



**Wye Free School**

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**Wye Free School**

**Consultation Report**

**February 2013**

**Project Director: Martyn Baker (United Learning)**

**Local Group Chairman: Margaret Williams**

## **1. Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to outline the results of the Wye Free School's public consultation, which took place between Monday 7<sup>th</sup> January and Monday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2013. The information provided in this report is to assist the Secretary of State for Education in determining whether to enter into a Funding Agreement with United Learning, the proposed sponsor of the Free School.

Throughout the consultation, members of the Wye Free School team engaged with a broad range of stakeholders through a variety of means including face-to-face meetings, drop-in sessions for the public, online, on the phone and through the local media. The feedback has been broadly positive with parents expressing their support for the school and their excitement at joining in September. The main concerns raised centred on the permanent location of the school and on the potential impact of increased traffic in the village. Where issues have been raised they have been highlighted in this report and responded to.

## **2. Background to Wye Free School**

The proposal to open Wye Free School was first suggested by the Wye Free School Group which was formed in 2011 with the aim of creating an exceptional secondary school for children living in Wye and the surrounding villages. The Group comprises parents who, along with a significant number of local community members, identified a real need for high-quality school places in the Ashford area. The Group chose United Learning as its educational partner and they have worked together to develop the Wye Free School proposal.

In February 2012, the Wye Free School Group and United Learning submitted a proposal to the Department for Education to open a new, state-funded, co-educational 11-19 Free School in the village of Wye in Kent. In July 2012, after an interview process, the Secretary of State gave the go-ahead for the proposal to progress to the implementation stage with an expectation of it opening in September 2013.

Wye Free School will be an all-ability school serving up to 600 students. It will open in September 2013 with a single Year 7 group and build its student body a year at a time.

## **3. Pre-consultation Engagement**

Before the start of the formal consultation, Wye Free School completed over 18 months of informal consultation and public engagement. The table below sets out the different activities involved. These were aimed primarily at identifying demand for the school, generating local public awareness and support and recruiting parents.

Activity	Reach	When
Attended Consortium meeting of Heads of Ashford primary and secondary schools, gave presentation and answered questions	Approximately 40 Head Teachers present	May 2011
Public meeting in Wye Methodist Church to inform interested parties about proposal for school	Approximately 60 attendees	May 2011
Article in Kentish Express, item on Radio Kent, item on Meridian Television News	Kentish Express covers a broad area around Ashford. Radio and television reached all of Kent.	May 2011
Mail drop to all houses in Wye and villages in close proximity (Brook, Crundale, Godmersham, Naccolt) seeking views on school and giving notice of public meeting	2,000 newsletters distributed	October 2011
Public meeting in Wye Church giving presentation and inviting questions	Approximately 150 attendees	November 2011
Various meetings with elected representatives and officers of Wye Parish Council, Ashford Borough Council and Kent County Council (KCC), also with the local MP, Damian Green.		September 2011 - March 2012
Further articles in Kentish Express, Kent Life and Godmersham and Crundale and Wye and Brook Parish Magazines	Kent Life covers all of Kent.	October 2011 and December 2011
Three focus group meetings to consult local community on Vision and Educational Plan, Travel Plan and Community Engagement	Small group meetings with those who asked to be involved	December 2011 and January 2012
Presentation to Kennington Community Forum, followed by questions	Approximately 80 people present	January 2012
Direct engagement with David Adams, KCC Area Education Officer		February 2012
Letters to Heads of the 30 primary schools closest to Wye, seeking opportunity to visit to seek views. Visits to Chartham, Bodsham, Chilham, Kennington, Wye, Brook, Spring Grove, Phoenix (Bybrook) and Stowting primary schools.		December 2011 to January 2012
Presentation to governors of Wye Primary School, followed by questions		March 2012
Further visits to Phoenix Primary School and Spring Grove School		May 2012
Further consultation with Head of Spring Grove School		September 2012

Activity	Reach	When
Consultation meeting with Chairman of Wye Parish Council		September 2012
Postcard to households in Wye advertising the Open Days	1,000 households	September 2012
Open Days	Approximately 900 people attended the first Open Day and 100 the second.	September and October 2012

#### 4. Formal consultation process

The keys aims of the consultation were:

- To inform a wide range of local stakeholders about the new the school;
- To provide an opportunity for interested parties such as local residents, parents/carers, schools, politicians and others to give feedback on our plans for Wye Free School.

