

# ELTHAM GREEN

## A Specialist Sports College

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Headteacher: Mrs J Pickering MA

Chair of Governors: Mr J Draper

2<sup>nd</sup> November 2009

Dear Parent \ Carer,

### ELTHAM GREEN SPECIALIST SPORTS COLLEGE – PROPOSAL FOR NATIONAL CHALLENGE TRUST

I am writing to you on behalf of the governing body of the school to seek your views on a proposal to change the way the school is governed and on its future direction. I attach a copy of the Consultation Document which sets out all the details of the proposals for your consideration.

The aim of the proposal is to secure a significant and permanent improvement in outcomes for pupils and to enhance their opportunities for further education, training and employment on leaving school. A summary of the key points of the proposal is set out below:

#### **What is the proposal?**

The proposal is that from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010 Eltham Green Sports Specialist College would become a National Challenge Trust School. A formal body called a Trust would be established and this would own the school buildings and nominate the majority of governors on the Governing Body. The Trust would include representatives from other organisations, who are interested in supporting the school and The University of Greenwich has agreed to become the lead partner.

The current Governing Body is making this proposal because it is an opportunity to engage with new partners to help improve what the school can offer and to access substantial additional funding from the Government.

#### **What does this mean for pupils and parents?**

Pupils will have access to an improved curriculum and more opportunities to progress beyond school to academic and work related options. The school will still remain part of the local authority's family of maintained schools which means that we will still teach the National Curriculum. The school will retain its specialist school status and its place within the community. A new parents' council will be set up to give parents' a stronger voice in the school's future development

### **What does this mean for staff and governors?**

The Trust would appoint the majority of governors and hold in trust the assets of the school and the school buildings. The Governing Body would also employ the staff. There are safeguards in place to ensure that the site and buildings are used for the school's benefit and cannot, for example, be disposed of for other purposes.

### **Comments/ Feedback**

If you would like to give your views on this proposal then please address your comments to: The Headteacher, Eltham Green Sports Specialist College, Middle Park Avenue, SE9 5EQ or send an email to: [jpickering@elthamgreen.com](mailto:jpickering@elthamgreen.com) by 4.00pm on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

We have also organised a meeting to take place on Tuesday 24 November 2009 from 7.00 – 9.00 pm in the school's Assembly Hall. This will be an opportunity for you to meet and raise any queries or comments you may have with representatives of the Governing Body, The University of Greenwich and senior staff of the school.

An electronic copy of this document is available on the school website at [www.elthamgreen.com](http://www.elthamgreen.com) and a translation of this document is available on request.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Joan Pickering  
Head teacher

**ELTHAM GREEN  
SPORTS SPECIALIST COLLEGE**

**PROPOSAL TO BECOME  
A  
NATIONAL CHALLENGE TRUST SCHOOL**

**CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

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## 1. Introduction

The Governing Body of Eltham Green Sports Specialist College is carrying out a consultation with all of the school's stakeholders on a proposal to make a change in the way the school is governed, and on its future direction.

The change is intended to secure a significant and permanent improvement in the outcomes for pupils and the opportunities available to them for continuing their education, training or employment beyond school.

Before any changes are decided upon, we want to hear from all those who are potentially affected by them. We are therefore making this consultation document widely available and inviting comments, to be received by 18<sup>th</sup> December 2009.

## 2. Summary of Proposals

The proposals involve the creation of a Trust (under the National Challenge Trust scheme) to guide and challenge the school and provide strategic direction. The primary aim is to widen the breadth of the curriculum to continue to drive up standards and increase opportunities for our pupils.

The Trust will be led by the University of Greenwich and will include other key partners. We have asked Lewisham College to join the Trust and they are currently considering this proposal. Trust partners will have expertise and experience of leadership in curriculum development to improve the offer made by the school and to provide new opportunities for students to progress beyond school and gain qualifications in both academic and work related subjects.

The Trust will help draw up a School Improvement Plan designed to raise standards and provide a sharper focus for the work of the school on improvements in teaching and learning that can be sustained on a long term basis.

