

PROPOSAL TO DISCONTINUE WHITTON SCHOOL (AND RE-OPEN IT AS AN ACADEMY)

Contact details

1.

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The school to be discontinued is: Whitton School, Percy Road, Whitton, Twickenham, TW2 6JW.

Implementation

2. The date when it is planned that the proposals will be implemented, or where the proposals are to be implemented in stages, information about each stage and the date on which each stage is planned to be implemented.

It is proposed that Whitton School will be discontinued on 31 August 2010 and will re-open as an academy on 1 September 2010.

Consultation

3. A statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposals were complied with.

Full statutory consultation regarding the proposal was undertaken.

4. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including—
- (a) a list of persons and/or parties who were consulted;
 - (b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
 - (c) the views of the persons consulted; and
 - (d) copies of all consultation documents and a statement of how these were made available.

- (a) The following groups were consulted: the school's staff and Governing Body, and parents of current and prospective pupils; all primary schools linked to the school; all other schools within Richmond upon Thames; all five neighbouring local authorities (Hammersmith and Fulham, Hounslow, Kingston, Surrey, and Wandsworth); Richmond Adult Community College; Richmond upon Thames College; the four diocesan boards of education whose areas include Richmond Borough (the Anglican Dioceses of London and Southwark, and the Catholic Archdioceses of Southwark and Westminster); the Council's Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee; Ethnic Minorities Advocacy Group; and Richmond upon Thames Admissions Forum.
- (b) Minutes of all public consultation meetings are attached to this document.
- (c) The minutes contain the views expressed.
- (d) Copies of all consultation documents are retained by Matthew Paul and can be inspected upon request (telephone 020 8891 7588; email m.paul@richmond.gov.uk).

Objectives

5. The objectives of the proposal.

The main objective of the proposal is to discontinue Whitton School and re-open it as an academy. This proposed 11-16 academy at Whitton is part of the authority's new strategic vision for secondary education in Richmond Borough and is designed to ensure further improvement in standards to the point where it becomes and remains 'outstanding'.

Standards and Diversity

6. A statement and supporting evidence indicating how the proposals will impact on the standards, diversity and quality of education in the area.

Our vision is to ensure that excellent performance is achieved and maximised in all our schools and in LA services. We will do this by:

- Fostering a healthy safe enjoyable and sustainable environment in which children will thrive – both academically and as members of our community – with a stimulating curriculum delivered in an innovative manner;
- Focusing resources on closing gaps between the achievement of different groups;
- Providing services that support children and their families/carers in local geographical areas;
- Using high quality ICT to ensure the needs of learners are met, personalising their learning and making sure they are able to access their learning materials at school, in their home and in local libraries and children's centres;
- Minimising the issues that are caused at transition by good partnership working;
- Ensuring that there are sufficient places available for parents at all phases of education; and
- Aligning funding streams so that all phases and types of schools gain a maximum benefit from a joined up approach to funding.

As part of its school commissioning role, the authority sees the need to expand the level of choice and quality offered to parents and students. These improvements are part of a wider strategy to reverse the trend of some parents choosing secondary education outside the borough. The authority is committed to supporting the introduction of three new academies, including the Kunskapsskolan Academy at Whitton, since it believes the academy route will offer the best chance of sustained long term improvements in student achievement and success. This improved achievement and success for students will sit alongside improved take up of post-16 provision, stronger provision for special needs across the borough and a strengthening of the *Every Child Matters* agenda on all school sites.

The authority is pleased to be working alongside Kunskapsskolan in developing the proposed academy as a full part of the local family of schools since their approach to personalised learning, and the emphasis on high standards for all students, fits well with our vision. We believe that the academy proposal would enable the school very rapidly to improve towards 'outstanding'

Provision for 16 -19 year olds

7. Where the school proposed to be discontinued provides sixth form education, how the proposals will impact on—

- (a) the educational or training achievements;
- (b) participation in education or training; and
- (c) the range of educational or training opportunities,

for 16-19 year olds in the area.

N/A.

Need for places

8. A statement and supporting evidence about the need for places in the area including whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

No pupils will be displaced, as all the existing Years 7-11 pupils will automatically transfer to the Academy, except those who are currently in Whitton Gateway, the provision for statemented pupils with autistic spectrum disorders (see **section 11**).

School place planning projections for the secondary phase are largely made on a whole-borough, rather than school-by-school basis, and are based on demographic and admissions trends, but also take into account external factors such as the popularity of, and changes to, out-borough schools.

The admission number of Whitton School is 200 and the school was expected to have approximately 160 pupils in Year 7 in September 2009, as a result of increased confidence in the existing school among the local community.