During the consultation there were three main ways for stakeholders to provide feedback:

1. Complete the consultation questionnaire and post it to United Learning, 91 – 95 Southwark Bridge Road, London SE1 0AX or email responses to [wyeconsultation@unitedlearning.org.uk](mailto:wyeconsultation@unitedlearning.org.uk)
2. Attend our consultation Drop In sessions which took place on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> January from 15.00 – 20.00 and Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February from 10.00 – 15.00, at The Kempe Centre, Olantigh Road, Wye, TN25 5EJ. The Drop In sessions were attended by over 100 people. There were approximately 30 parents present, most of whom had applied for their child to attend Wye Free School when it opens in September 2013. The rest of the attendees were local residents (we were unable to collect information about all attendees).
3. Call 0844 809 4744 with specific comments or questions.

Tailored introductory letters together with a consultation booklet were sent to a range of stakeholders during the first week of the consultation period. The booklet included the following information:

- Our vision and ethos;
- An overview of our curriculum plans;
- Our admissions policy;
- Governance;
- Staffing;
- Leadership, management and organisation;
- Community involvement and wider use;
- Relationship with parents.

The distribution groups and volumes are included in the table below:

Group	Contact
Local residents	Approximately 1,000 postcards publicising the consultation and the Drop In sessions were distributed in the areas surrounding the school. A press release was also featured in the Kentish Express newspaper. We also posted a comment on the local online forum, WyeWeb, publicising the consultation and giving details of how to respond. A similar article was printed in the Wye Parish Newsletter. The Chairman of the Local Free School Group participated in an interview with Meridian Television on 24 <sup>th</sup> January which was aired on the local news channel on 25 <sup>th</sup> January.
Local schools	Letters about the consultation and the consultation document were sent to the local maintained primary and secondary schools. The Head Teachers were also invited to meet with Mike Buchanan – the Chair of the Project Steering Group and Head of Ashford School.
Local community and religious groups	Consultation documents and letters were sent to a large number of local organisations including: Wye Heritage, Wye Business Association, Wye Cricket Club, Wye Community Farm, Wye Tennis Club, Wye Methodist Church and United Wye Benefice.
Parents/Carers	All the parents who had expressed an interest in Wye Free School and/or applied for their child to have a place at the school were emailed the consultation document and accompanying letter.
Politicians and Councillors	The local MP Damian Green, the Chairman of Wye Parish Council, the Leader of Ashford Borough Council and the Chairman of Kent County Council were sent the consultation document and accompanying letter. Three meetings were held with Ashford Borough Council on 16 <sup>th</sup> January, 25 <sup>th</sup> January and 1 <sup>st</sup> February 2013. These meetings were also attended by the Parish Council and the Education Funding Agency.
Other groups/organisations	The consultation document and accompanying letter was sent to the police and the NUT regional office.

## 5. Response to the Consultation

### 5.1 Questionnaire

Overall the questionnaire collected **59** responses although not all respondents answered every question. Of those who responded to the questionnaire:

- 35 were supportive of the Free School;
- 2 were supportive of the Free School if it is located in the historic buildings;
- 19 either expressed concern or actively opposed the Free School;
- 4 were neither supportive nor unsupportive of the proposal.

Whilst mainly supportive, the response to the questionnaire was mixed. Feedback is included below.

#### 1. Do you agree with the proposed vision and ethos for the school?

- For those who answered this question, 30 responded positively to the vision, two did not agree with it and one said that it was too broad and lacking in detail.
- Respondee were particularly in favour of focusing on the child as an individual.
- Comments included:

*“Yes, valuing all abilities, cultures and children as individuals is important. It is also encouraging to hear terms such as inspiring used and providing children with great opportunities in and out of the classroom.”*

*“We agree with the vision and ethos of this small community focused school. With high expectations of all its students, it will be a huge asset to the local area.”*

*“The description given is too broad and lacking in detail to agree with or disagree with. Who could disagree with excellence, enterprise, innovation and inclusivity?”*

#### 2. Do you agree with the proposed curriculum?

- For those that answered this question, 31 responded positively and one response was negative.

