



# School Organisation Review

**Public Consultation in the Thurston area  
Autumn 2011**



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# 1. Background

## School Organisation Review in Suffolk

In 2006, Suffolk County Council started a review of school organisation in Suffolk, to see whether the current situation, involving a mixture of two-tier and three-tier schools, was providing the best possible education for children in the county.

In 2007, after carrying out public consultation and considering research evidence which compared children's progress in the two-tier and three-tier systems, the County Council adopted a preferred model, based on the two-tier system, of primary and secondary schools across Suffolk. A set of principles were developed to help to guide the process of developing options for schools in different areas.

Given the number of schools affected, the County Council decided to carry out the review in stages. Changes for schools in Lowestoft, Haverhill, Forest Heath, Beccles, Bungay, Leiston, Sudbury and Great Cornard have been agreed and are being implemented. This leaves only a small area of Suffolk with a three-tier system.

## Restructuring in the Thurston Area

This booklet has been produced by Suffolk County Council, working with the Thurston Partnership of schools. All seventeen primary schools and the upper school are members of the Thurston Partnership. It explains why we want to reorganise schools in the Thurston area and sets out a possible new pattern of schools. The model has been developed by local schools, Suffolk County Council and the Church of England Diocese. This booklet is part of a consultation process which seeks your views on these ideas. In other parts of Suffolk, the views of parents and other interested parties at this stage have been very helpful in shaping final proposals.

While planning for the future we are committed to making sure there is no disadvantage to the achievement of children currently in the system.

We encourage you to read this booklet carefully, to attend one of the meetings listed in section 9 and to send us your views by any of the methods set out on page 24 .



## 2. Why Change?

### Introduction

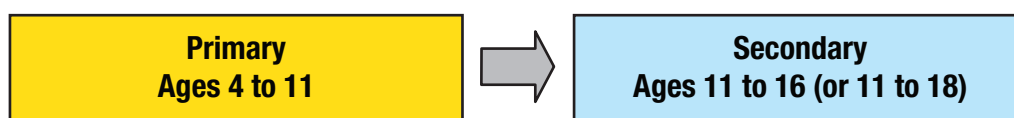
Our children are growing up in a world that is changing all the time. They will do jobs which do not exist today, using technology that has not yet been invented. We must make sure that the school system in Suffolk enables our young people to achieve high standards and obtain the skills and qualifications they need to be successful in the future. Raising attainment at every level in our schools remains one of the County Council's key objectives. By 2015 all young people will have to be in education or training up to the age of 18 and we have to prepare for this change.

While many young people in Suffolk do very well at school, others do not do as well as they should, particularly when measured at the age of 11 and 16. We have carried out extensive research into children's progress in Suffolk. Our findings show that where children change school at age 9 and then again at 13, their progress is not as good as it is when there is the single change of school at age 11.

### How are Suffolk Schools Currently Organised?

There are currently two systems of school organisation in Suffolk, the two-tier system and the three-tier system.

#### What is the two-tier system?



In the two-tier system, children attend primary school between the ages of 4 and 11 and secondary school between the ages of 11 and 16 or 11 and 18.

This means that pupils complete Key Stages 1 and 2 of the National Curriculum at primary school before moving to secondary school for Key Stages 3 and 4.

#### What is the three-tier system?



In the three-tier system, children attend primary school between the ages of 4 and 9, middle school between the ages of 9 and 13 and upper or high school between the ages of 13 and 16 or 13 and 18.

This means that pupils complete Key Stage 1 and begin Key Stage 2 at primary school. Then they move to middle school where they complete Key Stage 2 and begin Key Stage 3. Then they move to upper or high school where they complete Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. As a result, responsibility for both Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 is split between different schools.

In England, only 1% of schools are middle schools, there are no middle schools in Wales or Scotland.

### Standards of Education

Although some children and young people in Suffolk perform well, compared to national averages there is room for improvement. Standards need to rise for all age groups but, in particular, improvement is needed at Key Stages 2 and 4.

Virtually all the key attainment measures show that children in the two-tier system do better than those in the three-tier system. This is in no way a reflection on staff in three-tier schools, as they work hard for the benefit of their pupils. However, the system makes it more difficult for children to make the progress which they should. Research shows this may be because the two-tier

system only has one point of transfer between schools and responsibility for each key stage is in a single school. In the present system, children are also faced with choosing the options they will follow from the age of 14 in their first term at a new school. Transferring to a secondary school at the age of 11 would allow more time for information, advice and guidance to be given by staff who know the children and will subsequently teach them throughout Key Stage 4.

## Key Stage 2

By the end of Key Stage 2, the expected attainment is Level 4 in English and mathematics. In 2010, 74% of children nationally achieved this standard with 68% of children across Suffolk reaching this expected level.

The attainment of Suffolk children in 2011 at the end of Key Stage 2, when compared to similar areas nationally, placed Suffolk tenth out of eleven counties. Figure 1 displays the gap between achievement in Suffolk two-tier and three-tier schools.