The authority has experienced a large growth in applications for primary school places in recent years, due in part to a 20% increase in the number of live births between 2002 and 2007 and, in the last year, due to the economic situation. The

take-up rate from birth of places in state schools within the borough has historically been c.30%, but this year that figure has fallen to 22%.

In our Primary Strategy for Change (which was one of only 40 in England that was unconditionally approved by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), and Consultation on Primary Expansions Strategy documents, we set out plans to provide five additional forms of entry on a permanent basis. In recognition of our large growth in reception class numbers, in 2008 we were one of only two local authorities in London to whom the DCSF allocated 'Basic Need Safety Valve' funding to help with the costs of additional primary school places. There had been no opportunity to bid for Safety Valve funding since 2005. The DCSF also allocated some Targeted Capital Fund money to us last year and we are required to spend this money and the Safety Valve allocation by 2011. Those allocations have been supplemented by other funding streams and from the Council's own money to create a total pot of £32million to pay for the five planned forms of entry.

With even larger birth cohorts for the 2010, 2011 and 2012 intakes, the need for additional places will be even greater.

So it follows that we will require increased capacity in the secondary sector in the medium term. It also follows that the academies are an opportunity to build some of that capacity, rather than through BSF, which we are due to enter after every other LA in England. Although the effect of this growth on our secondary sector will not start to be felt in full until 2014, we feel that we should be looking now to add capacity to our secondary schools. There are eight secondary schools in the borough, of which five are now oversubscribed. The recession has meant that more preferences were expressed this year than in any year since the pan-London coordinated secondary admissions scheme started in 2004. The transfer rate from Richmond Borough primary schools to our secondary schools increased from 66% in 2000 to 70% in 2008 and is expected to have increased to c.74/75% in 2009. The number on roll at Whitton this September was expected to be approximately 160, compared with 127 in 2008. The three-fold effects of the recession, improved standards and the school's increased attractiveness if it becomes an academy, with new and refurbished facilities and new ways of curriculum delivery, is likely to result in the school being full by 2012/2013.

We therefore feel that each of our proposed academies, including Whitton, should have an admission number of 210. However, due to the restrictions of the site, it is proposed that the admission number should be 180 until September 2013, when the building work should be complete and when the proposed admission number of 210 will be introduced.

9. Where the school has a religious character, a statement about the impact of the proposed closure on the balance of denominational provision in the area and the impact on parental choice.

N/A.

Current School Information

10. Information as to the numbers, age range, sex and special educational needs of pupils (distinguishing between boarding and day pupils) for whom provision is made at the school.

As at May 2009, there are 726 pupils on roll, of whom 407 are boys and 319 are girls. The age-range is 11 to 16. There are 41 pupils with statements of special educational needs, 40 on 'school action plus' and 43 on 'school action'.

Displaced Pupils

11. Details of the schools or further education colleges which pupils at the school for whom provision is to be discontinued will be offered places, including—

- (a) any interim arrangements;
- (b) where the school included provision that is recognised by the local education authority as reserved for children with special educational needs, the alternative provision to be made for pupils in the school's reserved provision; and
- (c) in the case of special schools, alternative provision made by local education authorities other than the authority which maintains the school.

- (a) No 'mainstream' pupils will be displaced.
- (b) Pupils in The Gateway, the provision for those with autistic spectrum conditions, will remain in The Gateway; but, subject to separate formal consultation and decision-making processes, The Gateway will stay within the local Authority's control and become part of an overarching, borough-wide special school provision with revised governance. Subject to a service level agreement between the local authority and the Academies Charitable Trust, it is intended that pupils in The Gateway will be able to use the academy's resources. It is further proposed that some enhanced resource provision will be placed within all secondary schools in the borough, including the proposed academies, although the exact nature of the needs to be met within each school are yet to be determined. The local authority's review of special educational needs across the borough will be formally consulted upon in early 2010.
- (c) N/A.

12. Details of any other measures proposed to be taken to increase the number of school or further education college places available in consequence of the proposed discontinuance.

It is proposed that the capacity of the academy will be 210 in Year 7. However, due to the restrictions of the site, it is proposed that the admission number should be 180 until September 2013, when the building work should be complete and when the proposed admission number of 210 will be introduced.

Impact on the Community

13. A statement and supporting evidence about the impact on the community and any measures proposed to mitigate any adverse impact.

It is expected that the closure of the school and its re-opening as an academy will make it more attractive to parents of children transferring into secondary education.

Through increased standards and popularity, and rebuilding and refurbishment of facilities, the academy will have a beneficial impact, increasing its role at the heart of the Whitton community.

14. Details of extended services the school offered and what it is proposed for these services once the school has discontinued.

Whitton School currently provides sports and other facilities for use by the local community. It is the intention of the sponsor that the proposed academy would offer existing and improved facilities for community use.

