Frequently asked questions – St Mary’s CE Primary School

The Council is currently consulting on the possible expansion of St Mary’s CE Primary School from two to three forms of entry. We are concurrently carrying out consultation on the possible expansion of St James CofE Primary School from one to three forms of entry and the reinstatement of the published admission number of 90 pupils (currently the school admits 60 pupils each year) at Bounds Green Infant and Junior School. We are seeking views on the possible increase in numbers at all three of these primary schools to reflect growing local demand for reception places.

The consultation runs from 15 September to 7 November 2014 (8 weeks)\(^1\) and we welcome all views from everyone who might have an interest in the increase in pupil numbers at any of these schools.

Below is a list of questions that we think interested parties may ask us together with answers to those questions. We know that there will be other questions asked during the consultation period that are not set out below and we do undertake to update this list of questions through the consultation period on a dedicated webpage at www.haringey.gov.uk/stmarysn8expansion

The Consultation

1. Why are you consulting us and what will you do with our responses?

The current consultation is an opportunity for the Council to share information about a proposed expansion of your school and to hear views from all interested parties. This consultation is not a statutory stage in the process of any expansion of a school but it is fundamental to informing what might happen next.

The consultation will provide a number of ways to give you information and to gather your views including: –

- Public meetings
- Drop in sessions
- Consultation documents
- Background documents including the 2014 School Place Planning Report
- Email and telephone contact

\(^1\) The consultation date has been extended to provide additional time for stakeholders to consider the amended consultation document.
The consultation runs from 15 September to 7 November (eight weeks). Full details of how to have your say and to hear the views of others are available in our consultation document or by calling 020 8489 3607, and on our dedicated webpage at www.haringey.gov.uk/stmarysn8expansion

We will use all of the information gathered from this consultation to inform a report that will recommend whether or not we proceed to the next step - the publication of a statutory notice setting out our intention to expand your school.

The Department for Education (DfE) provides guidance on how to expand maintained schools. The guidance primarily relates to the 2013 School Organisation Regulations. The guidance sets out the four statutory stages for any expansion. These are:

1. Publication of a statutory notice setting out the Council’s intention to expand a school
2. Representation (formal consultation)
3. Decision on whether or not to expand
4. Implementation of the expansion

Question 6 below provides further information on the statutory stages of the consultation, and a flow chart setting out an expansion process is also appended to these Q and As.

2. Why does the local authority want to expand schools and why our school?
A combination of a sharp rise in the birth rate, increased housing in the borough and inward migration has created the need to provide additional primary school places in our borough and across the whole of London. We have selected St Mary’s CE Primary as a potential school to expand from two to three forms of entry to accommodate some of this increasing primary aged population. The data we have that helps us to plan for school places shows that we will not have enough local school places in the future if we do not take action to increase capacity now. We have already expanded a number of other local schools and there are some schools where it is not physically possible to provide additional classrooms or where to expand a school would be at odds with the local authority’s agreed school place planning principles.

3. How will you gather views during the consultation phase from pupils, parents and carers, staff and local residents and businesses?
Copies of a consultation document have been made available to every parent, carer, member of staff and governor in the school. Copies of the document, together with other background information, have also been made available on the council’s webpage at www.haringey.gov.uk/stjamesn10expansion. A leaflet drop has been made to local residents and businesses giving them information about the consultation. We will also be using the School Council to gather the children’s views. Information on the consultation has also been sent to all adjoining boroughs, all primary, secondary and special schools in Haringey, all of Haringey’s Councillors, the two elected MPs for the borough, and the Diocese of Westminster and the London Diocesan Board for Schools.

4. **Who will take minutes of the public meeting to feedback to parents who cannot attend any public meetings?**
   Minutes of the meetings will be taken by the local authority and published on our website at www.haringey.gov.uk/stmarns8expansion We will also provide copies of the minutes to the school office for parents and carers to pick up if they were not able to attend one of the meetings.

5. **How will developments be communicated to parents who cannot speak English**
   The Council will use the usual methods of communication with parents who cannot speak English including, where applicable, translations and interpreters. Your school has advised us on the best way to communicate with parents with a child already at the school.

6. **Publishing a statutory notice/Representation stage**
   If, following this consultation period, it is agreed that a notice should be published setting out the Council’s intention to expand the school it is currently expected that such a notice will be published on 8 January 2015. Immediately following the publication of the notice there will be a further fixed four week representation period during which time all stakeholders will have an opportunity to express their views. Further details on the representation period, including details of public events, will be made available if a decision is taken to publish the notice.