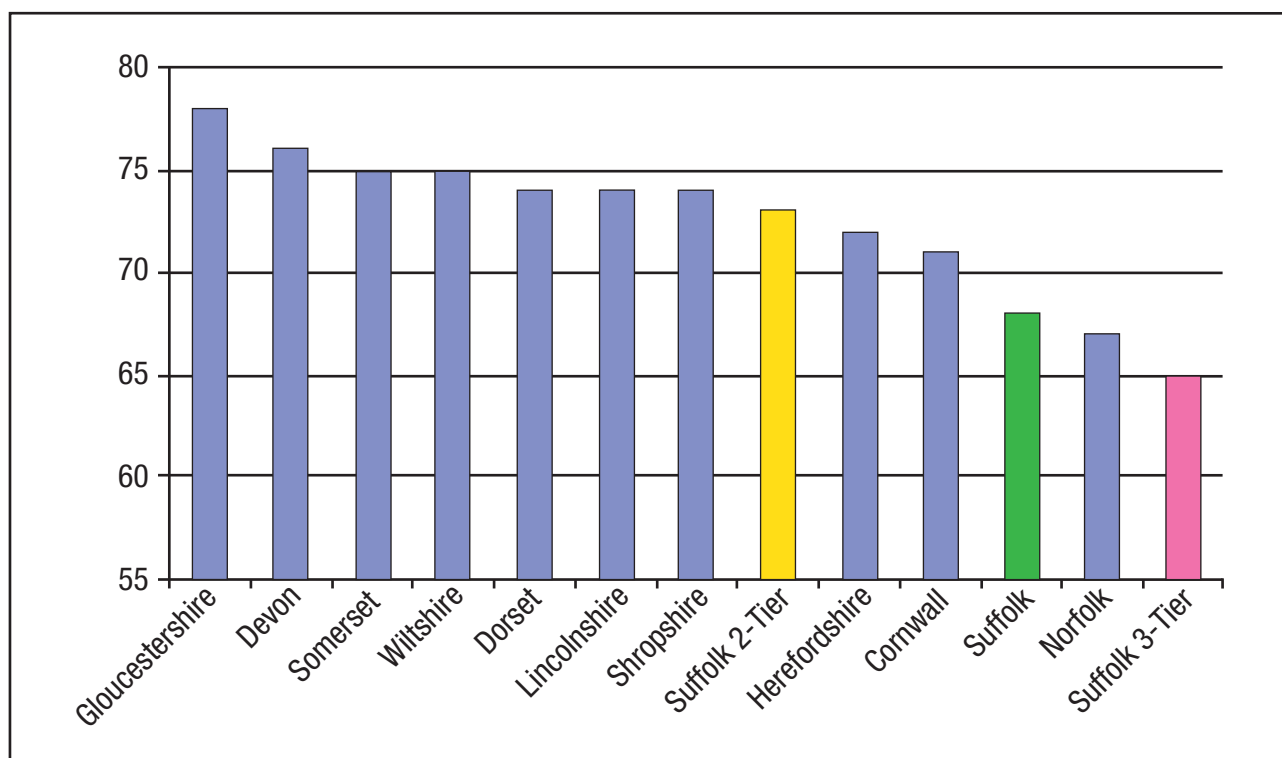


Figure 1: Percentage of children reaching the expected standard of level 4 in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2010

Despite the relative advantages of the Thurston catchment area, in 2010 only 68% of children who attended Thurston Pyramid schools achieved the expected standard of level 4 in English and mathematics, which is below the national average of 74%.

These outcomes reflect longer term trends. For many years, children in Suffolk who attend three-tier schools have not done as well as those in two-tier schools. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 (age 7) across Suffolk are consistently high and above national averages. However, by the end of Key Stage 2 (age 11), a gap has appeared between the attainment of children in the two and three-tier systems. The data in the Thurston Pyramid reflects this picture.

Figure 2 shows that, every year since 2003, children have underperformed in English at Key Stage 2, with the gap currently standing at 6%.

Figure 3 shows the same picture in mathematics, with the gap last year equalling 7.1%.

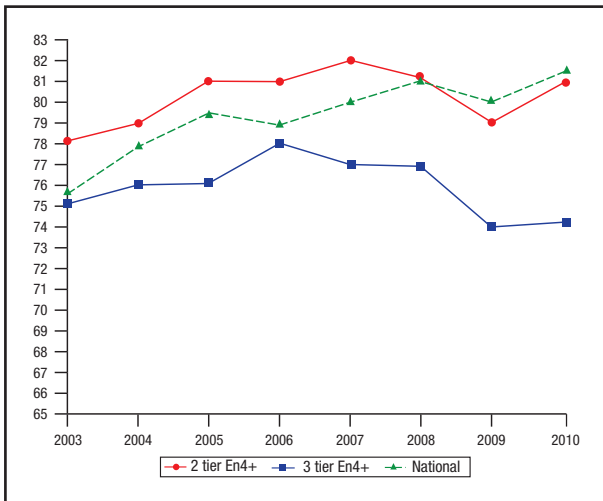


Figure 2: Percentage of Suffolk children attaining the expected standard of level 4 in English at the end of Key Stage 2 from 2003-2010

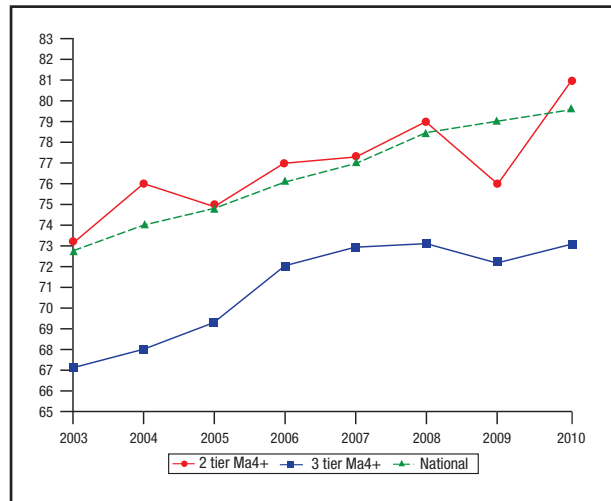


Figure 3: Percentage of Suffolk children attaining the expected standard of level 4 in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 from 2003-2010

## Key Stage 4

By the end of Key Stage 4, the expected attainment is five or more GCSE passes at grade C or above, including English and mathematics. In 2010, 55% of children nationally achieved this standard with 52% of children across Suffolk reaching this expected level. Compared with similar areas nationally, this result placed Suffolk eleventh out of eleven counties. Figure 4 displays the gap between achievement at GCSE level in Suffolk two-tier and three-tier schools.