Travel

15. Details of length and journeys to alternative provision.

N/A.

16. The proposed arrangements for travel of displaced pupils to other schools including how they will help to work against increased car use.

All Gateway pupils receive home to school transport as part of their statements of special educational needs.

Related Proposals.

17. A statement as to whether in the opinion of the local education authority or governing body, the proposals are related to any other proposals which may have been, are, or are about to be published.

The proposal to discontinue Hampton Community College is related to this one, in that it is also proposed to be re-opened as a Kunskapsskolan-sponsored academy.

Rural Primary Schools

18. Where proposals relate to a rural primary school designated as such by an order made for the purposes of section 15 of the EIA 2006, a statement that the local education authority or the governing body (as the case may be) considered—

- (a) the likely effect of discontinuance of the school on the local community;
- (b) the availability, and likely cost to the local education authority, of transport to other schools;
- (c) any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the discontinuance of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase; and
- (d) any alternatives to the discontinuance of the school,

as required by section 15(4) of the EIA 2006.

N/A.

Maintained nursery schools

19. Where proposals relate to the discontinuance of a maintained nursery school, a statement setting out—

- (a) the consideration that has been given to developing the school into a children's centre and the grounds for not doing so;
- (b) the local education authority's assessment of the quality and quantity of the alternative provision compared to the school proposed to be discontinued and the proposed arrangements to ensure the expertise and specialism continues to be available; and
- (c) the accessibility and convenience of replacement provision for local parents.

N/A.

Special educational provision

20. Where existing provision for pupils with special educational needs is being discontinued, a statement as to how the local education authority or the governing body believes the proposal is likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of the educational provision for these children.

Federated schools can benefit from a wider range of teaching expertise and a shared commitment with other establishments to raise the quality of leadership, teaching and learning. The advantages of the Gateway moving into the new arrangements allows the provisions to avoid duplication of effort or resources and enables staff to work across the group of schools in the partnership to improve the outcomes for children and young people. They will remain closely linked with the mainstream schools and pupils will continue to offer a wide range of curriculum opportunities.

**Notes of a meeting between Ethnic Minorities Advocacy Group (EMAG),
Kunskapsskolan (KS) and the local authority (LA), held at Whitton Day Centre,
111a Kneller Road, Whitton, on Wednesday, 25 March 2009**

Present: KS: Steve Bolingbroke and Patricia Hamhazee; LA: Matthew Paul and Richard Portas; EMAG: Prehlad Dhall (Director), Alan Warren (Chair), Noel Davies (Vice Chair), Ashi Dhillon, Dee Haji and Raj Khakharia.

The following questions and concerns were raised during the meeting:

1. What would happen, in terms of governance, when the academies would be up and running?

- KS would work with the local schools and LA, but the academies would be run by an academies charitable trust set up by KS once the funding agreement has been signed.
- The academies would be included in all the same arrangements as all the other local schools (e.g. admissions, exclusions, etc.).

2. What is in it for KS?

- Learning opportunities and exchanges for staff and students.
- KS want to learn from the British system and take back the best bits to Sweden.

3. Do you have any proof of not discriminating against BME communities?

- In Sweden, you are not allowed to measure BME population, discriminate in admissions, or exclude pupils.
- KS would work with the current Richmond upon Thames model of admissions, social inclusion, SEN, etc.
- By law, discrimination against BME communities is outlawed in England.
- KS will investigate Swedish data on complaints.

4. Would parents be represented on the governing body?

- Legally there has to be a parent and a member of the community, as well as local authority representation.
- Governance arrangements would be formally/legally agreed beforehand in a Memorandum of Understanding with the local authority.

5. Main concerns: would there be further disadvantage for minorities, especially regarding exclusions? What level of influence would ethnic minorities have?

- With admissions and exclusions, KS are legally required to follow the codes of practice, which are predicated on anti-discrimination legislation.
- Some of the earlier academies were allowed to take 10% of students with certain aptitudes, but there are now far more strict rules regarding admissions. KS have no intention of either selecting children on the basis of aptitude or of discriminating against any individuals.
- There will be direct influence on the governing body, and through the Admissions Forum and the Fair Access and Permanent Exclusions Panels.

