

# **Frequently-Asked Questions**

## **Educational Provision in Gamlingay**

### **Planning for the Future**

**Consultation : April - May 2011**

Date: 13 May 2011

## **Organisation of Document**

An attempt has been made to group the questions and answers in this document under headings, but there is some overlap.

### **The Ofsted Action Plan and the Consultation Process**

- 1. Why is Gamlingay Village College not being given time to improve, unlike other schools in Cambridgeshire that have been the subject of special measures following an Ofsted inspection, before options, including possible closure, have been proposed?**

It is a requirement of a local authority's Statement of Action, in response to a school being made the subject of special measures by Ofsted, that the case for the closure of the school, or federation with a strong and effective education partner, should be considered. The consultation on the future structure of educational provision in Gamlingay is, therefore, taking place alongside the support arrangements that have been introduced by the local authority to address the difficulties in leadership and management and teaching and learning that were identified in the inspection report.

There is no uniform approach to cases of special measures designation. In the case of Gamlingay Village College, there is an additional element that is not present in any other school in Cambridgeshire, because, even though it is designated a secondary school, it is a middle school (for children aged 9-13), and the Key Stage 2 results, which form part of the adverse Ofsted judgement, are for children of primary age. The structure of the educational provision in Gamlingay is, therefore, an important consideration.

- 2. Why is the two-tier system of primary schools (for children aged 4-11) and secondary schools (for children aged 11 – 16) considered by Cambridgeshire County Council to be better educationally? Is there any evidence to support this view?**

The two-tier educational model is considered to be better educationally, as it involves only one transition point, between primary and secondary school, as opposed to two in the three-tier model – at the end of first and middle schools. This is important because transition points are when children make least educational progress.

The two-tier educational model also goes with the grain of the National Curriculum Key Stages: primary schools (Key Stages 1 and 2); secondary schools (Key Stages 3 and 4); rather than cutting across those Key Stages, as is the case with the three-tier model.

- 3. Does the County Council's consultation timetable not contravene the Department for Education's (DfE) consultation guidelines, thus rendering the process illegal?**

The guide for local authorities and governing bodies from the previous Department for Children Schools and Families relates to the closure of a maintained mainstream school. The guide contains both statutory guidance and non-statutory guidance on the process for closing a

maintained mainstream school. The overview of the closure process provided in a table in the guide is set out below:

“26. There are 5 statutory stages for a statutory proposal to close a maintained mainstream school:

Consultation	Publication	Representation	Decision	Implementation
Not prescribed (minimum of 6 weeks recommended; school holidays <b>should</b> be taken into consideration and avoided where possible). Likely to be no longer than 12 months.	1 day	<b>Must</b> be 6 weeks (this is prescribed in legislation and <b>cannot</b> be shortened or lengthened to take account of school holidays).	LA <b>should</b> decide the proposals within 2 months, otherwise they fall to the schools adjudicator.	Not prescribed timescale – but <b>must</b> be as specified in the published notice, subject to any modifications agreed by the Decision Maker.
<b>Stage 1</b>	<b>Stage 2</b>	<b>Stage 3</b>	<b>Stage 4</b>	<b>Stage 5</b>

**Note:** “The statutory guidance sections are indicated by shading, the word **must** in bold refers to a requirement in legislation, whilst the word **should** in bold is a recommendation.”

The process relating to Gamlingay Village College is currently in Stage 1. As can be seen from the above extract, the guidance relating to this consultation stage is a recommendation, not statutory.

It is important to emphasise that Cambridgeshire County Council does, wherever possible, try to abide by government guidance relating to consultation timetables for school reorganisations. However, the imperative in the case of Gamlingay was to provide clarity on the way forward for parents and children before the end of the 2010/11 academic year. The only way to do this was to span the Easter school holidays.

The consultation document was delivered to the First School and the Village College on Wednesday 6 April, in order that parents might have the document before schools closed for the two-week Easter break on 8 April. The closing date for written comments is Wednesday, 25 May - seven weeks in total. Schools close for a week for May half-term on 27 May, returning on 6 June.

