

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT – PROPOSED EXPANSION ST NICHOLAS SCHOOL

Have your say on a proposal to permanently expand St Nicholas School by a further 1 form of entry from September 2018

Representation (formal consultation) period: 1 to 29 March 2017

This document sets out:

- information about St Nicholas School
- school expansion for September 2017 (this decision has already been agreed)
- proposed further school expansion for September 2018 (this consultation)
- why we are consulting you
- why we need more primary school places in Croydon
- why we are proposing to expand St Nicholas School
- the expansion proposal
- how you can give your views
- what happens after the consultation
- the consultation timetable

Information about St Nicholas School

St Nicholas School is a special community school for boys and girls of primary age, between 4 – 11 years old, with a range of needs including moderate learning difficulties, communication difficulties and autistic spectrum disorders.

Currently, the school has a maximum roll of 132 pupils. The school currently has 13 classrooms and pupils are grouped in small classes of around 10 pupils. Each class has a teacher and 2 teaching assistants. The school is located at Reedham Drive, CR8 4DS. The school was judged as 'Good' by Ofsted in 2014.

School expansion – September 2017

In January 2016 the Council's Cabinet Committee approved the proposal to permanently expand St Nicholas School by one form of entry (1FE) from September 2017. This means that an additional 56 pupils (around 8 per class), aged 4-11, will be offered a school place over a 7 year period from September 2017.

Proposed school expansion for September 2018

The council agreed that statutory consultation can take place on the proposed permanent expansion of St Nicholas special school by a further 1FE from September 2018.

This is due to the increased demand for Special Educational Needs (SEN) places, and the improved financial viability of providing more places on one site.

A part of the successful school building programme is ensuring there is a safe and clear plan for expansion, including where all pupils will be educated whilst building takes place. Options are being looked at which could include pupils being accommodated on part of the Beaumont Primary School playing field. In recognition of the temporary loss of playing space, pupils from Beaumont will have access to the green space opposite the playing field.

The total number of pupils registered at the school is currently 132. The school will gradually increase its capacity year on year by 8 places (minimum) until it reaches its full capacity of 224 in 2024/25

The proposal has been developed in partnership with the school's leadership team, including the governing body. If the implementation of the proposal is approved, construction will take place to enlarge the school site to create extra classes and facilities to accommodate the additional pupils from September 2018. The school will receive additional funding to employ extra teaching staff and meet the extra costs associated with the additional children being admitted at the school.

In considering the proposed expansion of the school, the council commissioned a viability study, including option appraisal of the school site. The details of the options will be worked out in consultation with the school's representatives, architect / contractor and council's educational standards team to ensure minimum disruption to existing pupils and high quality learning spaces and facilities that meet the needs of the local community. If approval has been given by the council to proceed with the proposal, a traffic impact assessment will be carried out and planning permission sought. We will also be looking very carefully at parking and pupil drop off and collection.

Why we are consulting you

The four week statutory consultation period is an opportunity for you to formally submit your views and make representations (support or object) on the proposed expansion.

In line with the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice, Local Authorities have a duty to ensure that SEN provision is in place as specified in the Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

There is a continuous rise in demand for SEN places in schools and there are insufficient SEN places available in Croydon to meet the demand. To meet its duty, the council is proposing to permanently expand St Nicholas school by a further 1FE (an increase of 56 places introduced over a 7 year period) from September 2018. Please note that this proposed expansion is in addition to the September 2017 permanent expansion.

For a proposal to permanently expand a school, where it would increase the capacity of the school by more than 20 pupils and 10% of the school's capacity (the number of places and pupils in a school), the council is required to follow a statutory process, including publication of statutory proposal; and a four week representation (formal consultation) period where anyone can comment on or object to the proposed expansion.

The statutory proposal was published in the Croydon Guardian newspaper on 1 March. We are now in the representation period which means we are formally consulting you on the principle of the proposed permanent expansion of the St Nicholas School. It is important to note that at this stage, no decision has been made regarding the implementation of the proposed expansion of the school. The outcome of the consultation, along with feasibility study will help to inform the decision by the school leadership team and the council about whether to implement the proposed change.

