

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS, SKILLS AND  
EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT****DATE: 28 JULY 2015****LEAD OFFICER: JULIE FISHER, DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE****SUBJECT: TO DETERMINE A PROPOSAL TO MAKE A SIGNIFICANT  
CHANGE TO THREE SCHOOLS IN EWELL****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

In response to a public consultation process the Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement is asked to determine whether to approve the re-organisation of primary schools in Ewell.

This proposal allows for the conversion of West Ewell Infants and Ewell Grove Infants to primary school status in conjunction with the GLF proposal to convert Danetree Junior School to primary school status. The joint re-organisation will create more school places in Ewell.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

Taking into account the perceived educational benefits, the area pupil place planning forecast and all consultation responses it is recommended that the Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement determines whether:

1. West Ewell Infant and Nursery School changes to become a two form entry (2 FE) primary school with a nursery in September 2017.
2. Ewell Grove Infant and Nursery School changes to become a 2 FE primary school with a nursery in September 2017

(NB. As Danetree is an academy its Governing Body and the GLF Trust have already determined that it will convert to primary status subject to approval by Surrey County Council that the two infant schools will become primaries. Once Surrey County Council has determined this proposal GLF will submit its Business Case to the Secretary of State for Education to seek similar approval through the Fast Track process for making a Significant Change to an academy).

3. If the changes at all three schools are approved, Surrey County Council (SCC) undertakes building and refurbishment programmes on each school site to ensure the required accommodation is provided.

**REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:**

There has been an increasing trend in the demand for places in primary schools in Epsom and Ewell Borough. Despite both temporary and permanent expansions of a number of local schools there remains a need for one more permanent form of entry to serve families living in the Ewell and North West Epsom primary planning areas.

This will ensure a sufficiency of places up to the end of the current forecast period which is 2025.

The governing bodies of all three schools are supportive of a change to primary status as they believe this will have a positive impact on standards of achievement for all pupils and would offer stability and continuity to young children throughout their primary education. The proposal would also give parents more choice of schools in Ewell and the important security of Key Stage Two places in the locality.

**DETAILS:**

**Business Case**

1. The 1996 Education Act places a duty on local authorities to ensure that there are sufficient school places within their jurisdiction. Surrey has had an unprecedented increase in demand for primary school places over the last ten years and Epsom and Ewell Borough has reflected this trend. SCC's pupil forecast data indicates that there is still a need for more primary school places across Epsom and Ewell Borough. A number of primary school expansions have already been completed in Epsom town and elsewhere and the residual demand is now in the Ewell and North West (NW) Epsom school place planning areas.
2. The six Ewell primary schools have a combined Published Admission Number (PAN) of 310 places per year and the forecast demand indicates a need for one more form of entry (1 FE), that is to say, 30 more Reception class places each year. This should be sufficient for the immediate and longer term.
3. Three of the schools in Ewell are already primary schools and the three remaining schools, which are the subject of this proposal, operate as single Key Stage schools and there are insufficient junior places to meet the infant pupil rolls.

	PAN	+/_	YR	Y1	Y2	I	Jun inc bulges	Jun +/-	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	J	Total
2015/16	310	-14	324	304	313	941	282	10	272	248	244	230	994	1935
2016/17	310	-26	336	323	304	963	282	3	279	274	249	245	1047	2010
2017/18	310	-13	323	334	321	978	248	-26	274	279	274	249	1076	2054
2018/19	310	-7	317	319	330	966	248	-39	287	273	278	273	1111	2077
2019/20	310	-2	312	314	316	942	248	-47	295	286	272	277	1130	2072
2020/21	310	-26	312	308	310	930	248	-35	283	294	285	271	1133	2063
2021/22	310	-4	314	309	305	928	248	-29	277	282	293	284	1136	2064
2022/23	310	-4	314	311	305	930	248	-25	273	277	281	292	1123	2053
2023/24	310	-5	315	311	308	934	248	-25	273	272	276	280	1101	2035
2024/25	310	-4	314	312	308	934	248	-27	275	272	271	275	1093	2027

4. The chart above represents the situation in the Ewell planning area if we do not change the three single phase schools into primaries, if there is no more house building in the area and if we do not add 'bulge' classes.