The relevant Cabinet meeting takes place on 14 June, after which the schools and parents will be informed of the outcome in good time before the end of the summer term in July. If Cabinet agrees that there should be significant change, stage 2 of the process will start in September 2011.

#### 4. How will the children’s views be taken into account?

The School Improvement Partner designated to work closely with

Gamlingay Village College, and monitoring progress, has been asked to work with the Acting Headteacher to ascertain how best to obtain children's views, and to report these back to the relevant County Council officers before the end of the consultation period.

**5. Why did the County Council undertake the recent parental survey on planning for educational provision in Gamlingay?**

This survey was undertaken in January 2011, following the County Councillor review of educational provision in South West Cambridgeshire, which included the pattern of educational provision in Gamlingay. This review ended in July 2010. In view of the difficult national and local economic circumstances, the outcome was that there should be no change in the current pattern of provision in Gamlingay at that stage, but that parents' views should be surveyed, in order to inform longer-term planning in this area. The survey was delayed by a term, at the request of the headteacher of Gamlingay Village College, who was of the view that it would cause uncertainty at the time when parents were making their school choices for September 2011. The subsequent timing of the survey, in January 2011, proved to be unfortunate, as the Village College was inspected by Ofsted, and became the subject of special measures, at the beginning of February. However, it must be emphasised that they were separate processes.

**6. Has the County Council deliberately allowed the Village College to fail, in order to be able to close it?**

No. A significant amount of support was provided to the Village College before the inspection, and continues now. This included detailed input from the Village College's designated School Improvement Partner and significant consultancy support. The Head and Chair of Governors were alerted of the local authority's concerns and provided with guidance on how to address them, but did not act on this.

**7. Will implementing change now not adversely impact the education of the children currently attending the Village College?**

When it has been agreed how this issue should be taken forward, detailed implementation arrangements will be put in place. These will be developed in close consultation with all of the schools involved, and clear emphasis will be placed on causing the least disruption to the education of the children concerned. The focus of local authority support will continue throughout the consultation period and beyond, to ensure that the education of the children continues to be supported and improved, as outlined in the post Ofsted action plan.

**8. Educational standards are important, but are social ties and friendships not equally important? Will closing Gamlingay Village College not irreparably damage these ties, particularly for children with learning and social difficulties?**

Social ties and friendships are important and contribute significantly to a positive learning environment. However, the main purpose of children attending school, including those with learning and social difficulties, is to learn. The key focus of action must, therefore, be to address the issues that adversely impact on the progress children make in their learning. All Cambridgeshire schools aim to be wholly inclusive and, when the way forward has been agreed, the implementation plan will include arrangements to meet the needs of children with learning and social difficulties.

**9. The main criticism of Gamlingay Village College in the Ofsted report is of the leadership and management. This has now been addressed, so why is structural change necessary?**

As indicated in the answer to question 1, it is a requirement of a local authority's Statement of Action that the case for the closure of a school, or for federation with a strong and effective education partner, should be considered. The leadership that has been put in place at present is only temporary. However, in addition to improving the leadership, Ofsted identified two other priorities for action and improvement, namely:

- increasing attainment and improving pupils' progress to at least national averages in all subjects, but especially the core skills of literacy and numeracy; and
- improving the quality of teaching to increase the proportion of good and outstanding lessons.

All of these areas need to improve to ensure that the school provides a satisfactory standard of education.

**10. Why was the post of headteacher not advertised? And why do we only have a temporary headteacher until the end of the summer term?**

The current temporary leadership was put in place in response to the formal suspension of the substantive headteacher, following the Ofsted findings. Due to this position, the school cannot appoint a headteacher until the situation with the substantive headteacher has been resolved and the post of headteacher is vacant. This situation is under review.

There was also a need to have a designated headteacher in post to lead the school on a daily basis and to implement the Ofsted action plan.

