

**CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE &  
SKILLS COMMITTEE****Agenda Item 52**

Brighton &amp; Hove City Council

|                          |  |  |                          |
|--------------------------|--|--|--------------------------|
| <b>Subject:</b>          | <b>Proposal to change the age range of Blatchington Mill School to remove sixth form provision</b> |  |                          |
| <b>Date of Meeting:</b>  | <b>15 January 2018</b>   |  |                          |
| <b>Report of:</b>        | <b>Executive Director of Families, Children and Learning</b>                                       |  |                          |
| <b>Contact Officer:</b>  | <b>Name:</b>   | <b>Richard barker</b>                      | <b>Tel: 01273 290732</b> |
|                          | <b>Email:</b>  | <b>Richard.barker@brighton-hove.gov.uk</b> |                          |
| <b>Ward(s) affected:</b> | <b>All</b>   |  |                          |

**FOR GENERAL RELEASE****1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND POLICY CONTEXT**

- 1.1 It is proposed to change the age Range of Blatchington Mill Secondary school from 11 to 18 as it is at present to 11 to 16 from September 2019.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is to report on the outcome of consultation on this proposal and to seek approval to proceed to the next stage of the statutory process, which is the publication of Statutory Notices.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- 2.1 To note the responses to the consultation undertaken regarding the proposal in 1.1 above.
- 2.2 To agree to the publication of the required Statutory Notices to progress this proposal.
- 2.3 That following the statutory notice period the matter is referred back to the meeting of the Children and Young People and Skills Committee on 6 March 2018 for a final decision.

**3. CONTEXT/ BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

- 3.1 There has been a focus in recent years on the state of financial resourcing for post-16 provision where funding has declined. Within Brighton and Hove the average size of the sixth form colleges is around 2500 students, while the average size of school sixth forms is approximately 200. The benchmark figures given for a financially viable Post-16 provision differ, but are generally considered to be in the range of 200-250 students as a minimum.
- 3.2 The Department for Education recognises that sixth forms with less than 250 students are at risk of not being financially viable. Blatch six has always had the capacity to take 250 students but only twice in the past decade have numbers been any higher than 180, with recent figures being much lower than this.

- 3.3 During both the Sussex Area Review and the Local Area Review, concerns were expressed about the viability of post 16 provision where numbers of students are below 200 students across the 6<sup>th</sup> form.
- 3.4 In March 2016, guidance was issued by the Department of Education which states: "The Area Review encourages school sixth forms to collaborate to a greater extent to help drive efficiencies. Similar provision in sixth forms is often duplicated in relatively small geographical areas, when it could be delivered in a more joined up way. This may be particularly the case where sixth forms are very small, as some evidence raises concerns about costs, breadth of offer and outcomes for these providers".
- 3.5 Blatch six provision, with numbers as they currently stand, is not considered to be sustainable financially. The school needs to consider the consequences on the whole institution as well as on sixth form students when group sizes are not at the optimum for learning.
- 3.6 Changing the age range of the school from 11-18 to 11 to 16, will allow resources to be focused on improving further the outcomes and opportunities for Years 7 to 11

#### **4. ANALYSIS & CONSIDERATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 4.1 The alternative option would be for the school to continue as an 11 to 18 school with a sixth form. This is not considered to be financially sustainable and will not provide the best outcomes for students.

#### **5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION**

- 5.1 A consultation document was prepared (attached at Appendix 1) and distributed to all pupils, staff and parents / guardians at the school on 6 November 2017.
- 5.2 The consultation document was also hosted on the councils consultation portal for a period of 6 weeks from 6 November 2017.
- 5.3 As part of the public consultation process a public meeting was held at Blatchington Mill School on Monday 13 November 2017. This meeting was noted and a copy of the notes is included at Appendix 2.
- 5.4 This initial stage of the consultation ended on 18 December 2017. The responses to this consultation exercise have been collated and analysed and are shown at Appendix 3 to this report.
- 5.5 In summary 30 responses were received to this consultation of which 16 were in favour, 13 were against the proposal and one respondent was unsure.
- 5.6 Those in support of the proposal said they understood the rationale for the efficient use of resources and the size of the school sixth form has meant that it cannot deliver the vibrant atmosphere required for a successful sixth form.

- 5.7 Those who did not support the proposal raised concerns about the impact on those young people in need of support at points of transition, continuity for young people who wish to feel secure when studying and the impact on teachers who specialise in sixth form teaching.

## 6. CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The senior leadership team and governors of the school proposed the change and therefore believe that changing the age range to remove the sixth form is in the best interest of the school and its students.
- 6.2 Public consultation on the proposal to change the age range of Blatchington Mill School has shown that of those who responded to the consultation there is marginally more support for the change than to remain with the current position.
- 6.3 It is therefore recommended to move to the next stage of the consultation process and publish the statutory notice.

## 7. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

### Financial Implications:

- 7.1 The school has a current licensed deficit agreement for 2017/18 for three years and to balance its budget in 2019/20. The closure of the sixth form will result in a reduction in funding for the school of approximately £500,000 in a full financial year; however this should be offset by a reduction in costs in staffing. Given the pupil numbers in the sixth form have been reducing in recent years, the costs of the sixth form have been supported by the main school budget. The closure of the sixth form should leave the school in a better financial position in the longer term.

*Finance Officer Consulted: Andy Moore*

*Date: 07/12/17*

### Legal Implications:

- 7.2 If it is agreed to proceed with the proposed change in age range it will be necessary for the Council to publish statutory notices in accordance with section 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and associated regulations. Following publication there will then follow a period of 4 weeks during which any person can comment or object to the proposal.
- 7.3 A final decision on the proposed change in age range will need to be taken within 2 months of the end of the representation period.

