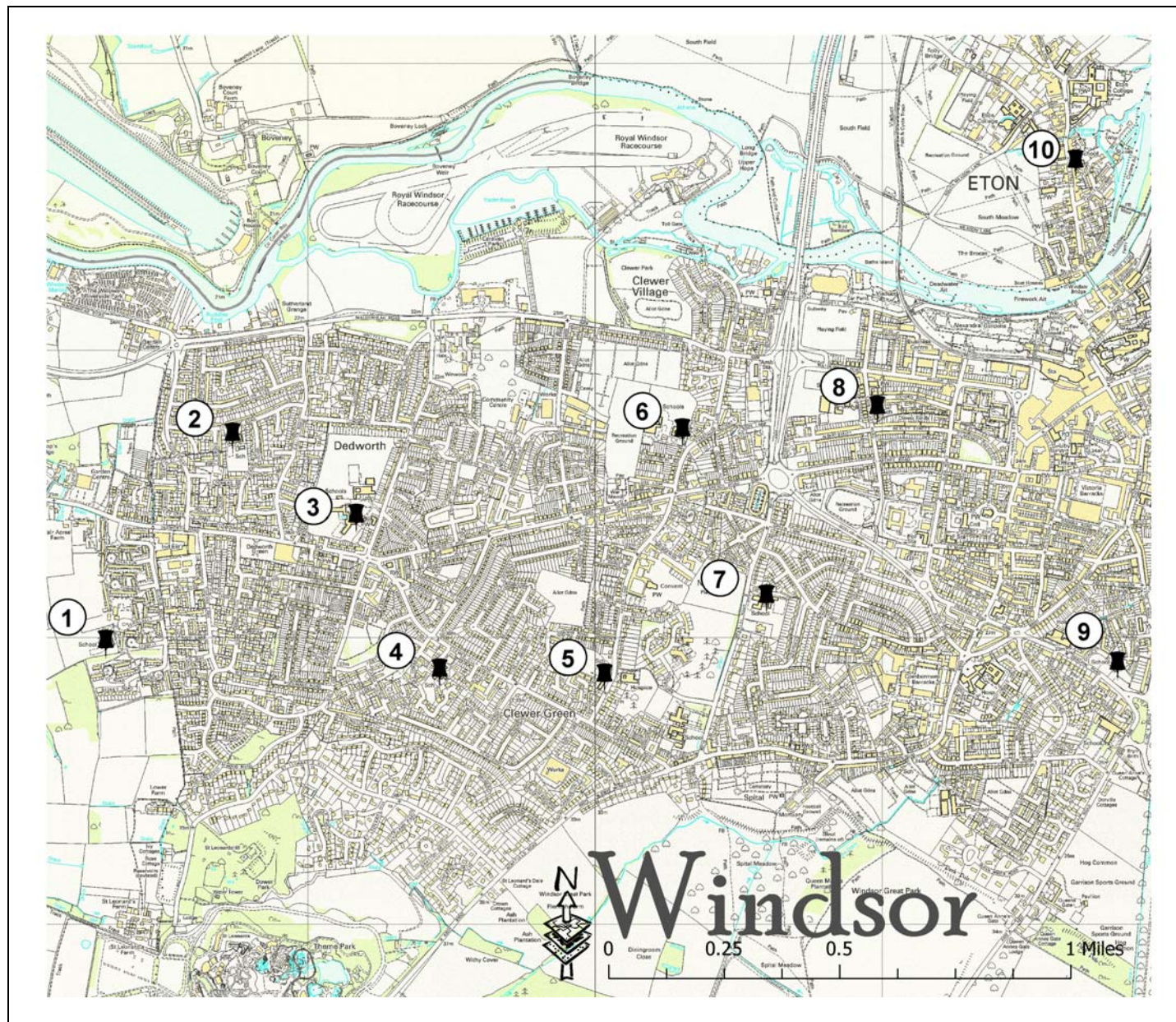


# Expanding First Schools in Windsor

## Spring 2008

Public consultation on proposals to expand one or more first schools in Windsor



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First schools in Windsor town (schools directly affected by this consultation are asterixed).