- 6. Whitton School has historically had a reputation of discipline problems and incidents of racism. How will you change residents' perceptions?**
- Perceptions traditionally take a long time to change, but as happened with Christ's School, things can improve significantly in a short period of time.
 - KS would focus on improving standards and building on the specialisms to change local residents' perceptions.
- 7. Will there be a pilot?**
- There will not be a pilot, but the KS model would be phased into the school over a two- or three-year period. There will be no 'big bang' changes and initially, students will have more structure.
- 8. How will the contract be reviewed?**
- The contract is a rolling seven-year contract with the Department for Children, Families and Schools, although if KS did not perform, the Department could step in at any time
- 9. Matthew Paul – why do some BME parents not send their children to Whitton School?**
- Parents do not send children to Whitton because of its results and perceptions of racism and The Heathland's excellent results. Improved standards would encourage BME parents to send their children to Whitton.
- 10. If there is no measurement of ethnicity in Sweden, will you collect data in England?**
- Yes – there is a legal requirement to do this.
- 11. Matthew Paul – What would be the best way to consult with the BME community?**
- The Edgar Road support group meet twice a month – a meeting could be convened, if the authority organised and paid for translators.

Notes of a meeting between parents of children at Bishop Perrin, Chase Bridge, Heathfield Junior, Heathfield Infant, Trafalgar Infant, Trafalgar Junior and Crane Park, and Kunskapsskolan (KS) and the local authority (LA), held at Heathfield Junior School, on Tuesday, 31 March 2009

Present: KS: Steve Bolingbroke and Theo Kjellberg; LA: Matthew Paul and Richard Portas.

The following questions and concerns were raised during the meeting:

How would the academies work? Are there any proven studies of KS schools working?

- There would be a transition period, which will be a key concern to be answered during the feasibility process.
- Many educational experts have been to Sweden to view KS schools, with very positive feedback.
- John Baumber, the KS educational expert, has been working on the development of the model for four years, so KS have full confidence it will work.
- Many schools are attempting similar principles to KS in their schools, but KS have more experience and a unique model.
- It is not a leap in the dark, as KS have 32 schools open in Sweden.

What is the difference between a traditional Swedish school and the traditional English schools?

- They are very similar, so the KS approach is similar.

How would you change these large schools?

- The schools would be split into communities ('houses'), where common facilities will be shared, e.g. sports facilities, etc.

Do 11 year-olds require more structure?

- Yes – there would be more structure for the younger students. This would also be phased in throughout the transition stage.
- As children pass throughout the school they would gain earned autonomy, where there will be an emphasis on developing learning abilities.

Will this detract from actual learning?

- No – developing learning abilities is not factored into the timetable, but is achieved through the tutor-pupil relationship.

Have KS taken over large schools and have they converted any?

- KS have converted six schools.
- The largest Swedish KS school has 450 pupils.
- In Sweden, there is no money given for buildings, so schools are made from a range of converted buildings.

What are your plans for children with SEN?

- The model works well for children with SEN, as provision is tailored to their

- KS would work with the Borough's SEN arrangements, which are under review and due to be consulted upon later in the year.

How would the academy be funded?

- The DCSF would fund it.
- The academy would receive slightly more funding per pupil than a state school in future years, as the LA would not 'top slice' the funding for services.

Could KS pull out at any point?

- KS would have a seven-year rolling contract with the DCSF.
- DCSF would be able to take over the school, if it is seen to be failing.
- The LA is also a co-sponsor, so would have seats on the governing body, etc. This will be agreed in a Memorandum of Understanding.

What would you do with children that aren't interested in learning? 15-20 minutes a week with a tutor does not seem enough.

- KS would work to ensure that parents would be involved throughout the child's education.
- The less-motivated children would require more structure unless they prove they can perform better.
- A lot of time would be spent with these children to work out what motivates them.

If there are only three large lectures a week, what else do teachers do?

- It depends on the young people. There will be a range of teaching sessions: classroom lessons, one-to-one tutorials, seminars, workshops, etc.

How do teachers check that the children are doing their work?

- There would be a diary/work-book that teachers would have to check and sign. The academy would have morning and afternoon registers.

How would exams fit into the KS model?

- The curriculum would be taught in steps. Targets will be set at the beginning of the year and would be reassessed every week.
- This model would allow some children to do GCSEs early, or spend more time on certain subjects, to ensure the basics are achieved.
- It would also work well for BTEC courses, as regular monitoring is desirable.

Do you have an English example of the model working?

- Not yet – KS want to work with the teachers within the school to build on the expertise already there. KS want to add to the strengths of the school.

How would you train the teachers to the new style of working?

- Some teachers are already competent in the skills we are looking for, while others may need development.
- There would be a transition period of two-three years and the training plan would extend throughout.
- Professional development may include qualifications for teachers and exchanges to Sweden.

The transition period is the main worry. What would happen to the children attending the school during the transition period?

- This is a key issue, which will be developed during the feasibility stage. If KS and the authority are not entirely confident that improvements can be made, then the project would not pass through to implementation.

Is Whitton changing to an Academy a done deal? Is there a plan B?