*Lawyer Consulted: Serena Kynaston Date: 11/12/2017*

### Equalities Implications:

- 7.4 There are no equalities implications arising from this proposal.

Sustainability Implications:

7.5 There are no sustainability implications arising from this proposal

Any Other Significant Implications:

7.6 None

**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Appendices:**

1. Consultation document
2. Notes from public meeting held on 13 November 2017
3. Analysis of responses to the consultation
4. Draft Statutory Notice
5. Full proposal information

**Documents in Members' Rooms**

1. All responses to the consultation

**Background Documents**

None



## **Brighton & Hove**

### **CONSULTATION PAPER**

#### **PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF BLATCHINGTON MILL SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM COLLEGE FROM 11 TO 18 TO 11 TO 16 THUS REMOVING THE SIXTH FORM**

**- Inviting you to have your say -**

#### **Why are we consulting you?**

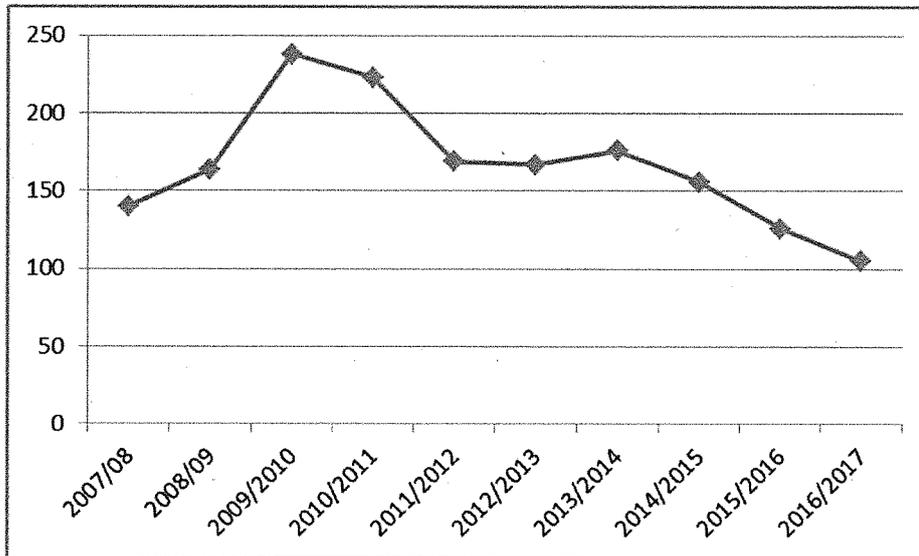
The council wishes to consult on a proposal to change the age range of Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College from 11 to 18 as it is at present to 11 to 16 thus removing the sixth form. The proposal, if implemented will be effective from August 2019 but there will be no admissions to Year 12 in September 2018. This consultation paper is published by Brighton & Hove City Council and explains the reasons for this proposal and the arrangements for consultation. At the end you will find a reply slip for you to let us know what you think. There is also some information about what happens after the consultation. The paper is being distributed to the schools' staff, pupils, governors and parents and other groups who may be interested in the proposal. It is also available on the Council' s website under the consultation portal.

This consultation is being conducted in accordance with the school organisation guidance which can be found by following this link <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools> published by the Department for Education in April 2016.

#### **Some background facts**

Education finances have been highlighted in the media over recent months. There has been a focus in recent years on the state of financial resourcing for post-16 where funding has declined. Within Brighton and Hove Local Authority the average size of the sixth form colleges is around 2500 students, while the average size of school sixth forms is approximately 200. The benchmark figures given for a financially viable Post-16 provision differ, but are generally considered to be in the range of 200-250 students as a minimum.

As a result economies of scale apply which means it is more expensive per student for schools to provide sixth form provision. The Department for Education recognises that sixth forms with less than 250 students are at risk of not being financially viable. Blatch six has always had the capacity to take 250 students but only twice in the past decade have numbers been any higher than 180, the intake of students is shown in the table below and details the gradual decline in numbers.



During both the Sussex Area Review and the Local Area Review, concerns were expressed about the viability of post 16 provision where numbers of students are below 200 students across the 6<sup>th</sup> form.

In March 2016, guidance was issued by the Department of Education which states: " The Area Review encourages school sixth forms to collaborate to a greater extent to help drive efficiencies. Similar provision in sixth forms is often duplicated in relatively small geographical areas, when it could be delivered in a more joined up way. This may be particularly the case where sixth forms are very small, as some evidence raises concerns about costs, breadth of offer and outcomes for these providers."

Over the past 20 years Blatchington Mill School has questioned students in the sixth form and Year 11 as to their choices. Studies have been completed using external companies as well as internal staff and the reality of the sixth form, as shown by the surveys is that;

- Students want to study courses that Blatch six is not able to offer
- Students like the social aspect and change of Post-16 environment of local colleges such as BHASVIC, Varndean, MET and other colleges further afield

Blatch six provision, with numbers as they currently stand, is not considered to be sustainable financially. The school needs to consider the consequences on the whole institution as well as on sixth form students when group sizes are not at the optimum for learning.

Changing the age range of the school from 11-18 to 11 to 16, will allow resources to be focused on improving further the outcomes and opportunities for Years 7 to 11, especially as there is currently a " bulge" in secondary school numbers across the city. This bulge grows ever more in September 2018 through to 2022.

Taking into account the range of factors above, this consultation proposes that the sixth form at Blatchington Mill will close when the current 2017/18 Year 12 students complete their studies in August 2019 and that there will be no further admissions to Year 12 from September 2018.