## Why Are We Proposing Danetree is Four Forms of Entry?

5. The NW Epsom school place planning area serves the new housing developments on the former NHS hospital sites such as Manor Park and Noble Park. This area also has a rising demand for primary school places. There are only three schools in this planning area and they are all now at their site capacity and cannot be further expanded. As the new estates are not yet complete we need to supply another form of entry somewhere in the area. Danetree School is a relatively short distance from these estates and therefore SCC officers, the school's governors and GLF, believe that it is possible to expand this school to help meet the wider local need and continue to provide a good quality of education.

6. NW Epsom

	PAN+ bulge	+/_	YR	Y1	Y2	I	Jun pl inc bulges	Jun +/-	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	J	Total
2015/16	240	31	209	202	205	616	210	13	197	182	180	176	735	1351
2016/17	210	-17	227	212	205	644	240	17	223	198	183	182	786	1430
2017/18	210	-7	217	228	214	659	240	19	221	224	199	184	828	1487
2018/19	210	-8	218	218	230	666	210	-20	230	222	225	200	877	1543
2019/20	210	-8	218	220	219	657	210	-36	246	231	223	226	926	1583
2020/21	210	-9	219	219	221	659	210	-26	236	247	232	224	939	1598
2021/22	210	-12	222	221	220	663	210	-28	238	237	248	233	956	1619
2022/23	210	-12	222	223	221	666	210	-26	236	238	237	248	959	1625
2023/24	210	-14	224	222	223	669	210	-27	237	236	238	237	948	1617
2024/25	210	-15	225	224	223	672	210	-29	239	237	236	238	950	1622

7. The current situation in Ewell is that there is a total of ten Reception classes across the six schools (at 30 pupils per class this represents 300 Reception places). If the re-organisation goes ahead as proposed there would be 360 Reception places available each year in Ewell (equivalent to 12 Reception classes) but some pupils would travel in from the NW Epsom area.

8. There are currently eight Year 3 classes provided in the Ewell Planning Area but if the three schools are re-organised as suggested this would mean there would be 12 classes available to match the Key Stage 1 provision and add capacity.

9. The net impact of this proposal, in terms of the total number of primary school places that would be on offer in the Ewell planning area is shown in the table below. It should be assumed that some of the surplus places will be filled by pupils from the adjacent planning area and by parental preference.

10. Ewell –proposed scenario

	PAN	+/_	YR	Y1	Y2	I	Jun inc bulges	Jun +/-	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6	J	Total
2016/17	370	34	336	323	304	963	282	3	279	274	249	245	1047	2010
2017/18	360	37	323	334	321	978	290	4	274	279	274	249	1076	2054
2018/19	360	43	317	319	330	966	290	3	287	273	278	273	1111	2077
2019/20	360	48	312	314	316	942	374	79	295	286	272	277	1130	2072
2020/21	360	48	312	308	310	930	374	91	283	294	285	271	1133	2063
2021/22	360	46	314	309	305	928	374	97	277	282	293	284	1136	2064
2022/23	360	46	314	311	305	930	374	101	273	277	281	292	1123	2053
2023/24	360	45	315	311	308	934	374	101	273	272	276	280	1101	2035
2024/25	360	46	314	312	308	934	374	99	275	272	271	275	1093	2027

### Ensuring a good quality education

11. As already noted above, all the other Ewell schools are primaries with Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils so, once children are admitted, there is no need for them to transfer schools until they are of secondary age. It is understood that this continuity of primary education, in the same school, gives stability and supports good learning outcomes for the majority of pupils. This is the other key reason for this proposal.

### Reducing journeys between schools

12. In addition, the proposal potentially reduces the need for additional school journeys by parents having to transport siblings from both infant and junior schools. In theory more children should be able to walk to school and there should be a reduction of school traffic in the area.