## 3. Background

The Governing Body is aware that Eltham Green School has not yet secured the "step change" in attainment levels that is required if all pupils are to maximise their potential. We want to raise pupils' own aspirations much higher and encourage parents to work with us to achieve this.

We want to improve outcomes consistently, so that many more pupils will be motivated to continue with their education after leaving school at 16.

To reach this point, we have decided to make a proposal for Eltham Green to become a National Challenge Trust (NCT) School, following initial discussions with the University of Greenwich and Greenwich Council.

#### 4. Acquiring a Trust and Foundation Status

National Challenge Trust Schools have foundation status, meaning that they have more direct influence over the life and work of the school, including setting their own admissions arrangements in the context of the national criteria and guidance. A Trust school remains part of the local family of schools, maintained by the Local Authority, and will continue to work with the Local Authority as now. Many other local schools already have a similar relationship with the Local Authority (including the Anglican and Catholic schools in Greenwich).

The Trust that would be established can include a number of partners but must include a strong education institution and we are delighted that the University of Greenwich has agreed to be the lead partner.

Before the Governing Body can acquire a National Challenge Trust and transfer the school to foundation status, it must complete the process for a “statutory” change. This means that the Governing Body must consult widely before publishing formal notices, providing an opportunity for all those who might be affected by the changes to comment on them.

The timetable and arrangements for the consultation process are set out in Section 10 below.

We are consulting between now and 18<sup>th</sup> December and, if the Governing Body agrees to go ahead with the changes, a public notice will be published early in the new year, potentially leading to the implementation of the new arrangements with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010.

#### 5. The role of the Trust and the new Governing Body

In a National Challenge Trust School, the role of the Trust is to support and challenge the school in a long term relationship dedicated to improving school performance and the quality and range of outcomes achieved by pupils. The lead Trust partner is a higher education institution that can offer the school a high level of expertise to develop and excel. Other Trust partners can be invited to join the lead partner.

Once the Trust is established, it will appoint a majority of the members of the new Governing Body. The new Governing Body will have the responsibility for the management of the school, including the employment of its staff.

The Trust will hold the legal title to the site and buildings for the benefit of the school. There are clear safeguards to ensure that the site and buildings are used for the school's benefit and cannot, for example, be disposed of for other purposes. Also, since a number of other users share the Eltham Green School site, including the workplace nursery and services provided by Greenwich Council, the arrangements for the transfer of the land and buildings will take this into account so that these activities can be continued.

Another key role for both the Trust and the Governing Body (both the existing Body and the new one that will replace it, if and when the new arrangements are implemented) is the preparation, and then the implementation, of a School Improvement Plan to guide the development of the school over the next five years.

In the first years of the plan, it will be supported by additional resources provided by the Department for Children, Schools and Families. Approximately £650,000 is expected to be made available for this purpose, subject to the proposed changes being agreed. This funding can be used, for example, to engage expert advice and training as well as specific enhancements to the curriculum.

## 6. The Vision for Eltham Green School

Our vision for the National Challenge Trust for Eltham Green School is to realise a radical and exciting School Improvement Plan by:

- bringing higher aspirations, expectations and innovative approaches to learning in the school;
- setting the challenge, ambition and drive of the governing body in managing the school's development;
- stimulating the best leadership at all levels and seeking effective ways of securing positive parental and community engagement;
- driving a review and revision of the school's curriculum such that it is better matched to the needs of the pupils and the local community;
- encouraging rigorous self-evaluation as the basis for the school's improvement planning;
- developing opportunities, such as links with sports providers, employers and other external bodies, to increase engagement, self-esteem and parental involvement;
- promoting the well-being of the local community by raising the motivation, confidence and ambition of young people, and improving their life chances;
- providing a strong and visible presence of high profile partners;
- creating a centre for high quality work-related education for pupils and the local community to enable all to gain the skills they need to enter and succeed in employment;
- a commitment to develop the school's buildings e.g. the creation of a Skills Centre as part of the local 14-19 strategy.

## 7. The make up of the Trust and the new Governing Body

### *Trust membership*

It is proposed that the University of Greenwich will be the lead Trust partner for the Eltham Green School National Challenge Trust from the outset. We hope they will be joined by a further education college. Additional partners may be identified later to bring further expertise to support the work of the Trust.