### **The proposal**

Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College currently offers education to students aged 11-18. The popularity of the main school, for 11-16 year olds, and the outcomes achieved by these students are both very successful. The sixth form phase, Blatch six, of Blatchington Mill School however, struggles to recruit enough students to maintain a suitable course offer, and outcomes in academic subjects are not as good as those in vocational subjects

This consultation is with regard to the proposal to not recruit new sixth form students from September 2018 at Blatch six so that 16-18 education is no longer part of the Blatchington Mill School offer.

This will mean that the sixth form, Blatch six, would close in August 2019; when the current (2017/18) Year 12 students complete their studies. No students will be removed from courses as a result of this closure. All current courses running will be honoured until their end point. The end point is defined as when a student has completed the normal duration of study and been entered for any relevant examinations once. No course currently studied by 2017/18 Year 12 students is due to take any longer than 2 academic years to complete.

### **Alternative Local Provision**

Hove students will still have access to a school sixth form at Hove Park 6 and also in the offer at Newman College and PACA College. Equally across Brighton and Hove the offer from BHASVIC, Varndean College and MET (Brighton) is also popular.

**What will be the impact of these changes?**

No current student will be affected by the proposed changes. All current courses at Blatch six will be taught until their completion; whether this is in July 2018 or July 2019.

**What does this mean if a student is already in Blatch six?**

Students currently in Blatch six will be able to continue their courses. In the event that this proposal is accepted, in September 2018 there will be a Year 13 cohort at Blatch six, but no Year 12. There will not be the option for any student who studied 1 year courses in Year 12 to begin 2 year courses at Blatch six in September 2018. However these kinds of courses will be available at Hove Park 6 and so study could commence at Hove Park 6.

**Can I still apply for a place in Blatch six?**

It is proposed that no applications will be taken for new (to sixth form) students starting in Blatch six from September 2018.

**What alternatives has the school considered?**

The school has considered many alternatives over the decades. In the past joint offers have been explored with 3 other providers. This was not deemed viable, or popular – with geographical distance a prohibitive issue for shared provision outside Hove.

The school has on regular occasions combined Year 12 and Year 13 classes in an attempt to make numbers financially viable. The school has also taught two subjects together previously with a core of common lessons and then further "break out" lessons on individual subjects. This is not considered to be sustainable, nor does it offer best quality teaching. The option for students to attend Hove Park 6 means that a school sixth form is still available locally for students studying post-16.

**What will be the impact on staff?**

Staff members have been consulted and will be able to continue to teach/work within the 11-16 school at Blatchington Mill.

**The Legal process**

The legal process for removing the sixth-form from Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College is to change the age range of the school from 11 to 18 as it is at present to 11 to 16.

As with any process of change, the interests of staff must also be considered carefully, and all staff and their unions will be consulted as part of this consultation.

## **Consultation arrangements**

We have arranged a public meeting to give parents, carers and other local people the opportunity to hear more about the proposal and to ask questions. This meeting will be held at Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College (Nevill Avenue, Hove, BN3 7BW) on Monday 13 November 2017 at 6pm. Anyone with an interest in the proposal is welcome to attend this meeting. The meeting will be attended by council officers and members of the schools' senior leadership teams and governing body.

At this stage, this is a proposal for consultation and no decision has been made. Your views are important. If, having read this document, you would like to comment on the proposal, there are several ways you may do so:

- You can complete and return the reply slip included in this document (either to Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College or to the Local Authority at Hove Town Hall)
- You can send a letter to Richard Barker, Head of School Organisation, Families, Children and Learning (Education and Skills), Brighton & Hove City Council, 1st Floor, Hove Town Hall Norton Road, Hove BN3 4AH
- You can complete a form online on the consultation portal of the Council' s website at [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/blatchington-mill](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/blatchington-mill)
- You can email your response: please address your email to [educationandinclusion@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:educationandinclusion@brighton-hove.gov.uk).

## **Replies must be received by 18<sup>th</sup> December 2017**

In the interests of economy, letters and emails will not be acknowledged or responded to.

## **The next stage**

All the views put forward during the consultation stage will be reported to the Children Young People and Skills Committee at a meeting on 15 January 2018. The views of the governing body will also be made clear in the report. The Committee will decide whether to progress to the next stage in the process.

If it is decided to move to the next stage the council publishes a Statutory Notice which describes the proposal. The notice remains open for a period of four weeks during which time objections to and comments on the proposal may be made by any person or group. Details of how to make an objection or comment are explained in the Statutory Notice.

The council has the authority to make the decision on whether to implement the proposal contained in the Statutory Notice but in doing so has to take account of guidance issued by the Department for Education. Any comments or objections have to be considered as part of the decision making process. The final decision regarding this proposed change will be made by the Children, Young People and Skills Committee at its meeting on 5 March 2018, taking into account the responses to the Statutory Notice and the views expressed by the governors of the school.

The proposals set out in this document are put forward as a basis for consultation only. It is stressed that *no decisions have yet been made* and that none will be made until consultations have been completed and all views carefully considered by Brighton & Hove City Council and the governors of the school. The consultation is however not a referendum and in reaching a decision at each stage of the process the Children & Young People and Skills Committee will need to take all factors into account, including the responses to consultation.

The table below sets out the timetable for this process.

| Date                                | Action  |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| By 3 November 2017                  | Decision of Executive Director, Families, Children & Learning following consultation with the Chair of the Children, Young People & Skills Committee to proceed with consultation |
| 6 November 2017                     | Commence Consultation   |
| 13 November 2017                    | Public meeting at Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College 6pm to 7pm  |
| 6 November to 18 December 2017      | Consultation period   |
| 19 December to 6 January 2018       | Analysis of responses received during the consultation  |
| 15 January 2018                     | CYPS to consider outcome of consultation and decide on whether to proceed to the publication of statutory notices.  |
| 19 January 2018                     | If agreed by CYPS, publication of statutory notices in Brighton & Hove Independent  |
| 19 January 2018 to 16 February 2018 | Four week representation period following publication of statutory notices  |
| 5 March 2018                        | Decision on whether to proceed with closure at Children, Young People and Skills Committee  |

The Children Young People and Skills Committee's major objective is to ensure the outcome of this consultation has local support and is in the best interests of children in Brighton and Hove.