1. Alexander First School\*
2. Homer First School
3. Dedworth Green First School\*
4. Hilltop First School
5. Clewer Green CE School\*
6. St Edward's Catholic First School
7. Oakfield First School\*
8. Trinity St Stephen CE Aided First School
9. The Queen Anne Royal Free CE Controlled First School
10. Eton Porny CE First School



# Your views needed on proposal to expand Windsor first schools

The number of children attending the first schools in Windsor is set to rise over the next few years. At present there are insufficient school places to accommodate these children. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead is, therefore, seeking your views on a number of options to create more first school places in the town.

The Royal Borough believes that an additional 30 places per year group will be necessary from September 2009. This is the equivalent of a whole new first school. The Royal Borough believes the following schools could most easily be expanded to take more pupils in each year group, although it should not be necessary to expand all of them.

- **Alexander First School**
- **Clewer Green First School**
- **Dedworth Green First School**
- **Oakfield First School**

Before taking a decision on which school(s) should be expanded, the council wants to hear from everyone involved so that the widest range of views can be taken into account.

## What you say matters

Over the course of this term, the Royal Borough is asking you what you think about the proposal to expand one or more first schools in Windsor. This document tells you more about the options and gives you the opportunity to feed back your views. It is being sent to parents, staff, governors, community organisations and neighbouring local authorities.

Please take the time to read this consultation document so that you can play a part in this important consultation. Your views are vital and you can tell us what you think by:

- **Using the tear-off form on pages 15 and 16**
- **Writing to Windsor First Schools Consultation**
- **E-mailing [windsorfirstschools@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:windsorfirstschools@rbwm.gov.uk)**

This document can also be downloaded from the council's website at [www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/consultation\\_current.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/consultation_current.htm)

The closing date for your comments is Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

## What happens next?

After the end of the consultation period, the Royal Borough's Cabinet will consider a report on the issues on **22<sup>nd</sup> May 2008** and councillors will take your views into account before making a decision about which option(s) should go ahead.

If cabinet does decide to proceed, Statutory Notices would have to be published, with a further six-week opportunity for you to object to and/or comment on the proposal(s). Following this formal consultation period the Royal Borough will then make a final decision on whether or not to proceed in August 2008.

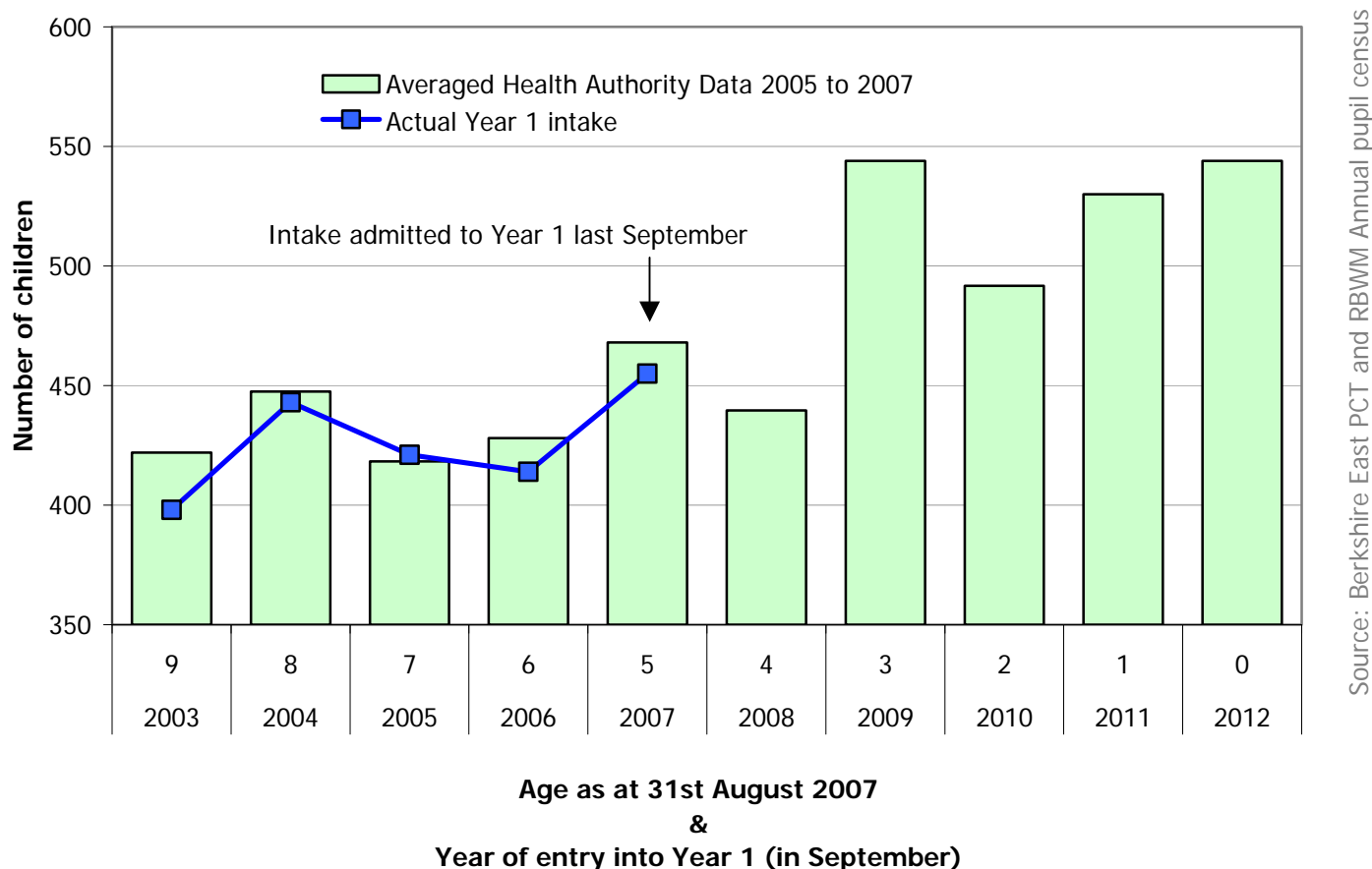
(Please note that this second consultation period does not apply to an increase at Alexander First School from 24 to 30 pupils per year group, as this change would fall below the minimum threshold requiring publication of statutory notices. An increase to 45 or 60 pupils per year group at the school would require the second consultation period.)



