

Petition Received 09/09/2014

“We strongly support the expansion of Barnett Wood Infant School to incorporate a junior school. This is the only OFSTED "Outstanding" school in Ashted and we would like to see this standard extended to juniors too under the leadership of Mrs Penny. Let's make us of the already acquired land adjacent to the school to ease the pressure of expansion on other local schools. We would like to see the expansion happen as soon as possible and would urge Surrey County Council to explore all available options.”

Thank you for your petition and your interest in Schooling in the Ashted area.

As I am sure you are aware Surrey is experiencing a significant increase in the demand for school places and very few communities have been unaffected by this. As a Council we are undertaking a major capital programme that is providing 16,000 additional school places up to 2019. These are desperately required to ensure that all Surrey residents receive a high quality education.

There are currently two schools where consultations are being undertaken concerning their expansion within Ashted. All schools within the planning area have been considered as part of the process, including discussions with the Planning and Highways Authority.

It is anticipated that the number of pupils requiring schooling will increase in the area to reflect changes in local demographics. In addition it is expected that future housing in the Ashted area will significantly add to these demand patterns. If current trends continue, and with a view to further potential housing across the District, it is anticipated that demand for school places will continue to grow and that further school places will be required.

The Council has taken steps to proactively look at potential property assets that offer opportunities to meet this demand in a sustainable manner. Firstly through the provision of further additional junior places, and secondly with a view to look at the pattern of provision more widely to include the admission numbers at the existing schools, with a focus on junior provision.

As a result of this the Council has purchased a site next door to Barnett Wood Infant School with the view that this could possibly provide school places needed in the future. It would mean that Barnett Wood would have the potential to provide additional junior places in the area. Additionally the expansion of Barnett Wood is contained within the Schools Basic Need Capital Programme. We will continue to work with the school to explore this option in detail and provide a project plan for its delivery.

It should be noted that any change to the present pattern of provision would require consultation both with schools, parents and wider stakeholders and it cannot be guaranteed that all respondents would welcome this proposal. Consultations would not start until we are sure that options are achievable and considerable work needs to take place to get to that position.