

Consultation on the  
Closure of the Sixth  
Form at St Edmund's  
Catholic School

## Introduction by the Chair of Governors and Head Teacher of St Edmund's Catholic School

The Governing Body at St Edmund's Catholic School with the support of the Diocese and Directors of the Multi Academy trust, following much discussion, has decided to consult on the proposal not to recruit new Sixth Form students from September 2017.

In effect, the proposal means that the Sixth Form would close when the current Year 12 students complete their studies in August 2018.

The future of school sixth forms has been highlighted in the media over many months, particularly in the light of the budget changes for post-16 funding which have gradually declined over the last two years.

The average sixth form college has around 1,700 students, while the average school sixth form has over 200. Economies of scale apply, so it is more expensive per student for schools to provide sixth form provision and they may have to subsidise them from other funding streams, such as that for 11 to 16-year-olds. The DfE recognises that sixth forms with less than 200 students are at risk of not being viable financially. St Edmund's Catholic School has 34 students in the sixth form and, in recent years, has never had more than 70.

At St Edmund's Catholic School, due to these low numbers we have been unable to provide the breadth of courses, including a wide range of A level subjects, that students need. Consequently, the demand for places in the Sixth Form is limited, with most students in Year 11 choosing to go elsewhere for post-16 provision.

Additionally, a small sixth form does not provide a good social experience nor does it prepare students for the larger environment of higher education or the work place. Hence, in making this decision, Governors want the most appropriate and best options for our students.

In changing the age range from 11-18 to 11-16, this will allow resources to be focused on improving outcomes for Years 7 to 11.

This four week consultation period will run from **03 July 2017** until **31 July 2017** and provides all stakeholders with the opportunity to present their opinions.

Your views are important to us, so please either complete and return the attached form by the 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017 or email the school: [admin@st-edmunds-dover.kent.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-edmunds-dover.kent.sch.uk)

We will be holding a public meeting at St Edmund's Catholic School on Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 5.00 pm and representatives from the Multi Academy Trust, Governing Body and school will be on hand to answer individual concerns on a one to one basis.

In their planning for the future strategic direction of the school, the Governors will consider all responses in their final decision for the closure of the Sixth Form.

Mr John Philpot  
Chair of Governors

Mr Mike Wilson  
Head Teacher

May 2017

## St Edmund's Catholic School

### Sixth Form closure consultation – some facts and figures

#### How large is a viable sixth form?

A school or college sixth form has to be large enough to be viable and sustainable in order to be able to provide a wide enough range of high quality courses. It has been recognised that sixth forms with fewer than 200 students are unviable, particularly in the light of the more recent funding changes where sixth form provision is now funded per student, instead of per qualification. The implications of these reforms have meant that some providers have been forced to cut courses whilst others have been forced to close.

St Edmund's Catholic School with a provision for a maximum of 150 students and never having had more than 100 in the sixth form (34 currently this year) is not a financially viable sixth form and would have to be funded from other funding streams such as that for the 11-16 phase.

#### How many students choose the Sixth Form at St Edmund's Catholic School?

St Edmund's Catholic School has always had a small sixth form prior to becoming an academy. In our Academy Funding Agreement we have provision for accepting 120 sixth form students but the numbers have been far less than this.

<b>Number of students on roll in the Sixth Form at St Edmund's Catholic School</b>			
	<b>Year 12</b>	<b>Year 13</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Sep 2013</b>	34	35	69
<b>Sep 2014</b>	24	21	45
<b>Sep 2015</b>	23	21	44
<b>Sep 2016</b>	19	15	34

For a number of years, the majority of our Year 11 students have chosen to pursue post-16 education at an institution other than St Edmund's Catholic School. The school is unable to offer the breadth of subjects or levels that students would like to follow. This means that students must seek other provision or choose from fewer options at St Edmund's. This has led to many students choosing to continue their post-16 education elsewhere.

#### What would this mean for the current Year 12 students?

Students in Year 12 would be unaffected by this proposal. They would progress, as normal, into Year 13 to complete their studies at St Edmund's Catholic School.

### **What would this mean for the current Year 11 students?**

Students in Year 11 would be unable to continue their post-16 education at St Edmund's Catholic School but would be supported by the school in choosing the correct provision elsewhere.

### **What is the range of courses on offer from some of the other providers in an acceptable 'travel to learn' radius?**

The strong Dover, Deal and Sandwich sixth form provision, delivered by schools and colleges, has the economy of scale to offer a wide range of qualifications at varying levels. Such diversity within institutions offers courses suited to all abilities and learner needs.

The KentChoices4U website is an excellent directory for a breadth of courses available in the local area.

For those wishing to continue their education in a Catholic setting, St Anselm's Catholic School in Canterbury offers a full range of post-16 courses.

### **Future post-16 provision for Year 11 students at St Edmund's Catholic School**

St Edmund's Catholic School is in consultation with a number of post-16 providers to ensure that there is appropriate curriculum provision for current and subsequent Year 11 students.

### **Implications for school staff**

The closure of the sixth form provision at St Edmund's Catholic School would mean a reduction in the number of staff and this would be part of an on-going process over the next two years.

### **St Edmund's Catholic School Governing Body's proposal**

The Governing Body of St Edmund's Catholic School is proposing to close the Sixth Form to new students from September 2017 onwards by reducing the upper age limit from 18 to 16 years.

Provision for the current Year 12 students would be maintained and protected. Courses for the current Year 12 students would be continued through to their completion in June/July 2018. This means that the Sixth Form would finally close after the current Year 12 students complete their studies in August 2018 and St Edmund's Catholic School would be a school for secondary students ages 11-16 years.

### **The Governing Body welcomes your views during the consultation period which runs for four weeks from Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> July to Monday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017**

You may respond to the consultation by either completing the Response Form on the next two pages, or by letter or by e-mailing [admin@st-edmunds-dover.kent.sch.uk](mailto:admin@st-edmunds-dover.kent.sch.uk) All responses should be sent, or handed in, to St Edmund's Catholic School by Monday 31<sup>st</sup> July 2017.

# Response sheet

Your views about the proposed closure of the Sixth Form at St Edmund's Catholic School

Please use this space to tell us your views about the proposed closure of the Sixth Form at St Edmund's Catholic School

This section asks you for some information that will help us analyse the results of the responses and to see who has taken part. You will not be identified by any of the information you provide.

I am a: (Please tick and complete all those that apply to you)

- Parent/carer      Your child's/children's school(s):  
.....  
.....
- Student      Your school:  
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.....
- Governor      Your school  
.....  
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Staff Member

Your school:

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Local Resident

Catholic

Other

Please tell us:

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