## Why we need new places in Windsor First Schools

Since about 2001 the birth rate nationally has been slowly, but steadily, rising. The bars in chart below show the number of children registered with the local health authority – the Berkshire East Primary Care Trust – who live in the Windsor area by their age as at 31<sup>st</sup> August 2007 and also by the year in which we would expect them to start Year 1 in a first school. The bar for 2003 represents about 420 children, whilst that for 2007 represents about 470 children. This in itself is a significant rise in the number of children, but it can be seen that from 2009 onwards the numbers of children increase substantially, approaching 550 in both 2009 and 2012.

Of course, not all of the children living in the area attend schools locally. The line in the chart below shows the number of children starting in Year 1 each September between 2003 and 2007. It can be seen that this follows the same pattern as the bars – there is no reason to think that this will change in future.



This, of course, will have a significant impact on the demand for school places in Windsor. Fortunately, there is some 'spare' capacity in the Windsor first schools at present and so the Royal Borough believes that sufficient places can be provided for all Windsor children by adding an extra 30 places per year group from September 2009. It is likely, however, that this will still leave most schools full, and so it may be more difficult than at present for children living outside the Windsor designated area to obtain places in the first schools.

The Royal Borough has a policy of maintaining a level of spare capacity in its schools in order to make it more likely that parents will be offered places for their children at schools they prefer, and to allow for children moving in and out of the area. If the higher level of demand indicated above is maintained in the longer-term then it may be appropriate to examine further expansion in order to provide this level of spare capacity.

## What are the options for providing new school places?

Most of the rising demand for school places is expected to come from within Windsor itself. Of the fourteen first schools in the Windsor area, only ten are in the town itself. The Royal Borough has examined which these could be expanded, and unfortunately most of them are on relatively restricted sites. This means that expansion would either be very difficult to achieve in practical terms, or would leave the school short of team games playing field space. The amount of team games playing field space a school is supposed to have is laid down in law and the borough will not be considering any options that affect this.