- There was strong support for a balanced curriculum that included a strong focus on extracurricular activities and also several respondents stressed the importance of languages, particularly given the close proximity to France.
- Comments included:

*“The curriculum will give parents a valuable added choice.”*

*“The curriculum seems to be a well balanced programme that will cater for all abilities and needs. As parents we particularly like the opportunity that will be offered for enrichment and cultural activities as we believe education is about far more than academic progress.”*

### **3. How do you think that the school can best interact with the needs of the local community?**

- The need to ensure the school was firmly embedded in the local community came out very strongly in the responses.
- It was felt the local community would benefit from the excellent school facilities, including after-school club and activities for children and adults, whilst students would benefit from sharing experiences and becoming actively involved in local groups and projects.
- Particular suggestions included regular coffee mornings, community support and volunteering opportunities, and a summer camp during the summer holidays at competitive rates for local children even if they are not students of the school.
- Several respondents also suggested the school would be a boost to local employment and may mean more parents visiting and supporting local shops.
- Comments included:

*“Placing the school physically where it is means it will inherently be part of the community, an open door policy with engagement and interaction in pastoral and academic focus will I believe be of benefit to both students, staff and parents as well as the local community and is sorely lacking in many secondary schools at the moment.”*

*“The school can interact with the needs of the local community by doing the same as it has been doing you have involved everyone from the start and this has worked very well.”*

*“Also provide adult ed courses/ painting classes in the evening.”*

- Some concerns were expressed around whether the school would make use of the Edwardian buildings; this will be covered later in this report.

**4. What role do you think the school can play in raising achievement in the area?**

- Overall the response was very positive in terms of how the Free School would raise achievement in the local area.
- A number of respondents complained about the lack of good secondary schools within the local area and felt Wye Free School could have a positive impact on these schools by raising the bar.
- Several respondents also stressed the importance of providing educational opportunities to those beyond the school.
- Comments included:

*“With the local non-selective secondary schools achieving disappointing 40% and lower grade A-C in core subjects there is clearly a need to raise results in this area.”*

*“United Learning has a clear, understandable ethos about education that clearly works. There are various schools in the area with low attainment levels – United Learning will set, and achieve, higher levels, making other schools take stock of themselves.”*

*“I think this could be the beginning of a better future for all, there will be a sense of grandeur about this school, local people respect what is theirs and we the village as a whole will feel very proud to have such a school. There are not enough secondary schools near us and the ones that are closest are large and we feel you don’t get the best from your child who sometimes seems to just get carried away in the school process and not actually learn or even enjoy being at school.”*

**5. What are your views on the proposed governance arrangements?**

- The overall response to the proposed governance arrangement was mainly positive as it was felt the experience provided by United Learning combined with support from the local community would prove a powerful combination.
- There was, however, some concern about ensuring there was sufficient local representation on the governing body.
- Comments included:

*“We feel that the proposed arrangements take into account the experience of United Learning, alongside the need to have local representation within the Board of Governors. It proposes both a careful monitoring of the educational achievements, and the financial backing to maintain this. We feel that both these areas are vital to the future running of the school.”*

*“There does appear to be scope for friction between the local community and the LGB appointed by United Learning. Interesting to see how the relationship with Ashford School develops. Wye Free School mustn’t be seen as a ‘poor man’s Ashford School’.”*

**Our response:** The Local Governing Body will comprise strong representation from the local community. United Learning will appoint the Chair of the LGB and together they will appoint the other governors. Once the school has opened, elections will be held to appoint staff and parent representatives.

**6. What are your views on the admissions policy?**

- The overwhelming majority of responses said that the admissions policy seemed fair and transparent and was in line with other schools' admissions policies.
- A couple of respondees felt that children at Lady Joanna Thornhill Primary should have precedence.

**7. Do you agree that the Secretary of State should enter into a Funding Agreement with United Learning for Wye Free School?**

- 27 agreed, five disagreed and three felt they didn't have enough information to respond.
- Comments included:

*"Yes. It would be a shame not to take advantage of the experience and expertise on offer, in support of both the children and the staff (and the parents) of a school that will clearly have so much to offer with the right support to achieve the vision and ethos from day one."*

*"Yes – United Learning seem to have very good skills expertise and experience to bring to the partnership."*

*"No the proposal to open in September 2013 is at best premature, consequently any decision should be deferred to 2014."*

## Additional responses

In addition to responses to the questionnaire we received 25 broader responses, a number of which expressed significant concerns or objections to the Wye Free School proposal. These concerns broadly fit into the following four areas:

### 1. Concern that there was already surplus secondary places so no need for another school

*“While I have no objection in principle to the proposed Free School in Wye, I do have concerns about the wisdom of opening such a school when there are surplus secondary places available in successful schools in both Canterbury and Ashford.”*

**Our response:** The proposal to open a new school in Wye is in response to significant demand for high-quality secondary school places in and around Ashford. During the pre-consultation phase, 650 parents expressed an interest in sending their child to the school and over 1,000 people attended the Open Days in September and October. There have been 224 applications for the 90 Year 7 places available in 2013.