**11. Are there many schools in special measures that do not improve?**

Cambridgeshire has, generally, been successful in supporting schools in the County that have become the subject of special measures to exit from that category within the target period outlined in the relevant Statement of

Action. This is usually within 18 months to two years. However, this is not uniformly the case nationally, where some schools in special measures have failed to improve. In cases of schools failing to improve, the DfE expects structural solutions to be applied.

### **The Options**

**12. Why has Cambridgeshire County Council included a preferred option in the consultation document, does this not preclude true consultation?**

It is Cambridgeshire's practice to include a preferred option, as part of a consultation process, to provide an indication of the local authority's assessment of the balance of advantage. However, a preferred option has no formal status, and people's views on all of the options identified are welcomed, as indicated in the consultation document. If significant change, such as closure of the Village College, is proposed, this will be the subject of a further, formal consultation process.

**13. By having Option 2 as the preferred option, with the proposed closure of Gamlingay Village College, is the County Council not denying parents the choice of education which they have at present, i.e. two-tier education elsewhere in Cambridgeshire and three-tier in Gamlingay and Central Bedfordshire?**

If the expansion of Gamlingay First School into an all-through primary school and the closure of the Village College were agreed, this would bring the pattern of provision in Gamlingay into line with educational provision elsewhere in Cambridgeshire. In this way, the choice available to parents within the County would be reduced. However, if they wished to do so, Cambridgeshire parents would be able to apply to attend schools that follow the three-tier model of education in Central Bedfordshire, in the same way as parents from Central Bedfordshire, and other neighbouring authorities, apply to attend schools in Cambridgeshire. If a child attends a school that is not the designated catchment school, as a result of parental preference, the parents are responsible for paying for and arranging the transport to that school, unless it is the nearest appropriate school to their home address and over the statutory walking distance for the relevant age range.

**14. Would it be possible to propose an additional option?**

Yes, this could be done as part of the consultation process. It would be included in the information on the outcome of the consultation that will form part of the report to the 14 June meeting of the County Council's Cabinet.

**15. Why is it not possible to expand Gamlingay Village College to become an 11-16 secondary school, so that secondary schooling is available in the village?**

As indicated in the consultation document, this option has been evaluated in detail in the past, and Members of the County Council have concluded that, as it would not be possible, in Gamlingay, to meet even the Council's minimum size guidance of four forms of entry (620 places) for a secondary school, this would not be a viable option.

**16. Does the County Council have the power to close Gamlingay Village College, which is a Foundation school?**

The Village College is a Foundation school which means that the governors have certain additional responsibilities. Under education law, local authorities can close a Foundation school. It does not require the approval of the DfE or the Office of the Schools Adjudicator. The final decision rests with the County Council's Cabinet.

**17. What is a Federation?**

A Federation involves two or more schools agreeing to enter into a formal, statutory partnership, overseen by a single governing body with collective responsibility for the schools concerned. The governing body and the headteacher determine management and organisational arrangements, but the usual expectation is of one Executive Headteacher providing leadership and management across the federated schools.

Such an arrangement has to be agreed by the governing bodies of the schools concerned, not the local authority. A Federation provides opportunities for joint working and the more cost-effective use of resources.

**18. If the First School is not in favour of federation, as outlined in Option 1, is this a real option, and will it not lead to the isolation of the First School? If it were taken forward, what would be done to combat this isolation?**

Federation does not rely upon the involvement of the First School. Improved joint working for pupils of secondary age, and more cost-effective use of resources could be achieved via the federation of the Village College with Stratton Upper School alone. Improved joint working and transition arrangements could also be achieved with the First School and the Village College working more closely together, but not in a formal federation.

If it was agreed that Option 1 should be pursued, and the First School decided not to become part of the federated arrangement, the school's existing links with the Bassingbourn primary schools could continue and, if required, the local authority could broker more formal links with other primary schools in Cambridgeshire or with first schools in other local authority areas.



