



FORMAL CONSULTATION on the amalgamation of Scott-Broadwood CofE Infant School and The Weald CofE Primary School into a single academy

1st July 2024

Dear Parent/Carer/Stakeholder,

The Good Shepherd Trust (GST) is the authority for The Weald Church of England Primary School (Newdigate Road, Beare Green, Dorking, RH5 4QW) and Scott-Broadwood Church of England Infant School (The Street, Capel, Dorking, RH5 5JX). As the body responsible for the school and its effectiveness, the GST is formally consulting on a proposed change designed to ensure the long-term sustainability of schools in the Capel and Beare Green areas. The GST is fully committed to supporting the best outcomes for its pupils and will endeavour to take action to ensure the continual flourishing of all schools in the trust. This requires us to constantly review our schools' operational model and acknowledge that we may need to do things differently to ensure continued success.

What is the proposed change?

Due to pressing financial concerns and the over-resourcing of the two sites for the number of pupils they serve, the GST is considering amalgamating the two schools. GST considered various options within this proposal: becoming a single academy rather than two, consolidating education at the Weald site, and sharing more roles across the two schools. Both schools face financial challenges that, if left unaddressed, could threaten their viability in the coming years. Therefore, you are invited to participate in a *formal consultation* about the proposal, which may then be submitted to the Department for Education (DfE) as a significant change.

How can I respond to the consultation?

Your views are important and will help us decide what action to take, if any. You are asked to read the following information and respond to the online consultation. Please follow the link below to complete the survey:

[Scott-Broadwood CofE Infant School and The Weald CofE Primary School amalgamation consultation.](#)

To request a paper copy, please send your postal address to admin@goodshepherdtrust.org.uk or write to "Scott Broadwood Weald Consultation, The Good Shepherd Trust, Larch Avenue, Guildford, GU1 1JY."

This consultation is open between **12:00 p.m. on July 2nd and 12:00 p.m. on August 7th, 2024**. If you submit your response after this date, it will not be counted. If you have requested a paper copy, please send your response to "Scott-Broadwood Weald Consultation, The Good Shepherd Trust, Larch Avenue, Guildford, GU1 1JY" and ensure it arrives by July 23rd, 2024.

We are consulting formally with as many of the following groups as we can:

- Surrey Local Authority
- The Diocese of Guildford

- Parents of children at Scott-Broadwood and The Weald
- Prospective parents with children at local nurseries, childminders and preschool settings, including Capel preschool
- Local primary, secondary and other schools in the area (within 3 miles)
- Surrey School Admissions
- GST employees based at the schools and the schools' Local Committee

What happens next?

Please note that you will not receive an individual response to your submission. After the formal consultation has closed, all responses will be collated, and we will decide on our next steps. This will include whether to submit a significant change request to the DfE.

As the proposal for the schools would be a significant change, if the GST Board decides to proceed, a full business case must be presented to the Department for Education (DfE). The DfE will then consider our proposals. Once the outcome is determined, updates outlining the proposed arrangements will be placed on the school website. We will keep stakeholders up to date with timelines via school and GST websites, as these will depend on the speed of decision-making at all levels.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Paul Kennedy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end of the name.

Paul Kennedy
Chief Executive Officer
The Good Shepherd Trust

Background

All schools in the South Mole Area face significant local challenges, meaning that action is needed to ensure that the schools are sustainable and flourishing. Doing nothing is not an option for us as this could threaten the long-term viability of both schools. We wish to maintain all that is good at both schools, including providing for those children who are vulnerable or have special educational needs, together with our rigorous safeguarding practices, all of which will be unaffected by our proposal. We acknowledge that the presence of Scott-Broadwood is an important consideration for many in the school community, so we are consulting with you about the proposed changes.

Pupil Population

Scott-Broadwood and The Weald operate as a split-site primary school, as the schools share leadership, some staff, and a single Local Committee. The Reception/Key Stage 1 site (Years 1 and 2) is at the Scott-Broadwood site in Capel, and the Key Stage Two site (Years 3-6) is 1.6 miles away in Beare Green (approximately five minutes to drive and park). There is capacity for 436 children across both sites. 346 children can be accommodated on The Weald site and 90 on the Scott-Broadwood site:

School	Number of pupils on roll	Number of pupils when available classes are full	Capacity of school sites	Current spare capacity
Scott-Broadwood	67	90	90	23
The Weald	132	252	346	214
Total	199	342	436	237

Scott-Broadwood is not currently admitting its full Published Admission Number (PAN) of 30 pupils in Reception, and future pupil projections for the number of children in the area are not favourable. Falling birth rates mean the proportion of school-age children in Surrey and the Mole Valley is declining. As a result, pupil numbers in Scott-Broadwood are unlikely to increase (Surrey pupil places data):

South Mole Valley						
School year	Year R places	Year R Forecast	Surplus / Deficit	Year 3 places	Year 3 Forecast	Surplus / Deficit
2023-24	75	52	23	49	42	7
2024-25	75	53	22	49	39	10
2025-26	75	51	24	49	39	10
2026-27	75	51	24	49	36	13
2027-28	75	51	24	49	38	11
2028-29	75	50	25	49	36	13
2029-30	75	50	25	49	35	14
2030-31	75	49	26	49	35	14
2031-32	75	49	26	49	35	14