The five secondary schools in the borough of Ashford (including the two single-sex grammar schools) have places in Year 7 for a total of 991 students. There are 30 primary schools located closer to the Ashford secondary schools than to any other. Between them, these primary schools have 1,212 students in Year 6 and, as such, more than 200 children have to go outside the borough each year for their secondary education. Moreover, the increase in housing planned by Ashford Borough Council has led the Council to propose for three new secondary schools to be opened to cater for further demand.

### 2. Traffic congestion at peak times

A number of residents said they feel the school will cause significant traffic congestion problems in the village, particularly at the beginning and end of the school day. Some have said that it will add to existing congestion problems which is compounded by the frequent closing of the level crossing gates and the large numbers of parents driving into the village at the primary school start and finish times. A further concern was expressed that Olantigh Road – the approach to the proposed new school – would be restricted to one lane due to inevitable parking, and would be completely blocked to people who live on the road.

**Our response:** We are currently developing a Travel Plan which seeks to address the issues raised about the potential impact of increased traffic in the village. The plan includes:

- Encouraging staff and students to walk, cycle or use public transport in order to travel to and from school, with specific incentives for students to travel by environmentally sustainable methods. Based upon applications for September 2013, we expect that 25% of students will live close enough to the school to walk or cycle and another 25% will qualify for free transport to school provided by Kent County Council. Around 40% of students will live close to public bus routes. We are currently consulting with Stagecoach in an attempt to make a minor amendment to one bus timetable in order to make the use of public buses the transport mode of choice for most of the 50% of students who will neither walk nor qualify for free transport.
- Staggering arrivals and departures at the start and end of the school day so that they do not coincide with the periods of congestion caused by the start (8.45am) and finish (3.10pm) times of the Lady Joanna Thornhill Primary School. The compulsory school curriculum will run from 8.30am until 4.15pm with a breakfast club from 7.30am for those who arrive early. The school will remain open for after-school activities and for private study/homework until 5.30pm. Staff will typically arrive at school between 7am and 8am.

The Travel Plan will be monitored termly, and reviewed and, if required, adapted annually by the Principal and the LGB. The site plan for the school includes a drop off area and a significant amount of car parking space so that it will not be necessary to park on Olantigh Road.

*“By providing school transport that drops children the north side of the railway line, therefore reducing the amount of traffic in the village, and providing the children with some exercise.”*

*“Should our sons be among the 2013 joiners we are looking at bus to Ashford, train to Wye then walk ..... even at 11 they need to mature, and I think that only comes with the freedom that a journey to school brings!”*

### **3. Support for the historic buildings**

A number of residents feel the school provides a real opportunity to make use of the old Imperial College buildings located in Wye that have been unused for four years. Some argue that re-use of the old buildings was one the main reasons for the proposal for the school to be located in Wye.

Nine people expressed their strong wish for the new school to be located in the historic buildings of the former Wye College. Out of the 58 responses we received, two people said that their support for the school was dependent on it being located in the historic buildings.

Wye Parish Council, which has always expressed a strong wish for the school to be located in the Edwardian building, also issued a questionnaire to every household in Wye as part of the Neighbourhood Plan Survey asking:

*“Do you agree to a Free School being located in Wye (please respond for both locations)*

- *In the Kempe Centre library and a new building on the adjacent car park (of the former Wye College) to the east of Olantigh road*
- *In the old Edwardian buildings fronting onto the High Street and the laboratories (of the former Wye College) to the West of Olantigh road”*

Of the 1,054 respondents from 674 households, 62.1% either strongly agreed or agreed with the siting of a free school in the Edwardian college buildings. 27.4% strongly agreed or agreed to its siting in the Kempe Centre with associated new build.

**Our response:** The Education Funding Agency (EFA) is currently considering all possible options for a permanent home for the school. It is assessing which site best meets the requirements of a thriving and busy 21st century school including being able to deliver a wide-ranging curriculum and extracurricular programme. As part of their decision making process, the EFA has met with the Parish Council, Ashford Borough Council, Imperial College as well as the Wye Free School Group and United Learning. We expect them to make a final decision very shortly. We are committed to keeping the community informed of how the plans for the school will develop. The Wye Free School Group and United Learning are confident that wherever the school is located, it will be possible to run a successful school that meets the needs of all students.

