this respect; would they be willing to go further than they would be statutorily required to? I welcome the idea of greater parent involvement in supporting each child's learning. The theory of treating all children individually and personal timetabling, trying to develop them into 'independent learners' and so on, sounds very attractive in theory. I do have considerable qualms about how it would actually work - and I simply cannot see how 15 minutes a week with one tutor covering the whole range of subjects, could possibly be effective, but what can I say? I'm told it will, so I guess it will have to be a case of 'the proof of the pudding is in the eating'. I would obviously really want it to work. If it doesn't, my son's GCSEs will be at stake, as he will be in the first year to do his GCSEs under the new steps system. For all the children in the first few years, there is no doubt that they will be in at the teething trouble period, while staff and students adapt to new ways of working. Long term, the system may turn out to be a great improvement - and I'm happy to admit, indeed hope, that they will benefit too, but the fact is that no-one can know for sure. It is inevitable that the Council, KS and HCC will all be looking long-term; I can't blame them for that, but we do not have that luxury and I can only urge in the strongest possible terms that everyone involved keep that in mind. I know they all say the right things in this regard, but...! I am concerned about the reduction in TEACHING, if I have understood right. The whole steps programme sounds pretty mechanical. Is there enough room for good, inspirational teaching? Not that the current model of teaching in large classes is by any means always effective, especially where there is not a culture of wanting to learn! As the parent of a child now in Y8, I am also deeply concerned about the impact of the REBUILDING, from which my child will not benefit at all, and which can only be a hindrance to him. Nobody has been able to explain to me how this can be satisfactorily carried out on such a tiny site. However sceptical I am about the practical outworkings of the proposals, I would like to thank those involved for all the efforts to communicate with us as parents and as a community, for the willingness to adapt and respond to concerns. 18 months ago, I started off cautiously excited, which rapidly turned into alarm and deep concern, which has gradually shifted till I now feel that I am at least cautiously hopeful (probably more for the long term than for ourselves), and this is in no small part due to the attitude of goodwill and desire to get it right which I perceive. In summary, then, I suppose I am neither greatly in favour of the Academy - for the short-term reasons which will affect my own son - and if it did not go ahead, then there is no reason why many of the good things KS could apparently bring could not be incorporated into what HCC is already doing (and which, we gather, are increasingly being adopted anyway within the UK). Neither am I strongly opposed to the Academy, since I can see the POTENTIAL (if not guaranteed) benefits. I would even be strongly in favour if it were possible to allay all my concerns, but I realise it is not.</p>
Parent of children at HCC	<p>I am a parent and have two children currently at HCC, one in year 8 and one in year 10. Despite all the information that has been distributed I have not seen anything that persuades me that this change is a good idea. If a more conventional teaching were proposed for the Academy, this might be different, but even then it would seem that the only reason for the change of status is the opportunity to gain extra money, not for any</p>

