

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR ALL-AGE LEARNING****DATE: 3 SEPTEMBER 2018****LEAD OFFICER: DAVID HILL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN, FAMILIES & LEARNING****SUBJECT: PROPOSED EXPANSION OF ST. BEDE'S SCHOOL****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

St. Bede's School is ecumenical in nature, providing specifically for admission from both the Anglican and Catholic faiths. Surrey County Council, in partnership with the Governing Body of St. Bede's School, the Diocese of Southwark (Anglican Diocese) and the Diocese of Arundel & Brighton (Catholic Diocese), has consulted on a proposal to expand the school by two forms of entry from September 2019. The education consultation was conducted between 11 June 2018 and 9 July 2018.

The Cabinet Member is asked to review the education rationale for the project and summary of the consultation process/feedback provided within this report and associated annexes and, on that basis, decide whether to determine the associated Statutory Notice.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for All-Age Learning determines the Statutory Notice, thereby bringing into effect the formal expansion of St. Bede's School by two Forms of Entry (2FE) for September 2019.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

There is an increasing demand for primary school places around the Reigate and Redhill area which reflects a rise in the primary-age population over recent years that is beginning to transition into the secondary sector. In order to meet this demand, Surrey County Council (the Council) is overseeing an ongoing school expansion programme designed to increase the capacity of the school estate. The proposal to expand the capacity of St. Bede's School by 2FE is a core element of the Council's strategy to deliver additional places in this area. In line with this, the Council has undertaken the requisite statutory consultation to inform the decision-making process and a note of support for the proposal was received as part of this. For these reasons, it is recommended that the Cabinet Member determines the Statutory Notice (appended to this report as Annex 1), so as to bring the expansion of the school formally into effect.

DETAILS:**The Proposal**

1. On 11 June 2018, the Council published a proposal to:

- enlarge St. Bede’s School from nine forms of entry (9FE) at Year 7 to eleven forms of entry (11FE) at Year 7, to allow for a roll of 1,650, comprising eleven classes of 30 pupils in each year group; and
 - build additional permanent classrooms and ancillary space to facilitate this.
2. It was proposed that the above enlargement would be effective from 1 September 2019 and that the school would grow incrementally, year-on-year, as the higher intake works its way progressively through the age range. As such, the school would effectively reach its new capacity of 1,650 places in September 2023.

Reasons for the Proposal

3. Reigate & Banstead is experiencing a significant increase in the demand for school places reflecting both a rise in birth rate and increased house building and migration within the area. Births in the Borough in 2014 were 27.7% higher than births in 2002. The increased pupil cohort is now starting to make the transition into the secondary sector. As such, there is now the need to accommodate increased demand via the expansion of local secondary provision. To date this has been achieved via the permanent expansion of The Warwick School by 1FE in 2017/18, as well as offering bulge year classes at St. Bede’s School for the 2015/16, 2016/17 and 2017/18 academic years. However, in order to keep up with demand, additional capacity is required moving forwards.
4. Within the Reigate & Redhill planning area, there is presently provision for 1,023 places per year in Year 7, composed of the following:
- Reigate School (offering 250 Year 7 places per annum);
 - Royal Alexandra and Albert School (offering 113 Year 7 places per annum);
 - St. Bede’s School (offering 270 Year 7 places per annum);
 - The Warwick School (offering 210 Year 7 places per annum); and
 - Merstham Park School (offering 180 Year 7 places per annum).
5. Demand for secondary school places in Reigate and Redhill is projected to rise over the coming years in line with the general increase across the whole of the Reigate and Banstead Borough area. Projections of future demand for school places are presented in the below table:

Year	Y7 PAN	Y7 Projection	Deficit
2019/20	1,023	1,010	13
2020/21	1,023	1,012	11
2021/22	1,023	1,058	- 35
2022/23	1,023	1,101	- 78
2023/24	1,023	1,125	- 102
2024/25	1,023	1,105	- 82
2025/26	1,023	1,128	- 105
2026/27	1,023	1,113	- 90
2027/28	1,023	1,105	- 82

6. As can be seen from the above, there is a sustained need for additional secondary places in the area. A core component of the strategy devised to meet this need is the proposed expansion of St. Bede's by 2FE, which, if approved, would reduce all of the above projected deficits by 60 places as shown in the below table:

Year	Y7 PAN	Y7 Projection	Deficit
2019/20	1,083	1,010	73
2020/21	1,083	1,012	71
2021/22	1,083	1,058	25
2022/23	1,083	1,101	- 18
2023/24	1,083	1,125	- 42
2024/25	1,083	1,105	- 22
2025/26	1,083	1,128	- 45
2026/27	1,083	1,113	- 30
2027/28	1,083	1,105	- 22