### More places at good schools

13. It is the ambition of SCC that all Surrey schools will be judged to be at least 'Good' by 2017. At their last OFSTED inspections, in 2009 and 2010 respectively, Ewell Grove and West Ewell infant schools received Outstanding (Grade 1) judgements. At its most recent OFSTED inspection in June 2014 Danetree was judged to be a good school (Grade 2). All three schools are popular and frequently over-subscribed. This proposal therefore meets the government's guidance to local authorities that successful and popular schools are expanded where there is a need for more places.

### How will this proposal be implemented?

14. Because we need to meet the demand for the additional places and also manage the transition of pupils between key stages and schools, the proposal can only go ahead if all three schools agree to change to primary.

15. Assuming there is strong local support for the proposal, and the Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement agrees that it should go ahead, there will need to be a successful planning application to enable the required site developments. If this is also successful we can begin to make the changes in two stages.

### **Stage 1 Danetree Junior School**

16. GLF propose that in September 2016 Danetree School converts to primary status, initially taking a Reception cohort of 90 pupils and increasing the number of places available to 4 FE (PAN 120) in 2018.
17. In 2016 Danetree's junior PAN will continue up to 160 junior places (Year 3) will be offered as necessary. In 2017 Danetree Primary School will cease to maintain a junior PAN but if there are parents wishing to move their children from a primary school to join siblings at Danetree this may be possible providing the school has the accommodation.

### **Stage 2 West Ewell Infant School and Nursery**

18. It is proposed that in September 2017 the PAN at West Ewell is reduced to 60 and it becomes a primary school. This means that its 2014 Reception classes will be the first cohort to stay on at the school until the end of their primary education. All the pupils in this cohort, and the 2015 Reception year group, will have the opportunity to remain at West Ewell Primary School if they want to. However, the school will not admit any pupils above Year 3 in 2017 but will grow incrementally year on year until 2020.

### **Stage 2 Ewell Grove Infant and Nursery School**

19. It is proposed that in September 2017 the PAN at Ewell Grove is reduced to 60 and it becomes a primary school. This means that its 2014 Reception classes will be the first cohort to stay on at the school until the end of their primary education. All pupils in this class and the 2015 Reception class will be able to stay at Ewell Grove through to Year 6 despite the PAN being 70 for these years. However Ewell Grove Primary School will not admit any pupils above Year 3 in 2017 but will grow incrementally year on year until 2020.

### **Siblings**

20. For one year (from September 2016) it may be possible for Year 3 pupils with a sibling at Danetree to move there so that both children are in the same school. It will not be possible for children already at Danetree to move back to join siblings in Ewell Grove or West Ewell Primary as they will not have junior classes above Year 3 at this stage.
21. After 2017 if parents wish to move a younger child into Danetree to join an older sibling they will have to apply for any spare places or join the school's waiting list. This will be managed by the Danetree/GLF Admissions Officer as an in year transition.

## CONSULTATION

22. A four week statutory consultation on this proposal was launched on 15 June 2015 and Notices were published at all three schools. A joint GLF and SCC consultation document (Annex 1) was produced and circulated to all parents, to the residents living in close proximity to the schools; to other local schools and nurseries and to the local Elected Members of the County and Borough councils.
23. Public meetings were held at each school to outline the proposal and to answer questions from stakeholders. Their comments and concerns were recorded and are attached to this report as Annex 2.
24. The three meetings were attended by a mixture of staff, governors, parents and residents where everyone had the opportunity to ask questions. Their comments were noted and a summary of each meeting is attached to this report. SCC also received 294 individual written responses. These are summarised in the table below:

School	No. attending meeting	Number of written responses	Agree	Disagree	Don't Know
Danetree	20	106	80 (86%)	20 (11%)	6 (3%)
Ewell Grove	20	117	101 (86%)	13 (11%)	3 (3%)
West Ewell	30	71	60 (85%)	11 (15%)	0