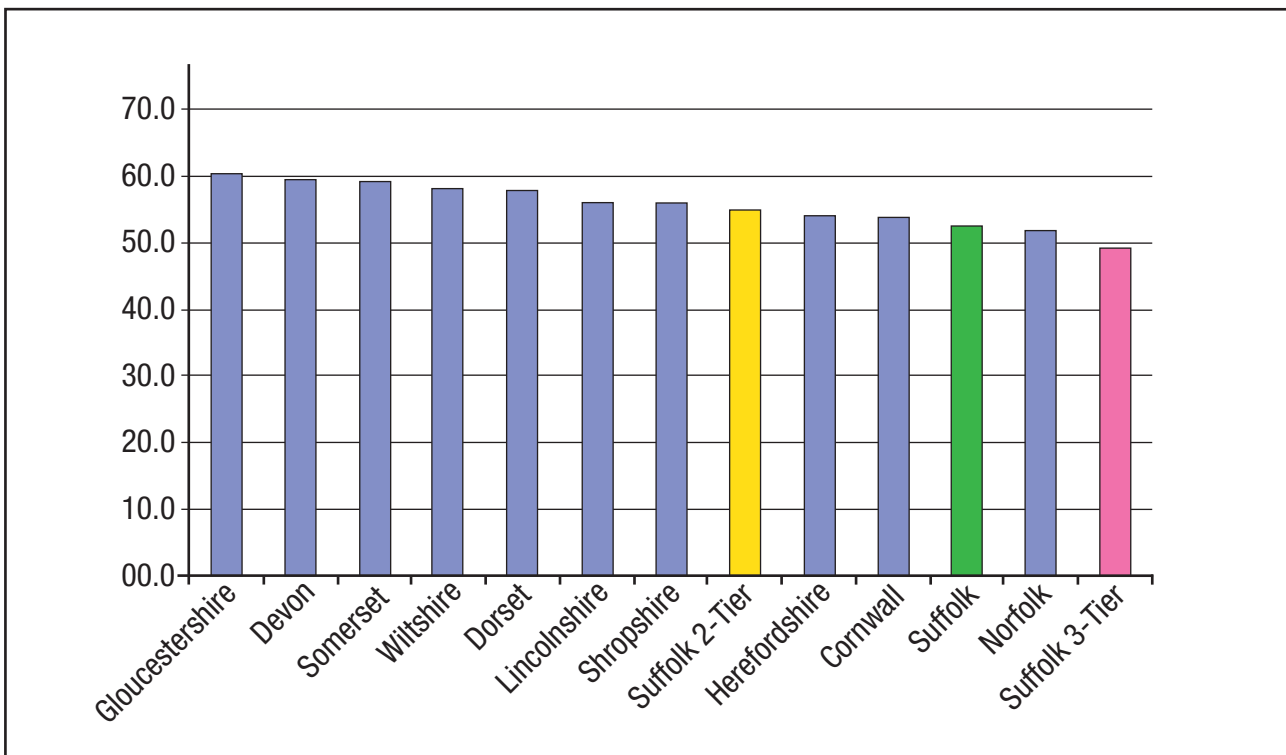


Figure 4: Percentage of children attaining the expected standard of five GCSE passes at grade C, including English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 4 in 2010

In the Thurston pyramid, 54% of children achieved the expected standard of five GCSE passes at grade C, including English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 4, in 2010. Although this figure is close to the national average (55%) and the Suffolk average (52%), and well above the Suffolk three-tier average (49%), this achievement falls short of expectations, considering:

- The relative advantages of the Thurston area;
- Attainment at Key Stage 1 is above the national average;
- Most schools in the pyramid are regarded by Ofsted as good or outstanding;
- Thurston Community College is an ‘outstanding’ school where ‘exceptional care, guidance and support mean that many students attain standards that they would not otherwise be able to’ (Ofsted 2010).

Once again, this outcome was not a one-off event in 2010. The children educated in three-tier areas of Suffolk struggle to close the attainment gap which appears during Key Stage 2. By the time they leave school at 16, attainment at GCSE in the three-tier schools is lower than that in two-tier areas of Suffolk. This pattern has consistently occurred every year since 2003, with the gap in performance last year equalling 6.5% (Figure 5).

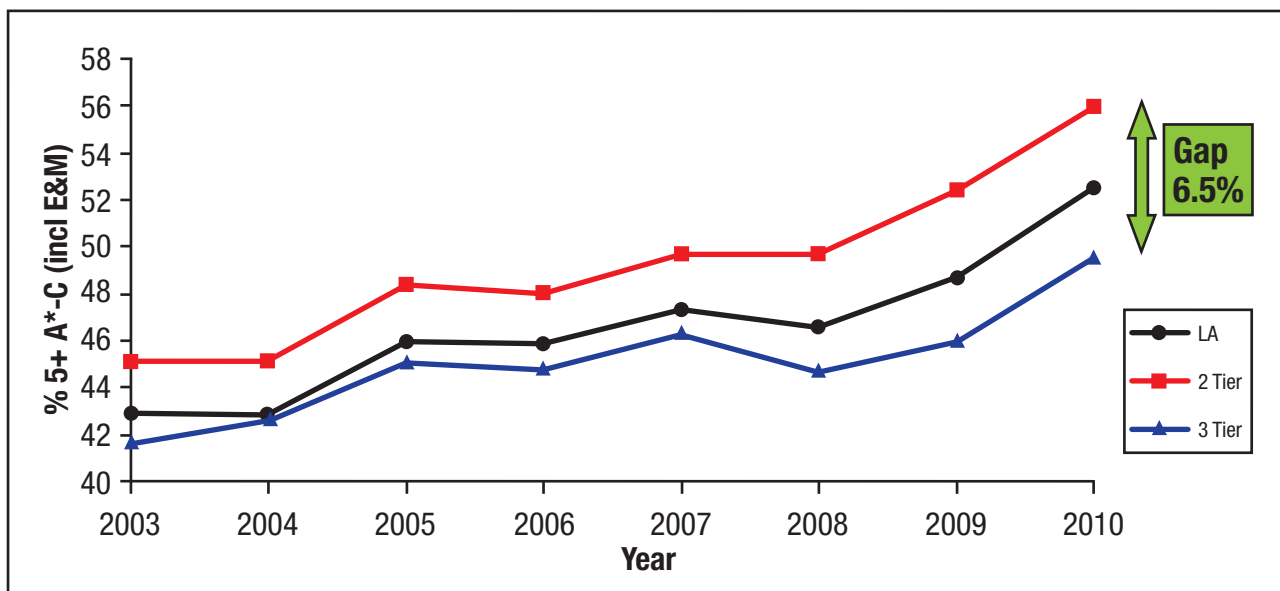


Figure 5: Achieving five ‘good’ GCSEs gives young people a wider range of opportunities for further education and employment





