

# Meopham School

A Member of Swale Academies Trust

Trust Principal: Mr J Whitcombe MA  
Executive Headteacher: Mrs S Dickinson BA (Hons) NPQH  
Head of School: Ms K Girling BSc (Hons)



Wrotham Road Meopham Kent DA13 0AH  
Tel: 01474 814646  
Website: [www.meophamschool.org.uk](http://www.meophamschool.org.uk)

## Statement from the Head of School - Benefits of the proposed expansion to the school

22nd November 2021

Meopham School is currently housed in a single building, commissioned by the EFA, and completed in February 2018. The building was built to accommodate 798 pupils: 700 Year 7-11 and 98 in the Sixth Form. The school cohort as of September 2021 is 936 students.

The school agreed to raise its Published Admission Number (PAN) from 140 to 200 in September 2021 at the request of KCC. Indeed, we have been accepting 170 students (30 over PAN) for the past 4 years, in response to requests from KCC due to the ever increasing demand for school places in the local area. We also understand that Meopham School is now a popular choice for parents as it has a track record of securing strong examination results for students. The fact that the school was rated as Outstanding by Ofsted in January 2019 has further increased its popularity.

We were approached by KCC in 2019 and asked if we could further increase the PAN to 200 students from September 2021 onwards. We were asked to consider this in response to the increasing demand for places in the Gravesham area and the popularity of Meopham School through admission applications. For September 2021, 269 applicants put Meopham School as their first preference, an increase of 46 from last year.

Currently we have nine temporary classrooms on our site to house the additional students we have taken. With a further increase in the school population we require additional general and specialist classroom space.

As part of the plans for the new building, a school hall is planned. The access and facilities for this hall have been considered with the community in mind. The space would be accessible for booked community events for some evenings and weekends, thereby supporting the community of Meopham village.

Meopham School was designed with six Science laboratories, which was adequate for the smaller school cohort in 2018. KCC has already recommissioned our Art rooms to increase the number of laboratories. The three additional laboratories will allow us to increase the curriculum offer in Science, by hopefully offering A Level for the first time. The new building will house specialist Art, Music and Design & Technology rooms. Due to the much needed expansion of the dining hall these subjects are currently taught in non-specialist and temporary classrooms.

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The additional classrooms and student numbers would also allow our 6th form to grow and thrive, as we could offer a greater variety of courses and therefore give students a curriculum that is more bespoke to their interests, and be able to match the needs of the local employment market.

As a rural school many of our students travel to and from school by car. The car park capacity of the shared site is currently very limited. Access for buses, and those in the community using the other facilities on the site (nursery, health centre, library and leisure centre) is difficult to manage at the end of the school day. We therefore currently ask parents not to drive onto the site at busy times. The planned expansion includes an additional car park and drop off / collection bay on site. This means that students can safely arrive and be collected from school without having to negotiate the busy main road. This may also have the benefit of reducing congestion in the village as we will be able, for the first time, to encourage parents to come on site to drop off or collect their children.

We are very proud of the success Meopham School has had over the past few years and feel strongly that we want to offer all those in the local area the opportunity to attend Meopham School if they choose. We aspire to further embed ourselves in the heart of the community, and feel that the building expansion will have a positive impact for students, parents and the community as a whole.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Girling'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ms K Girling  
Head of School