- No – it has to be right for everyone, or the programme would not be agreed.
- There is no plan B – the authority is the lowest-funded borough in London, so there will not be funds available. Richmond upon Thames has been ranked last out of 70 local authorities who have not yet been invited to participate in the Government’s Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.

How would you retain staff and keep them motivated, especially with the additional training they would require?

- The additional training would not consist of full-time education and teachers will not be expected to teach all subjects. They would be expected to facilitate learning throughout subjects, but would have their specialisms, as they do now.
- All staff would be transferred through TUPE regulations. If some do not wish to stay, then that would be discussed at a later date. Teachers in Sweden love this style of teaching.
- Some pressures would be taken off teachers, e.g. educational specialists would work out the teaching plans.

Would there be building works for three years?

- No – funding is provided in annual periods, so there would not be continuous building work.
- It is a key area to be tackled during the feasibility phase

Would KS and the LA oversee this building work?

- The LA would be responsible for procuring the design and construction companies
- There would be a project steering group overseeing the whole project and a project management company that reports to it. KS chair the steering group.
- There would also be a specific design group, chaired by KS to work specifically on the buildings.

What about specialisms?

- KS would like to keep the same sports specialism, but also have Mathematics as a specialism. KS want to complement the specialisms in other local schools and to build on the excellent existing specialism.

What about post-16?

- It is a complex issue. It was included in the Expression of Interest, but it is important to make sure there is sufficient demand for it. There is already outstanding provision in the borough, so it has to be discussed further and agreed during feasibility.

How would children go from British schooling to KS-style schooling?

- It will not be a problem for younger children to enter a KS academy. It will

- It will be easier for children to adapt to further education from a KS academy, as they will have already developed their learning capabilities while at school.
- Many of these teaching styles have been introduced elsewhere with great success, so it would not be a leap of faith.

What is the parental choice in the local area, if a parent does not wish to send their child to a KS academy?

- Some parents currently complain that there is no choice; but the proposed academy would aim to improve standards so that the school becomes the automatic school of choice for local people.

Notes of a meeting between parents of children at Whitton School and its linked primary schools, and Kunskapsskolan (KS) and the local authority (LA), held at Whitton School, on Wednesday, 1 April 2009

Present: KS: Steve Bolingbroke and Theo Kjellberg; LA: Matthew Paul and Richard Portas.

The following questions and concerns were raised during the meeting:

How would a stepped curriculum fit with the English National Curriculum?

- This will be worked out in feasibility – it will be developed with staff at Whitton to consider how it could best be implemented.
- The transition period would be phased in by subject or pupil age. There would be no ‘big bang’ where everything is changed on day one, and training would be provided for staff throughout the transition period.

What is the plan for post-16 provision?

- There needs to be clear demand for post-16 provision, so that if it were to be provided there would be a case for having a broad curriculum.
- The proposed Whitton academy would need to complement other schools in the borough; and the local authority, in its forthcoming (from April 2010) role as commissioner of local 14-19 provision will need to consider borough-wide provision in the round.

Would the academy be able provide education to 900 pupils?

- The Expression of Interest document stated that there would be 900 pupils, but this could be subject to change. The most important thing is to have the right sized academy for the number of pupils.

If one proposed KS academy did not pass feasibility, would you continue with the other?

- KS are really keen to secure both and are confident that the proposals will secure local approval.
- If the local authority is not completely satisfied that it would be in the best interests of local young people, the proposed academy at Whitton would not go ahead.

What about the fields on the other side of the A316?

- The Football Association has provided a grant to develop sporting facilities on that site. It cannot be used to house the school temporarily during the transition period.

How would children be affected during the transition, if they have to stay on the same site?

- This will be a key concern to be answered during the feasibility process. The chosen construction company would have to be able to demonstrate that they have managed similar projects safely and with minimal disruption.
- The site would also be used as a learning tool, where children would be able to undertake work related to the management, environment,

How would you train the teachers to the new style of working?

- Some teachers are already competent in the skills we are looking for, while others may need development.
- There would be a transition period of two-three years and continuing professional development would be offered to staff throughout.
- Professional development may consist of additional qualifications for teachers and exchanges to Sweden.

How would the governing body work?

- Academies benefit from freer regulations on the structure of their governing bodies, but there would still be parent and local authority representation.
- The detail of the governance structure will be presented during the feasibility stage. It will be agreed by the LA and KS in a memorandum of understanding, including arrangements such as admissions, exclusions etc.
- KS would establish a more inclusive parent forum, including representatives from the LA (as a co-sponsor), parents, KS, staff, etc.

When will parents see the building design?

- It is unlikely that initial designs would be available until the Implementation stage, since there are complex tendering processes that have to be undertaken.
- There are many UK-based architects that have designed academies and many have viewed schools in Sweden.