### 3. Vision for Learning

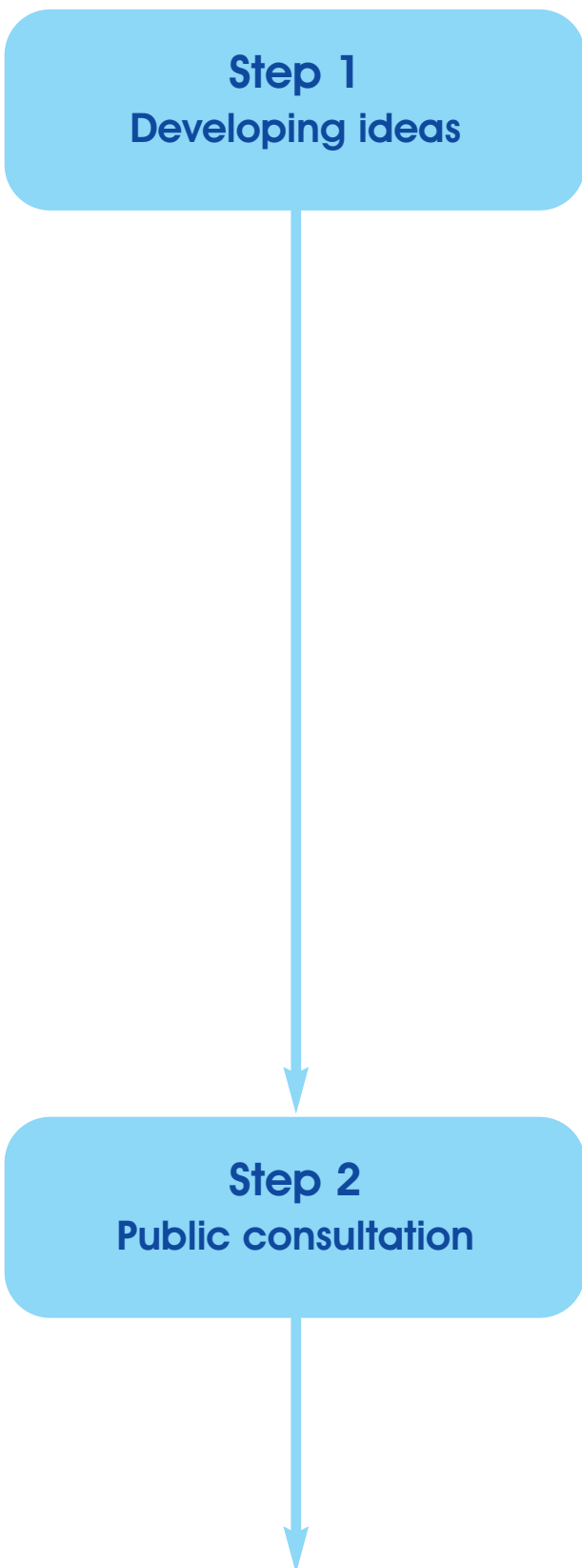
The Thurston Partnership's vision for learning is to work together for an outstanding future for all children. Its guiding principles are to:

- Deliver outstanding outcomes for every child who attends a partnership school;
- Have children's attainment and progress at its heart;
- Address the key weaknesses of the current three-tier system – two transition points and split accountability across key stages;
- Provide clear progression routes for children through the partnership of schools, from primary to Thurston Community College;
- Provide children with a primary approach to learning across Key Stages 1 and 2, taught by primary specialists;
- Provide children with their entitlement to a broad, balanced and personalised secondary curriculum, delivered by secondary trained subject specialists;
- Provide a progression route to outstanding sixth form education;
- Be supported by capital and revenue resources;
- Move all partnership schools forward together.



## 4. Process for Change

It is important that any changes to schools are the right ones and they are carried out carefully. Therefore, changing the pattern of schools is a long process.



### Step 1 – Developing Ideas

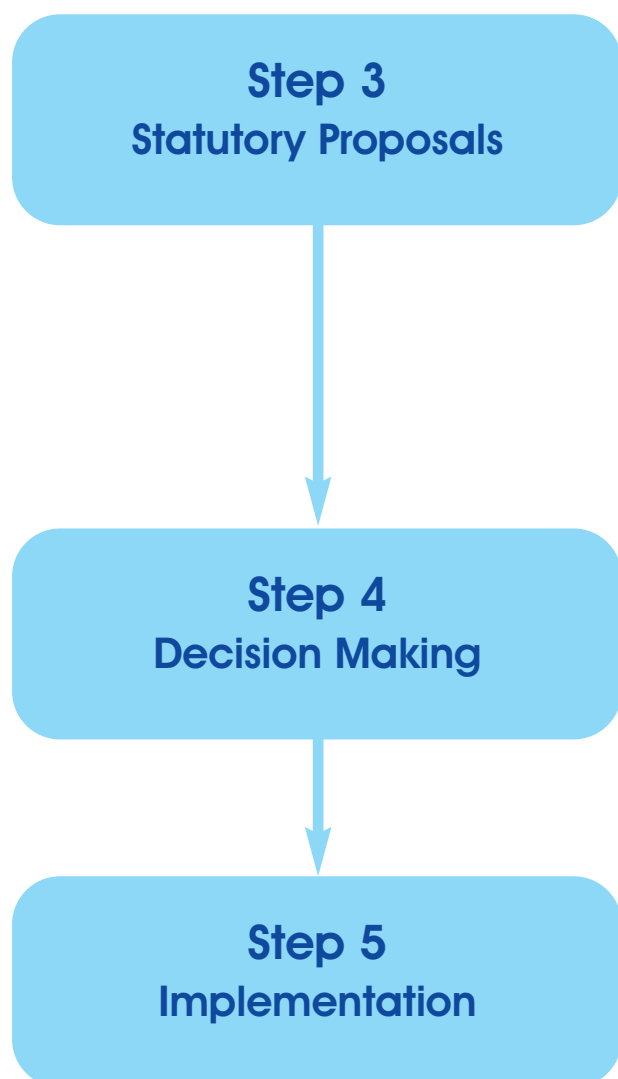
In March 2011, Simon White, the Director for Children and Young People, wrote to all Headteachers in the remaining three-tier areas of Suffolk, explaining that because of reduced capital funding and schools being able to take more control of their future, the previous model of school re-organisation could not be continued. In his letter, he stated that ‘the need to address children’s progress in three-tier areas remained’ and that ‘the Local Authority would be willing to consider ideas emerging from schools themselves which addressed the problems associated with a three-tier system.’

Following receipt of this letter, detailed discussions took place involving all Headteachers within the Thurston Pyramid (seventeen primary schools, three middle schools and one upper school) and representatives from the Local Authority. Emerging from these discussions was a clear proposal to reorganise all schools in the pyramid to provide a two-tier system. The schools which agreed with this vision formed the ‘Thurston Partnership’ in order to work effectively with Suffolk County Council and in line with the Council’s principles. All seventeen primary schools and the upper school are members of the Thurston Partnership. The Church of England Diocese has also pledged its support for a change to two-tier.