In addition, the Royal Borough wants to keep the number of children admitted to a school each year (the Admission Number) as either 30, 45 or 60 because this generally makes the organisation of classes within a school much easier. As a result, the borough believes that the most obvious options for expansion are:

- **Alexander First School**, which has an admission number of 26 and could be expanded to 30, 45 or 60 places per year group;
- **Clewer Green First School**, which has an admission number of 38 and could be expanded to 45 places per year group;
- **Dedworth Green First School**, which has an admission number of 30 and could be expanded to 45 or 60 places per year group; and
- **Oakfield First School**, which has an admission number of 45 and could be expanded to 60 places per year group.

The location of these, and the other first schools in Windsor town, is shown on the map on the front cover.

It is not the borough's intention that all four schools should expand in September 2009 as this would provide more places than are currently thought necessary. The additional places could all be provided at one school (Alexander First or Dedworth Green First) or alternatively at two or more schools. The main section of this consultation document gives more details about the options for each of the four schools, including the advantages and disadvantages of each.

## What are the implications of higher admission numbers?

The main reason for higher admission numbers at one or more of the above schools is to allow the borough to offer places in the first schools to all Windsor children. Without expansion it is likely that some children living in the town will not have first school places in September 2009.

Increasing the number of children attending a school can have a number of implications. On the positive side, schools attract funding largely on the basis of how many children are on roll. Larger schools can often make significant economies of scale, so allowing more funding to be diverted to teaching and learning. This can increase the breadth and depth of the curriculum offered and so help improve outcomes for all children. Larger schools can also often find it easier to recruit staff.

On the other hand, some parents do prefer their children to go to smaller schools, although a first school with 45 places in each year group would still be smaller than the national average primary school size. A first school with 60 places in each year group would be larger than the national average. Nothing in these proposals would lead to class sizes for infant children exceeding 30 pupils.

Larger numbers of pupils can also place a greater strain on car-parking facilities and local roads at the beginning and end of the day. This will need to be taken into consideration in the further development of these options.

Discussions have been held with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors at each of four schools referred to above. All have agreed that expansion would be possible as suggested and have agreed that consultation with parents, staff and governors should be undertaken.

Aside from the practical implications at each school, one key consideration is likely to be the location of the schools in relation to the parts of Windsor seeing the biggest rises in numbers. The information from the East Berkshire PCT suggests that most affected are the areas south of the Dedworth Road and to the east of the Relief Road. Clewer Green First and Oakfield First Schools fall within this area, but Alexander First and Dedworth Green do not.

The borough also has to consider government guidance that states that popular and successful schools should be expanded. All four schools are good schools.

## **Funding**

At this stage it is not possible to provide estimate costs of each option, although work on establishing these is now beginning. The Royal Borough will meet most of the costs, either from within its general capital programme or from funds anticipated from the government under the Primary Strategy for Change programme. This is a national initiative that, over fourteen years from 2009/2010, will see at least half of all primary schools rebuilt, refurbished or remodelled.

The borough will be examining, together with schools, how any expansion programmes for the schools mentioned here could be combined with improvements to be made via the Primary Strategy for Change. It is possible, for instance, that wiring or heating improvements could be done at the same time as expansion work, in order to minimise disruption in the long term and deliver modern standards and better value for money.

# Expanding Alexander First School

Alexander First School is a community school on the westernmost fringe of Windsor, with an admission number of 24. Of the fourteen first schools it has the largest site and could easily be expanded to have either 30, 45 or 60 children in each year group.

In the 2006/07 academic year the school had 33 empty places across all five year groups. Historically, the school has served the army community – Windsor has two barracks, Victoria and Combermere – as it is located in an area of housing for the armed forces. The empty places in the school allow it to cope when the units based at one or both barracks change.

In order to expand the school to 30 in each year group all that would be required would be some internal remodelling, and possibly a small extension to increase the size of an undersized room.

If the school were to expand to 45 or 60 in each year group, then an additional three or five classrooms would be needed (in addition to the internal remodelling). It would probably be most straightforward to move the current nursery and possibly reception provision into new accommodation elsewhere on the site. This could create a foundation unit teaching all children in the Foundation Key Stage, for which the most likely location would be near the swimming pool as indicated in the plan below. The remaining new classrooms would be built in a new extension – the school would still be left with sufficient team games playing field space.