**19. When is the earliest that a significant change to current educational arrangements in Gamlingay could be implemented? What is the timetable for consultation and implementation?**

The earliest that a significant change to current educational arrangements in Gamlingay could be implemented would be September 2012. The timetable for consultation is as follows:

- Series of consultation meetings concluding 19 May;
- Deadline for written comments 25 May;
- Report to 14 June meeting of County Council's Cabinet at which a decision on the way forward would be taken;
- The outcome of this meeting would be communicated to parents, staff, governors and other interested parties, setting out the next steps;
- Beginning of September 2011, publication of statutory proposals for change;
- Six-week period following publication of the statutory notice for comments / objections;
- Report to November 2011 meeting of Cabinet for final decision;
- Implementation September 2012.

The timetable for the detailed implementation arrangements would depend on which option was chosen.

**20. What arrangements will be made for the staff at Gamlingay First School and Gamlingay Village College?**

Specific arrangements will depend on the option chosen. However, in line with the County Council's normal practice, there will be full consultation with staff and their union representatives and detailed guidance will be produced on employment issues.

**21. Have Year 4 implementation arrangements for September 2011 already been agreed with the First School?**

No, nothing will be agreed until the outcome of the 14 June Cabinet meeting is known. If Cabinet decides to consult formally on Option 2, interim arrangements are likely to include the current Year 4 cohort continuing to be educated at the First School for an additional year, rather than transferring to the Village College in September 2011, for one year only. However, if this were to happen, the Year 5 pupils would still be formally on the roll of the Village College for the 2011-12 academic year, until formal consultation on the proposal had been completed.

**22. What will happen to the children currently attending Gamlingay Village College if the school closes in September 2012? How would the school be wound down? Which year groups will be educated there?**

This level of detail has yet to be determined, but, as indicated above, if

Cabinet did decide to consult formally on Option 2, it is likely that interim arrangements would entail the current Year 4 remaining at the First School in September 2011. These arrangements could also include the current Year 6 being given the opportunity to transfer to a Cambridgeshire secondary school in September 2011. For the September 2011 -12 academic year, this would leave the following year groups at the Village College: pupils in Year 6, those in Year 7 who chose not to take up the secondary transfer option and Year 8.

**23. If Options 2 or 3 were to be taken forward, what would the expansion of the Gamlingay First School building entail, to enable it to become an all-through primary school? How much would this cost?**

If the school stayed on its current site, with a Published Admission Number of 45, it would need three extra classrooms, new group rooms and toilets, plus a larger hall. The minimum cost of this work would be £1.2m. This would be funded from the County Council's five-year rolling capital programme. A feasibility study would be undertaken which would inform a development plan for the expansion of the school accommodation. This would be phased, as necessary, to meet planning requirements.

**24. Is the First School site capable of expansion? If Option 2 were agreed, would it not be better, and cheaper, to use the Village College site for a primary school, as it is as a larger site and a better building?**

Site evaluation work was undertaken, as part of previous reviews of educational provision in Gamlingay, which indicated that the First School site would enable a primary school to be developed there. However, a full site re-appraisal will be undertaken, to take account of updated school building requirements and any other relevant factors.

This work will also include an appraisal of the Village College site, in order to determine the best way forward.

**25. How much money would the County Council obtain from the disposal of the Village College site?**

As a number of factors have a bearing on this question (see questions 25, 26 and 27, below) it is not possible to provide a clear answer at this stage. The County Council's Strategy and Estates section will explore the issue further in preparation for the report to the 14 June Cabinet meeting.

**26. Is there not a covenant on the Village College site, restricting its use to educational purposes? (Reference was made to Merton College as previous owners.)**

This would, obviously, have a bearing on the issue. As indicated previously, the County Council's Strategy and Estates section will explore

this further in preparation for the report to the 14 June Cabinet meeting.

**27. In view of the agreed development of the multiple-use games area (MUGA) on the Village College site, funded by South Cambridgeshire District Council, will this not restrict the future use of the site and the funding which could be obtained from its sale?**

This would, obviously, have a bearing on the issue. As indicated previously, the County Council's Strategy and Estates section will explore this further in preparation for the report to the 14 June Cabinet meeting.

**28. Should the Village College site not be retained in its entirety for community usage?**

County Councillors will take account of the community implications as part of their decision-making. Existing and future community usage will also be factors which the County Council's Strategy and Estates section will take into account in exploring site-related issues.