### Step 2 – Public Consultation

From 10 October to 9 December 2011, parents, teachers, young people, governors and all other interested parties will have the opportunity to say what they think about the proposed new organisation of schools. Responses are invited on all aspects of the change, including whether or not you agree that there should be a move to a two-tier system for a particular school or schools. Details of how you can have your say can be found in Section 8 on page 24.

All responses will be analysed and taken into consideration. In previous consultations, comments from people at this stage helped to develop the final proposals.



### Step 3 – Statutory Proposals

After consultation is over, Suffolk County Council's Cabinet and the governing bodies of voluntary schools will decide what the proposals should be for each school taking into consideration all consultation responses. The legal process of making any changes to schools by publishing statutory notices will begin. You will find these in the local paper and at schools and libraries. They will also be available on our website, [www.suffolk.gov.uk/sor](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/sor)

There will be a six-week period in which anyone can comment on the final proposals for each school.

### Step 4 – Decision Making

In most cases, the final decision on the proposals will be made by the County Council. However, in some cases the law states that the Schools Adjudicator will make the final decision. The Secretary of State for Education appoints the Schools Adjudicator. A final decision for the Thurston area is expected by April 2012.

### Step 5 – Implementation

If the proposal is approved, the first changes would happen in September 2013 when children currently in Year 3 would not transfer to middle schools, but would stay as Year 5 in their primary schools. The following year, September 2014, these pupils would become Year 6 in their primary schools.

Middle schools would close at the end of the summer term 2014 and in September 2014 their pupils would transfer to secondary school.

We intend to keep to this timeframe. However, it will be kept under continual review in the light of consultation responses and any unexpected events. Parents will be consulted if any change in the timeframe is needed.

**The diagram overleaf shows how the changes in the preferred future pattern would affect individual children as they progress through the school system. It should be read from the left hand side. First, use the child's date of birth to identify his or her school year group as at September 2011. Then, follow the chart across to the right to identify the type of school the child would attend, and the periods during which they would attend them.**

<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Year Group Sept 2011</b>	<b>Effect of these proposals</b>
01.09.10 – 31.08.11	Pre-School	Remain in primary school until end of Year 6 and then transfer to secondary school in September 2022
01.09.09 – 31.08.10	Pre-School	Remain in primary school until end of Year 6 and then transfer to secondary school in September 2021
01.09.08 – 31.08.09	Pre-School	Remain in primary school until end of Year 6 and then transfer to secondary school in September 2020
01.09.07 – 31.08.08	Pre-School	Remain in primary school until end of Year 6 and then transfer to secondary school in September 2019
01.09.06 – 31.08.07	Reception	Remain in primary school until end of Year 6 and then transfer to secondary school in September 2018
01.09.05 – 31.08.06	Year 1	Remain in primary school until end of Year 6 and then transfer to secondary school in September 2017
01.09.04 – 31.08.05	Year 2	Remain in primary school until end of Year 6 and then transfer to secondary school in September 2016
01.09.03 – 31.08.04	Year 3	Remain in primary school until end of Year 6 and then transfer to secondary school in September 2015
01.09.02 – 31.08.03	Year 4	Transfer to middle school in September 2012 and then transfer to secondary school in September 2014 in Year 7
01.09.01 – 31.08.02	Year 5	Transfer to secondary school in September 2014 in Year 8
01.09.00 – 31.08.01	Year 6	Transfer to secondary school in September 2014 in Year 9
01.09.99 – 31.08.00	Year 7	Transfer to secondary school (Year 9) in September 2013
01.09.98 – 31.08.99	Year 8	Transfer to secondary school (Year 9) in September 2012
01.09.98 – 31.08.99	Year 9	Remain at secondary school
01.09.98 – 31.08.99	Year 10	Remain at secondary school
01.09.98 – 31.08.99	Year 11	Remain at secondary school

*Table 1: Table to show how the changes in the preferred future pattern would affect individual children as they progress through the school system*

## 5. Map of Thurston Area



## 6. Preferred Future Pattern for Schools in the Thurston Area

### Early Years

Children’s Centres are based on the site of Thurston Community College and Stanton Community Primary School. Ixworth CEVC Primary School and Stanton Community Primary School have nursery classes on site. The proposal set out in this booklet would not change the number of places available in nursery classes.

These proposals will not affect any private or voluntary pre-school provision.

Should any proposals to change nursery classes at these schools be brought forward, there will be separate consultation.

### Primary Schools

In the preferred pattern of schools set out on the following pages, all seventeen first schools would increase their age range to take pupils until the end of Year 6, aged 11.

The number of children admitted to each year group, the published admission number (PAN) is being set to help all children find a place at their local school and allow some flexibility for people moving into the area and to meet parents’ preferences.

#### Badwell Ash CEVAP School

The preferred model for Badwell Ash CEVAP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

School	PAN		Capacity	
	Now	Future	Now	Future
Badwell Ash CEVAP	18	10	90	70
Bardwell CEVCP	15	15	75	105
Barnham CEVCP	23	15	115	105
Barningham CEVCP	18	15	90	105
Cockfield CEVCP	22	15	110	105
Elmswell CP	43	45	215	315
Great Barton CEVCP	30	30	150	210
Honington CEVCP	30	30	150	210
Hopton CEVCP	18	15	90	105
Ixworth CEVCP	30	30	150	210
Norton CEVCP	20	20	108	140
Rattlesden CEVCP	20	20	112	140
Rougham CEVCP	25	30	125	210
Stanton CP	45	30	210	210
Thurston CEVCP	40	30	200	210
Walsham-le-Willows CEVCP	20	20	108	140
Woolpit CP	35	30	150	210

Table 2: Table to show Present and Future Planned Admission Numbers and Capacities of Thurston Primary Schools

Currently the school can admit up to 18 children into each year group, and has up to 90 pupils overall. We suggest reducing the admission number to 10 which would lead to the school having up to 70 pupils on the site. This number reflects current trends. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Badwell Ash CEVAP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Badwell Ash School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### **Bardwell CEVCP School**

The preferred model for Bardwell CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 15 children into each year group, and has up to 75 pupils overall. We suggest keeping the admission number at 15 which would lead to the school having up to 105 pupils on the site.