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## Headteacher

Ms Nicola Summerfield

## Address:

Alexander First School  
Kenneally Road  
Oakley Green  
Windsor  
SL4 4XP

## School Type:

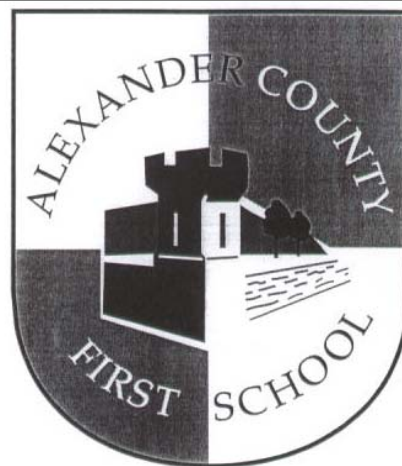
Community School

## Net Capacity:

112

## Admission Number:

24



## Total Number on Roll (as at Summer)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
109	90	74	72	76	86	76	87	79

*In addition to the general issues raised on page 4 about increasing the size of a school the following comments apply specifically to Alexander First School...*

## **Advantages**

## **Disadvantages**

### **All options**

- ✓ the school site is large enough to take 30, 45 or 60 pupils per year group without danger of over-crowding;
- ✓ a new relocated Foundation Unit could significantly improve the early years provision in the area;
- ✓ having more pupils will give the school greater stability in numbers;
- ✓ the internal remodelling necessary to increase the size of the school would improve the internal layout and address issues of space in some rooms.

- ✗ the school is not in the area most immediately affected by rising demand;
- ✗ the school is situated on the westernmost fringe of the town.

### **Expanding the school to 30 places per year group**

- ✓ increase of 6 places per year group will not make the school much bigger;
- ✓ making the admission number 30 should make class organisation easier than with the present admission number of 24;
- ✓ this could be achieved cost-effectively, outside term time and so with no disruption for pupils.

- ✗ an increase of 6 places per year group is less than a third of the 30 places required, and so at least one another school would also need expanding.

### **Expanding the school to 45 places per year group**

- ✓ increase of 21 places per year group gives two thirds of needed expansion;
- ✓ construction of a new Foundation unit, together with the internal remodelling of the existing building, could be relatively straightforward;

- ✗ an increase to 45 would mean that the school would have mixed year group classes (i.e. some Year 1 and Year 2 children, for example, in the same class);
- ✗ the new build and remodelling would be relatively expensive.

### **Expanding the school to 60 places per year group**

- ✓ increase of 36 places per year group gives more than the required expansion;
- ✓ making the admission number 60 should make class organisation easier than with the present admission number of 24;
- ✓ construction of a new Foundation unit and an additional two classrooms at the school, together with the internal remodelling of the existing building, would be relatively straightforward.

- ✗ 60 places in each year group means, over time, the size of the school would more than double, which could be challenging if not managed appropriately;
- ✗ the new build and remodelling would be relatively expensive.

The Headteacher and Chair of Governors have expressed support for the idea of expansion, particularly to 45 places in each year group. Although this would mean mixed year groups the school currently successfully manages these. There is also support for the possibility of putting in place a Foundation Unit elsewhere on site. Even if Alexander First School is not expanded in time for September 2009, it is possible that the remodelling to address some of the internal layout issues could happen in the longer term as part of the Primary Strategy for Change.

# Expanding Clewer Green First School

Clewer Green First School is situated in Clewer Green and is a Voluntary Aided Church of England School, with an admission number of 38. The school does not have a particularly large site, but could be expanded from 38 to 45 in each year group.

In 2006/07 the school was nearly full, with nine empty places across the five year groups.

In order to expand the school to 45 places in each year group there are two options:

## Option 1

Two additional classrooms could be built in a separate block to the rear of the school.

## Option 2

The current hall, which is undersized, could be converted into two classrooms and a new hall built, close to the existing one.