   The Council’s cabinet would make a final decision on whether or not the school is expanded. At the present time it is expected that Cabinet would make this decision in March 2015.

7. **If a significant number of stakeholders are opposed to expansion, how will the Council take their views into account?**
   Statutory guidance sets out that the local authority is the decision maker as to whether of not the expansion is agreed. However it is important that the local authority seeks all views on the expansion and balances this against the need to continue to ensure that there
are sufficient local school places for children in the coming years. Our projections indicate that we will run out of school places locally if we do not increase the number of places available by 2016. Before making any decision the local authority will take into account a number of factors including:

- Views gathered as part of this consultation exercise
- Any effect on school standard and school improvement
- The need for places
- The expansion of successful and popular schools
- Funding and land
- Special educational needs provision

We need to have your views to inform this process. During this consultation we will be seeking the views of all those with an interest in the possible expansion of St Mary’s. The feedback we gather as part of this process views will help us to decide whether or not to proceed with the expansion plans

8. **Can I see a comprehensive breakdown of the consultation process?**
   
   A flow chart is appended to this Q and A.

**Why expand our school and not expand another school or build a new school?**

9. **Can the local authority build a new school?**
   
   Recent changes in legislation (Education Act 2011) means that any new school should now be a Free School or an Academy – these are publicly funded schools that are independent of the local authority. There are currently no proposals for such a school in the central part of Haringey where we have identified a projected place shortage. Two primary free schools have previously opened in Haringey: Eden Primary opened on Creighton Avenue in September 2012 offering 30 reception places a year, and Hartsbrook School opened in September 2013 offering 60 reception places a year. A further free school – Harris Academy Tottenham will open a ‘through’ school in September 2014 offering 60 reception places and 180 year 7 places.

   The Academies Act 2010 allows for applications to be made to open a free school. At the time of writing the local authority (LA) is not aware of any free school proposals approved or otherwise, that might impact on demand for and supply of places in the west of the
borough. One of the issues that Haringey faces is the scarcity of sites that are of a size and in a location capable of accommodating a new school, a problem seen across many LAs.

10. How are schools assessed or suitability for bulge or permanent expansion?
In Haringey we use our School Place Planning Principles to prioritise schools for expansion and associated investment. The principles, agreed by the Council’s Cabinet, are:

- Seek to meet demand for places within established, new or emerging local communities, having regard for the role of schools at the heart of sustainable communities;
- Supporting work to make all our schools good or outstanding, ensuring that every child has a place at a good or outstanding school. Where expansion is needed to meet demand for places, we should favour the expansion of schools where there is proven demand and well-established and successful leadership and management at a good or outstanding school;
- Have regard to the impact of any changes on the viability and standards at existing and new schools;
- Bring forward proposals that make best use of scarce capital resources;
- Work with schools to provide the optimum forms of entry appropriate to the capacity of the school site and the level of demand for that particular school, giving each school the capacity to meet our aspirations.

11. We are a church school and you are thinking about expanding us, one other church school (St James CofE Primary N10) and a community school (Bounds Green Infant and Junior School). Why have you chosen these schools?
Schools have been indentified for expansion because they are popular, the standard of education is excellent and there is room to expand in a way that provides value for money. Building the additional classes will help to ensure every child has a school place. If the schools being expanded are local to you we would always encourage you to visit before you decide where to send your child to school, however are other local schools you may wish to make for preference for too.

The impact of any expansion on my child(ren)

12. What are the potential advantages and challenges of an expansion?
Delivery of the curriculum – how would an expansion affect the delivery of the curriculum in our school?
The expansion of the school will allow the Head Teacher and Governors the opportunity of employing more specialist teachers and engage more specific educational services – with the opportunity arising from the economies of scale resulting from increased funding and proportionately lower fixed costs.

Does the leadership of the school see an expansion as an opportunity to broaden specialisms and the scope of offer to our children? Our experience of larger schools is that yes, there is greater scope for specialism and the offer to children. With St Mary’s being a split site the school has indicated that it will be able to increasingly offer provision that is age and stage focused with any potentially negative aspects of a larger school being mitigated by the organisation and management of the two sites. With increased funding that comes with a larger school ad economies of scale the school’s leadership has commented that they will also be able to maintain and build on their excellent levels of staffing and resources.