	<p>actual educational benefits. The whole process has been rushed and the community have been pushed into change without any real consultation until now, when an awful lot of money and time have already been spent... I would argue that if the Kunskapsskolan teaching method is supposedly so good, then why are they not setting up a private school and getting students to pay to go to it, rather than experimenting on our children, where we, and our community in Hampton, will have no choice about it. I also have reservations about this teaching, and how it could relate to subjects at GCSE and cannot see how it could prepare our children properly for A-levels and further education. I think students benefit from being taught in classes and am not sure how either larger groups, with more discipline issues, or individual learning could be made to work for this age group. I would also prefer the school to stay completely in the control of the local authority, and thus, to a certain extent, the local community, rather than being given away to a commercial organisation. As a parent I have visited the school fairly often and have seen no evidence of a need for any major building remodelling - this would seem to be a disruption that is completely unnecessary. I would also like to add that I think that the consultation with the local community on this has been poor. There was an initial 'consultation' some time ago which consisted of one question which could really only be answered in one way. There was no consultation on the choice of sponsor, which I would say is the main bone of contention, and then this rather strangely organised consultation where a questionnaire is given out that is not really a consultation on the proposal to become an academy, but is about what might happen if it does become an academy, then just an e-mail address for the 'real' consultation...</p>
<p>Parent of children at HCC and a linked primary school</p>	<p>I am wholly against the idea of changing HCC. I have one son already at HCC who is in year 10 and another son who is in year 5 at Buckingham Primary School who I had every intention of sending to HCC. I am now finding myself reconsidering sending my youngest son to HCC if it changes to an academy. I have attended many meetings regarding the proposal and have yet to be convinced that this is in the best interests of the pupils who already attend the school and indeed those that are due to become students there in the future. My eldest son has a statement of special educational needs and is doing really well at HCC and I have been told that the school has every expectation that he will get at least 5 good grade GCSEs. We are told that the school is somehow failing or underachieving but it doesn't seem to have failed my son or in fact the many children that have just received their GCSE results. I have watched programmes on the academies already in place and I must say I still don't find any reason to be happy that this may happen to HCC. On a recent programme hosted by Jonathan Dimbleby, it was stated that academies are only put in place when a school is failing and as this isn't the case at HCC I cannot see any reason for the school to change. We have an excellent headteacher in Dr Demont, who has fought extremely hard to change people's perceptions of the school and has done a wonderful job. Why fix something when it isn't broken? There are many reasons I and many others are against this idea, some of which I will list. HCC has an outstanding link with the local community and local primary schools. It is an improving school. It is the only local secondary school, so if it is changed to an academy parental choice will be taken from us. It has improving exam results. There are many factors why myself and others are not happy, such as the fact that if the school is changed and we don't want to send our children to this academy what other choice do we have as there isn't another secondary school in the borough that is within distance for the local children to attend? The nearest other school is out of the borough so therefore has no link with the local primary schools so the children are unlikely to get into it. We didn't make this choice; it has been pushed upon us. A lot of the academies that are already in place are now failing, with one going to special</p>

	<p>measures within 5 months of opening as an academy. By their own admission Kunskapsskolan didn't get it right in the first 2 years in Sweden and have only been in place for 6 years – we don't want our children to be guinea pigs. What happens to our children if this doesn't work? We can't take them out of the school and put them in a different one as there isn't one! Kunskapsskolan urge independent learning and say this works in Sweden, but their children are taught to be independent as soon as they start school; ours aren't and would find this difficult at age 11. It has also been stated that some of the lessons would enable children to study in small groups of 3 or 4 in small unsupervised classrooms - most children with the best will in the world when left alone are not going to settle down and produce work! My youngest son is considered to be very bright but he does still need to be pushed or nudged in the right direction to get all his work done, so left alone to study with a couple of like minded children should be interesting! These are just some of the reasons I am against this proposal, there are many more, and I am seriously thinking of home-schooling my youngest son as I really do not consider this academy to be the best way forward for our children and I know I am not alone in this.</p>
<p>Parent of a child at HCC and a child at a linked school</p>	<p>I am writing to let you know that as a council tax payer and a parent of a current year 9 and year 5 child I am not in favour of the Kunskapsskolan Academy proposed for Hampton Community College. I have attended 3 of the consultation meetings and much as I was in favour of some of the ideals do not consider this kind of schooling the best for children in the area. I have many concerns, some of which were addressed at the meetings but my overall opinion has not changed. Below are issues that I feel still need to be addressed before any Academy plan is considered. If you look to Kingston who still runs a very successful Grammar School education system why can't this borough follow suit? Many Richmond parents who live close to the borders would rather opt for a bus ride to Kingston than send their child to a Richmond school! What choice as a parent do we actually have? None, there is no change whatever we think of HCC or an Academy we still (if we live near the school) do not have a choice. As a council tax payer I appear to have no choice about my child's education other than to apply out of borough. What the council needs to do is ask itself why Teddington, Waldergrave and Orleans are continuously over subscribed and look to these 3 schools as to what is different between them and HCC/ Whitton and apply the changes necessary, not 'give up' by 'offloading' the problem to Kunskapsskolan. We only have one choice of Academy style education – Kunskapsskolan – as no other alternative was offered. One of Kunskapsskolan methods of teaching is to have children working together in groups by themselves. How the idea of unsupervised learning could ever work in a secondary school defies belief; many children who come to HCC need to be led in the right direction, supervised constantly. I have heard of an instance of year 7s where the teacher left the room for a couple of minutes and a fight broke out. Although this may seem quite extreme it does happen. A French visitor to the school was very surprised at the lack of discipline in class and how little respect the children had for the teachers.</p>
<p>Parents of children at HCC</p>	<p>Since the process began we have not become convinced of the value of the idea of Academies in general. The principle of course, has been debated at length but it has not been demonstrated that, the advantages and disadvantages of Kunskapsskolan aside, the introduction of any Academies into the borough will not entail some considerable risk. What guarantee is there, for example, of the long term future of an Academy? Kunskapsskolan's plans as outlined in the most recent consultation document propose fairly radical alterations to the school buildings in the near future. If, for whatever reason, Kunskapsskolan's charitable trust decided it</p>