The School has a catchment area which spans Hangleton and Knoll, Wish, Westbourne, Central Hove, Brunswick and Adelaide, Regency, Goldsmid, Hove Park and St Peter's and North Laine wards. The councillors for these wards are:

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Hangleton and Knoll</b>       | Cllrs Dawn Barnett, Tony Janio and Nick Lewry          |
| <b>Wish</b>                      | Cllrs Robert Nemeth and Gary Peltzer Dunn              |
| <b>Westbourne</b>                | Cllrs Tom Bewick and Denise Cobb                       |
| <b>Central Hove</b>              | Cllrs Claire Moonan and Andrew Wealls                  |
| <b>Brunswick and Adelaide</b>    | Cllrs Phelim MacCafferty and Ollie Sykes               |
| <b>Regency</b>                   | Cllrs Tom Drutt and Alex Phillips                      |
| <b>Goldsmid</b>                  | Cllrs Saoirse Horan, Amanda Knight and Jackie O' Quinn |
| <b>Hove Park</b>                 | Cllrs Jayne Bennett and Vanessa Brown                  |
| <b>St Peters and North Laine</b> | Cllrs Lizzie Deane, Louise Greenbaum and Pete West     |

## RESPONSE FORM

*Please return no later than  
18 December 2017*

To: Richard Barker, Head of School Organisation  
Families, Children and Learning (Education and Skills)  
Brighton & Hove City Council  
1st Floor, Hove Town Hall  
Norton Road  
Hove  
BN3 4AH

**Proposed Change of age range of Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form  
College from 11-18 to 11-16 years of age, thus removing the sixth form**

|                             |  |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <b>Name and<br/>Address</b> |  |
|-----------------------------|--|

I support the proposal

I do not support the proposal

*Please add any comments here and on the reverse of this slip if needed:*

Signature and date:

Are you a: parent or carer / member of staff / governor / pupil / other?  
(Please indicate)

## Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form Public Meeting Notes

Meeting date 13 November 2017

Attendees Richard Barker, Gillian Churchill and Rachel Carter from the LA  
Ashley Harrold Head teacher, Ruth King Deputy head teacher and  
Peter Sowrey Chair of Governors of Blatchington Mill School and Sixth  
Form  
No members of the public  
8 members of school staff and 1 union representative

RB introduced the LA staff and outlined the process and why the LA was making this proposal. He also stated that this is a genuine consultation, no decision has yet been made and that the final decision will be made by elected members not by officers. All responses to the consultation will be seen by members before the decision is made. The decision is made on balance bearing in mind the responses to the consultation and the impact on the school and pupils of low numbers in the school sixth form.

The floor was opened to questions.

**The timing of the proposal seems a little strange given that the decision not to admit pupils to the sixth form in 2018 has already been made.**

AH said that the school had to make the decision about whether to admit students into the sixth form in advance of the proposal being decided. The leadership team felt that it would be better to announce that they would not to take students into the sixth form in September 2018 rather than having to tell those students that chose this option at a later date that there would be no provision for them. In the event that the decision is not to close the sixth form students will be able to apply in future in the usual way.

**If, at the end of the consultation period it is decided that the proposal will not proceed there will be no year 12 students in the school.**

AH responded to this by saying that the reality was that there are actually very few Blatchington Mill pupils in the sixth form, just 80 across both years. This means that there has had to be a reduction in the number of courses offered which in turns makes the offer to students even less attractive.

**There are some students in Hove Park Sixth form who take all three courses at Blatchington Mill School. This falsely skews the apparent numbers of Blatchington Mill pupils looking for a school sixth form.**

AH said that he was unaware of this and will take this matter up with the head teacher at Hove Park School. PS added that the governors had been looking at the viability of the school sixth form, in terms of financial sustainability and outcomes for students, for a number of years and that even if there are some students incorrectly registered it is unlikely that this would be sufficient to change the view of the governing body.

**The consultation document suggests that the sixth from provision will be called Hove Park six, is this correct?**

Ah said that the naming of the sixth form of Hove Park School would be a matter for them and their governors. His responsibility and that of the governors of Blatchington Mill School was to make the correct decision for the future of this school. Obviously there would be every effort made to reach a consensus decision with Hove Park School whereby it could be seen that the sixth form offer at Hove Park Schools was for the wider Hove area.

**What recommendations were made as a result of the Sussex Area Review?**

RC said that the review prompted discussions about the viability of school sixth form size in the city as did the Local Area Review. Both reviews identified that a sixth form needed at least 200 students to be viable. The review went on to recommend that sixth forms collaborate to ensure that there is no duplication in a locality. The proximity of the two schools would suggest that this model should work well for Hove students.

**It seems a shame that there is a proposal to close the sixth form at Blatchington Mill School.**

AH explained that it is intended that the sixth form at Hove Park School would be a shared provision. Unfortunately the only legal mechanism available is to change the age range of the school which means that the school will be unable to offer sixth form courses in the future. The school will work closely with Hove Park School and hope to influence the direction of their provision. However it has to be recognised that the final decisions will rest with the leadership and governing body of Hove Park School.

**What consideration has been given to the staff who predominantly teach sixth form students and wish to remain as sixth form teachers?**

AH confirmed that it is anticipated that there will be no need for redundancies as a result of this proposal. He could not guarantee however that staff would be able continue only teaching their specialist subjects although it was hoped that this might be the case. RB confirmed that the LA would not be able to insist that other schools offered sixth form jobs to teachers at Blatchington Mill School who wished only to teach sixth form students.

