



18 October 2019

Dear Parent/Carer

You may be aware that our community has recently been approached as part of a consultation by St Bede's Inter-Church School, a member of the Roman Catholic Diocese of East Anglia and the Anglican Diocese of Ely, in relation to their proposal to build a new 'free' secondary school in Soham.

All of the local secondary academy trusts are united in their opposition to the plans, due to the fact that we believe that the investment required to meet future population growth can and should be met by the existing colleges of Ely, Soham and of course Witchford. This is a view, which has also been expressed by both local and county politicians, who have already met with the colleges to discuss future expansion plans, and the capital investment required for them.

We believe that this 'free' school proposal does not reflect the needs of our communities and goes against the idea of the Community College model of education, which has worked so successfully in Cambridgeshire. What the consultation letter states is that this proposal can go ahead "without necessarily affecting existing schools", however there is only a finite pot of money for school expansion. If this new 'satellite' secondary school for 400-500 students is to be built from scratch, it has been made explicit that there will be no funds left to support the investment needed in the other three village colleges.

As a Governing body, we will therefore be objecting to this proposal in the strongest terms, and we will be responding to the consultation on the basis that high quality education should be local and be delivered by our community colleges. We will also emphasise the fact that we believe that the investment that will be coming into our area for education, goes to expanding and improving the facilities and resources of the existing three colleges that already make a difference for their students and their lives, rather than a 'satellite school' that we believe is not wanted or needed.

We would encourage all parents and members of our community to respond to the consultation or to their local political representatives with their thoughts.

Yours faithfully



Chair of Governors
WVC Governing Body



Principal
Witchford Village College