	<p>no longer wished to operate the Hampton Academy or was unable to do so the school would be left without clear direction. Even if there is some provision for either the local authority or the DCSF intervening following such an event, an Academy closing down will inevitably be extremely disruptive. We believe parents would appreciate an assurance that Kunskapsskolan will not be able to simply abandon the school, and that if such an assurance cannot be given, may be legitimately concerned. Moving from Academies in general to Kunskapsskolan's proposals, and specifically the 'transition to a full personalised learning approach', we are concerned about the effect on current students. Whilst we recognise the need to gradually phase in the new model, it appears that students currently in the college will benefit very little if at all but may well suffer. According to the transition proposed, the first year to have the "full Kunskapsskolan type experience" from Year 7 to Year 11 is the current Year 3. In the meantime, older students – in particular those currently at HCC – will apparently see little change to their education but will have to cope with members of staff inevitably spending some of their time managing the transition and training for their new responsibilities rather than teaching and disruptive rebuilding. To put it indelicately, it's a lot of children to potentially suffer for a radical change which may or may not work. You were asked at the consultation meeting on 28th September about the problem of there being no choice of secondary schools in Hampton. We hope very much, of course, that the Academy is such a success that all Hampton parents wish their children to attend it. But however successful the Academy is (and particularly if it is not successful) some parents will decide this approach to personalised learning will not suit their child. With Whitton School undergoing the same reforms as HCC, and Teddington and Waldegrave being already oversubscribed, these children will effectively be forced into an Academy which their parents have judged will not suit them. We noted with concern that, although the consultation officially began on the 11th September, the leaflet explaining the process was not received by HCC parents until the 25th September. It was this leaflet that made clear the two responses required – filling in the KS questionnaire and making views on the closure of HCC to the Local Authority. Thus, parents had a period in which to respond two weeks shorter than that promised. If a strict deadline is going to be imposed on responses, then the proposals and the process of consultation should really have been with parents by the 11th at the latest, so that they have as much time as possible to consider them. [Editor's note: The Council's consultation leaflets were sent to HCC for the 11 September and should have been disseminated at that point. However, the Council's consultation was prominently publicised in the Richmond and Twickenham Times and on the Council and HCC websites on 11 September, and was also referred to in the academy brochures which the school issued to parents on that same date. The leaflets were also displayed in local libraries and Council buildings on that date.]</p>
<p>Parents of children at HCC</p>	<p>We have 2 children at HCC and are happy with the education that they currently receive there; we are not convinced that Hampton Academy will be able to improve on this. We understand why the Council is recommending that HCC should become an academy: mainly for financial reasons. If it is a financial necessity to make HCC an academy, then Kunskapsskolan seem to be a reasonable choice of sponsor.</p>
<p>Parents of a child at HCC</p>	<p>I have attended many meetings and have to say that the decrease in numbers of people attending the recent meetings has been very disappointing. The general consensus appears to be that this is a "Done Deal"; so many people have just given up. I do feel that the voices of opposition to this change do seem to be the same core group, I being one, as we really do feel passionate about what happens to our college and our children's</p>