It is proposed that, initially, the Board of the Trust will be constituted as follows:

<b><i>Nominating Body</i></b>	<b><i>Number of nominees</i></b>
University of Greenwich	2 (including the Chair)
Lewisham College (to be confirmed)	1
Greenwich Council	1
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>4</b>

### *New Governing Body membership*

The Trust will appoint the majority of the members of the new Governing Body, which must be constituted according to the national formula that ensures at least one third of the members of school governing bodies are parents.

For Eltham Green, it is proposed that the new Governing Body will have fifteen members, constituted as follows:

<b><i>Category</i></b>	<b><i>Number of governors</i></b>
Elected parent governors	2
Trust-appointed governors	8 (incl. 3 parents)
Community governors	2
Staff governors	2
Local authority governors	1
<b><i>Total</i></b>	<b>15</b>

## 8. What do the changes mean for the school community, pupils, parents and staff?

### *Pupils*

Pupils on the roll of Eltham Green School will remain pupils of the school once the new Trust arrangements are in place. They will be part of a better school and we intend that they begin to see improvements from the first year of the new arrangements as the School Improvement Plan is put into effect. From the outset, we expect to offer better progression routes into further and higher education opportunities for pupils.

### Parents

The Governing Body wants to involve parents more actively and give them a stronger role in the life and mission of the school. Shortly after the establishment of the Trust and the implementation of the change in the school's status therefore, a new Parent Council would be set up, to give parents a stronger and continuing voice as the school develops.

### Staff

Staff would have their contracts transferred to the Governing Body (from the local authority). Their existing terms and conditions would not be affected and nationally agreed provisions would continue to apply. Similarly, existing pension arrangements would be unchanged.

## 9. The timetable for implementation

The Governing Body is carrying out this consultation with a view to the changes being implemented with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010, if it is agreed to progress them.

The main events and activities leading up to implementation, if the changes are pursued, are expected to be as follows:

<b>Event</b>	<b>Expected dates</b>
Consultation with interested parties	2 <sup>nd</sup> Nov – 18 <sup>th</sup> Dec 2009
Decision by Governing Body on outcome	21 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2009
Publication of Public Notice	6 <sup>th</sup> Jan 2010
Period for representations to the Notice	6 <sup>th</sup> Jan – 3 <sup>rd</sup> Feb 2010
Decision by Governing Body on proposals	18 <sup>th</sup> Feb 2010
<i>and, if the Governing Body's decision is to agree the proposals:</i>	
New Governing Body replaces existing GB	With effect from 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2010
Land and assets transfer to Trust	
Rights, duties, powers and liabilities in relation to staff transfer to new GB	

## 10. Consultation arrangements

This consultation document is being sent to all those who may be affected by the proposed changes. Copies are being sent to:

- All parents of pupils currently attending the school
- Parents of children attending the main feeder primary schools
- Headteacher and Chair of Governors of primary and secondary schools in Greenwich
- All staff employed by the school and their Trades Unions
- The school's local partners and the agencies that support it e.g. Charlton Athletic FC
- The local authorities in Greenwich and Lewisham

- All members of the school Governing Body
- The Learning and Skills Council
- Local councillors, the Member of Parliament and the Member for the London Assembly

A copy of the document is also published on the school website at:  
[www.elthamgreen.com](http://www.elthamgreen.com)

**A meeting for all parents is being arranged at the school on  
Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at 7.00 p.m. in the Assembly Hall.**

The Headteacher, representatives from the Governing Body and the University of Greenwich will be present at the meeting to answer any queries and hear comments about the proposals.

(Separate arrangements are also being made to meet members of staff and their trades union representatives. School pupils will be consulted via the School Council).

Written responses to this consultation document are invited. These – as well as the comments made at the meeting being arranged – will all be taken into account before the Governing Body decides whether to go ahead with the changes proposed.

All responses should be addressed to:

The Headteacher  
Eltham Green Sports Specialist College  
Middle Park Avenue  
SE9 5EQ

or emailed to: [jpickering@elthamgreen.com](mailto:jpickering@elthamgreen.com)

**to arrive no later than 4.00 p.m. on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2009**