#### **4. Lack of initial consultation**

Some concern was expressed that there had not been sufficient consultation of the village prior to the launch of the bid and during the consultation period itself.

**Our response:** Before the start of the formal consultation, Wye Free School completed over 18 months of informal consultation and public engagement. This activity is outlined on page 3. As plans for the school develop, we will continue to work with the community, seeking their input and updating them on progress. This includes a new, informative website and a series of newsletters sent to all residents in Wye.

## Other responses

The table below sets out the key issues and questions raised during the consultation together with the Wye Free School Group and United Learning's response:

Question/Concern	Who	Wye Free School Group and United Learning's Response
Will the school be ready for September 2013?	Parent	Yes. The school will open for the first Year 7 group of 90 students in the Kempe Centre. Work is well underway to ensure the school is ready for opening. We are currently recruiting the Principal and expect to make an announcement shortly.
What sports facilities will be available in the first year?	Parent	Field sports will take place on the existing sports field that is just a few minutes' walk from the Imperial College Campus.
What will the curriculum cover?	Parent	Wye Free School will teach a broad and balanced curriculum including the core subjects of English, maths, science, RE, ICT, and a wider offer from the arts, humanities and technologies.
What are the admissions arrangements for Wye Free School?	Parent	<p>Wye Free School will be socially, academically and culturally inclusive and will welcome applications from all.</p> <p>If the number of preferences for the school is more than the number of places available, places will be allocated in the following priority order:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Children in local authority care</li> <li>2. Current family association</li> <li>3. Health and special access reasons</li> <li>4. Children who live nearer to Wye Free School than any other maintained non-selective secondary school or academy with those living closest being ranked highest</li> <li>5. Children who live nearer to any other maintained non-selective secondary school or academy than to Wye Free School with those living closest being ranked highest</li> </ol> <p>The proposed admissions policy is included as an annex to this report.</p>
Of the total 600 pupils, how many are likely to come from within Wye with Hinxhill Parish?	Unknown	The early analysis of the applications received so far seem to indicate that around 50% of our likely intake might come from Wye itself plus the area immediately around the village.

Question/Concern	Who	Wye Free School Group and United Learning's Response
Concern that a significant part of the intake will have Special Educational Needs	Parent	This concern may be as a result of a misunderstanding of the admissions policy which places Statemented children and those with a particular educational and social need at the top of the oversubscription criteria.
Will the school grow beyond 600 students?	Resident	No. Our vision is to create a small school and we have no intention of increasing the size of the student body. Indeed, we could not increase the size of the school without consulting the local community since it was on the basis that we wanted to create a small school that the Department for Education gave permission for the free school project to proceed.
Will Wye Free School students qualify for free transport to school?	Parent	Kent County Council will provide free transport to a child's closest secondary school but only if the child's home is more than 3 miles away or if there is no 'safe walking route' for those who live closer. There is a 'Freedom Pass' which can be bought for £100 a year for children in Years 7 – 11 attending school and whose parents pay Council Tax in Kent. This allows children to travel on any public buses in the county at any time of day for a year. Freedom passes can be bought at a discounted rate for those children who qualify for free school meals.
What time will the school day start and finish?	Resident	The school day is likely to start at 8.30am and finish at 4.15pm at which time voluntary enrichment activities will be available. There will also be a breakfast club from 7.30am.
Will there be an opportunity to meet the Principal when they are appointed?	Parent	Yes. We will hold a number of open evenings in the summer which will provide an opportunity to meet the Principal and hear more about how plans for the school are developing.
Opposition towards the school if it is not located in the historic buildings of Imperial College	Resident	See previous statement on support for the historic buildings.
Opposition to new buildings being built	Resident	See previous statement on support for the historic buildings.
Concern that children from Wye that go to	Resident	It is of course parental choice that will decide whether the preference is for a child's place of education to continue to be within the village or whether going elsewhere will broaden their outlook. The Free School's curriculum and