25. The main areas of concern are summarised below:
- The proposed size of Danetree (4 FE) is too large in comparison to other local schools
  - Parking and traffic congestion around the three schools. This comment was mainly made by residents but some parents also felt this to be the case.
  - The distance between the new housing estates in north Epsom and Danetree will not facilitate walking to school. Some people stated that they would prefer a new school being built on the hospital estates site.
  - There was opposition to the Danetree expansion from Epsom Primary School as they feel that this proposal will affect their intake of pupils. The school has been admitting pupils from the Noble Park and Manor Park estates in the past three years in bulge classes. It is not possible to permanently expand this school due to site restrictions.
  - A few respondents felt that the Ewell Grove site was too small for a 2 FE school while a significant number felt that the village needed a primary school and thus supported the proposal.
26. Other comments were that SCC should have considered expanding the Wallace Fields schools; and that more new schools should be built. There is also some concern about the lack of space and on site sports facilities at

Ewell Grove and West Ewell Infants. A small number commented on the impact of more building work at West Ewell. However, it is envisaged that this will be minimal as it is mainly internal refurbishment.

27. Those people who supported the proposal commented that they supported the concept of the pupils staying in one all through primary school instead of being forced to move schools at seven years of age. Many parents commented on their confidence in their child's current school and welcomed the opportunity for their child and siblings to remain at their preferred school. There were very few concerns or negative views included in the responses for Ewell Grove. Some noted that the site is small, would lack sufficient play space, and would necessitate travelling off site for some PE lessons for older children.
28. There were also concerns expressed regarding accommodating siblings during transition years, and recommendations for road safety improvements to ensure safety of a larger number of children walking to school.

### Summary

29. **Responses relating to Danetree:** Most parents were in favour of the change and there was strong support from staff at Danetree. It is mainly residents who disagree with the proposal, although a minority of parent respondents also had concerns. The Danetree responses have been considered by GLF and the governing body and will form part of the Business Case which will be submitted to The Regional Commissioner's Office shortly.
30. **Responses relating to Ewell Grove:** Strong support from parents who believe that it will offer more educational opportunity and will be less unsettling for their children as it removes the need for them to choose another school at seven years. Many parents express the view that traffic will not be any worse as people are willing to walk to school as they live in relatively close proximity to Ewell Grove. There was relatively little disagreement from residents and only concern expressed about traffic.
31. **Responses relating to West Ewell:** Strong support expressed by parents with reservations about parking and traffic. An acknowledgement that there was a need for more school places and a number of positive comments about the leadership of the school and the perceived improvement in education that an all through primary school would offer.

### **RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:**

32. The key risk to this proposal is the dependency on a successful planning application to develop the Ewell Grove and Danetree sites. Ewell Grove is located on a small site within a conservation area with a number of protected specimen trees. Careful building design and planning has taken account of these factors and pre-application advice has been sought from the Planning Officer throughout the design process.
33. Danetree is on a large site but situated on a residential road. The proposed capacity of the school places a degree of risk and again pre-planning

application advice has been sought from Highways and Planning to try and mitigate any impact on the local community.

34. There is no requirement to submit a planning application for the development of West Ewell Infant school as there is no need to build anything more on site. However, it is acknowledged that vehicular access to the school gates is restricted. The revised School Travel Plan seeks to mitigate this challenge particularly once the school reaches its full capacity.

#### **Financial and Value for Money Implications**

35. The cost of the proposed projects will be funded through the Schools Basic Need Capital Programme and funding for this scheme is included in the current 2015 -20 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)
36. Once the DfE have confirmed the conversion to primary for Danetree school, detailed options and costs will be developed as part of the scheme business case at each phase of construction. Options for build solutions and delivery will be considered as part of the business analysis to ensure value for money.