**29. How much would it cost to implement Option 2, in terms of revenue and capital?**

**Revenue Costs**

Revenue funding, for the running costs of schools, is determined by a local Cambridgeshire formula. As far as general revenue budgets are concerned, the First School would, as it is now, be funded as a primary school, and Bassingbourn Village College would continue to be funded as a secondary school. The key determining factor in the formula for schools' annual budgets is the number of pupils on roll each January on the date of the annual school census. Additional pupils lead to increased school budgets. When taking forward changes that have been agreed by the County Council, transitional, or planned-growth, funding is also discussed with the schools concerned. This would include funding to appoint additional teachers and teaching assistants for any extra classes that were established in advance of the additional funding generated as a result of the increased numbers in the annual school census. It is not possible to provide specific figures showing the exact budget changes that would result from the changes outlined in Option 2. However, further relevant information is set out below.

**Gamlingay First School**

The First School's cost per pupil in 2011/12 is £3,525. This places it 111<sup>th</sup> out of 197 schools in the primary sector in Cambridgeshire, excluding academies. The maintained primary school average is £3,669 per pupil.

The school's 2011/12 budget, based on the funding generated through the formula for the number of children on the school roll, is £680,000. It is not possible to say exactly how much funding the school would have as a 315-place primary school in 2012, but if it were full in every year group, from Reception to Year 6, the budget would increase to approximately

£950,000, at current prices.

### **Bassingbourn Village College**

The Village College's cost per pupil in 2011/12 is £4,494. This places it 12th out of 23 secondary schools in Cambridgeshire, excluding academies. The maintained secondary school average is £4,503.

It is not possible to indicate exactly how much funding Bassingbourn Village College would receive from September 2012 if Gamlingay were added to its catchment area, because Bassingbourn already admits more students than those living in its immediate catchment area, thus generating a higher budget than the pure catchment students would generate. If Gamlingay was added, and Bassingbourn was oversubscribed in the future, Gamlingay children would be a higher priority in the oversubscription criteria. They would, therefore, replace some children from out-of-catchment rather than, necessarily, being additional to them. (Bassingbourn Village College is also consulting on possible conversion to Academy status at present. If this change in status were to take place, Bassingbourn would be funded directly by central government, in the future, not Cambridgeshire County Council.)

### **Headteacher Salaries**

As far as headteacher salaries are concerned, it is governing bodies' responsibility to determine the salary of their school's headteacher, with reference to the size group in which the school is placed.

### **Transport Costs**

There would be additional transport costs, as transport would be required for children from Year 7 rather than Year 9, as at present. The distance would also be greater to Bassingbourn than to Biggleswade. The exact cost is not yet known, because if this option were agreed, a tender process for the contract would be undertaken.

### **Capital Costs**

As referred to in question 21, above, the minimum **capital** cost for the expansion of the First School would be £1.2m.

Bassingbourn Village College currently has some spare capacity, so it is not expected that extensive capital work would be required. However, exact building requirements would be explored with the Head and Chair of Governors of the Village College.

## **30. Why spend money on expanding the First School building which would be better spent supporting the Village College to improve?**

The County Council's budget for expenditure on buildings is completely separate from the Learning Directorate's budget for supporting standards and effectiveness in schools. Gamlingay Village College is already receiving a high level of support from the Learning Directorate, and this will continue.

It may also be worth noting that Gamlingay Village College, which is designated as a secondary school, even though half of its children are of primary age, is the second highest-funded secondary school in the county. For 2011/12, the Village College will receive £5133 per pupil, compared with the Cambridgeshire secondary school average of £4503 and the primary school average of £3669.

**31. Why has Bassingbourn Village College been included as the preferred option in the consultation paper, as this was not one of the possible options evaluated as part of the previous internal review undertaken by County Council Members of secondary education in South West Cambridgeshire?**

Circumstances have changed since the Member review was undertaken. At that point, Gamlingay Village College was not the subject of special measures. Bassingbourn Village College was included as the preferred option, as it is a successful school with some spare capacity. This option could, therefore, be delivered by September 2012, a shorter timescale than the main options evaluated as part of the South West Cambridgeshire Review – including the new secondary school in Cambourne.