Question/Concern	Who	Wye Free School Group and United Learning's Response
Wye Free School will not have a rounded experience		extracurricular activities will, however, ensure that a well-rounded, balanced approach to educating the whole child is delivered.
Secondary Schools are normally built in or on the edge of a town or city - not in an outlying village with poor transport and road systems.	Unknown	There are many examples of secondary schools operating very successfully in rural locations. Wye has good transport links, including a rail line providing half hourly trains to London and Canterbury and a regular bus service to Ashford and Canterbury.
How will Wye Free School work with Ashford School?	Parent	Wye Free School will work closely with Ashford School which will play a key role in the development of the Free School and will enrich the educational and extracurricular opportunities available to students.
Concern that the consultation was unfair	Resident	The period of informal and formal consultation was extensive and incorporated opportunities for written and verbal responses to information imparted through literature, meetings and a dedicated website.
Will an independent body be collating and presenting the consultation responses to the department for education, or will it be WFS / United Learning?	Unknown	As with all free school projects, it is those proposing the school that have a responsibility to carry out the consultation and report their findings. The Wye Free School Group and United Learning have therefore produced a report of all of the findings. The report will be made publicly available on the Wye Free School website

## 5.2 Additional responses

We were written to by the NUT who asked whether the national union ULT recognition agreement would apply at Wye Free School. We confirmed that it would be and are in the process of arranging a meeting to make arrangements for the next academic year.

We also received a letter from Ashford Borough Council Planning and Development Services where the Council:

- Confirmed its general support for new Free School provision in the Borough as an important way of broadening choice for parents and students and complementing existing school provision;
- Expressed strong support in principle for a Free School on the Imperial College campus as a practical means of securing the educational re-use of the important existing core of the college buildings, especially the listed Edwardian buildings in line with adopted local planning policy for the area (policy WYE 3);
- Registered a strong preference for the 'conversion' option over the proposed substantially new build option for the Free School, unless the latter is part of a wider, masterplanned solution for the WYE 3 site;
- Committed to continuing to work with the local community to deliver the intentions of the adopted plan policy for Imperial College campus and to support the already well advanced local processes of producing a Neighbourhood Plan for the village and a master plan for the WYE 3 site.

Both Ashford Borough Council and Wye Parish Council expressed their support for the Free School in principal but that it should be situated in the historic buildings of Imperial College.

## 6. Conclusion

Overall a large range of stakeholders remain very supportive of Wye Free School. The number of responses to the consultation was relatively small but, in addition to those we have heard from, we must add the 817 people on our mailing list who have generally been very supportive of the Free School.

Although the formal consultation process has now finished, we remain in regular contact with many of the consultees, particularly the Council and local parents and we are confident we can retain these high levels of support. We will continue to work with people who have concerns, particularly around the school travel plan. We will also continue to use our website, newsletters and the local press to keep the community updated on how our plans for the school are progressing.

## ANNEX

### Admissions policy

Wye Free School will abide by the School Admissions Code and the School Admissions Appeals Code. In order to do this we will ensure that arrangements for admission to the school are clear and fair and that they are as simple as possible.

Wye Free School will be socially, academically and culturally inclusive and will welcome applications from all. We will not select students by ability or by faith. The school will provide high quality education for boys and girls from the age of 11 to 19 years. Our aim is to ensure that boys and girls who join the school will be happy and successful in the unique academic, pastoral and cultural environment that we will offer. Prospective students and their parents will be offered the opportunity to visit the school before making an application for a place.

Kent County Council has co-ordinated admissions arrangements for all schools in the Ashford area (the area closest to Wye) for entry into Year 7. Wye Free School will participate in this scheme for students joining the school from September 2014 onwards. For the first year, i.e. those students who will join the school in September 2013, Wye Free School will conduct its own admissions process because it has not yet signed a Funding Agreement with the Department for Education.

### Year 7 Entry

The Published Admissions Number (PAN) for entry into Year 7 will be 90. If fewer than 90 students apply for a place, then all will be admitted.

### Special Educational Needs

All students with a statement of Special Educational Need which names the Wye Free School in the statement will be admitted.

### Oversubscription Criteria

The oversubscription policy for entry into Wye Free School in Year 7 will rank prospective students as follows, those ranked highest being offered places first.

### **1. Children in Local Authority Care and Children who were previously in care**

A child under the age of 18 years for whom the local authority provides accommodation by agreement with their parents/carers (section 22 of the Children Act 1989) or who is subject to a care order under Part IV of the Act, or children who are adopted having previously been in care.

