

Notes of Public Consultation Meeting

Primary School Expansion 2011 – Public Consultation Meeting St Matthew’s Church of England Primary School

Tuesday 23 March 2010, 19:00 – 21.00

Officers Present:

Tina Herring - Head of Learning & School Effectiveness
Katharine Thorn - Information Officer, Learning and Children’s Services
Pam Dryden - Head Teacher, St Matthew’s Primary School
Colin Powell - Primary Advisor, Diocese of Southwark

There were 10 people present at the meeting.

Presentation

Tina Herring welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave a presentation on expansion of Primary Schools 2011. The presentation outlined our statutory responsibility to ensure that there are sufficient school places for all children who need one and Kingston’s proposal to meet this demand through school expansion and the building of a new Primary school in the Surbiton area. The presentation is attached as Annex A.

Comments and Questions

The table below outlines the main comments made and questions asked together with the response given by officers.

Comment/Question	Response
Question in relation to slide 16 – “Investment of at least £12,400 per extra pupil to cover building adaptation, ICT and furniture and equipment”. What does this mean? Is this a lot of money?	<p>For St Matthew’s we are looking at spending between £3 million to £5million. Our total budget is £70 million, which has to cover everything. This will include the cost of a new school site and build, building fees, any problems that may arise (e.g. asbestos found), adaptations to the school which come with expansion (e.g. new alarm system). Therefore the figure gets reduced very quickly.</p> <p>The money allocated to each school will differ. Some school’s lend themselves to expansion and will not need as much money allocated to them as others.</p>
Queries about architect involvement and whether they have individual plans for each school.	<p>The Head has met with the architects who have looked at issues for the school. One aspect that has been discussed is the school hall, which can be difficult to use as it is a thoroughfare to other classrooms. This is something that the architects will take into account when drawing up their plans for the school.</p> <p>Kingston wants to build quality developments and will ensure that they meet the needs of the school as much as possible and within the budget that we have. Also it is about 21st Century learning</p>

	<p>and ensuring small spaces are created for learning.</p> <p>The design proposal will very much depend on what the Head and Governing Body want. There have already been 3 previous designs for St Matthew's from previous consultation. When the design has been agreed by the Head and Governing body it is then that members of the public can see the plan for expansion.</p> <p>Designs proposals for each of the schools will be exhibited in Kingston on 15 May 2010, they will also be available at neighbourhood meetings in May and at pre-planning application consultation evenings.</p>
<p>Will building go on for four years/ the amount of time that it takes for 2FE to go through to each school year? When will traffic etc be considered?</p>	<p>When we apply for Planning Permission it will be for the whole school site (not for different phases of the build). However, building work may need to be phased, but not year on year. We will have to look at existing buildings including the recent temporary buildings and consider what needs to be built first. For example, it may be that there are enough existing buildings to house Reception and Key Stage 1, so the build may start by providing classrooms for Key Stage 2. Buildings differ so much that it will vary for each school site.</p> <p>Traffic will form part of the planning stage and not part of this consultation.</p>
<p>What happens if the Government changes, could they remove funding?</p>	<p>The majority of the money in place to fund the school expansion programme is from a grant called the Primary Capital Programme, which was intended for transforming schools fit for the 21st Century and developing exciting areas such as extended schools. The need for primary school places means that this money will now be spent on school expansion. A much smaller amount of money has come from the Government. This money has to be provided by the Government to meet the basic need of providing school places for children. Kingston Council is also putting money into the expansion programme.</p>
<p>Concern was raised about the proposed new school in Surbiton. The expansion document states that "until building works are complete, pupils would be based for the first year only away from the proposed site in satellite arrangements which are likely to be linked to existing LA provision". Does this mean St Matthews will have provide 60 extra places?</p>	<p>To illustrate what this means the example of Fern Hill Primary was given. Fern Hill opened in its own right but for the first year was linked to Alexandra Infant School, in order to use its facilities. There is a possibility that similar arrangements will have to be made for the newly proposed school in Surbiton. However we have not had these discussions as we have not yet secured the site. If it did happen, the new school would be autonomous, have its own staff, Head teacher, pupils etc but would be borrowing space on another school's site.</p>

<p>One parent referred to the expansion document data which predicts a decline in demand for reception places from 2014/15. How has this been predicted? What will happen if the number keeps on increasing?</p>	<p>These figures take into account a variety of factors, including what housing developments have been planned. We cannot predict all factors over the next four years, but we will have to keep a close eye on this and keep our information up to date. We have learnt a lot over the last couple of years and are working closely with the Greater London Authority (GLA) to adapt predictions to the changing situation, such as families living in smaller accommodation. Also we will keep talking to schools, as some schools that may not want to expand now may wish to expand in the future.</p>
<p>Why are we building more housing if we have a shortage of school places? Why are these two things not more joined up by Government?</p>	<p>There is a Government requirement to build more housing, which has to be built into our estimates. We also believe that the two areas (housing and school places) need to be joined up as much as possible. We have learnt lessons in terms of previous assumptions about the size of a property and the number of children that are likely to live there, e.g. children living in one bedroom flats.</p> <p>It is a challenge to sensitively adapt to accommodating our growing population, but we will do this by ensuring that quality work is carried out in our schools.</p>
<p>Concern was raised about losing the large amount of outdoor space which is attached to St Matthew's.</p>	<p>The Governing Body and Head have accepted a 2 FE proposal not a 3 FE proposal, so less outside space will be lost. In the future it may be possible that the school decides to increase the size of the school (and use more of this outside space). However we are being creative with design to ensure space for children to play is provided.</p>
<p>What is the shortfall between what the Council want to do at St Matthews and what the school will agree to?</p>	<p>Previously feasibility plans have been drawn up for all schools at a cost of £90 million. This included two plans for St Matthew's, one as a 3 FE school and one as a 2 FE school. Neither were acceptable to the school at the time and the plans were too costly to LA.</p> <p>Some schools have not been able to include a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) in the school's expansion plans, including St Matthew's. This is because St Matthew's already has a large amount of outside space.</p> <p>We will not build anything that does not meet children's needs and we will be as creative as possible with the build.</p>
<p>Any funding from Diocese? Any change in admissions criteria for Church schools?</p>	<p>The Diocese signed up, with the Local Authority, to the Primary Capital Programme. This money is now being used for school expansion. The Diocese has a good working relationship with Kingston, particular with the building teams. The Diocese is looking at any possible money that can be utilised for these projects.</p>

	<p>We are also keen to maintain balance in our Church schools with foundation and church school places. Church schools have been built for communities and we want to continue to meet this need.</p> <p>We will have to look at other factors including the affect of bulge classes (in terms of a need to provide places for siblings). The impact of an increase in 0.5 FE and the impact of the new school will all need to be taken into account in the future.</p>
General Comments	Parents felt that the expansion of 0.5 FE made sense for the school.

Tina Herring, Head of Learning & School Effectiveness, thanked everyone for attending the meeting and encouraged parents to complete the expansion consultation.