

By: Rosalind Turner, Managing Director, Children, Families and Education

To: School Organisation Advisory Board – 4 November 2009

Subject: PROPOSAL TO EXPAND THE JOHN WESLEY SCHOOL FROM 210 PLACES TO 420 PLACES

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report seeks the views of the School Organisation Advisory Board on a proposal to undertake a consultation to expand The John Wesley Primary School from 210 places to 420 places.

Introduction

1. (1) The John Wesley School is a Voluntary Aided school, currently providing for pupils aged 4-11 years. The Published Admission Number is 30, giving a total capacity of 210 places.

(2) Ashford is identified as a growth area by the Government with 30,000 houses expected to be built in the period 2001 to 2031. Development continues in the Singleton area served by this school.

(3) Appendix 1 sets out the forecast school rolls within three miles of John Wesley School. These show a reduction in the availability of school places up to 2011-12. In September 2012 the new school Repton Park is due to open, providing a further 210 places. However, it is expected that these places will quickly fill during the years 2012 – 2015. Of greater significance is appendix 2 which sets out the forecast year R pupil numbers. The birth rate has increased in recent years resulting in a shortfall of places for four year old children from 2011-12. In 2010-11, it is expected that few reception class places will be vacant. It should be noted that when Repton Park School opens in September 2012 its reception class places will be full and a forecast shortfall of 52 places remains.

Background

2. The John Wesley School was newly built and opened in September 2007. It was constructed as a “hybrid school” meaning the central resources, such as the hall, were built at a size large enough to accommodate 420 children, but only seven classrooms were completed. Thus the disruption of expansion is minimal, with the comparatively straight forward task of adding a further seven classrooms being all that is required in respect of the school building. A site plan is attached as Appendix 3.

The Proposal

3. To expand The John Wesley School by one form of entry, bringing the total capacity to 420 places, with up to 60 places per year group. The expansion of the school will be gradual with the additional places being created annually to

accommodate reception aged pupils only, and therefore taking seven years for the school to grow to its full size. The first two form entry intake is proposed for September 2010. Appendix 4 provides a dot map of the home locations of pupils who currently attend the school.

Site Issues

4. The site is sufficiently large to accommodate a two form entry school (420 pupils) and, if required, extra staff parking spaces.

Resource Issues

Capital & Revenue

5. (1) Initially the school will require temporary accommodation to enable the intake of additional pupils, and until the permanent build is complete. The Canterbury Diocese have indicated that they will fund the temporary accommodation and the Local Authority will have to cover the 10% Governors liabilities (10%). This will be funded from an existing budget. The permanent expansion will be funded via developer contributions and is in the agreed capital programme.

Human

(2) Additional teaching and support staff will be required. The school's budget will increase annually as its pupil numbers increase, although there is a lag of seven months in receiving this funding. The school will also receive reorganisation funding, currently £7,041 based on a per class allocation for furnishing.

Views of the Local Members

6. The Local Member, Jim Wedgbury is aware of the proposal and supports a public consultation being undertaken.

Views of the Governing Body

7. The Governing Body has been consulted and has agreed to support the School's expansion. The Governors would wish to see permanent accommodation being provided as quickly as possible.

Views of the of the Diocese

8. John Wesley School is a joint Church of England and Methodist school. Both churches support the expansion of the school.

Views of the Partnership Board

9. The Board's view will be sought as part of the consultation process.

School Improvement Implications

10. John Wesley School is a popular, over-subscribed school, which is performing well. It has the leadership capacity to manage the school during the building works,

and to grow the school. The gradual growth of the school will help ensure it remains stable and is not in a position of admitting significant numbers of casual admissions throughout the year. Equally this approach will help minimise disruption to other schools in Ashford caused by children leaving mid-year.

Transport & Environmental Impact, Including Community Implications

11. Any current transport arrangements for pupils will continue. The admission of additional reception aged pupils only should ensure that local children are admitted, thereby helping reduce the need for local families to travel to more distant schools. It is likely that additional staff parking will arise as a result of this proposal. However, this is unlikely to have any major environmental impact in the area.

Proposed Timetable

12. Public Consultation Period	10 Dec 2009 to 4 Feb 2010
Public Meeting	w/c 18 Jan 2010
Report back to SOAB	17 March 2010
Cabinet Member Decision	9 April 2010
Public Notice Issued	22 April 2010
Public Notice Expires	2 June 2010
Cabinet Member Decision	11 June 2010
Implementation	1 Sep 2010

Recommendations

13. Members are asked to recommend that a public consultation be conducted on the proposal to expand The John Wesley School from 210 to 420 places.

David Adams
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The Local Member is Jim Wedgbury.

Background Documents:

None