School name	Year R places	Year 3 places
The Weald CofE Primary School		34
Charlwood Village Primary School	15	15
Newdigate CofE Endowed Aided Infant School	30	
Scott Broadwood CofE Infant School	30	
Total places in planning area	75	49

Key	
	Over 5 surplus places
	Between -5 deficit and 5 surplus places
	Over -5 deficit places

The Trust chose to 'mothball' the infant phase at The Weald due to the surplus of places. Unfortunately, there are still over 20 surplus places in the areas at Year R, and there are likely to be surplus places in the junior phase in the next few years. Neither Charlwood Village Primary School nor Newdigate CofE Infant School are part of the GST.

Consolidating the two schools into a single site would help maximise efficiencies and enable more shared leadership at all levels, such as subject leadership.

There are currently (at the date of publication) 65 pupils on roll at Scott-Broadwood and 132 on roll at The Weald.

Funding and two sites

As schools are funded on a per-pupil basis, funding has declined in recent years. If left unaddressed, both schools will face financial challenges. The GST has recently provided financial support to the schools, as we are committed to their long-term future and continued improvement. Like the school, the GST's funding depends on those same pupil numbers. Continuing to provide additional funding for the school is not a sustainable option.

Bringing both schools together on one site would bring operational efficiencies as both schools, whether together or separately, must set balanced budgets. This is a requirement of being any school or academy..

The two separate sites mean that services (such as teachers, support staff, administrative staff, utilities, broadband, telephone, waste collection, cleaning, school lunches, etc.) are duplicated, resulting in increased costs and reduced staffing flexibility. The schools receive additional funding for operating separately. However, given the fall in numbers on roll, this does not cover the total costs of running effective educational provision on both sites. The two separate sites also mean that securing consistency of the curriculum across both schools is more challenging.

Both the school leadership team and the GST central team believe that a single site would enhance the curriculum, quality of education, and support continuing school improvement. Subject leadership could be shared across all key stages rather than having separate leads in each school, providing a smoother journey from the early years to KS2.

Amalgamation

The two schools could come together formally as a single academy to enable the above. This would mean that one school would close, and the pupils at that school would be offered places at the other school. GST's preferred model is for Scott-Broadwood to close officially, and all pupils would be offered places at The Weald. As this would not impact the number of school places available, there would be no impact on admission numbers at either school. The remaining school would be Year R to Year 6, and there would be no need to apply for a place at the other school; the transition would be automatic (if desired).

This would be a natural progression from our current shared leadership model. It would mean single policies for all school aspects, e.g., curriculum, behaviour, admissions, and a single Ofsted inspection.

Impact on admissions/school places

Scott-Broadwood has a published admissions number (PAN) of 30 at year R.

The Weald is designated a primary school (age range 5-11), but we have 'closed' the infant admission point (30 pupils) due to low demand in the area. The Weald has a second admissions point in year 3 (juniors) of 34 pupils. This was based on 30 infant pupils already being at the Weald in year 2, moving up to year 3, with an additional 34 pupils joining from other infant schools, to make an additional class in year 3.

Therefore, the proposed change would not impact current pupil place offers at either entry point, but the GST board of trustees may review the Year 3 PAN after this consultation has closed based on local

demand. GST would work with Surrey admissions at this point. We are aware of other local infant schools that feed into The Weald at Year 3, and we would be keen to allow that process to continue.

We would like you to consider the following:

To provide the very best educational experience for children, to allow effective collaboration between staff and to achieve a balanced budget by 2025 and in future years, it is proposed that the school sites should be rationalised. The Weald site can accommodate up to eleven classes of 30/32 children (Reception through to Year 6 inclusive). Therefore, the following action is being proposed:

Amalgamate Scott-Broadwood CofE Infant School and The Weald CofE Primary School into a single academy and move Reception, Year 1 & Year 2 pupils (65 children) to the Weald site in Beare Green (date dependant on decision-making process and approval by DfE) into refurbished, age-appropriate accommodation.

There will be an informal stakeholders' meeting on Monday, 8th July, at The Weald from 6:30 pm-7:30 pm for a short presentation from GST and questions. We will publish an FAQ on the school websites after this meeting.

This consultation is open between 12:00 pm on 2nd July and 12:00 pm on 7th August 2024. If you submit your response after this date, it will not be counted. If you have requested a paper copy, please send your response to "Scott-Broadwood and The Weald Consultation, The Good Shepherd Trust, Larch Avenue, Guildford, GU1 1JY" and arrive by 7th August 2024.

THIS TEXT IS FOR INFORMATION ONLY; PLEASE CLICK THE LINK BELOW TO COMPLETE THE CONSULTATION RESPONSE:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=QJzJmIG4rk22dTSzyZDJs4IkBOw3uCpMorxg6g5ySCNUQIMwNVIHNOdaWkFBWjE3Nkc4RTIyQVNSNC4u>



Microsoft Forms