This number meets local needs. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Bardwell CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Bardwell CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### **Barnham CEVCP School**

The preferred model for Barnham CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 23 children into each year group, and has up to 115 pupils overall. We suggest reducing the admission number to 15 which would lead to the school having up to 105 pupils on the site. This number reflects the number of children living in the catchment area. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Barnham CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Barnham CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### **Barningham CEVCP School**

The preferred model for Barningham CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 18 children into each year group, and has up to 90 pupils overall. We suggest reducing the admission number to 15 which would lead to the school having up to 105 pupils on the site. This number reflects current trends. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Barningham CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Barningham CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### **Cockfield CEVCP School**

The preferred model for Cockfield CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 22 children into each year group, and has up to 110 pupils overall. We suggest reducing the admission number to 15 which would lead to the school having up to 105 pupils on the site. This number reflects current trends. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed



would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Cockfield CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Cockfield CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### **Elmswell CP School**

The preferred model for Elmswell CP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 43 children into each year group, and has up to 215 pupils overall. We suggest increasing the admission number to 45 which would lead to the school having up to 315 pupils on the site. This number meets local needs. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Elmswell CP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Elmswell CP School catchment area are not currently in the catchment area for Thurston Community College, but can usually find places there as they live nearer than other out of catchment children. If supported by this consultation, it would be possible to widen the College's catchment area to include Elmswell for future years.

### **Great Barton CEVCP School**

The preferred model for Great Barton CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 30 children into each year group, and has up to 150 pupils overall. We suggest



retaining the admission number at 30 which would lead to the school having up to 210 pupils on the site. This number reflects current trends. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Great Barton CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Great Barton CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### Honington CEVCP School

The preferred model for Honington CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 30 children into each year group, and has up to 150 pupils overall. We suggest retaining the admission number at 30 which would lead to the school having up to 210 pupils on the site. This number reflects current trends. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.



Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Honington CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Honington CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### Hopton CEVCP School

The preferred model for Hopton CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 18 children into each year group, and has up to 90 pupils overall. We suggest reducing the admission number to 15 which would lead to the school having up to 105 pupils on the site. This number reflects current trends. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Hopton CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Hopton CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### Ixworth CEVCP School

The preferred model for Ixworth CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 30 children into each year group, and has up to 150 pupils overall. We suggest retaining the admission number at 30 which would lead to the school having up to 210 pupils on the site. This number reflects current trends. Our architects have considered re-locating to the Middle School site. However the site was felt to be unsuitable. As a result we will ensure that the present site is developed to meet

the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Ixworth CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Ixworth CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### **Norton CEVCP School**

The preferred model for Norton CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 20 children into each year group, and can hold up to 108 pupils overall. We suggest retaining the admission number at 20 which would lead to the school having up to 140 pupils on the site. This number reflects current trends. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Norton CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Norton CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### **Rattlesden CEVCP School**

The preferred model for Rattlesden CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 20 children into each year group, and can hold up to 112 pupils overall. We suggest retaining the admission number of 20 which would lead to the school having up to 140 pupils on the site. This number meets the needs of the village. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet

the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Rattlesden CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Rattlesden CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Stowupland High School or Thurston Community College.

### **Rougham CEVCP School**

The preferred model for Rougham CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 25 children into each year group, and has up to 125 pupils overall. We suggest increasing the admission number to 30 which would lead to the school having up to 210 pupils on the site. This number is more than the number of pupils currently in the catchment area. As a result it would be well placed to take additional pupils from other local schools if necessary. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils as it has plenty of expansion opportunities. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Rougham CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Rougham CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### **Stanton CP School**

The preferred model for Stanton CP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 45 children into each year group, and can hold up to 210 pupils overall.

We suggest reducing the admission number to 30 which would lead to the school having up to 210 pupils on the site. This number reflects current trends. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders. If it was felt the school should relocate to the Middle School site there would need to be a strong business case from the community to develop a library and other amenities.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Stanton CP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Stanton CP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### Thurston CEVCP School

The preferred model for Thurston CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 40 children into each year group, and has up to 200 pupils overall. We suggest reducing the admission number to 30 which would lead to the school having up to 210 pupils on the site.

This number is usually sufficient for local needs. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.



Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Thurston CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Thurston CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### Walsham-le-Willows CEVCP School

The preferred model for Walsham-le-Willows CEVCP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 20 children into each year group, and can hold up to 108 pupils overall. We suggest retaining the admission number at 20 which would lead to the school having up to 140 pupils on the site. This number is usually sufficient for local needs. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Walsham-le-Willows CEVCP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Walsham-le-Willows CEVCP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Thurston Community College.

### Woolpit CP School

The preferred model for Woolpit CP School would be to extend its age range to include Year 5 and Year 6. This would mean the school would be responsible for all of Key Stage 2 and would keep the pupils at their local primary school for two more years.

Currently the school can admit up to 35 children into each year group, and can hold up to 150 pupils overall. We suggest reducing the admission number to 30 which would lead to the school having up to 210 pupils on the site. This number meets the needs of the village. Our architects have told us that it is possible to develop the school to meet

the needs of additional pupils. Any building work needed would be planned in partnership with the Headteacher and other stakeholders.

Pupils who have started Year 4 and above in September 2011 would transfer to middle school at the end of Year 4, as they would have done if there was no change.

Pupils in Year 3 and below in September 2011 would continue at Woolpit CP School until the end of Year 6, when they would transfer to a secondary school. Pupils living in the Woolpit CP School catchment area would be in the catchment area for Stowupland High School or Thurston Community College.

## Middle Schools

### Beyton Middle School

The County Council has adopted a preferred option to move to a two-tier system of primary schools covering the 4 to 11 age range and secondary schools covering the 11 to 16 or 11 to 18 age range. If the preferred option is adopted in the case of Beyton Middle School, the school would be closed.

If the pattern of primary schools set out above is adopted, it would lead to there being no admissions to Beyton Middle School in September 2013 when Year 5 pupils would stay in their primary schools.

This would mean that in September 2013 Beyton Middle School would teach Years 6, 7 and 8. In September 2014, the three year groups remaining at the middle school would transfer to secondary school and Beyton Middle School would close.



The site would become available for use as the second campus of Thurston Community College. The reasons for this site being selected are:

- Size – it is the only existing middle school site with sufficient space for current pupil numbers;
- Suitability of accommodation – it was formerly a secondary school;
- Nearness to the main Thurston campus – it is only 2 miles away.

### Ixworth Middle School

The County Council has adopted a preferred option to move to a two-tier system of primary schools covering the 4 to 11 age range and secondary schools covering the 11 to 16 or 11 to 18 age range. If the preferred option is adopted in the case of Ixworth Middle School, the school would be closed.