**32. Why does the County Council's preferred option designate a Cambridgeshire secondary school, Bassingbourn Village College, for Gamlingay children for which the Ofsted category (satisfactory with many good features) is not significantly better than Gamlingay Village College, which is in special measures?**

There is a significant difference between the special measures category and that obtained by Bassingbourn Village College, of satisfactory with many good features, with a capacity to improve. 40% of schools nationally are satisfactory, while only 8% are in special measures – an indication of the gravity of the category. Bassingbourn was inspected in January 2010. However, its examination performance improved significantly in the summer of 2010, with 69% of its students obtaining GCSE A\* - C grades, including Maths and English, which is well above the local and national average. Bassingbourn is now in a position to be considered a significantly improving school.

**33. Why have the Contextual Value Added measures for the various schools not been included in the table in the consultation document? What are they?**

There was no ulterior motive in not including this information. The school table that was included with the consultation paper, revised to include details of the contextual value added measures for Key Stages 2 – 4, is now attached as **Appendix 1**.

**34. Are there enough places for Gamlingay children at Bassingbourn Village College. What are the demographic forecasts?**

The projected pupil numbers for the current catchment area of Bassingbourn Village College, which has a published admission number (PAN), or annual intake figure, of 150, are set out in the table below. These are based on the known birth figures, provided by the National Health Service (NHS) and the ageing forward of the children currently on roll in the partner primary schools in the Village College's catchment area:

<b>September Projection</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Spare capacity with PAN of 150</b>	45	36	52	43	60	48	62	20	31

For the children currently on roll at Gamlingay Village, of the 45 in Year 5, who will reach Year 7 in September 2012, only 27 are Cambridgeshire children, for whom this authority has a responsibility for providing education. Subsequent to this, the First School's annual intake figure of 45 can be accommodated within Bassingbourn Village College's existing PAN until September 2018. If this option were agreed, school-place planning discussions relating to how to deal with the 2018 peak in forecast in-catchment numbers would take place with the Village College well in advance of that year.

The NHS birth data for Gamlingay identifies a reduction in the number of school-age children in the Gamlingay catchment area in future years. This reduction will be balanced by some increase in the number of children, due to housing development in the village.

**35. Is the closure of Gamlingay Village College being proposed in order to increase the number of pupils at Bassingbourn Village College, as the future of Bassingbourn Barracks is in some doubt?**

No discussions have taken place with the local authority in relation to the future of Bassingbourn Barracks and all of the figures outlined above relate to forecast data which take no account of possible developments at the Barracks.

**36. Why is Bassingbourn Village College being proposed, when Stratton Upper School is significantly nearer to Gamlingay?**

Possible federation with Stratton Upper School is one of the options included in the consultation document.

In addition to the information provided in the answers to questions 31 and 32, above, Bassingbourn Village College is also included as the preferred option because two-tier education (primary schools for children aged 4 -11 and secondary schools for children aged 11-16) is Cambridgeshire County

Council's preferred educational policy approach. See answer to question 2, for more detail about this issue.

### **Transport**

**37. The route to Bassingbourn from Gamlingay, down Croydon Hill, is dangerous. What is going to be done about this?**

This issue has been explored with the County Council's Social and Education Transport Team. They have advised that this route is used every day by school buses, without incident, operating to Bassingbourn Village College/Petersfield School, Orwell. However, in particularly difficult winter weather conditions, an assessment of whether an alternative route should be used would be made.

**38. Any alternative route proposed would be longer. Is this acceptable?**

In general, an alternative route would not be necessary. However, as indicated in question 35, above, an assessment of whether an alternative route should be used in particularly difficult winter weather conditions would be made.

**39. What route will the County Council propose?**

From Gamlingay, buses would operate via Hatley St George/East Hatley/Croydon Hill/B1042/A1198/Kneesworth/Bassingbourn.