- **Toilets – will there be enough toilets?**
  Yes there will be: The number of toilets for pupils and staff is laid down in specific requirements. The expanded school will provide the number of toilets required for the size of the new school and layout will be addressed to ensure a safe environment is retained for pupils

- **Parental choice – parents and staff have chosen this school because of its size. Will an expansion change the ethos and feel of the school?**
  The Head Teacher and her staff are very keen to preserve the ethos and feel of the school – the welcoming and nurturing environment enjoyed by pupils and parents of the school. The Head Teacher has been very carefully working with design consultants to build into the new school design a clear recognition of this requirement. This will be able to be seen through the clustering of year group classrooms and group rooms and the location and adjacencies of key school rooms e.g. main office, medical room, reception etc.

- **Resources – will resources like IT, teaching assistants, access to specialist facilities in the school be spread more thinly or does the expansion allow for greater funding, a more efficient economy of scale and an opportunity to increase the offer to our children?** The majority of school funding in Haringey, over 88%, is distributed through pupil led funding. It follows that larger schools will attract more funding and will be able to realise economies of scale, allowing a greater proportion of resources to be spent on education. The school expansion will provide for a 21st century ICT infrastructure for the whole school, supporting the required evolution of ICT at St Mary’s under the guidance of the Head Teacher and her team.

- **The hall – how will assemblies be run? Will the school still be able to put on shows and concerts?**
  The expanded school at Rectory Gardens will have the existing main hall and a small Hall which are adjoining and can be opened up to form a large space for assemblies and performances. In addition to this there will be a group room, specialist...
flexible classroom and Rainbow room near the hall to support any school productions. The number of children at Church Lane will not change after the expansion, therefore the use of the hall at this site will remain unaffected by the expansion.

- Local area – will the roads and pavements become too busy at pick up and drop off? Will the new buildings overlook our neighbours or give them the opportunity to overlook our school?
Haringey’s Transportation Team will work closely with the Design Team to ensure that this aspect of the school expansion is addressed. Initial review of the proposed additional numbers at the Rectory Gardens site together with a review of the school’s location and the school’s Travel Plan indicates that the increased number of pupils at Rectory Gardens will not have a significant impact on local roads and pavements. All schools are encouraged to have School Travel Plans promote sustainable ways for the whole school community to travel to and from school. The Plan should encourage walking, cycling, car sharing and public transport use and should aim to reduce the number of car journeys to and from schools. There will be no additional children at the Church Lane site, so again, roads should remain unaffected.

- Timetabling – what are the implications for the timetabling of activities such as music, PE and languages?
The expanded school will provide classrooms and group rooms to support and develop current curriculum practice. In addition new specialist spaces / rooms which currently do not exist will be provided providing the clear opportunity for a qualitative curriculum experience for the pupils. These new spaces include a Food tech room, flexible specialist classroom, group rooms and improved Rainbow rooms. There will be a sufficient number of rooms and spaces to accommodate the needs of the school.

- Would a three form entry school strengthen the potential for teacher planning and working together or sharing workload, more ideas, subject specialism, cross-class working, and differentiation?
The brief answer to this question is yes. The expanded school will provide the opportunity for more specialist teaching to be delivered, potentially freeing up time for teaching planning in a flexible approach to CPD/lesson planning. This opportunity will be dependent on the school management. The school’s leadership has commented that being a bigger school will bring the added benefit of economies of scale, and will make the school an attractive workplace for professionals. They have confirmed that the school already attracts high quality staff and are a school of choice for teachers as well as for parents. They believe that being larger will enable them to offer increased career progression, and a larger staff body will mean a more equitable sharing of the additional responsibilities that support continued school improvement. The head has confirmed that the focus of the school will remain on the achievement, progress and well-being of all of the children and families that move through the school.

- Will there be more opportunities for staff recruitment and retention as well as staff development?
The expanded school will be able to offer a more diverse educational environment for teachers and support staff to operate within. This in and of itself will be attractive and would support improved recruitment.

- Do permanent expansion(s) mean that less schools will be asked to take bulge classes and that the LA’s strategic planning can focus on permanent expansions and not bulge classes?
  With every permanent expansion comes secured additional places and a reduced or removed requirement for any bulge classes. Bulge classes are a short term solution to allow a quick response to the need for additional places. They are not viewed as a sustainable long term solution to place shortage. They also serve a role where population is fluctuating slightly year on year and where a permanent expansion could not be sustained.

