

School Specific Responses

School: Belmont School

Primary Planning Area: Central

The projections for Central planning area indicate increased demand above the 480 permanent Reception places available in September 2013 requiring additional Reception places of between 114 (in September 2014) and 176 (in September 2021) pupils per year.

In the context of the current projections it is expected that at least a further three primary schools in this planning area will need to be permanently expanded. Two community schools are proposed for permanent expansion in Phase 2 of the Primary School Expansion Programme to meet increased demand for places up until 2015/16.

The proposals are:

Year	Permanent expansion	Temporary Reception Classes
September 2014	Belmont School Norbury School	<i>St Anselm's Catholic Primary School</i>
September 2015	<i>St Anselm's Catholic Primary School</i> *	One class if required

* *Note: St Anselm's Catholic Primary School, a voluntary aided school located within this geographic planning area, is also proposed by its Governing Body for expansion in 2015.*

Proposal for Belmont School

Permanent expansion with effect from September 2014.

(The school opened a bulge Reception class in September 2013)

School Response

At its meeting on 7 November 2013, the Governing Body of Belmont School unanimously agreed to support the proposed expansion of the School.

General Consultation Responses (including individuals, organisations and on-line)

A summary of the number of responses is presented in the table:

Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
31	14	8	53
58.5%	26.4%	15.1%	

The main concern of respondents is traffic congestion, especially in Hibbert Road, and the safety of children. Comments are made about the poor standard of driving and parking, with references to parking across driveways and residents being blocked in. Suggestions are made for a one way system, preventing parking along Hibbert Road and ensuring access for emergency services at school drop off and collection times. Some concern is expressed that the small family feel of the school will be lost and staff would be less accessible to parents. A comment is made that thought is needed into how to retain pupils in order to reduce pupil mobility.

Officer Comments

The permanent expansion of Belmont School would provide school places in a good strategic location and would be a popular choice amongst parents wishing to secure a place. The permanent expansion would increase the school from two forms of entry (60 places) to three

forms of entry (90 places). Belmont School has already contributed to the need for additional school places in its locality by opening bulge Reception classes in September 2009 and 2013.

It is expected that some new build and reconfiguration of existing space in the school will be needed to enable the additional pupils in an expanded school to be accommodated.

Successful application was made to the Government's Targeted Basic Need Programme for funding to expand Belmont School. The conditions of the Programme require the funding allocation to be spent and the new places to be available by September 2015. In order to meet these conditions, if Cabinet approves the publication of statutory proposals to expand Belmont School, detailed design work would proceed in parallel with the statutory expansion processes before a final decision would be made by Cabinet in March 2014.

A school expansion delivery team is being established to ensure appropriate engagement with the schools and involvement in the design and construction planning. Officers will have detailed discussions with the school about how the 30 extra children would be accommodated in September 2014 prior the building works being completed in 2015.

Work will be undertaken with all the schools proposed for expansion to ensure a coordinated approach to addressing traffic issues as far as practicable. A coordinated cross-council approach is being adopted by officers to address the traffic and school travel planning issues. This is intended to ensure that all that can possibly be done to address traffic problems and to influence travel behaviour is done. This corporate approach is described in more detail in the Cabinet report. Belmont School has only one access point for pedestrians and vehicles, in Hibbert Road close to the junction with Locket Road. How the development will contribute to improving pupil safety entering and leaving the school will be included in the site design work.

Increasing the size of a school does not necessarily change the quality of the relationships surrounding the child. For most children, their key experiences are related to their classroom, their class teacher and their year group, which would not change in a bigger school. The school is over-subscribed on first and second preferences which indicates that the pupil mobility issues that have been experienced with the 2009 bulge intake year would not be experienced if expansion of the school is approved.

Officer Recommendation

Statutory proposals are published to increase Belmont School by one form of entry (30 places) to be a three form of entry (90 places) school with effect from September 2014.