



Axe Valley Academy

Sixth Form Closure Consultation Paper

Consultation on closure of Sixth Form provision at Axe Valley Academy from September 2019 (Final intake September 2017)

The Trustees of Vector Learning Trust have put together the following information to help parents, staff, pupils and other interested parties comment on the proposed closure of the Sixth Form at Axe Valley Academy. There will also be a public meeting with opportunities to ask questions for all groups concerned (see the section 'Have Your Say').

We would like to invite you to send your comments to
consultation@axevalley.devon.sch.uk

Please put 'Sixth Form Closure' in the subject line and please indicate your interest i.e. staff, parent, pupil.

The consultation will run from Tuesday 26th September until close of business on Tuesday 7th November 2017.

Thank you for your consideration.

Axe Valley Academy Sixth Form Closure Consultation Paper

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Background

In recent years, a reduction in government funding for sixth form provision in schools has created a financial dilemma for governors and school leaders in setting budgets. There has been an increasing need to top up post-16 funding from the 11-16 budget thus diverting funds away from their target group. In addition, schools with small sixth forms (fewer than 250 students) are particularly at risk of losing their Key Stage 5 due to non-viable class sizes and an inability to offer a sufficiently broad curriculum. Furthermore, falling rolls in East Devon are adding to the financial burden on the whole school as income decreases but running costs increase.

Having implemented a number of strategies over the last two years to improve the viability of the sixth form that have ultimately proved unsuccessful, it is regrettably the considered opinion of Vector Learning Trust trustees and governors of Axe Valley Academy that removal of sixth form provision is necessary for the continued good of the whole school.

Context

Axe Valley Academy Sixth Form

- Our sixth form currently consists of 75 students with some classes having as few as one or two students.
- Current predictions for the next two years in East Devon estimate reduced transition numbers from primary to secondary with an average intake that will be lower than our published admissions number (PAN) of 150 pupils.
- With reduced rolls the proportion of budget required from the 11-16 funding to maintain the sixth form is increasing to an unsustainable level.

Strategies employed in an attempt to retain sixth form provision

- Partnership with Holyrood Academy in an attempt to increase overall sixth form numbers to sustainable levels.
- Joint teaching of selected subjects across two schools.
- Appointment of high calibre staff to better support sixth form students.

What would sixth form closure mean for students?

Current Year 13 and 12 students

Axe Valley Academy is committed to providing students who have already embarked on their two year A level and Level 3 courses with high quality teaching until the end of those courses in July 2019.

Current Year 11 students

Pupils wishing to pursue A level and Level 3 courses will need to apply for places with other post-16 providers. Post-16 transition support will be provided.

What would sixth form closure mean for staff?

There will be no change in sixth form teaching for the academic year 2017/18. Vector Learning Trust will attempt to provide staff with the opportunity to teach Level 3 courses within our academies where possible.

Will the admission arrangements change?

A change in the current admission arrangements for post-16 students forms part of this consultation. As an academy, we are our own admissions authority and decide which pupils should be offered places in accordance with our published arrangements. The academy is bound by the National Admissions Code and Admissions Appeals Code.

We will continue to be committed to offering high quality education to all the children and young people in our community commensurate with our equality policy.

Who is being consulted regarding this change?

We are consulting the following groups:

- parents/carers of pupils at the school
- staff currently employed at the school and any due to take up a post in school in the next academic year
- pupils at the school
- feeder primaries
- local post-16 sixth form providers
- the local authority
- the wider local community

Have Your Say

Before we make our final decision regarding sixth form closure we would like to hear your views. There will be a public consultation evening at 6pm on Tuesday 10th October in the Main Hall, Axe Valley Academy.

Trustees and governors are interested to know your thoughts on this important change to our status. Please take the time to respond to our consultation by sending an e-mail to consultation@axevalley.devon.sch.uk putting 'Sixth Form Closure' in the subject line and indicate your interest (parent, pupil, staff etc.). The consultation will run from Tuesday 26th September until close of business on Tuesday 7th November 2017.