- What additional funding will the school receive for learning resources and staffing? – Every pupil brings additional funding to the school s/he attends that will cover learning resources and staffing and make a contribution to other school costs. The funding of schools is largely based on the number of pupils attending – so an expanded school would have expanded funding.

- How can I see how the pupil place requirement is divided up throughout the borough? The borough is divided into five ‘planning areas’ (PAs) for the purposes of school place planning. St Mary’s CE Primary School falls within PA2. Details of these planning areas, including a map showing how the borough is divided into the five PAs, can be found in our annual School Place Planning Report at www.haringey.gov.uk/schoolplaceplanning

- How do I know that there is a local need for primary places? What radius is used to determine local need? The School Place Planning Report sets out the local need for school places and shows that demand in the Hornsey area exceeds supply and that demand is expected to continue to rise for the foreseeable future. There is no single radius that determines whether or not a place is local but we look at individual PAs and ascertain whether or not demand meets supply and whether those living in the PA are able to attend a school within the PA or, if living close to the PA boundary, a school in the adjoining PA.

- Is St Mary’s in an area of local demand – if so what is the pupil place deficiency in this area? The deficiency for the planning area within which St Mary’s CE Primary School sits is set out in our annual School Place Planning Report. This shows that we expect a deficiency of two form of entry (up to 60 school places) in the short term, and one form of entry (30 school places) in the longer term.

- Over what time period is this under capacity set to exist?
  Our projections for school places are for a period up to ten years ahead.

- What will happen to the schools budget if the ‘extra’ places deemed to be needed do not fully materialise?
In a year of expansion the AWPU funding for the new class comes from the Growth Fund and is guaranteed for 30 pupils for the period September to March also paid is £15,000 initial funding. From the following April funding is based on the number recorded in the October census, although there may be some adjustment for historical late entries in reception.

- What are the local authority’s agreed school place planning principles and how does this relate to St Mary’s?
  Our School Place Planning Principles are set out in our annual report at [www.haringey.gov.uk/schoolplaceplanning](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/schoolplaceplanning)

- How secure is the means of identifying additional pupil places – for example London is increasingly seeing internal migration with families moving from borough to borough and out into surrounding counties. Given such a scenario with what level of probability can we say that 30 places will be needed at our school?
  We work with the Greater London Authority to produce annual projections for school places. These projections are based on actual and projected birth rates and school rolls and take account of birth rates from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the latest available information on inward and outward migration in London.

- How will the quality of education at St Mary’s be maintained through the expansion works? Will additional resources be made available to secure standards?
  Through careful planning and strong leadership, which the school has, we have confidence that these issues will be addressed through any implementation process. We recognise that to deliver an excellent expansion it takes the time of senior leaders in the school and resources are made available to support this.

- Given that council tax payers’ money and central government funding will be making the new school/expanded school possible how many non-faith pupil places will be available?
  The governors of the school have committed to going through a process to change the school’s admission arrangements so that 50% of the overall 90 places at the school would be offered to families from the local community.

Any expansion will mean more local spaces for children on our local community and a greater opportunity for them to attend a school of their choice. The local authority has already been considering the benefits and disadvantages of an expansion and some of the conversations we have had with your head teacher and governors have explored some of these issues. These conversations will be ongoing right up until the time that any decision is taken not to expand or until such time as an expansion has been effectively delivered.

13. What if I do not want to continue with an education for my child at the expanded school?
   If you have any concerns at any point about the impact of an expansion on your child, we would encourage you to speak to your child’s class teacher to discuss your concerns in the first instance. Continuity of education is important and significant thought will go in to enhancing your child’s experience through an expansion process.
14. How will pupils be affected as part of a bigger school?
   One of the most important aspects of any school is its leadership and the quality of teaching and we are confident that the school is well led and that the quality of teaching delivered is high. A larger school will give more possibilities to attract and retain high quality teaching staff. Further teaching staff will be recruited as required to accommodate the increased reception intake from 2016 if the expansion goes ahead.