	<p>futures. I would like to think that it is not a done deal because that would mean we have all been lied to and deceived! I am a long standing parent at the school and have seen and experienced many changes at HCC "Trying to get it right!!!" and I can't but help feel very let down. It feels as though the council have just "given up" on us now. We are NOW improving! We are NOW achieving! We are seeing the fruits of the staff, parents & students hard labour that have made the college what it is today and a college that I and my family are proud to promote to others. We are more or less being held to ransom as we are continually reminded that there will be limited funding if we do not support this Kunskapsskolan Academy proposal, thus burdening us with the feeling that we would be responsible for limiting our children's educational opportunities and experiences, etc., and most importantly their future. On a personal note, I truly believe that this is not the right way forward for our college and our children, as this is an unproven project in the UK at this educational level. My child who attends HCC currently is a year 9 student and although I have been re-assured that he will not really be affected by this change, the tutors that teach him will be, and I do have reservations as to how the transition to an Academy and the training of the said tutors will impact on him during his last two vital exam years at HCC. Also, what would happen if the new Academy proposal does not sit well with "New" families that would normally send their children to HCC if they protest with their feet and abandon HCC altogether! Where do we stand then.....? I cannot help but feel that the college is going to become a Kunskapsskolan Academy Guinea Pig with no real "come back" for the students involved in this trial. We have not really had any firm reassurance regarding failure!!!! When realistically this is an option, as it is untried here currently at this level. As with anything in life, it is the customer service that promotes a good company, how things are dealt with that we remember.....the after care we receive should things not work out.....who do we return our children too when it fails for a refund????????????????? There is no returns policy here!!!! I know it should be "get it right first time!!" but as we all know, this happens very rarely.....HCC are proof of this.....hence all the changes made through the recent years to try and get it right! Now we are on the right track!!!!!!!!!!!! I do not feel I will need a receipt for my child as it stands to date, as I know he will not fail with the current systemhe is happy.....he is working well.....he is achieving.....he is supported.....he is proud to be a HCC student! I hope that the right decisions are made for the right reasons, as you hold a big responsibility.</p>
<p>Parent of children at a feeder primary school</p>	<p>I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposal to close Hampton Community College and Whitton School and re-open as academies. I am a parent of children at Stanley Infant and Junior Schools and therefore both the schools subject to this proposal are ones that they may attend in the near future. I firmly believe that schools should stay in the control of the London Borough of Richmond, with decisions made by democratically elected representatives, at a local level. The proposals would place control of the schools with a private enterprise whose primary objective is profit and who would be accountable to a central government department. The schools currently perform well and any change in management style required, could be implemented within the current framework. The only advantage that the proposals offer is the infrastructure funding from central government, effectively a bribe to follow their current dogma. I do not believe this warrants the loss of the fundamental loss of local democratic control over our community's valued schools.</p>
<p>Teacher at HCC</p>	<p>I am writing to tell you my point of view about the proposed academy. I am a member of staff at HCC and the</p>