**It must be made clear that if there are any changes to the terms and conditions for teachers as a result of this proposal further consultation with staff would be necessary.**

AH said that he understood this.

**What is the timetable for implementing this proposal?**

If the proposal is successful the intention is that it will be implemented in September 2019. This will mean that all pupils currently in the sixth form will be able to complete their courses at the school.

**When are Hove Park School intending to make their decision regarding their sixth form provision?**

Hove Park Governors have a meeting this evening and it is anticipated that they will make their decision at that meeting.

**Blatchington Mills School has benefitted from considerable accessibility works. Has any consideration been given to sixth form students with Special Educational Needs and Disability?**

The LA has a responsibility to make reasonable adjustments to school buildings to ensure that the right provision is available to meet the needs of vulnerable pupils / students.

**Are there any examples of 11 to 16 schools working collaboratively with 11 to 18 schools?**

It was agreed that the school would look to see if there are examples of this type of collaborative working. RK said that even if none could be found it should be remembered that Blatchington Mill may become an 11 to 16 school but it will still have 11 to 18 experience for years to come.

**It is likely that one of the main causes for concerns as a result of this proposal is likely to be the impact on staff. It might be a good idea to put the implications down on paper and confirm the schools belief that there will be no redundancies as a result of this proposal as this may provide some reassurance to staff who feel they may be affected.**



## Respondents

| How are you responding |   | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent |
|------------------------|---|-----------|---------|---------------|
| Valid                  | Brighton & Hove resident                              | 7         | 30.4    | 30.4          |
|                        | Parent of a pupil at another Brighton & Hove school   | 2         | 8.7     | 8.7           |
|                        | Teacher at Blatchington Mill Sixth Form College       | 10        | 43.5    | 43.5          |
|                        | Support staff at Blatchington Mill Sixth Form College | 1         | 4.3     | 4.3           |
|                        | Other   | 3         | 13.0    | 13.0          |
|                        | Total   | 23        | 100.0   | 100.0         |

### In what other way are you responding

Ex Pupil of Blatch 6

Parent of a pupil in Year 10 at Blatchington Mill Secondary School

Parent of pupil at Blatchington Mill

| Do you agree or disagree in principle to the closure of Blatchington Mill Sixth Form College?                      |                |               |                            |                  |                   |
|--|----------------|---------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Neither agree nor disagree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree |
| All Respondents (n=23)   | 30%            | 26%           | 4%                         | 9%               | 30%               |
| Brighton & Hove resident (n=7)   | 43%            | 14%           | 0%                         | 14%              | 29%               |
| Parent of a pupil at another Brighton & Hove school who's child was planning on going to Blatchington 6 form (n=2) | 0%             | 50%           | 0%                         | 0%               | 50%               |
| Teacher at Blatchington Mill Sixth Form College (n=10)   | 40%            | 30%           | 10%                        | 10%              | 10%               |
| Support staff at Blatchington Mill Sixth Form College (n=1)  | 0%             | 0%            | 0%                         | 0%               | 100%              |
| Other (n=3)  | 0%             | 33%           | 0%                         | 0%               | 67%               |

| Q2. - Do you agree or disagree in principle to the closure of Blatchington Mill Sixth Form College? | Q3. - If there is anything you want to tell us about the reason for your answer, you can write this below   |
|---|---|
| Strongly agree  | I believe that the partnership between Hove Park School and Blatch has been an excellent example of two schools working closely together. It makes sense that there is a Hove provision and that that provision is at Hove Park School  |
| Strongly agree  | Strong rationale for efficient use of resources.  |
| Strongly agree  | The school cannot sustain the poor results or financial insecurity of the current sixth form. It is unfair on the 11-16 year old students.  |
| Strongly agree  | This will provide more places for 11-16 year olds which are needed in the city  |
| Tend to agree   | sad, but fully understand. My eldest daughter took A-levels at Blatch 6, my younger daughter was expecting to do the same. She will miss the extra-curricular opportunities that Blatch offers all its pupils.  |
| Tend to agree   | Sixth forms need to be viable in terms of numbers and offer a vibrant atmosphere; Blatch 6 has struggled to meet either need.   |
| Tend to agree   | Whilst the economic argument for closing Blatch 6th form is sound, there is still a need for small colleges that support children in post-16 education who cannot cope with large college organisations. This will be lost when Blatch closes and there's no other provision in Brighton and Hove   |
| Tend to disagree  | Although I understand the reasons for closure as provided by the school and Local Authority I do not think the needs of young people with challenging early life experiences is adequately addressed within the proposal. Transitions are hard for young people who have had early life challenges and the teenage years are known to be particularly challenging. The structure of Brighton and Hove's post 16 provision can be seen as more challenging and less inclusive to this group of young people. Having to change education environment and make key decisions at 15-16 adds extra layers of stress to young people and their families/carers. Additionally, the post 16 colleges are huge, provide very limited structure (3 hrs timetable lessons per subject) and appear to be lacking in some of the key features which we know support young people (being 'known' by staff, Key Adults, Team around the Young person etc.). For this reason I think it is very important to provide smaller post 16 opportunities across Brighton and Hove where young people can be supported through a challenging stage. It is unfortunate that the remaining sixth forms are in a similar geographical area. If Blatchington Mill Sixth form is to close (leaving Hove Park and Cardinal Newman as sixth form opportunities in the West of the City) has any consideration been given to matching provision in the East of the city to benefit some of our most vulnerable young people i.e. seamless transition into sixth form at either Dorothy Stringer or Vardean? Thanks |
| Tend to disagree  | I have really enjoyed teaching 6th form students. It has been very hard to recruit students but many of the ones that I have taught have hugely benefited from being in a small 6th form and taught in small classes. I think some of these students will get lost in the larger colleges. Some students just don't have the confidence to manage and will fail. Other students have really benefited from the range of specialist subjects that have been offered particularly in performing arts & creative subjects and gone on to Uni and in to excellent professional jobs. Many of them still keep in touch because we offer a more personalised programme. I am also concerned about the impact on staff. Mr Harold says that teachers jobs are secure but the change in status could potentially lead to redundancies for staff as several small subject specialisms will disappear or teaching time at K3384 will not be a full time job. It will lead to staff having to teach outside their specialism and possibly pushed into subjects that they don't feel they can deliver. The pace of change in education at the moment with new gcse's and revised KS3 is difficult to manage in our own specialisms but it would be very tricky if asked to teach something new. Limited finances would mean that it would be difficult to be properly trained to do this.   |
| Strongly disagree   | Continuity, children who wish to feel secure studying A levels in the school they know well. Children who work well with teachers at Blatch.  |
| Strongly disagree   | Many staff feel like this will have a negative impact on the school and the local area. We feel that not enough effort has been made to increase 6th form numbers and that in fact decisions have been made that have had an adverse effect on students attending Blatch 6. For example open evenings have been scheduled after students have already had to make choices about other colleges, brochures have not been completed in time, successful courses have been closed and not enough options have been given to students. Blatch 6 provides a specific post 16 education to students who would struggle in larger 6th forms and who have specific needs that teachers know and care about. We would be doing a disservice to those students. On the consultation form it says there will be no negative effect on staff which is simply not true. Staff will be forced to work in subjects they are not trained in which impacts the progress of students. Others will be offered admin jobs below their capabilities and skill set. We will lose good members of staff because they want to work in post 16 and it hinders chances of promotion or progression to other schools with post 16. many teachers love that part of the job the most. I am certainly not alone in thinking these things and we feel there is an agenda here to get rid of the 6th form because it is the thing the school finds most difficult to improve. rather than working harder to improve it, they get rid of it.  |
| Strongly disagree   | There is no reason to close the 6th form college for economies of scale, as small colleges will benefit from more personalised teaching and smaller classes. Also, the pupils will have to travel further to other colleges, probably Vardean, which is already a large site and will have to expand to the detriment of its pupils.  |