The Council's Cabinet Committee will make a decision in May 2017. Subject to the council's approval to proceed to the implementation stage, there will be another opportunity during the planning application process for those with an interest to view design plans and share their views.

Why do we need more Special Educational Need places in Croydon?

There is a continuous rise in demand for SEN places in schools and there are more children with complex learning needs both locally in Croydon and nationally. Croydon Council is exploring ways of increasing the number of places available in the borough for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). The council would like to enable more children and young people to remain in their local communities and be educated in local special schools, or in mainstream schools with properly equipped facilities and specialist staff.

Why are we proposing to expand St Nicholas School?

St Nicholas School is a popular and successful school with strong leadership and governance. The school has been judged by Ofsted as a good school that is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. The behaviour and safety of pupils has been judged as outstanding.

An initial viability study has indicated that the school site has the physical capacity to be expanded, although further investigation is to be carried out including a traffic assessment.

How you can give your views

Your views are important to us. We will be holding a public meeting at the school on **Tuesday, 14 March 2017 from 6pm to 8pm**. At this meeting, representatives of the council and the school will talk about the proposal and seek your views. You can also:

- complete the attached questionnaire and put it in the consultation box at the school
- complete the online questionnaire via www.croydon.gov.uk/stnicholasexpansion2018
- send your comments to: Denise Bushay, Croydon Council, Schools Organisation & Place Planning Team, People Department, 4th Floor, Zone A, Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR9 1EA; or school.org@croydon.gov.uk
- visit <https://www.croydon.gov.uk/special-schools/st-nicholas-school>

Please respond by Wednesday 29 March 2017 for your responses to be taken into account.

What happens after the consultation?

All the feedback we receive will be analysed and a consultation outcomes report produced. This report will be sent to the Council's Cabinet Committee, and St Nicholas School Leadership Team. The Council's Cabinet will decide, taking account of the pressure on SEN places and the consultation feedback, whether to approve the implementation of the proposal.

Consultation timetable

Event	When
Publication of statutory notice	Wednesday, 1 March 2017
Start of formal consultation	Wednesday, 1 March 2017
Public meeting at St Nicholas School	Tuesday, 14 March 2017 from 6pm to 8pm
End of consultation period - deadline for feedback and comments	Wednesday, 29 March 2017
Cabinet decision on proposal	Tuesday, 02 May 2017
Implementation (if approved)	September 2018

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Questionnaire

1. Please tell us who you are – tick all that apply

- Parent or carer of child/children at St Nicholas School
- Parent or carer of child/children at another school.
- Parent or carer of a child/children not yet of school age
- A pupil at St Nicholas School
- A member of staff at St Nicholas School
- A member of staff at another school. Which one?
- A School Governor at St Nicholas School
- A local resident
- Other. Please tell us more _____

2. What is your view of the proposal to expand St Nicholas School to create places for 8 (minimum) additional pupils each year?

- Strongly in favour
- In favour
- Not sure
- Not in favour
- Strongly against

3. Please use the space below to add any other comments or views on the proposed expansion of St Nicholas School.

4. About you

In order to ensure we collect comments from a broad range of people and families reflective of our community it would be helpful if you could take a moment to complete the section below. Many thanks.

I identify my gender as:

Please tick one option only

Male

Female

Prefer not to say

5. Age range

Under 15 16-18 19-25 26-34 35-44 45-54 55-64 65+

6. Ethnicity (which of these describe your ethnic group?):

Asian/Asian British

- Bangladeshi
- Indian
- Pakistani
- Chinese
- Any other Asian background

(please specify) _____

Other ethnic group

- Arab
- Any other ethnic background

(please specify) _____

Black/African/Caribbean/

- Black British
- African
- Caribbean
- Any other Black background

(please specify) _____

White

- English/Welsh/Scottish
- Northern Irish/British
- Irish
- Any other White background

(please specify) _____

Mixed/Multiple Ethnic Groups

- White and Asian
- White and Black
- White and Black African

Any other Mixed/Multiple

- Ethnic background

(please specify) _____

- Do not wish to declare ethnic group

7. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

Please tick one option only

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - Mobility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - Visual impairment | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - Hearing impairment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - Mental health | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - Learning difficulties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Yes - Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Do not wish to declare |