Would there be a uniform? It should be easily available and inexpensive for parents to purchase.

- The pupils would design the school uniform and there may be possible links with a high street chain. Children would not have a free rein to design it how they want, as it still must be smart and respectable. Children would be expected to wear clothes within the rules.

How would the transition work for current students?

- There would be a stronger structure for the younger students. This would also be phased in throughout the transition stage.
- As children pass throughout the school they would gain earned autonomy, where there would be an emphasis on developing learning abilities.

How would the teachers be trained?

- They would be able to undertake additional training, but that would not be in full-time education.
- Teachers would not be expected to teach all subjects. They would, though, be expected to facilitate learning across the curriculum, and would have their specialisms, as they do now.
- All staff would be transferred through TUPE regulations. If some do not wish to stay, then that would be discussed at a later date. Teachers in Sweden love this style of teaching.
- Some pressures would be taken off teachers, e.g. educational specialists would do the teaching plans.

What would be the arrangements for the current headteachers?

- All staff would be transferred through TUPE regulations. If some do not

- The headteachers' posts would probably be advertised.

Would PTAs have money for projects and would there be parental involvement?

- It is hoped that there would be high parental involvement, throughout the child's education.
- The less motivated children would require more structure unless they prove they can perform better, and a lot of time would be spent with these children to establish what motivates them.

What would happen if teachers are off sick? Would there be supply teachers?

- In terms of the students, there would be a flexible timetable – a student would be able to do a different class / piece of work and catch up later in the week.
- For sickness, there may be a pool of supply teachers with knowledge of the KS working style to draw upon, especially for long term illness.
- Teaching assistants would also be able to help with mentoring.

If a student is more suited to HCC, could they transfer across?

- If there are vacancies then yes. There would be the same admissions policies for the two academies as at present in the existing schools.

Would there be sharing of facilities?

- Both schools would be separate, although if there is a large event, this could be possible.

What happens if funding changes?

- The funding agreement will hopefully be confirmed by late autumn. Until then, the funding allocations will only be indicative.

Notes of a meeting between parents of children at Trafalgar Junior, and Kunskapsskolan (KS) and the local authority (LA), held at Trafalgar Junior School, on Monday, 27th April 2009

Present: KS: Steve Bolingbroke; LA: Matthew Paul and Richard Portas.

The following questions and concerns were raised during the meeting:

Who is accountable for the academy?

- KS would set up a charitable trust, which would ensure it is strictly not-for-profit. The academy would be run by the charitable trust, but would have representatives from stakeholder groups.
- If the school is deemed to be failing by Ofsted, the Department for Children, Schools and Families can take over the school.
- There is a seven-year rolling contract, so if the sponsor were to be failing at that stage, the contract would not be renewed.
- The authority is a co-sponsor, so would be involved throughout, via governance and the development of a Memorandum of Understanding with KS.

How would the programme be delivered?

- There is a project steering group who oversee the project.
- A project management company (Appleyards) has been brought in to deliver the programme.
- It is important that the programme is not rushed through, hence the proposed opening date of September 2010.
- If the local authority is not completely satisfied with the proposals, they would not go ahead.
- The buildings would be leased to KS over a 125-year period.

When would the buildings be finished?

- 2013 – it is not a three-year building programme, but that is how the money is allocated. There would inevitably be some disruption throughout that period, but the construction company that would be selected would have to be able to demonstrate a track record of safe, well-managed construction projects.

Is there any other funding if the local authority doesn't decide to go with the academies programme?

- There is no plan B – the authority is the lowest-funded borough in London, so there will not be funds available from the authority's own resources. Richmond has been ranked last out of 70 local authorities who have not yet been invited to join the Government's Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme.

Have KS any experience of taking over a school?

- KS have converted six schools, so have experience of adapting sites for schools.
- The largest school KS run in Sweden has 450 pupils.

- KS would look to split the schools into two smaller communities ('houses'), where some facilities are shared. This model has been effective in other schools in the UK.

How would the transition period work with such little space?

- There would be money to refurbish the school while the transition is taking place.
- Tutoring may start quite early in the process, even if subject lessons are not changed.
- There are ideas of how to phase in subject lessons, but the whole transition period would be examined in detail during the feasibility stage.
- Staff training would also be essential to allow the KS style of teaching.

What happens to children who do not want to learn?

- Children would be given earned autonomy, where they would have to prove capable of working with increased flexibility.
- In Sweden, schools are not allowed to exclude children. The personalised approach makes it easier to manage children's behaviour and produce strategies that would prevent poor behaviour.
- KS would fit with the borough's exclusion policies, along with admissions, etc. This will be agreed in a Memorandum of Understanding, where the LA is a co-sponsor.

What would happen to the current teachers? Would KS need more staff?