| Do you agree or disagree in principle to the closure of Blatchington            |                      |                             |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------|
|   | Support the proposal | Do not support the proposal |
| All Respondents (n=7)   | 3<br>43%             | 4<br>57%                    |
| Brighton & Hove resident (n=0)  | 0                    | 0                           |
| Parent of a pupil at Blatchington Mill School (n=6)                             | 3<br>43%             | 3<br>43%                    |
| Parent of a pupil at another Brighton & Hove school who's child was planning on | 0                    | 0                           |
| Teacher at Blatchington Mill Sixth Form College (n=1)                           | 0                    | 1<br>14%                    |
| Support staff at Blatchington Mill Sixth Form College (n=0)                     | 0                    | 0                           |
| Other (n=3)   | 0                    | 0                           |

| Do you support or not support the proposal to close Blatchington Mill Sixth Form College? | Comments included on paper forms  |
|---|---|
| Not support   | It seems to be being rushed through with decisions already made which can pre-determine the outcome. I understand the concept of financial viability but would also like some consideration given to continuity of care and the benefits a smaller college can bring to more vulnerable students.   |
| Not support   | It takes away choice. Some children prefer to stay at the school where they feel safe, have the same teachers in a small and familiar environment. My son has been left with Varndean or BHASVIC, he will not consider Hove Park. He walks to and from school, now it will be a bus journey and he will not be able to come home for free periods. Bad move for a popular school. |
| Not support   | With the current rise in primary school places comprising of bulge years and the opening of Hove Juniors in Holland Road I believe we should be increasing provision for High School KS3 places and Post 16 KS4 places for our children. We should invest money into KS4 education and stop cutting money which will reduce the chances for our children.                         |



**Proposal to change the age range of Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form from 11 to 18 to 11 to 16 thus removing the sixth form**

Notice is given in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006, as amended, (the Act) that Brighton & Hove City Council, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road Hove BN3 4AH intend to make prescribed alterations to Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form, Nevill Avenue, Hove BN3 7BW.

**Change of Age Range from 11 to 18 to 11 to 16**

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Brighton & Hove City Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form, Nevill Avenue, Hove BN3 7BW from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019 by changing the age range of the school from 11 to 18 as it is at present to 11 to 16 thus removing the sixth form.

It is proposed that Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form should become an 11 to 16 school from September 2019. It is proposed to close the sixth form to new entrants from September 2018. Any student already undertaking a two year course in September 2018 will be able to complete this course at the school. The school will therefore close its sixth form at the end of the 2018 / 2019 academic year.

This Notice is an extract from the full proposal. Copies of the full proposal can be obtained from: Richard Barker, Head of School Organisation, Brighton & Hove City Council, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road Hove BN3 4AH or by contacting Gillian Churchill on 01273 293515 or via email at [gillian.churchill@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:gillian.churchill@brighton-hove.gov.uk). The full proposal is also on the council's website and can be found at <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/>

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal (i.e. by 16 February 2018), any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Richard Barker, Head of School Organisation, Brighton & Hove City Council, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road Hove BN3 4AH Contracts,

Signed: Pinaki Ghoshal

Publication Date: 19 January 2018



**Brighton & Hove  
City Council**



**FULL PROPOSAL INFORMATION TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE OF  
BLATCHINGTON MILL SCHOOL FROM 11 TO 18 TO 11 TO 16 THUS  
REMOVING THE SIXTH FORM**

**NAME AND ADDRESS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITY MAKING THE PROPOSAL**

Brighton & Hove City Council  
Hove Town Hall  
Norton Road Hove  
BN3 4AH

**NAME, ADDRESS AND CATEGORY OF THE SCHOOL**

Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College, Nevil Road, Hove BN3 7BW is a mainstream community secondary school serving pupils from 11 to 18 years of age. It does not have a religious character.

**DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSAL**

In accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006, as amended, (the Act) it is proposed that Brighton and Hove City Council, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove, BN3 4AH make prescribed alterations to Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College, Hove BN3 7BW.

The proposal, being made by the Local Authority, Brighton & Hove City Council, is that the age range of Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College is changed from an 11-18 school with sixth form, which it is at present, to an 11-16 school from September 2019. The school currently offers sixth form provision at Blatch Six for students aged 16-18. This proposal would close Blatch Six and the school would continue to provide an education for 11-16 year olds only.

**THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROPOSAL**

During both the Sussex Area Review and the Local Area Review, concerns were expressed about the viability of post 16 provision where numbers of students are below 200 students across the 6<sup>th</sup> form. Although the focus of The Sussex Area Review was not schools, it drew attention to the application threshold of 200 for new school 6<sup>th</sup> forms.

In March 2016, guidance was issued by the Department of Education which states: "The Area Review encourages school sixth forms to collaborate to a greater extent to help drive efficiencies. Similar provision in sixth forms is often duplicated in relatively small geographical areas, when it could be delivered in a more joined up way. This may be particularly the case where sixth forms are very small, as some evidence raises concerns about costs, breadth of offer and outcomes for these providers."

The Local Area Review, which was undertaken by the Local Authority, culminated in a report that was presented to the Children Young People and Skills Committee in October 2016, and included the following recommendations-

"That governing bodies of schools and academies consider the future financial viability of their sixth form provision.

Where the long term financial circumstances of a sixth form is likely to be challenging, then each school or academy should have a plan to address these challenges. Strategies might include realistic plans for securing greater numbers via collaboration with aspects of provision with other institutions, or possible merger with another provider to achieve scale of provision.

Governing bodies and schools review their specialisms to meet needs of their learners, especially more vulnerable young people.

Schools and academies continue to build stronger relationships with local employers to ensure students have the skills needed for future employment."

The LA recognises the benefits of having school based provision and would wish to see this continue but within a context of sustainability and viability which could be a joint or sole provision in the Hove area. It is also essential that there is sufficient provision to meet the city's needs and this applies specifically to more vulnerable learners.

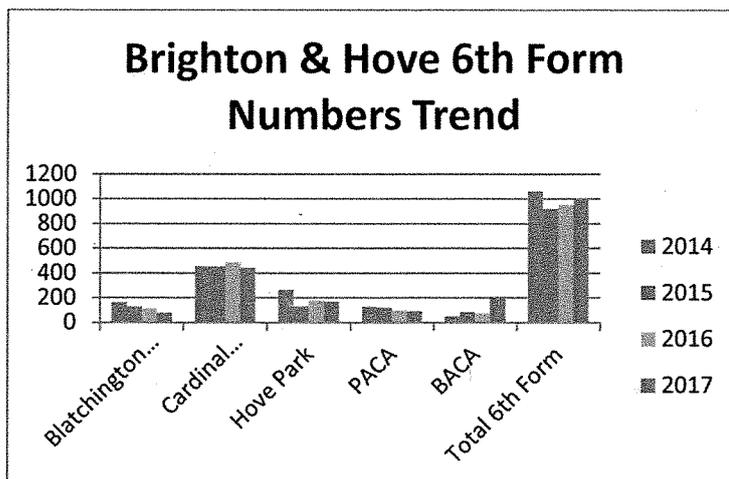
The Blatchington Mill Head teachers post 16 report of July 2017 makes it clear that the numbers of students on roll, and the level of success achieved on academic courses are insufficient to argue for provision at the school to continue as it has been in the past.

Partnership with Hove Park School has brought renewed energy to the provision, and a strong and clear focus on Blatch six provision from the leadership team in 2016-17 has meant that standards have risen. There are a number of students for whom a school sixth form is of huge value – and the local authority supports this view. However, it is likely that this is only sustainable with at least 250 students. There is no indication that the sixth form will attract these numbers in the future.

This proposal will in effect mean that the sixth form at Hove Park School will become the school sixth form provision for the Hove area of the city. In making this proposal it is anticipated that the sixth form provision at Hove Park School will recruit sufficient numbers to make one sustainable viable successful school sixth form.

#### **NEED AND DEMAND FOR PLACES & CAPACITY OF POST-16 PROVISION WITHIN THE LA CURRENTLY**

Overall school sixth form numbers in the city remain fairly constant at around 980 students per year. The most recent census data shows, sixth form numbers at Blatchington Mill School have declined to 78 in October 2017 whilst Hove Park School's sixth form are more than double this at 168 students.



| 6th Form Numbers      | 2014        | 2015       | 2016       | 2017       |
|-----------------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Blatchington Mill     | 163         | 129        | 111        | 78         |
| Cardinal Newman       | 453         | 454        | 490        | 445        |
| Hove Park             | 266         | 131        | 178        | 168        |
| PACA                  | 129         | 121        | 97         | 92         |
| BACA                  | 50          | 87         | 75         | 210        |
| <b>Total 6th Form</b> | <b>1061</b> | <b>922</b> | <b>951</b> | <b>993</b> |

Within the city, there is significant demand by students and their parents/carers for school based sixth forms. The smaller environment and levels of pastoral support offer an individualised and more supported experience which is highly valued. This complements the provision provided by the two sixth form colleges in the city. The proposed larger sixth form at Hove Park School will also enable the development of a more sustainable and wider curriculum offer for students, with the potential to increase the vocational curriculum offer both at level 2, or at a mixed level 2 and level 3.