### **2. Siblings**

A brother or sister attending the school when the child starts. In this context, brother or sister means children who live as brother or sister in the same house including natural brothers or sisters, adopted siblings, stepbrothers or sisters and foster brothers and sisters. If siblings from multiple births (twins, triplets etc) apply for a school place and the school would reach its Published Admissions Number (PAN) after admitting one or more, but before admitting all of those siblings the school will offer a place to each of the siblings even if doing so takes the school over its PAN.

### **3. Health and Special Access Reasons**

Medical/Health and Special Access Reasons will be applied in accordance with the school's legal obligations, in particular those under the Equality Act 2010. Priority will be given to those children whose mental or physical impairment means they have a demonstrable and significant need to attend Wye Free School. Equally this priority will apply to children whose parents'/guardians' physical or mental health or social need means there is a demonstrable and significant need for their child to attend Wye Free School. Such claims will need to be supported by written evidence from a suitably qualified medical or other practitioner who can demonstrate a special connection between these needs and the school.

### **4. Children who live nearer to Wye Free School than any other maintained non selective secondary school or academy**

Children will be ranked according to the distance from their home to Wye Free School with those living closest being ranked highest. The distance is measured between the child's permanent address and the school in a straight line using Ordnance Survey address point data. Distances are measured from a central point within the child's home to the front gate of the school. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. Distances will be measured in accordance with the practices set out in "Admission to Secondary School in Kent 2013" booklet.

### **5. Children who live nearer to any other maintained non selective secondary school or academy than Wye Free School**

Children for whom Wye Free School is not their nearest non selective secondary school or academy will be ranked according to the distance from their home to Wye Free School with those living closest being ranked highest. The distance is measured between the child's permanent address and the school in a straight line

using Ordnance Survey address point data. Distances are measured from a central point within the child's home to the front gate of the school. The same address point on the school site is used for everybody. Distances will be measured in accordance with the practices set out in "Admission to Secondary School in Kent 2013" booklet.

### **Tie breaking**

If two or more children are ranked equally on any of the above criteria, random allocation will determine which child or children are offered places. In this case, a child or children's names will be randomly selected from a total list of tied applicants by someone unconnected with the school.

### **Waiting lists**

If Wye Free School is oversubscribed on 1 March 2013, the names of pupils who have applied, but have not been offered places, will be included on a waiting list if their parents ask for this by 19th March 2013. Any places which become available will be offered to pupils who will be ranked according to the original oversubscription criteria. Those ranked highest will be offered places first. Waiting lists will be maintained up to January following the start of the academic year.

### **Appeals**

There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel for unsuccessful applicants.

## Supplementary Information

### Year 7 Entry

Entry to Year 7 in September 2013 will be made by completing an application form obtainable from the school. The process will be as follows:

- September 2012 – prospectus published, dates for Open Days and other opportunities for students and parents to visit Wye Free School published.
- 31st October 2012 – Application forms returned to Wye Free School
- January 2013 - Applicants ranked according to the school's over subscription criteria.
- 1st March 2013 - Offers of places made to parents (provisional if funding agreement has not been signed)
- 19th March 2013 - Parents to whom offers were not made must ask to be included on the waiting list
- 21st March 2013 - Places must be accepted or declined if funding agreement has been signed. If not signed by this date, places must be accepted or declined within 10 working days of the signing of the funding agreement and confirmation of offer to parents.
- 16<sup>th</sup> April 2013 – Appeals to be lodged by parents if necessary

Entry to Year 7 from September 2014 onwards will be made by completion of a 'Secondary Common Application Form' (SCAF). The process will be as follows:

- August 2013 – school prospectus complete
- September 2013 – prospectus published, dates for Open Days and other opportunities for students and parents to visit Wye Free School published, Local Authority supplied with information for composite schools' prospectus.
- 31st October 2013– SCAFs returned to Local Authority. Parents are asked to specify up to four secondary school choices and to rank them in order of preference.
- January 2014 - Applicants' details received by Wye Free School for the applicants to be ranked according to the school's over subscription criteria.
- February 2014 - Ranked lists returned to Local Authority
- 1st March 2014 - Offers of places made to parents
- 19th March 2014 (date to be confirmed) – Appeals to be lodged by parents if necessary
- 22nd March 2014 (date to be confirmed) - Places must be accepted or declined.
- April 2014 onwards - Local Authority reallocates places that have become available using the schools' ranked waiting lists.
- 31st July 2014: Deadline for Schools' Adjudicator on contested decisions.