**40. What is the length of the school day at Bassingbourn Village College?**

The school day begins at 8.50 am and ends at 3.30 pm.

**41. How long will it take for children from different parts of the Gamlingay Village College catchment to get to Bassingbourn?**

The journey time should take no longer than 40 minutes.

**42. What is the longest commute to a secondary school in Cambridgeshire?**

This is 19 miles, to Bottisham Village College. The County Council's policy is for no school journey for secondary-aged children to take longer than one hour and fifteen minutes.

**43. Would accessible transport be provided?**

Yes. Children's needs would be assessed in line with the Council's transport policy which takes full account of the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

**44. How would Gamlingay children participate in after-school activities at Bassingbourn, or return home in time for local after-school activities, such as Scouts?**

The local authority is responsible for home-to-school transport at the beginning and end of the school day. As far as after-school activities at Bassingbourn are concerned, parents and carers would need to make arrangements, as appropriate, for their children to be transported at the end of the activities. The possibility of providing a late bus has been explored in the past by Bassingbourn Village College, but this has proved not to be viable.

As far as activities in Gamlingay are concerned, with the Bassingbourn Village College school day ending at 3.30 pm and the journey to Gamlingay taking no longer than 40 minutes, children would be back in the village before 4.30 pm.

**45. If a Gamlingay child is ill during the day, or has a health appointment back in his or her community, how would it be possible to bring them home, if parents are working or do not have transport?**

Parents would be expected to make the necessary arrangements. In a significant emergency, the school would liaise with parents to take the necessary action.

**46. What are the public transport routes between Bassingbourn and Gamlingay?**

There are no public service buses between Bassingbourn and Gamlingay.

**47. How will pupil behaviour on school buses be monitored?**

The local authority has a well-established Code of Conduct for Home to School/College Travel. First introduced in September 2005, this sets out the expectations for behaviour of children on the way to and from school, whatever their mode of travel. A copy of the bus users' section of this Code would be sent to pupils when their bus pass was issued. A formal system of warnings and bans is used to address incidents of misconduct.

Primary schools are urged to devote time in the second half of the summer term of Year 6 to preparing their pupils for the new experience of travelling to school by bus. Guidance on this can be provided by the Council's Social and Education Transport Team.

**48. If Option 2 goes ahead, on what basis will transport be provided to alternative schools?**

If Option 2 was agreed and Bassingbourn Village College, which is 11 miles from Gamlingay, became the designated catchment secondary school, free transport would be provided for Cambridgeshire children.



If parents chose to send their children to Stratton Upper School, which is 6 miles from Gamlingay, free transport would continue to be provided, in line with the Council's home-to-school/college transport policy, as this is the nearest Upper School to Gamlingay.

If children attended any other school, in line with parental preference, parents would be responsible for arranging and paying for the transport.

**49. What will be the transport arrangements for siblings in the future?**

If Gamlingay parents wished children to attend Stratton Upper School, alongside older siblings, as Stratton is the nearest Upper School to Gamlingay, free transport would continue to be provided, as outlined in the answer to question 48, above.

**50. Is the proposal for additional transport usage (at a younger age and a greater distance than present arrangements) not in direct contravention of the County Council's Sustainable School Transport policy?**

There is no doubt that children being able to walk or cycle to school is the most sustainable approach. However, as it is a rural county, this is not possible for most Cambridgeshire secondary schools. In circumstances where it is not possible for children to walk or cycle to school, as would be the case for Gamlingay children attending Bassingbourn Village College, arrangements are made, in line with the Council's overall transport policy, to provide contract coaches. This enables a large number of children to be transported together, thus obviating the need for numerous, and unsustainable, individual journeys.

**51. Would the increase in numbers of children attending Bassingbourn Village College not cause significant traffic problems in the village?**

When any significant change is proposed, the relevant travel plans relating to individual school sites are updated. Discussions on this matter will also be held, as appropriate, with the relevant organisations responsible for local planning, including Bassingbourn Parish Council.