#### **PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

It is intended to implement the proposal on 1<sup>st</sup> September 2019. However the school will not be taking pupils into the sixth form in September 2018. Any pupils currently on roll at the sixth form who are undertaking a two year course will be able to complete their course at the school by July 2019 hence the proposed implementation date of September 2019.

#### **WHERE AND WHEN THE STATUTORY NOTICE AND FULL PROPOSAL INFORMATION WILL BE AVAILABLE**

Brighton & Hove City Council will publish the statutory notice for this proposal on Friday 19 January 2018. The notice will remain in force for a period of 4 weeks i.e. until Friday 16 February 2018. Copies of the notice will be placed at all entrances to the school and in other places in the community; it will also be published in the Brighton & Hove Independent newspaper on 19 January 2018. A copy of the

statutory notice is attached as **Appendix 1** to this document. Attached as **Appendix 2** is a list of the locations where the notice is posted.

On 19 January 2018 the full proposal information (this document plus appendices) will be sent to the following recipients

The Governing Body of the School  
The Diocese of Chichester  
The Diocese of Arundel and Brighton  
East Sussex County Council  
Members of the Children, Young People and Skills Committee  
Ward Members  
**Hangleton and Knoll** Cllrs Dawn Barnett, Tony Janio and Nick Lewry  
**Wish** Cllrs Robert Nemeth and Gary Peltzer Dunn  
**Westbourne** Cllrs Tom Bewick and Denise Cobb  
**Central Hove** Cllrs Claire Moonan and Andrew Wealls  
**Brunswick and Adelaide** Cllrs Phelim MacCafferty and Ollie Sykes  
**Regency** Cllrs Tom Druitt and Alex Phillips  
**Goldsmid** Cllrs Saoirse Horan, Amanda Knight and Jackie O'Quinn  
**Hove Park** Cllrs Jayne Bennett and Vanessa Brown  
**St Peters and North Laine** Cllrs Lizzie Deane, Louise Greenbaum and Pete West  
Members of Parliament for Brighton & Hove

It will also be published on the council's website at the following address  
<http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/content/children-and-education/schools/school-statutory-notice>.

Any person may request a copy of the full proposal information either by writing to Richard Barker, Head of School Organisation, Brighton & Hove City Council, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road Hove BN3 4AH or by contacting Gillian Churchill on 01273 293515 or via email at [gillian.churchill@brighton-hove.gov.uk](mailto:gillian.churchill@brighton-hove.gov.uk). The full proposal is also on the council's website and can be found at <http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/>

## **HOW TO MAKE REPRESENTATIONS OR COMMENT ON THE PROPOSAL**

Any person may object or make a representation or comment on the proposal. This can be done by sending them to Richard Barker, Head of School Organisation, Brighton & Hove City Council, Hove Town Hall, Norton Road Hove BN3 4AH.

Following the closing date for representations, comments and objections a report will be prepared for the Children and Young People Committee to decide the proposal within 2 months i.e. no later than 16 April 2018. At the present time it is anticipated that the report will be considered at their meeting scheduled for 6 March 2018.

## CAPACITY OF THE SCHOOL IF THE PROPOSAL PROCEEDS TO IMPLEMENTATION

If this proposal were to proceed the capacity of the school would not be changed. The school currently has accommodation for sixth form teaching and social space, in the event that this proposal proceeds to implementation this space will be used to support the 11 to 16 pupils in the school.

## OWNERSHIP OF THE SITE

The freehold of the site is owned by Brighton & Hove City Council.

## CONSULTATION

All applicable consultation was carried out prior to publishing this full proposal.

Initially the school and its governors approached the Local Authority (LA) to say that they wished to consult on a proposal to change the age range. As this is a proposal that can only be made by the LA it was agreed that we would take this proposal forward. This included undertaking a consultation with parents / guardians, pupils and staff at the school as well as the wider community to gauge their feelings on the proposal.

A consultation document was prepared and issued on 6 November 2016. It was published online on the council's website and was circulated to the parents / guardians, pupils, staff and governors of Blatchington Mill School and Sixth Form College. In addition a copy of the consultation document was sent to the members of the Children, Young People and Skills Committee and all ward councillors whose wards fall into the catchment area for the school. A copy of the consultation document is attached as **Appendix 3** to this document.

The document contained details of how comments on the proposal could be made and the closing date of the consultation.

During this consultation stage a public meeting was held at the school. A copy of the notes taken at this meeting are attached as **Appendix 4** to this document.

The results of this consultation were reported to the Children and Young People and Skills Committee on 15 January 2018. At that meeting the decision was to proceed to the publication of the statutory notice and full proposal. A copy of the Committee report and Appendices are attached as **Appendix 5** to this document.

## IMPACT ON OTHER SCHOOLS AND ACADEMIES

It is not believed that the removal of Blatch Six will have a negative impact on other schools or sixth form providers in the city. The two further local schools with sixth forms (Hove Park and PACA) may observe a slight increase in their intakes. But as Blatch Six has become so small, the potential surplus of students will be minimal.

Any changes will be of benefit to other sixth form providers through increased numbers.

The consultation referred to above included the sixth form providers local to Blatch Six. The consultation was brought to the attention of all schools in the city by using the Schools Bulletin. There have been no representations received from other schools to this proposal.

### **PROJECT COSTS**

There are no anticipated capital costs as a result of this proposal.

### **SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND DISABILITY**

Blatch Six is a mainstream school sixth form. It does not have any specific provision or unit at present and it is not intended that it will have one as a result of this proposal. In line with all colleges in the city Blatch Six does have a number of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. It is not intended as part of this proposal to alter this now or in the future. The same facilities will be extended to any future pupil at the 11-16 school as at present.