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### Headteacher

Mrs Marie L Stephenson

### Address:

Clewer Green CE Aided First School  
Hatch Lane  
Windsor  
SL4 3RL

### School Type:

Voluntary Aided (Church of England) School

### Net Capacity:

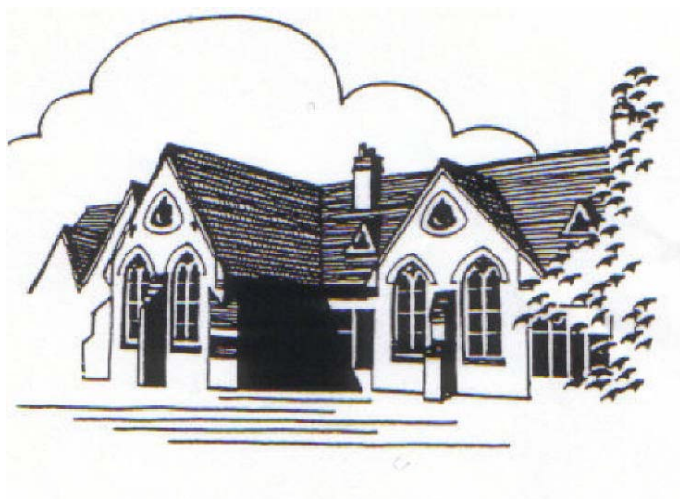
177

### Admission Number:

38

### Total Number on Roll (as at Summer)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
184	174	164	160	157	154	159	158	168





*In addition to the general issues raised on page 4 about increasing the size of a school the following comments apply specifically to Clewer Green First School...*

## **Advantages**

## **Disadvantages**

### **Both Options**

- ☑ an increase of 7 places per year group will not make the school much bigger than at present;
- ☑ making the admission number 45 should make class organisation easier than with the present admission number of 38;
- ☑ the school is located in an area experiencing growth in demand.

- ☒ an increase of 7 places per year group is less than a third of the 30 places required, and so at least one another school would also need expanding.

### **Option 1 – a separate block to the rear of the school**

- ☑ this would be relatively simple to construct and could probably occur over the summer holidays, thus minimising disruption;
- ☑ no internal modifications of the rest of the buildings would be undertaken, making this option significantly cheaper than option 2.

- ☒ the children taught in this building would be physically separate from the school;
- ☒ the likely location of any new block would make it more difficult for a local playgroup to be situated on the site at the same time;
- ☒ it would leave the school with an undersized hall (and more children) which would still need addressing;
- ☒ playground would need replacing.

### **Option 2 – building a new hall and converting the existing into two classrooms**

- ☑ all children would be taught in the main part of the school;
- ☑ this option would better suit the long-term development of the school by providing a full-sized hall;
- ☑ dealing with the hall, new classrooms and any other adaptations all at the same time may be more cost effective and lead to less disruption in the long-term.

- ☒ it might be difficult to achieve completion in time for September 2009;
- ☒ some construction work might be necessary in term time, leading to the possibility of some disruption;
- ☒ this option is significantly more expensive as it would involve not just the internal remodelling and a new hall, but possibly also other upgrade works to the school infrastructure at the same time.

As Clewer Green First CE School is a Voluntary Aided school there will be financial implications for the governing body who, at present, have to find 10% of the cost of all building projects, either from the Oxford Diocese or from within their own fund-raising programmes. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors have indicated a preference for Option 2 as this would clearly be in the longer-term interests of the school. Given the advantages for class organisation and so on, it is possible that even if Clewer Green is not expanded in time for September 2009, option 2 could happen in the longer term as part of the Primary Strategy for Change.

# Expanding Dedworth Green First School

Dedworth Green First School is situated in Dedworth and is a community school with an admission number of 30. The school has a large site and could be expanded from 30 to 45 or 60 places in each year group. It has a Children's Centre and Dedworth Middle School is also situated on the same site. In 2006/07 the school was full, with no empty places.

In order to expand the school to 45 places per year group, three additional classrooms are required. If the school expands to 60 places in each year group then five additional classrooms will be needed.

Three or five additional classrooms could be provided in a new block on the playground adjacent to the main school (i.e. where Years 1 to 4 are located). A replacement playground would need to be provided elsewhere on site. Alternatively, land further to the rear of the school could be used.

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## Headteacher

Miss Helen Fisher

## Address:

Dedworth Green First School  
Smith's Lane  
Windsor  
SL4 5PE



## School Type:

Community School

## Net Capacity:

140

## Admission Number:

30

## Total Number on Roll (as at Summer)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
152	158	157	155	155	155	153	160	160

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*In addition to the general issues raised on page 4 about increasing the size of a school, the following comments apply specifically to Dedworth Green First School...*

## **Advantages**

### **Increasing to 45 places per year group**

- ☑ an increase of 15 places per year group will achieve half of the necessary expansion.