- Additional training for staff would not involve full-time education and would not discredit their current qualifications.
- Teachers would not be expected to teach all subjects, but would be expected to facilitate learning throughout subjects. They would have their specialisms, as of now.
- All staff would be transferred through TUPE regulations. If some do not wish to stay, then that would be discussed at a later date, although teachers in Sweden love this style of teaching.
- Some pressures would be taken off teachers; for example, educational specialists would do the teaching plans.
- There would be no additional staff – teachers are used differently to manage the curriculum model.
- Teaching assistants could be used, especially for mentoring.

Why is the whole borough not using this model?

- A number of schools in the country are using these techniques, but KS use them in a particular way. KS want beacon schools for the future.
- Other schools in the borough have developed their own techniques for improving performance, some of which involve a degree of personalised learning.

Would the children be 'guinea pigs' during this process?

- No – KS currently have 10,000 pupils in their schools in Sweden, so they will be able to draw upon that experience.
- Sometimes change can be beneficial and this is the aim of the project.

How do children in Sweden deal with the transition to KS schools?

- Traditional Swedish schools are similar to England, where children are gradually phased in.

- KS aim to combine the best of their Swedish model with the best of the two schools here to create an environment that would improve local young people's attainment.
- KS would work with children, and their parents, to work out how they can be become better motivated and specific priorities would be set on an individual basis.

What about harder-to-reach parents?

- KS would try to meet and engage with the parents. The KS model gives the parents a specific person to contact, allowing easier access. This should increase parent participation.

How many children would there be per tutor?

- 20.
- The tutor groups would be of the same age ranges.

What would happen if the child does not like the tutor?

- The tutor would be changed – it is important to have a strong, workable relationship between the child and his/her tutor.
- Teachers would be trained to mentor, so hopefully this would not be an issue.

Would there still be the same options?

- Yes – there would be the same range of GCSEs and BTECs, etc.
- All pupils would learn the core subjects, such as mathematics, science and English. All children would also learn a language to a qualification standard, though not necessarily to GCSE level.

Notes of a meeting between Edgar Road Community Centre users, Kunskapsskolan (KS) and the local authority (LA), held at Edgar Road Community Centre, Edgar Road, Hounslow, on Tuesday, 28 April 2009

Present: KS: Steve Bolingbroke and Patricia Hamhazee; LA: Matthew Paul; Appleyards: Marilyn Hodges and Clive Ledger; EMAG: Prehlad Dhall and Ashi Dhillon.

The following questions and concerns were raised during the meeting:

How would children be admitted to the Whitton academy?

- The admissions policy would stay as it is currently, with children attending linked primary schools taking priority over other children.

Would the academy allow pupils to wear headscarves, turbans, etc.?

- The academy would be sensitive to the needs of pupils of all faiths and backgrounds.
- It is proposed that the uniform would be changed, in discussion with the pupils themselves.

What ages would the academy serve?

- The proposal is for an 11-18 school. (Steve Bolingbroke asked if attendees felt that post-16 provision would be a good idea, and there was broad support for a sixth form because of continuity and a perception that the colleges were difficult to get into. When asked if post-16 provision offering a limited range of courses would still be attractive, attendees seemed less sure.)

Some academies have failed, so how would an Academy at Whitton succeed?

- The Government's academies programme was initially aimed at turning round the worst 100 or so schools in England, so some of the academies had faced great challenges in improving standards; but the programme had been expanded to include schools such as Whitton, which had improved but needed new resources to improve it further to the point where its educational provision would be outstanding.
- KS do not currently run any schools in England, but run 23 schools in Sweden very successfully.

Would RE be taught?

- Yes, this is a Government requirement, but it would be multi-faith.

Could speakers of minority languages be brought in to help pupils with English as an additional language?

- This sounds like a very useful idea and would be explored further.
- KS schools in Sweden teach six languages, and KS are looking to open schools in the USA, India and other countries, so there would be the possibility of exchange visits.

How would the timetable allow some pupils to study in the morning and others in the afternoon?

- The KS educational model recognises that pupils learn in different ways and some study best in the morning whereas others study more effectively in the afternoon. Each pupil's abilities and needs would be met appropriately through a variety of learning methods – ordinary lessons, lectures, one-to-ones, workshops, etc., as appropriate.

How would the academy tackle racism?

- It would value every learner so that they feel included.
- It would deal very firmly with any instances of racism or bullying, and part of the personal tutor's role would be to deal with any problems that the pupils encounter.
- Some KS schools in Sweden have a high proportion of BME pupils, particularly from the Somali and Asian communities, and they have an excellent record in tackling inequality and discrimination and in promoting diversity.

Would each class have 20 children in it?