7. There is also good evidence to suggest that there are insufficient places for Catholic families in the area. At present, there are approximately 110 places available at St. Bede's for Catholic applicants. The Catholic primary schools in the Redhill Deanery currently have a combined published admission number (PAN) of 150.
8. Where possible, the Council's strategy is to expand high quality provision that meets parental demand whilst also ensuring that there is a diverse pattern of provision so as to provide families with some element of choice. The most recent Ofsted report on the school from January 2017 rates the school as 'Outstanding'. In particular, this report noted that "a zest for learning permeates the whole school. Teachers' high expectations mean that pupils are ambitious for their own futures and approach their learning with determination and resilience". The evident quality of education provision at St. Bede's was a key reason underpinning the move to expand this school and thereby increase the provision of high-quality school places to the local community.

School Building Requirements

9. The school site has sufficient capacity to enable expansion in its existing location. Naturally, though, a building programme will be required to provide the permanent facilities to allow for the increase in pupil intake. To this end, the Council has allowed for an appropriate capital sum for this project, within the Basic Need Capital Programme element of its Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)
10. The proposal consists of both new build and refurbishment works. The new build consists of an extension to the art block to provide IT classrooms and an extension to the main teaching block to relocate and provide new science laboratories as well as English and maths classrooms. Refurbishment and adaptations of existing buildings to create specialist teaching spaces.

CONSULTATION:

11. The increase in admission number was the subject of a Council-led consultation process which was held for a four-week period, between 11 June 2018 and 9 July 2018. This process engaged a range of interested stakeholders, including the school community, local residents, local admissions authorities and the Surrey School Admissions Forum. On 21 June 2018, a consultation evening was held at the school, to which all interested parties were invited.

12. In all, six responses were made to the consultation, with three being opposed to the expansion; two in support; and one unspecified. The feedback from the consultation exercise raised the following issues:

- **Faith-based admissions policy** – two respondents raised concerns regarding the fact that Surrey was proposing to expand a school with faith-based admissions criteria. The respondents stated that they would likely support the expansion of places in “secular” provision. By way of response, it is worth noting that St. Bede’s is the only secondary school with a religious character in the Reigate and Banstead Borough. In order to meet the demand for additional school places, the Council has planned the following elements of new provision:
 - 300 new places at St. Bede’s School;
 - 300 new places at Oakwood School;
 - 150 new places at The Warwick School; and
 - 900 new places at Merstham Park Free School.

Overall, then, the “faith-based” places provided at St. Bede’s comprise less than 20% of the overall number of additional places planned. This is not considered to be an unduly large figure, considering the profile of demand and the popularity of the schools concerned.

- **Traffic and Parking** – one respondent expressed concern in relation to traffic and parking around the school during peak pick-up and drop-off times and the potential for this situation to be exacerbated as a consequence of the proposed expansion. The respondent noted that Carlton Road, in particular, was laden with such traffic. In order to address such concerns and as a fundamental part of the process of expansion the School Travel Plan will be updated so as to ensure that it reflected the growing nature of the school and the need to promote more sustainable modes of transport to and from the school site. To support this an additional 30 cycle spaces are due to be installed on the schools as part of the expansion scheme. In addition, the planning consent for the scheme requires that parking restrictions be instated on the north side of Carlton Road which should alleviate the traffic and parking issues identified.
- **Site Capacity** – one respondent expressed concern in relation to the capacity of the facilities to accommodate the proposed increase in pupil numbers. The particular areas highlighted in this respect were the hall, the canteen, and the external play space. The school has been fully involved in the development of the design in relation to the expansion project and are content that the solution devised provides sufficient capacity to provide for the anticipated pupil numbers. Building Bulletin 103 guidance

for school buildings has been used to inform design and scaling matters in this respect.

- Surplus Places** – one response was received from another school in the area. The feedback was provided by GLF Schools, the academy sponsor for the new Merstham Park School which opens in September 2018. Due to the length of the response it is provided in full as Annex 2 to this report. The principal concern identified by GLF Schools is that there are surplus school places forecast for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 academic years and that the expansion of St. Bede’s School would therefore “result in vacant places at other local secondary schools, at a time when every school is facing significant financial challenges”. As noted in the response, on the basis of the pupil forecasts the expansion of St. Bede’s by 2FE would create a surplus of 73 places in September 2019 and 71 places in September 2020. Whilst this is accurate, it should be noted that the temporary planning application for Merstham Park School provides sufficient accommodation for an intake of 4FE over its first two years of operation (rather than the 6FE that will be its long-term capacity). As such, the proposed expansion of St. Bede’s effectively acts as a “buffer” for Merstham Park School operating at below capacity in those two years and the actual physical capacity of the school system would only leave the 13 (2019) and 11 (2020) surplus places quoted in the table in Section 5. This level of surplus places is well within the Audit Commission’s recommendation of 5% surplus capacity within any given schools system. If the St. Bede’s expansion were to be approved, the forecast demand relative to the school system’s operational capacity would be as shown in the below table:

Year	Y7 PAN	Y7 Projection	Deficit
2019/20	1,023	1,010	13
2020/21	1,023	1,012	11
2021/22	1,083	1,058	25
2022/23	1,083	1,101	- 18
2023/24	1,083	1,125	- 42
2024/25	1,083	1,105	- 22
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RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

- There are naturally risks associated with the building project required to facilitate this expansion. Ultimately these are, in large part, related to cost and programme, i.e. the capacity to deliver the requisite project within the defined financial parameters in line with the timeline for increased demand. A Risk Register is being maintained and updated on a regular basis by the Project Manager of the scheme and this should serve to both mitigate risk (in part) and to provide early foresight of any issues as they materialise. A contingency allowance appropriate to the scheme has been included within the project budget to mitigate for potential identified risks.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

14. The building project associated with this proposal is included in the 2017-22 MTFP. A scheme of works has been developed and agreed by Cabinet on 28 February 2018. All schemes are expected to remain within the funding that has been allocated to them in the MTFP.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

15. The basic need expansion scheme for this school is included in the school basic need programme of works and has a funding allocation in the 2017-22 MTFP.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

Consultation

16. In considering this report, the Cabinet Member must give due regard to the results of the consultation as set out above, and the response of the Service to the consultation comments and conscientiously take these matters into account when making its final decision.

Best Value Duty

17. The best value duty is contained in s3 of the Local Government Act 1999 as a result of which the Council is under a duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The relevant guidance states that Councils should consider overall value, including economic, environmental and social value when reviewing service provision.

School Expansion

18. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on the Council to ensure that efficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the population in its area. In doing so, the Council is required to contribute to the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on the Council to secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available in its area. There is a legal duty on the Council therefore to secure the availability of efficient education in its area and sufficient schools to enable this.
19. This report sets out how the Authority will meet its duties in response to increasing demand for school places in Reigate & Redhill, in line with the general increase across the whole of Reigate and Banstead Borough.
20. As the school's capacity and PAN will be increased, a consultation and publication of notices was required. Responses to the consultation were considered carefully and the School Organisation Guidance and Admissions Code 2014 were duly followed.

Equalities and Diversity

21. The expansion of the school will not create any issues that would require the production of an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA), as no group with protected characteristics will be adversely affected as a consequence of its approval, or otherwise.
22. The new school building will comply with Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) regulations.
23. The Admissions arrangements give the highest priority to Looked After Children (LAC) and children with exceptional medical or social needs thus supporting provision for the county's most vulnerable children. Priority is then given to those who attend an Anglican or Roman Catholic Church, followed by siblings of pupils already attending the school and those living within the school's catchment area. Remaining applicants are then sorted on the basis of distance from home to school. There is no proposal to amend the admissions criteria, which are fully compliant with the School Admissions Code.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

24. This proposal would provide increased provision for secondary places in the area which would be of benefit to the community served by the school. This would therefore also be of benefit to any Looked After Children who have the opportunity of attending the school with this grouping of children receiving the highest priority ranking within the school's admission arrangements.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

25. The design philosophy is to create buildings that will support low energy consumption, reduce solar gain and promote natural ventilation. The school will be built to the local planning authority's adopted core planning strategy. In addition, the provision of additional school places to meet local demand is likely to have a positive impact on reducing journey times (and therefore carbon emissions), relative to the scenario of not so doing.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

26. Subject to Cabinet Member approval of the recommendation of this report, the next steps are to expand the school, in line with the proposal formally agreed by Cabinet on 13 June 2017.

Contact Officer:

Oliver Gill, School Commissioning Officer, Tel: 020 8541 7383

Consulted:

St. Bede's School Governing Body
Parents of pupils attending the school
Local residents
Diocese of Southwark
Diocese of Arundel & Brighton
Local Headteachers
Liz Mills, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning

Jonathan Essex, Local County Council Member for Redhill East
Natalie Bramhall, Local County Council Member for Redhill West and Meadvale
Reigate & Banstead Borough Council
Unions (NEU; NASUWT)
School Admissions Forum

Annexes:

Annex 1 – St. Bede’s School Statutory Notice (Full)
Annex 2 – GLF Schools Consultation Response Form

Sources/background papers:

- St. Bede’s School Consultation Document