

# Consultation on a proposal to expand St Blaise CE Primary School, Milton

**7 January 2018 – 4 February 2019**

St Blaise CE Primary School is in the village of Milton, in Vale of White Horse District. The school is part of the Abingdon area partnership of schools and currently has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 15 (i.e. the school admits up to 15 children each year in to the Reception class).

The school was last inspected by Ofsted in October 2018 and is graded as Good.

The total number of children on roll at the current time is 89 as at January 2019 is shown below:

<b>Year</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Number on roll</i>	16	14	13	13	11	10	10

## **What is being proposed?**

### **Expansion**

Oxfordshire County Council, working with the leadership team of the school, proposes to increase St Blaise's PAN in September 2020 from 15 to 30 on a permanent basis.

This means that each year group that starts at the school from September 2020 onward would consist of up to 30 places, making a maximum total of 210 pupils in Reception to Year 6 across the whole school eventually.

The school intends to admit over its current admission number of 15, accepting 20 from Reception in September 2019 to gradually build up numbers. This will be achieved through the rearranging of classes and will not require any physical expansion. From September 2020, total numbers would grow gradually each year as up to 30 children are admitted into the Reception classes, allowing the school to adjust to the larger size. Should there be a demand for places in older year groups as a result of children moving into the village and needing school places, the school will review whether it is able to speed up the expansion of the older year groups.

### **Class organisation**

Where possible, county council policy is to organise and expand primary schools in multiples of 15 or 30 children per year group (i.e. half or a full form of entry) at a time. This helps schools organise more easily their classes across the year groups. An advantage of this

proposal to increase the Admission Number from 15 to 30 is that the children would be admitted in forms of 30 children, and would potentially stay in those single age classes as they progressed up through the school, rather than being taught in mixed-age classes.

There are many schools across the county that operate with an admission number of 30 as standard. The exact organisation of the classes would be managed by the school, and would be dependent on the number of children admitted.

## Reasons for proposal

At the time of writing, planning permission has been granted for 525 new homes in St Blaise catchment area since 2012, with more applied for and awaiting a planning decision. The county council considers it essential to expand St Blaise CE Primary School to ensure sufficient pupil places are available in Milton.

The school's Governing Body wants to be able to meet the needs of the local community and in September 2017 the school expanded from a PAN of 10 to 15, to meet high local demand for primary school places. To create additional space the community room was converted in to a classroom and a small extension was built to provide a small store and resource area. This work was part funded by 'S106' funding secured from housing developers and capital funding provided by the county council. A decision now needs to be taken as to whether to permanently expand the school from an annual intake of 15 to one of 30.

Current pupil forecasts (calculated summer 2018) indicate that St Blaise Primary School will exceed its current capacity of 105 places by 2020, with intakes continuing to grow rapidly beyond that date. Reception pupil numbers are forecast to persistently exceed the current admission number of 15. Actual 2018 pupil numbers are currently slightly higher than had been forecast.

Year	R	Yr1	Yr2	Yr3	Yr4	Yr5	Yr6	Total
<b>2017 actual</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>74</b>
2018 <i>forecast</i>	15	17	13	13	8	10	10	86
<b>2018 actual</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>89</b>
2019 <i>forecast</i>	17	17	18	14	14	9	11	100
2020 <i>forecast</i>	18	18	18	19	15	15	10	113
2021 <i>forecast</i>	21	20	19	20	21	17	17	135
2022 <i>forecast</i>	23	22	21	20	20	22	18	146
2023 <i>forecast</i>	24	23	22	21	21	21	22	154
2024 <i>forecast</i>	26	25	25	24	23	22	22	167
2025 <i>forecast</i>	26	26	26	26	24	23	23	174

Expansion of school capacity is needed to meet the forecast demands of the growing population in the area, and to allow for population fluctuations and movement into the area by new families, including into new homes planned to be built around the village. To enable the county council to meet its statutory duty to ensure sufficient pupil places for the growing population in Milton, a permanent expansion of St Blaise CE Primary School is now sought.

If St Blaise CE Primary School expands to 1 form entry (PAN 30) on a permanent basis, the county council considers there will be sufficient places to meet the scale of currently forecast population growth.

## Buildings

To accommodate a permanent increase to PAN 30, the county council would provide additional new classrooms and other related accommodation.

It is expected that the cost of expanding the school will be met from money the county council has secured from housing developers and capital funding provided by the council.

## Important points to remember

- This consultation is about **the principle of expanding St Blaise CE Primary School**. It is **not** about any decisions to allocate housing development to the area made by Vale of White Horse District Council. Comments on housing development proposals need to be made direct to Vale of White Horse District Council when they are submitted for planning decision.
- Issues around traffic, parking and the design of the school accommodation will be addressed through the planning process when the planning application is submitted.
- This consultation is taking place until **4th February 2019**. You have until midnight on that date to give us your views. All responses received will then be considered.
- The next step, after consideration of consultation responses, would be for the publication of a statutory Public Notice, which is when interested parties can formally respond to the proposal. The Oxfordshire County Council Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services would then decide whether to approve the proposal to expand the school.

## How you can respond to this consultation

This information is available online at the county council's website in the consultations section: <http://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk>. We would like to hear from you if you support this proposal as well as if you have any concerns. There are several ways you can submit your views:

- respond online at the above web address using the online form for this consultation, on the Oxfordshire County Council current consultations webpage;
- email your response to: [lucy.mills@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.mills@oxfordshire.gov.uk) putting '**ST BLAISE EXPANSION**' in the subject line;
- hand in your response at St Blaise CE Primary School's office, to be passed on to the county council.

**You must respond by 4th February 2019.**