If the pattern of primary schools set out above is adopted, it would lead to there being no admissions to Ixworth Middle School in September 2013 when Year 5 pupils would stay in their primary schools.

This would mean that in September 2013 Ixworth Middle School would teach Years 6, 7 and 8. In September 2014, the three year groups remaining at the middle school would transfer to secondary school and Ixworth Middle School would close.

The future use of the site would be decided through consultation with parents, residents, and local planning authorities. One option for consultation would be for a free school to be opened on the vacant middle school site, within the two tier structure, as has happened elsewhere in Suffolk.

Free schools are explained in more detail at the end of this section.

### Blackbourne Middle School

The County Council has adopted a preferred option to move to a two-tier system of primary schools covering the 4 to 11 age range and secondary schools covering the 11 to 16 or 11 to 18 age range. If the preferred option is adopted in the case of Blackbourne Middle School, the school would be closed.

If the pattern of primary schools set out above is adopted, it would lead to there being no admissions to Blackbourne Middle School in September 2013 when Year 5 pupils would stay in their primary schools.

This would mean that in September 2013 Blackbourne Middle School would teach Years 6, 7 and 8. In September 2014, the three year groups remaining at the middle school would transfer to secondary school and Blackbourne Middle School would close.

If it was felt that Stanton CP School should relocate to the Middle School site, there would need to be a strong business case from the community to develop a library and other amenities on the site. If this scheme was not felt to be sustainable then we would need to consult with parents, residents and local planning authorities to decide how the site could be used. One option for consultation would be for a free school to be opened on the vacant middle school site, within the two tier structure, as has happened elsewhere in Suffolk.



## Secondary Schools

### Thurston Community College

Within the capital budget currently available to Suffolk County Council, the preferred way to provide places for all 11–18 year old students currently attending schools in the Thurston area is to use the Beyton Middle School site as a second campus for Thurston Community College. Graded by Ofsted in 2010 as “an outstanding school”, the College has the capability and expertise to expand across both sites and would continue to provide an outstanding curriculum and exemplary care, guidance and support for students.

The use of both Ixworth and Blackbourne Middle Schools were considered as second campuses for Thurston Community College and as sites for a new 11–16 school. However, while the Beyton buildings have sufficient accommodation, neither of the other two middle school sites have enough space and would require significant capital investment to extend them.

Thurston Community College has given a lot of thought on how to use the Beyton Middle School site as a second campus. This site was originally built as a secondary school, so is well equipped for the delivery of a secondary curriculum. The plan is for some pupils to attend the Beyton Campus for their secondary education from ages 11 to 16, whilst others would attend the Thurston Campus. The same high standard of education would be delivered at both campuses, including the continuation of outstanding pastoral



support currently provided by the Thurston house system. Two houses would be based at the Beyton Campus and four at the Thurston Campus, both sites being governed and led by the same governing body and leadership team. All pupils would have access to a broad, balanced and personalised curriculum, leading to a clear post-16 progression route in Thurston Community College's Sixth Form.

The allocation of children to the two campuses would be based primarily on the principle of minimising travelling distances wherever possible. By using the Beyton site, the College could continue to offer 360 places in each year group, thereby allowing continued provision for some students from outside its catchment area. This option would also make full use of a valuable building.

### **Possible Free School at Ixworth or Stanton**

If there was sufficient support from parents, it would be possible to develop proposals to open a free school on either the Ixworth or Blackbourne Middle School sites in September 2014. The choice of site would be based on a detailed option appraisal later in the process. This would be in addition to the plan for Thurston Community College described above.

Some members of the local community have begun to explore the possibility of setting up a free school for students aged 11-16 or 11-18 and the Church of England, which has a long history of involvement with education in this area, has offered its support.

In September 2011 twenty four new free schools opened. One of these is the Stour Valley Community College which is on the site of the former Clare Middle School in Suffolk. Free schools are set up by groups of parents, teachers and others to provide an additional school to reflect how and where they want their children educated. Free schools get both capital and revenue funding directly from the Government and operate as academies independent of the local authority and with the ability to work outside the National Curriculum, set their own admissions policy, term dates and length of school day. Free schools are still inspected by Ofsted to ensure they are providing good quality education. Suffolk County Council supports the establishment of free schools and academies where they are likely to lead to improved standards and are consistent with the move to two-tier schooling. The Thurston Partnership came into existence to bring about two-tier education in our area in order to raise standards for all our children. The establishment of a free school is in no way at odds with these aims and the Thurston Partnership would welcome the choice a possible free school would offer to parents.

If a free school were set up in the area, Thurston Community College would still need to use the Beyton site until such time as sufficient accommodation is available at the Thurston site to educate all students on the Thurston campus.

Please use the consultation form to let us know your views on having a free school in this area as evidence of parents' support is the first step in getting the Government's approval.

## 7. Managing Change

We are committed to making sure that children in all schools continue to make progress during the changes. We will manage change carefully and well, minimising disruption and ensuring continuity of education and support for all children and young people. Experience from other parts of Suffolk has demonstrated that children will continue to learn effectively whilst these structural changes occur.

### High Quality Staff

To manage change successfully we need support and commitment from high quality staff. Change can be unsettling for all those involved so Suffolk County Council will continue to work with professional associations, trade unions, staff representatives, headteachers and governors on employment stability and professional development programmes.

### Costs

In the new financial climate, it will be necessary to develop a cost effective solution to expand the primary school sites where necessary, in order to accommodate Year 5 and 6 children. This does not mean the use of temporary accommodation. Permanent buildings, designed by architects, will be built in consultation with headteachers, governing bodies and other stakeholders.

### Sustainability

The three-tier system introduced in the 1970s is not aligned to the National Curriculum key stages or to the framework for assessment. Moving to a two-tier system will ensure greater sustainability in the quality of our schools.

Expanding the seventeen first schools to include Years 5 and 6 will strengthen the viability of these schools and enrich their rural village communities.

There are over 20,000 schools in England, only about 200 (1%) of these are middle schools. Correspondingly, there are significantly fewer people training specifically to teach in the middle school system.

The model for secondary education described in this proposal makes economic sense, both in the short term and in the longer term. The economies of scale provided by running one school across two campuses would ensure value for money and future sustainability.

### Transport

Currently the vast majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 have to travel by bus to their middle school. Under the preferred future pattern of schools, these children would be able to stay at their primary school. There would however be a small number of pupils in Years 7 and 8 who are currently able to walk to middle school, who would need transport to their secondary school. Overall, fewer children would need to travel by bus to school each day.