- Not necessarily; as some sessions, especially lectures, would be larger, and some, e.g. one-to-one tutorials, would be smaller.

Public Meeting at Whitton School, 5 May 2009

Purpose: Engagement meeting to further develop feedback on Academies proposals prior to formal statutory school closure consultation.

Number of attendees: Approx. 100 people

Meeting Hosts

Marilyn Hodges	Education Services, Appleyards (Chairperson)
Nick Whitfield	Director of Children's Services and Culture, London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
Steve Bolingbroke	Managing Director, Kunskapsskolan UK

Content of meeting

1. Presentations by Nick Whitfield and Steve Bolingbroke
2. Interactive table discussions on defined topics
3. Question and Answer session

Introductions and Presentations

Ms Hodges introduced the meeting by confirming that Appleyards had been appointed by the Department for Children, Schools and Families to manage the feasibility phase of the academy development process.

Ms Hodges explained that the purpose of the public meeting was to build on the extensive engagement carried out by both Kunskapsskolan (KS) and the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames (LBRuT) over the previous year, with the aim of consolidating views and opinions for a series of proposed engagement meetings with staff of Whitton School to develop the education vision and initial curriculum plans. This information would be represented to the communities as part of a non-statutory consultation on the Academies proposals to be held in September and October.

Ms Hodges explained that whilst she was sure there were many questions still to be answered, both KS and LBRuT wanted to ensure sufficient time was available for a series of discussions in groups at each table. These were the groups that would provide invaluable information for the shaping the vision and curriculum planning for the academies. However, each table would also be given an opportunity to record questions – as many as possible being dealt with in the question and answer session at the end.

However, even if specific questions were not answered on the day, summaries of the table discussions and answers to questions raised would be posted on the Academies website as soon as possible and therefore available to all.

Mr Bolingbroke provided a brief overview of the KS ethos and vision for personalised learning and the aspirations for KS's involvement in the academies in Richmond upon Thames.

Mr Whitfield spoke about LBRuT's involvement and commitment to the academies programme. He confirmed that whilst the authority was committed to the two KS

academies proposed at HCC and Whitton School, a final decision would not be made until the end of Feasibility.

Mr Whitfield also confirmed that a statutory consultation process would be undertaken by the authority leading to a decision by the authority as to whether to approve closure of the existing schools so allowing the academies to open. This consultation process would be undertaken in September and October. Further details would be issued as the programme of consultation was developed.

Interactive Table Discussions

Groups of approximately six to eight people plus a facilitator were formed on seventeen tables – each table given the following five specific topics to discuss:

- Curriculum
- Parental involvement
- Post-16 provision
- Specialisms
- Buildings

Each table was given approximately 40 minutes to debate views and aspirations under each topic.

Notes were taken by the facilitators, and summaries are available at: <http://www.richmondacademies.org/its.html>.

Questions and answers session

Tables were offered the opportunity of confirm to the meeting as a whole the key issues discussed in the table discussions.

Specific questions were then selected from the more general questions recorded at the tables and Mr Bolingbroke and Mr Whitfield provided as full an answer as possible.

The number of questions and issues recorded at each table was too numerous to effectively answer at the meeting. Also many of the issues required further development of the academies plans before being able to provide a full answer.

Mr Bolingbroke confirmed that he had already consolidated 16 key questions to be answered in the feasibility phase and the information gained from the meeting would be reviewed to determine whether additional key questions should be added to the list.

Furthermore all other questions would be reviewed and as soon as answers were available they would be posted on the academies website. Everybody was asked to monitor and view the website and to let Appleyards know if they felt a specific question had not been addressed.

The website address was confirmed as <http://www.richmondacademies.org>.

Summary

Some of the key points and issues raised at the meeting were:

- Where would our students go while the rebuild is happening?
- How would personalised learning fit within the English education system?
- Would the governing body still include parent-governors?
- Why do KS want do this?
- Would extra or fewer staff be required?
- What would happen to The Gateway centre for pupils with autistic spectrum conditions once the academy is open?

Notes of a meeting between parents of children at Chase Bridge, and Kunskapsskolan (KS), held at Chase Bridge Primary School, on Tuesday, 16 June 2009

Present: KS: Steve Bolingbroke and Theo Kjellberg.

The following questions and concerns were raised during the meeting:

- How are the teachers at the proposed academies reacting to your plans?
- How do you motivate your students? What about those that have very little ambition?
- How do you deal with underachievers?
- What is your student/teacher ratio? How does it compare to the current ratio?
- Would the academies retain their connection to the community?
- What length of contract would you have with the DCSF? Can they cancel it if you do not perform?
- How do you assess incoming students to fit into your model?
- Why are you opening academies? What is in it for you?
- Would there be a sixth form provision?
- How would the school be governed?