15. How do parents of children going into Reception in 2016 (or before) make their choices?
   Full information about applying for a school place can be found in the Admissions booklet at www.haringey.gov.uk/schooladmissions

Delivery of any expansion

16. When would any expansion be delivered
   The current consultation is the first step in a process to establish the principle of whether or not your school will be expanded. Within this process there is ample opportunity for all those with an interest in the school to make their views heard. The consultation document sets out a period for consideration of the proposal which runs from September 2014 to March 2015. During this time there are two potential periods of consultation – the current consultation and a further consultation know as the ‘representation stage’ which it is scheduled would happen between January and February 2015 but only if a decision is taken to publish a notice setting out the Council’s intention to expand the school. A published statutory notice would set out the date on which the Council would like to implement the expansion of the school. This implementation would be incremental: this means that the expansion would begin with an increase in the number of children admitted into the reception class. The expanded number of children entering reception class would continue until, after seven years (2022), there were three forms across all year groups.

   In March 2015 the Council’s Cabinet (the decision making body of the Council) will make any final decision on the principle of whether or not to expand the school.

17. How long will any building work take?
   Work is likely to last up to 18 months. Any work will need to take place both during term time and in the school holidays. Work that is likely to cause the most disruption will be programmed to take place in consultation with the school for periods when the disruption can be avoided/minimised.

18. What input can we have on the design process of the school if the expansion goes ahead?
A list of FAQs from a design project perspective has been complied and can be viewed on the consultation page.

19. What will an expanded school look like?
It is not possible to say at this stage, but all possible measures to maintain the character of the school and the maximum space for children to learn and play will be made. A list of FAQs from a design perspective is available to view on our dedicated consultation page at www.haringey.gov.uk/schoolexpansions2014

As and when more detailed feasibility study is carried out, issues including pace utilisation and access, as well as design and layout will be looked at in more detail and this will be shared with the school.

Other questions

20. Does a bigger school mean bigger class sizes?
The class sizes will remain at 30 pupils per class.

21. How will the overall expansion programme be funded?
The local authority will provide funding for the project.

22. What happens if the school is expanded, but in further we find that the places are not needed?
Pupil numbers are continually monitored across our borough and we look at our projections to be sure that we plan to provide enough school places, while at the same time balancing this against the need not to over provide or to make one school bigger while at the same time seeing an neighbouring school’s numbers declining. Our projections of our school rolls are based on actual and projected birth rates and we do know that the birth rate in Haringey is rising and that we expect to need more school places in the coming years. This is a pattern that has been evidenced across our borough for several years and, since 2005, we have added a total of 11 additional classes to our primary schools as well as the five classes (150 children) provided as a result of the opening of free schools in the borough.

Based on a careful analysis of our projections we do not expect to find that any additional places created through expansion will not be needed. In the unlikely event that this does happen we will undertake consultation to decide on the most appropriate action. We expect demand for places to increase year on year until at least 2023. Thereafter there may come a time when numbers decrease slightly. We will consult on the most appropriate action as and when required.
23. What are other schools doing to help solve the places shortage?
We have already expanded a number of our primary school and provided bulge (one off) classes at others to increase the number of reception places that are available each year. We are currently carrying out similar consultation with two other schools – St James CofE Primary N10 and Bounds Green Infant and Junior School – to seek views on increasing the numbers that come into their reception classes each year. Harris Academy Tottenham will provide an additional 60 reception places in the borough from September 2014.

Our projections (set out in our 2014 School Place Planning Report) show that we will need capacity above and beyond that outlined above, even assuming that we increased numbers at all three schools. We will be working with our school community over the coming years to see if and how we can provide further places to meet projected demand. We will also factor in any additional ‘free’ school places provided in the coming years.

24. How can I keep updated?
There are two main ways to keep informed – by visiting Haringey’s dedicated webpage and by reading the correspondence that will be sent to you from the LA via the school.

25. A town planning application
If a final decision is taken to expand the school there will need to be a planning application submitted to secure permission for the relevant building works to the school to support the expansion. As part of the planning application a fixed consultation period of 21 days would be held to allow all interested parties to express views on how the school would look. Detailed floor and elevation plans would support this application to allow everyone to see what the new building works would look like from the street and from within the school, and to show how the floor plans for all year groups would be laid out.
Communication and Decision Process

LA decide to consult on

Consultation Period 6 Weeks

Lead Member of Children’s Service decides to/not to publish statutory notice

Expansions plans currently put on hold

Statutory notice published (start of representation period)

Representation Period (4 weeks)

LA decides to/not to approve expansion (within 2 months)

Expansion plans currently put on hold (within 2 months)