	<p>parent of a year 12 son who has just left HCC (having achieved very highly in his GCSEs) as well as a year 6 son at Hampton Hill Junior School. Firstly, I resent very strongly recent implications that HCC is a failing school. Councillor Malcolm Eady is quoted in this week's Richmond and Twickenham Times as saying that "three or four schools ... are under-performing". This is extremely damaging for morale as well as being blatantly untrue. HCC had a challenging target for its intake last year which it achieved, and it continues to add value to the education of its students. My own son overcame early learning difficulties and dyslexia to get 7A*s, 4As and 3Bs in his GCSEs and is now studying for A-levels at Hampton School. I feel very strongly that Richmond Borough has failed him (and many others) in its lack of provision for post-16 education. Councillor Eady also stated "what we have at post-16 is working". This is also untrue. However successful Richmond College is (and I acknowledge that it is successful for many) it can NEVER be said that "one size fits all" with regard to education. My son is a bright, hard-working boy who is also very shy and retiring. For him, Richmond College would have been utterly wrong and yet it is all that Richmond Council is prepared to offer. We were too late in our application to Esher through my own naivety and were forced look further afield, at Strodes and Tiffin before being offered a place at Hampton. There are many others who do not have these options. I believe that Richmond Schools are much poorer places for having no sixth forms. They add breadth, depth and maturity to a school's community which cannot be replaced by anything else, and now is the perfect time to reconsider this option for HCC. As a member of staff I feel that the academy would potentially give me many benefits and opportunities in my work. However as the parent of a year 6 child I also have many reservations about the amount of disruption it would cause to his education, both from the building work and the academic changes and I am reluctant to commit him to these. I am also unsure how 'themed' courses could be the right basis from which he would choose GCSEs. As this is not an issue in Sweden it must remain an unknown quantity. In addition the proposals seem to rely on intrinsic motivation. As a mother of sons I am aware that they are not always able to motivate themselves as many girls can, and any proposal must ensure the right framework for both sexes to be successful. Finally, I am concerned that a system of 'houses' within Hampton Academy, however attractive initially, may result in competition between these houses. Some will no doubt get better results and be perceived as performing better than the others which could result in a situation no better than that in which we now find ourselves, with parents fighting for the 'best' house! I trust that these points will be taken into account by the Council during the decision making process.</p>
Governor of a linked school	<p>My first concern is the lack of choice given to parents. Some may find their child given an unwanted place at one of the new academies with its different education ethos in the borough with no access to a more conventional style of education which they may wish for their child. If this system is so good why is it that families in Sweden do not all have the advantage of this system? Pupils are selected, I think I understood from a meeting I attended; this is not the case with those from the areas where these schools will be situated in Richmond. This system sounds very supportive of the individual; very labour intensive. I hope there will be sufficient staff for the needs as proposed. But has the borough considered looking at successful schools, including independent schools where the individual is considered very important and is known very well by his/her firm tutor? Too late of course; the decision, whatever the comments made by the borough reps etc at meetings, has been perceived by parents to have been already made. Several told me from various schools told me personally that they feel helpless and too insignificant to have any actual influence with the large</p>

	machine of the LA. Hey ho. I could go on but...
Local resident	I write to advise that I still feel that the closure of HCC is a mistake and that the proposed Academy school is a leap into the unknown for local children. Currently we have an improving school which is well regarded in the community and has highly committed teachers and governors supporting it. This is a complete reversal of the school's position in recent years and the Council's support for its state secondary schools has at times been less than wholehearted. We have no idea if the Kunskapsskolan method of teaching will work; no sound academic reason for the change has been put forward and we will have several years of disruption. It appears to me that there will be a reduction in teaching time, certainly in a classroom format and that the self-motivation required by pupils will be beyond a large number of young people. There are already questions being raised in the Swedish press whether these new systems are actually lowering the standard of education. In reality the existing school is part of the community whereas the new school will be directed by and legally responsible to organisations not in this community. The appointment of Dr Demont as the Principal to the new school has probably deflected discussion from the real issues of the change and whilst she will be able to further her career elsewhere if matters do not turn out as she expects, this route will not be open to many local children who will have reduced choice. Finally, I feel that large parts of the consultations on this matter have been deeply flawed. The open meetings were controlled to avoid any real discussion on the main issues and the consultation questionnaire used on the Academy proposal is constructed in a way to limit expression of real concerns.
Local resident	I am opposing the closure of HCC and its reopening as an Academy sponsored by Kunskapsskolan. There will be no choice for parents in the Hampton area who do not wish to choose the KS model of education which is progressive and reduces the amount of classroom teaching. I regard this as essential for a successful secondary school. If Whitton is also a KS Academy there will be no alternative offered in this area of the Borough. The deletion of a sixth form from the proposals is a missed opportunity to reintroduce post-16 education into our schools. I attended the earlier consultation meeting and was concerned that there was little opportunity to ask questions or to consider alternatives. I left with the impression that the decision had already been taken. My suspicions were confirmed by the Director's report to School Governors and the recent Lib Dem leaflet that made it clear that an Academy would be installed at HCC (and at the other 2 schools). These statements were made even though the consultation was still under way. I regard this as an abuse of process.
Local resident	I am totally opposed to the closure of Hampton Community College. I have lived in the borough all my life and this school has been a problem for at least 30 years, from its days as Rectory School. You have tried to change the name before and the standard has gone down. I agree changes are needed at this failing school but you must make the changes as an Education Department and not pass them to an outside body in the hope that something might happen but probably won't. Schools must be in the control of the local authority and NOT a Swedish company. I trust that in this matter you will listen to the views of the community and if the majority say no you will think again. If you don't plan to listen, then don't waste our money consulting.
Local resident	I continue to be concerned that Richmond is the only Borough without a Catholic Secondary school. Regrettably the Council are giving priority to promoting two experimental systems very close to each other rather than a Catholic School. I would like to continue to register and hope that they rethink about a Catholic