### **Increasing to 60 places per year group**

- ☑ an increase of 30 places per year group will achieve all of the necessary expansion;
- ☑ having an admission number of 60 would mean that the school would not have to have mixed year group classes.

## **Disadvantages**

- ☒ an increase to 45 would mean that the school would have mixed year group classes (i.e. some Year 1 and Year 2 children, for example, in the same class);
- ☒ the school is not in the area most immediately affected by rising demand.

- ☒ the school is not in the area most affected by rising demand;
- ☒ 60 places in each year group means, over time, the size of the school would double, which could be challenging if not managed appropriately.

Any expansion of the school will need to take into account the wider development of the Dedworth site for community use. There are plans, for instance, for a library and a doctors' surgery to be located on the site, which will reduce the amount of space left for school expansion and increase the amount of traffic onto the site. Unless carefully managed there could also be serious issues with congestion, parking and safety.

### **A new classroom block on site**

- ☑ it would be relatively straightforward to build a complete new block on site with the required number of classrooms;
- ☑ if all the classrooms were built in this block no internal remodelling of the main school building would be required;
- ☑ there would only be disruption for pupils if any building work was carried out in term time.
- ☒ a new block would be expensive;
- ☒ the current playground could need relocating, depending on the exact location of the new block;
- ☒ if the nursery were to be included in this new block then access for parents and pupils could be more difficult.

The school have indicated an initial preference for moving to 60 places per year group on the grounds that this would avoid mixed year group teaching. The Headteacher and Chair of Governors believe that the school could successfully manage the transition to double the present size. They do, however, have concerns about how expansion of the school would work together with the wider plans for the Dedworth site. The Royal Borough recognises these concerns and is currently examining how these could be addressed if this proposal were to go ahead.

# Expanding Oakfield First School

Oakfield First School is situated in Clewer New Town and is a community school with an admission number of 45. The school has a large site and could be expanded from 45 to 60 places in each year group. It shares a site, and buildings, with The Lawns Nursery School and Children's Centre.

In 2006/07 the school was full, with no empty places.

In order to expand the school to 60 places per year group, three additional classrooms are required. One of these classrooms would almost certainly have to go in the playground behind the Headteacher's office. The remaining two classrooms could be provided in two ways:

## Option 1

The two classrooms by the main school entrance - currently used by Year Groups 3 and 4 - could be converted into a two-storey block of four classrooms with a disabled access lift.

## Option 2

The two classrooms currently above the playgroup situated in The Lawns (and due to be taken back by the music service, Maestros) could be put back into school use. New access arrangements would need to be put in place to prevent mixing of the Children's Centre and Oakfield First 'populations'.

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### Headteacher

Mrs Roz J Sendorek

### Address:

Oakfield First School  
Imperial Road  
Windsor  
SL4 3RU

### School Type:

Community School

### Net Capacity:

200

### Admission Number:

45



### Total Number on Roll (as at Summer)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
205	209	211	205	207	202	209	200	202



*In addition to the general issues raised on page 4 about increasing the size of a school the following comments apply specifically to Oakfield First School...*

## **Advantages**

### **Increasing to 60 places per year group**

- ☑ an increase of 15 places per year group will achieve half of the necessary expansion;
- ☑ the school is located in an area experiencing growth in demand;
- ☑ an increase to 60 would give the school the flexibility to organise in either mixed year group classes or in single year group classes.

## **Disadvantages**

- ☒ any increase in numbers could lead to further difficulties with parking, which is already a particular problem at the school;
- ☒ the playground behind the headteacher's office would need to be replaced elsewhere on site if a new classroom was built there;
- ☒ an increase of 15 places per year group is half of the 30 places required, and so at least one another school would also need expanding.

### **Option 1 – replacing a single-storey block with a two-storey block**

- ☑ this option would make good use of the land on site;
- ☑ all Oakfield children would continue to be educated in the main body of the school, which would better suit the long-term development of the school;
- ☒ it would be expensive to construct and could take longer than required to complete;
- ☒ the two classrooms currently there would have to be taken out of use for the duration of the build, meaning that children in those classes would need to be taught elsewhere on site. It might be possible that these children could temporarily be taught in the classrooms above the playgroup;
- ☒ the site would have three separate, disconnected, double storey blocks.