#### **Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer**

37. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on the Council to secure that efficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the population in its area. In doing so, the Council is required to contribute to the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on the Council to secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available in its area. There is a legal duty on the Council therefore to secure the availability of efficient education in its area and sufficient schools to enable this.
38. This report sets out how the Authority will meet its duties in response to the increasing demand for primary school places in Ewell.
39. The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2014 sets out the regulations that apply to prescribed alterations of maintained schools. There is an equivalent set of regulations for academies. There is also departmental guidance on making significant changes to all types of school; this includes school expansions. The statutory and non-statutory guidance has been followed with regard to this consultation.
40. The Schools Admissions Code 2014 sets out the regulations and guidance in relation to admissions criteria. Ewell Grove and West Ewell Infants are Community Schools and, as such, their admissions arrangements are set by SCC and are in line with the Code. Danetree is an academy within GLF Schools and its admissions arrangements are set by the Governing Body in line with the Schools Admissions Code. The proposed expansion will not affect any group of pupils adversely as the same admissions criteria will apply, although it is proposed that Danetree will remove its junior PAN in 2018 and SCC intends to apply for an in year variation to the PANs of West Ewell and Ewell Grove Infant Schools in 2016 in order to facilitate the transition of pupils between all three schools.

## **Equalities and Diversity**

41. The public sector equality duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) applies to the decision to be made by the Cabinet Member in this report. There is a requirement when deciding upon the recommendations to have due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics, foster good relations between such groups and eliminate any unlawful discrimination. These matters are dealt with in the equalities paragraphs of the report and in the attached equalities impact assessment.
42. An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) was made in relation to this proposal and an equalities monitoring statement was included on the consultation response forms. There are no direct equalities implications for groups with protected characteristics arising out of the proposal. The proposed increase in provision would be open to all applicants with the highest priority being given to Looked After Children, and those who have an Education, Health and Care Plan, thus supporting provision for the most vulnerable young people.

## **Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications**

43. All three schools have robust safeguarding policies which are monitored by the designated Child Protection Lead Officer, regularly reviewed by the governing body and are subject to OFSTED inspection. Site access and security, both during the proposed building programme and afterwards, will be considered and addressed in the planning and design of these building projects, if the proposal is agreed.

## **Climate change/carbon emissions implications**

44. SCC attaches great importance to being environmentally aware and wishes to show leadership in cutting carbon emissions and tackling climate change. A safe walking route to each school will be identified for use by parents and pupils and facilities will be provided on campus for pupils and adults who cycle or use scooters to get to school.
45. The proposed additional school provision is centred close to an area of demographic demand and therefore will enable young people to attend a local school; thus reducing the need for car journeys to other schools within the borough.

## **Section 151 Commentary**

46. The Section 151 Officer confirms that funding for these schemes have been included in the 2015-20 MTFP. Scheme costs are expected to be contained within the funding allocated. More detailed costings will be developed as the scheme progress to tender and the Medium Term Financial Planning will be updated accordingly.

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:**

- Subject to Secretary of State approval, Danetree Junior School will be designated a primary school with effect from September 2016.

- Subject to SCC approval Ewell Grove and West Ewell Infant Schools will be designated Primary schools with effect from September 2017
  - All three schools will offer nursery provision from 2016: These places will be for a mixture of 2, 3 and 4 year old children to meet the needs of the area.
  - Three planning applications will be submitted in the autumn of 2015 and, if approved, building will commence
  - SCC will submit an in year variation of PAN request to the Schools Adjudicator for reductions to the admissions numbers at both West Ewell and Ewell Grove Infant Schools in 2016.
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**Contact Officer:**

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**Consulted:**

Parents of pupils and prospective pupils of Danetree Junior, West Ewell infant and Nursery and Ewell Grove Infant and Nursery schools  
Staff and Governors of the schools  
Other local schools and nurseries  
Local Councillors  
Local residents

**Annexes:**

Consultation Document – Annex 1, question and answer sheet from the public meetings - annexes 2, 3 and 4  
Equalities Impact Assessment – Annex 5

**Sources/background papers:**

All paper consultation responses for West Ewell and Ewell Grove to be available at the meeting

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