**Cambourne/Comberton**

**52. As the proposed new secondary school in Cambourne has no agreed site or planning permission, it is unlikely to be ready, even by September 2013. Is it, therefore, a real option?**

Concerted action is being taken by the local authority to deliver secondary school provision in Cambourne by the target date of September 2013. The option would not have been included if it was not considered to be deliverable by that date.

**53. Would provision of a new secondary school in Cambourne release places at Comberton Village College to which Gamlingay children could have access?**

Admission arrangements to Comberton Village College, after additional secondary provision has been made in Cambourne, have not yet been discussed with the Village College, which is an Academy and its own admissions authority.

If places were available, but Comberton Village College was not the designated catchment secondary school for Gamlingay, parents would be responsible for transport.

**Post-16 Education**

**54. What post-16 arrangements will Gamlingay children have access to? What transport arrangements will support these?**

The arrangements for post-16 education for each of the schools named in the options are outlined in Appendix 1.

Cambridgeshire's policy on eligibility for assistance with transport costs is based on students attending their nearest appropriate post-16 centre, which is determined by their home address. The majority of students contribute to transport costs.

Stratton Upper School is the closest post-16 centre, and Bedford College the closest Further Education College, to Gamlingay.

For students living in the Bassingbourn catchment, the Cambridge/South Cambridgeshire post-16 arrangements apply, for which the designated post-16 centres would be: Hills Road and Long Road Sixth Form Colleges, Netherhall School and the Parkside Federation in Cambridge, Cambridge Regional College; the College of West Anglia campus at Milton; and The Meridian School, Royston.

**55. As Bassingbourn Village College does not have its own sixth form, unlike Stratton Upper School, does this not create an additional transition point at 16, when it is maintained that transition points are bad for children's education?**

Post-16 education involves a key transition – to non-statutory education - whether or not it is in a separate establishment. At an older age, children, or young people, are better able to deal with change without it affecting their performance, and a change of educational establishment at this stage is often seen as good preparation for university or the world of work. Option 2 would also provide children from the Gamlingay area with a broader range of opportunities at post-16.

**Central Bedfordshire Residents**

**56. What is Cambridgeshire County Council's responsibility for the future educational placement of children of Central Bedfordshire residents attending Gamlingay Village College, if it closes? Why are there such limited alternative arrangements being proposed in the consultation paper for these children? What action will be taken to address their needs?**

Cambridgeshire's statutory responsibility is to make educational provision for children who live within its County boundary. This is why Options 2 and 3 focus on provision in Cambridgeshire. However, the consultation document has been provided to Central Bedfordshire, and we are arranging to discuss the issue with officers within that authority, as the options do affect children who live in their local authority area, for whom they have the responsibility for providing education.

**Appendix 1**

**Neighbouring Cambridgeshire Secondary Schools to Gamlingay : Relevant Information**

School	Status	Post-16 Educational Arrangements	Distance from Gamlingay (rounded)	Ofsted Category	% GCSE (5 A* - C, inc. Maths & English) 2010	Key Stage 2-4 Contextual Added Value Measures
Bassingbourn Village College	Foundation	11-16 school, part of Cambridge/ South Cambs (C/SC) provision	11 miles	Satisfactory, with good features	69	989.9
Comberton Village College	Academy	11-18 school, part of C/SC provision	11 miles	Outstanding	82	1033.7
Proposed Cambourne secondary	Will be Academy or Free School	11-16 school, part of C/SC provision	10 miles	N/A	N/A	N/A
Longsands School	Foundation*	11-18 school+	9 miles	Good, with outstanding features	67	999.4
St Neots Community College (SNCC)	Foundation*	11-18 school+	8 miles	Satisfactory, with good and outstanding features.	36	949.1
<b>Notes:</b>	*Longsands and SNCC, who together form a federation known as the Longsands Learning Partnership, are consulting on conversion to Academy status.	+Longsands and SNCC work together to plan sixth form provision.				
Comparable information for <b>Stratton Upper School</b>	Community, consulting on conversion to Academy status	13-18 school	6 miles	Good, with outstanding features	56	1013.1