### **Option 2 – taking back into school use the two classrooms above The Lawns**

- ☑ these classrooms have recently been refurbished and so are ready for occupation;
- ☑ aside from the cost of providing separate access to the two classrooms for the Oakfield pupils, there would be minimal costs directly associated with this.
- ☒ a new home would have to be found for the music service, Maestros;
- ☒ the cost of this could offset any savings made through using the two classrooms above The Lawns playgroup;
- ☒ the two classrooms and their children would be separate from the rest of Oakfield school;
- ☒ a new direct access route would need to be built.

The Headteacher and Chair of Governors have indicated that both options would be possible, although they also agree that a number of issues would need to be addressed. In particular, use of the classrooms above The Lawns would have implications for access arrangements, a view that is shared by the Headteacher of the nursery school. If Option 2 were to go ahead, then the Royal Borough would work closely with all partners on the site to come up with suitable access arrangements.

## Other alternatives

The Royal Borough believes that the options presented in this document are the ones that allow for relatively straightforward school expansion without reducing the amount of team games playing field space below the statutory minimums allowed. Nevertheless, there may be other options that parents, staff and governors think the borough should explore, and the consultation document invites your views on those.

The government has introduced new legislation placing a duty on local authorities to consider and respond to any concerns about the school provision in the area made by parents with children of, or below, compulsory school age living locally. The Department for Children, Schools and Families has identified two main factors likely to raise concerns:

- parental dissatisfaction with the standards of their child's school or potential school; or
- parental dissatisfaction with the current pattern of schooling in the area, particularly relating to religious beliefs and/or educational preferences.

Such concerns may result, for example, in proposals for the creation of a completely new school of a particular type; bringing an existing private school into the public sector or by modifying an existing school.

At present, the Royal Borough believes that Windsor has strong first schools and that there are places available in a range of different types of schools. Nevertheless, the borough is inviting your views on whether or not this is the case, and if not, what alternatives you would like to see put in place.

## Your views matter

This is your opportunity to have your say about the proposed options for expanding one or more of the first schools in Windsor.

### You can respond by:

- Using this tear-off form and sending it either direct to the address below or to your school (who will send it on to us)
- Writing to Windsor First Schools Consultation, using the address below
- Emailing [windsorfirstschools@rbwm.gov.uk](mailto:windsorfirstschools@rbwm.gov.uk)

This consultation document can also be downloaded from the council's website at:

[www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/consultation\\_current.htm](http://www.rbwm.gov.uk/web/consultation_current.htm)

**The closing date for your responses is Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2008**

### Section 1 – About You

You do not have to provide this information but it would be helpful if you would complete these details about yourself. The information will be used solely for consultation analysis.

1. Name:

2. Address:   
  
Postcode:

3. I am (please tick as appropriate and insert the school name where applicable)

A parent of a pupil at:

☐

A governor at:

☐

A member of staff at:

☐

A resident (please specify area):

☐

Other (please specify):

☐

**Please return this form either to your school for them to return to us or to:**

**Windsor First Schools Consultation  
Room 215, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF**

All views received by **Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2008** will be taken into account before any final decisions are made. All responses will be publicly available (with personal details blanked out) unless expressly requested otherwise.

**If you have any questions about the proposal or need further information, please call  
01628 796572.**



## **Section 2 – Your Views**

1. Do you think that the number of places per year group at **Alexander First School** should:  
stay at 26? ☐ change to 30? ☐ change to 45? ☐ change to 60? ☐ don't know? ☐
2. Do you think that the number of places per year group at **Clewer Green CE First School** should:  
stay at 38? ☐ change to 45? ☐ don't know? ☐
3. Do you think that the number of places per year group at **Dedworth Green First School** should:  
stay at 30? ☐ change to 45? ☐ change to 60? ☐ don't know? ☐
4. Do you think that the number of places per year group at **Oakfield CE First School** should:  
stay at 45? ☐ change to 60? ☐ don't know? ☐

## **Comments**

**If you have any comments relating to:**

- (a) any aspect of the above proposals;
  - (b) any other Windsor schools that could or should, in your view, be expanded;
  - (c) any shortfalls in the type or quality of provision in Windsor; or
  - (d) any other aspect of addressing rising demand for first schools in Windsor,
- please give these below (you may use a separate sheet if necessary).**