	Academy.
Local resident	I am opposed to the closure of Hampton Community College on many grounds.
Local resident	I am opposed to the closure of Hampton Community College. This is because this will limit the choice available to local residents. Kunskapsskolan appear to have no experience of the English Schools Curriculum or English Schools of this size. And there are still no plans for a 6th form which is what parents and teachers are crying out for.
Local resident	<p>In accordance with your Statutory Notice to close Hampton Community College, I wish to register my formal objection for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The school is still fairly well supported by parents and is not 'failing'. The main reason for seeking academy status appears to be the prospect of money for capital investment, but this is now most uncertain due to the fiscal deficit as a result of the recession. I am a grandparent of four primary age children in the area and a former parent governor at HCC: most of the families and parents I know are opposed to the academy scheme with Kunskapsskolan. I and my wife have lived in Hampton Hill with our family for 39 years and our four sons all went to school locally and then to Kingston College and various English universities. 2. The Swedish sponsor Kunskapsskolan has no experience of the English system of curriculum and examinations. The English experts they have employed have little or no knowledge of the local scene, and in particular the need to cater for special needs and the specific requirements of bright girls. The due diligence checks on the Swedish sponsor appear to have been inadequate or non-existent. 3. The Swedish style of teaching and learning depends on learning themes rather than subject teaching. This would sacrifice subject GCSEs such as RE, geography, history and separate sciences. It is not clear which modern foreign languages would be available for students from 11 to 16 or how they would be taught. There will be a massive need for in-service training for present staff to learn the new Swedish methods of personalised learning and tuition. It is not clear who is paying for this or how many staff will remain at the end of the TUPE period. 4. The KS project manager Steve Bolingbroke says he has 'no idea' what the proposed buildings would look like. But they would require a complete rebuild on a limited and difficult site and could cost at least £15m. The rebuilding would take at least 18 months and probably longer. This would cause massive disruption to children's education at least until September 2013. 5. The governance proposed for the academy is not acceptable. Most of the strategic policy decisions are to be taken by the Learning Schools Trust and we are not told how this is to be composed. The local academy council does not adequately represent either parents or the local community. It is clearly an executive body, mainly representing the interests of the Swedish sponsor and the local authority. The head and education officer should be servicing and advising the council, rather than serving as full members of it. We are not told who the 'significant local partners' are, but most of the local community bodies I know have not been approached and do not approve of the academy project anyway. Mr Bolingbroke disapproves of the PTA model, which he sees as 'a barrier to individual parent