## 8. How to Have Your Say

Your views will be carefully considered as we move to the next stage in the process.

To help as many people as possible to be involved we are using a variety of methods:

- A paper questionnaire;
- An online questionnaire (log onto [www.suffolk.gov.uk/sor](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/sor));
- Public meetings.

You can also write to the School Organisation Review team at:

**SOR Thurston Area  
Suffolk County Council,  
8 Russell Road,  
Ipswich,  
IP1 2BX.  
or email: [sor@suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:sor@suffolk.gov.uk)**

Details of public meetings are on page 25 of this booklet.

### Who are we consulting?

Copies of this booklet have been sent to all parents of pupils within local schools, to staff, and to every school governing body. We are also seeking views from unions, professional associations, Catholic and Church of England Dioceses, parish, borough and district councils, and neighbouring local authorities. We have also sent copies to local playgroups and other early years providers.

### How can I find out more?

If you need further information, talk to the headteacher of your local Thurston Partnership School. Alternatively, you can log onto our website [www.suffolk.gov.uk/sor](http://www.suffolk.gov.uk/sor). Further copies of this booklet and other material can be found at your local library, school, or by calling **01473 260752**.

### When does the consultation finish?

Please reply to this consultation by **Friday 9 December 2011**.

### What happens after the consultation finishes?

The County Council's Cabinet and the governing bodies of the voluntary (church) schools will carefully consider the responses to the consultation before making a decision about the options they want to take forward for each school.

Once a decision is made we will publish statutory notices detailing the changes we want to make to schools. You will be able to make representations about these notices during the six-week period after they are published. The notices will explain how you can comment on them.

The Cabinet will then consider the options and the responses from the six-week statutory consultation. If the Cabinet cannot agree the proposals, they will be referred to the Schools Adjudicator.

We expect a final decision by April 2012. Detailed planning for implementation will then be finalised for the agreed proposals.





## 9. Public Meetings

### Education is changing – make sure you have your say

All meetings are for dates in 2011

Parents' meetings will run from 6:30pm to 8:00pm unless stated otherwise

The meetings will take place at the first named school

<b>Monday 17 October</b>	Ixworth & Great Barton Primary Schools
<b>Tuesday 18 October</b>	Stanton & Walsham Primary Schools
<b>Tuesday 1 November</b>	Woolpit Primary School
<b>Wednesday 2 November</b>	Hopton & Barningham Primary Schools
<b>Thursday 3 November</b>	Elmswell Primary School
<b>Monday 7 November</b>	Honington, Bardwell & Barnham Primary Schools
<b>Wednesday 9 November</b>	Thurston, Norton & Badwell Ash Primary Schools
<b>Thursday 10 November</b>	Rougham Primary School
<b>Monday 14 November</b>	Cockfield & Rattlesden Primary Schools
<b>Tuesday 15 November</b>	Thurston Community College
<b>Wednesday 23 November</b>	Blackbourne Middle School
<b>Monday 28 November</b>	Beyton Middle School

A meeting will be arranged at Ixworth Middle School. We will inform parents when a date has been agreed.

## 10. Glossary

### Academy

An independent publicly funded school. Academies are funded directly by the Government. Academies do not have to follow the National Curriculum, although their curriculum must still be “broad and balanced” and they will be inspected by the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). Academies can set their own admissions policy, but cannot select by ability and must follow the national Code of Practice on school admissions. Academies can vary the length of the school day and terms, they also employ their own staff and can set their own pay and conditions.

### Capital Funding

Money that is available to use on school buildings.

### Community School

Community schools used to be called “County” schools. The local authority employs the staff, owns the buildings and is the admissions authority.

### Free School

A free school is a new school set up by groups of parents, teachers or others. Free schools are operated as academies, funded directly by Government.

### Key Stage

**Key Stage 1** is for children aged 5 to 7. Children’s attainment and progress is assessed by their teachers.

**Key Stage 2** is for children aged 7 to 11. Children’s attainment and progress in English and maths is assessed by national tests taken at the end of Year 6, age 11.

**Key stage 3** is for children aged 11 to 14. There is no longer any national assessment at age 14.

**Key Stage 4** is for children aged 14 to 16. Children’s attainment and progress is assessed by GCSE and other external examinations.

### National Curriculum

The curriculum set by the Government which community and voluntary schools must follow. It is split into four key stages.

### Published Admission Number (PAN)

The PAN is the limit on the number of pupils in any year group at a school. If the number of applications is less than the PAN, all applicants are offered a place. If the number of applications is greater than the PAN, the school’s oversubscription criteria are used to allocate places up to the PAN.

### Revenue Funding

Money that is available to pay salaries, buy books and other equipment.

### School Organisation Review

Suffolk County Council’s programme to establish a two-tier pattern of schools across the county.

### Voluntary Aided Schools (VA)

Voluntary aided schools are often known as “Church” schools. In this area, all VA schools are Church of England schools where there is significant church involvement in running the school. VA schools employ their own staff and are their own admissions authority. They have additional responsibility for the school buildings and can bring forward their own proposals for changes of age range.

### Voluntary Controlled School (VC)

Voluntary Controlled schools are often known as “Church” schools. In this area, all VC schools are Church of England schools where there is church involvement in running the school. VC schools have additional responsibilities for the school buildings and can bring forward their own proposals for changes of age range.



If you need help to understand this information in another language please call 08456 066 067.

Se precisar de ajuda para ler estas informações em outra língua, por favor telefone para o número abaixo.

Portuguese

بەم زانیاریەشینی ئە ب ت گەییەتی دە یارمەر پ ویستیەت بەگەئە  
بەگە.وەی شواریەم ژمارەندی بەیو بەزمان کی نر تگایە

Kurdish

Jeżeli potrzebujesz pomocy w zrozumieniu tych informacji w swoim języku zadzwoń na podany poniżej numer.

Polish

如果你需要其他語言來幫助你了解這些資訊，請撥以下電話。

Chinese

এই লেখাটি যদি অন্য ভাষাতে বুঝতে চান তাহলে নিচের নম্বরে ফোন করুন

Bengali

اگر شما نیاز دارید که این اطلاعات را به زبان دیگری دریافت کنید لطفاً به شماره زیر تلفن کنید.

Farsi

If you would like this information in another format, including audio or large print, please call **08456 066 067**.