	<p>6. The proposal for an 'extended school' is made in the brochure, but there is no mention of adult education courses or of links with other local community, sporting and cultural bodies. The specialist status as a drama college has been diluted to include 'communications', but it is not clear what this means.</p> <p>7. There is very little alternative choice, if local parents do not like the Swedish model, as offered, for their children.</p>
The Hampton Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The decision to single out Hampton Community College to be developed into "the best school in the Borough" is based on the premise of inequality. All children have the same right to the same level of education. • The sponsors state that the Academy will be part of the local community. Those parents who do not choose Kunskapsskolan's style of education for their children will be forced to send them elsewhere. For those children there will be a weakening of ties with the Hampton community. Furthermore, because of travel circumstances, these children will probably also lose out on after-school activities as well as community initiatives. This situation is worsened by the decision to sanction Kunskapsskolan as co-sponsor of the Academy at Whitton. • There are significant reservations about Kunskapsskolan's approach to the curriculum. The insistence upon thematic teaching does a disservice to Secondary-level students since it deprives them of the opportunity for consistent in-depth study. A recent Ofsted report criticises the value of thematic studies. It points to the lack of clear goals, to contrived links between subjects, to the unevenness of the attention paid to the various contributory subjects and consequent loss of subject content. It comments upon the lack of development of subject study-skills, the want of appreciation of underlying subject values and a disjointed understanding of subject concepts. In summary, thematic studies are often little more than a cursory and unconvincing examination of a topic that lacks focus. This is a poor basis for the move to GCSE subject-based study in Key Stage 4. • The heavy emphasis upon personalised learning, together with a computer-based portal may mean that some students develop a sense of isolation from their peers. Real-life interaction, rather than virtual, between student-and-student and between student-teacher is a vital part of learning. John Baumber himself made the point that children's needs, interests and abilities often coincide, necessitating the formation of specific classes. • The Consultation Process has had serious unsatisfactory aspects. In the April meeting there was inadequate time to put questions. Appleyard's questionnaire is based upon the assumption (until the last question) of the respondent's acceptance of the proposal. That the consultation procedure has failed is demonstrated by the low number of returns stated by Councillor Eady himself. The inadequacy of the consultation process is further emphasised by the fact that Councillor Eady has felt it necessary to canvass support including making suggestions for the nature of replies. This shocking action by a senior Cabinet member perhaps indicates that the decision has yet to be made. It will be even more

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is relevant to note here that Jan Bjorkland, Sweden's Minister of Education put forward earlier this week, (October 19th to 24th), a proposal for the re-nationalisation of all Sweden's schools. A Report from Skolverket, (the Swedish National Agency for Education) indicates, amongst other things, that since the "free" schools were introduced in the 1990s, there has been a consistent decline in Swedish children's attainment in Maths and Science, both domestically and in world rankings and also that there is unacceptable disparity in educational provision and in quality of education. The variety of providers and the divided nature of controls create problems of administration. The Swedish National Agency has already been mandated by Jan Bjorkland to achieve equivalence in the quality of education by the standardisation of study-programmes and by the devising of new courses to attain higher standards. ALL Swedish schools will be required to undertake these programmes from 2011. History, Maths and Science are to be taught as distinct subjects. |
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The Appleyards consultation

At each of the public meetings listed to on page 2 of this document, Steve Bolingbroke, Managing Director of Kunskapsskolan UK, gave a presentation on the details of the academy proposals and answered any questions arising from it. Many questions were asked and many concerns were raised. Although the majority of feeling among attendees appeared to be in favour (see below), there were notable voices of dissent, especially at Buckingham Primary and one governor at Hampton Junior (who also aired his concerns at the meeting at Hampton Community College).

At the end of each meeting, the Appleyards representative present asked attendees for a show of hands to indicate general satisfaction – or not – with the proposals. At all of the meetings, except the one at Buckingham Primary, there was a clear consensus in favour of the proposals. At the most well-attended meeting – at Hampton Community College, where there were 107 attendees – the majority of attendees backed the Principal's declaration that she strongly supported the proposal.

144 people completed – either in paper form or online – the questionnaire that Appleyards issued on 11 September.

Of those respondents, the percentages of responses to the question "To what extent are you in favour of the vision for the proposed Academy?" were as follows:

Very much, 39%; To some extent, 35%; Not Very Much, 11%; Not at all, 12%; Don't know, 3%.

The percentages of responses to the question "Overall, to what extent are you in favour of the arrangements for the proposed Academy as set out in the consultation document?" were as follows:

Very much, 39%; To some extent, 34%; Not Very Much, 11%; Not at all, 13%; Don't know, 3%.

The percentages of responses to the question regarding post-16 provision, that "It is proposed that the Academy would be an 11-16 school with strengthened progression links with other local education providers, principally Richmond upon Thames College, Esher College and West Thames College – to what extent are you in favour of this proposal?", were as follows:

Very much, 48%; To some extent, 34%; Not Very Much, 4%; Not at all, 10%; Don't know, 4%.