

London Borough of Barnet
REVISED
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Proposal to expand
Whitings Hill Community Primary School
(and Nursery)

Whitings Road, Barnet EN5 2QY

Other schools related to this proposal:

Barnet Hill Community Primary School
(and Nursery)

Hammond Close, Barnet EN5 2EQ

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Comments on this proposal should be sent in writing to: School Organisation & Admissions Team, North London Business Park, Building 4, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP, or by email to school.admissions@barnet.gov.uk by 10th January 2007. To facilitate the consultation process a questionnaire is attached to this document for those individuals wishing to respond.

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Service: Education

Division: Resources and Performance

Date: November 2006

Intended Target Group: All interested parties

Review Date: Post consultation period, January 2007

Part 1 Summary of Proposals

1. Barnet Council is consulting on a proposal to improve the quality and standard of its educational provision through a re-organisation as part of its Primary Schools Capital Investment Programme (PSCIP).
2. This proposal is that Whittings Hill School be rebuilt and expanded to become a 2 Forms of Entry (FE) school with effect from the autumn term 2009. The proposal to create additional places at Whittings Hill School includes the absorption of some pupils from the closure of Barnet Hill School at the end of the summer term in 2009.
3. There are two main reasons why this proposal is being considered as part of the Primary Schools Capital Investment Programme (PSCIP) in Barnet:
 - The poor state of the current buildings at Whittings Hill School
 - The linked proposal to close Barnet Hill School
4. According to the asset management data which the council holds on Whittings Hill School, the school suffers from a range of condition problems. The flat roof and windows need replacing and the mechanical and electrical installations are at the end of their life and need replacing. The concrete block panelling is showing signs of damp and decay. These add up to a real need to address the school's condition problems.
5. The linked proposal is to close Barnet Hill School with effect from the end of the summer term in 2009.
6. If the proposal were approved then at the end of the summer term 2009 some pupils from Barnet Hill School would transfer to Whittings Hill School for the start of the autumn term.
7. The council recognises that this will be a time of uncertainty for staff, pupils and parents and will endeavour to support them through this process of change.
8. Consultation meetings will be organised for parents, staff and governors (see part 2). The period of consultation will last until 10th January 2007. The council will consider carefully any comments made at meetings and all comments and observations made in writing by this date.
9. Any individual wishing to comment on the proposal is invited to do so by filling in the attached questionnaire (see part 4) and sending it to the School Organisation & Admissions Team, North London Business Park, Building 4, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP by 10th January 2007. Those requiring an electronic version can email: school.admissions@barnet.gov.uk

Part 2 Dates, times & venues of Consultation Meetings

A range of meetings will be held at the two schools affected by this proposal, including meetings for parents, staff, trade unions and governing bodies. Officers of the council will consider carefully any comments made at these meetings as well as all comments and observations made in writing.

Date & Time	Meeting	Venue
Day - Tuesday Date - 7 November 2006 Time - 3.00pm	Whitings Hill School Parents	Whitings Hill School Whitings Road, Barnet EN5 2QY
Day - Tuesday Date - 7 November 2006 Time - 3.30pm	Whitings Hill School Staff & Trade Union representatives	Whitings Hill School Whitings Road, Barnet EN5 2QY
Day - Tuesday Date - 7 November 2006 Time - 3.30pm	Whitings Hill School Governing Body	Whitings Hill School Whitings Road, Barnet EN5 2QY
Day - Thursday Date – 14 December 2006 Time – 6.30pm	Whitings Hill School Parents	Whitings Hill School Whitings Road, Barnet EN5 2QY

Day - Monday Date - 6 November 2006 Time - 3.30pm	Barnet Hill School Parents	Barnet Hill School Hammond Close, Barnet EN5 2EQ
Day - Wednesday Date - 8 November 2006 Time - 3.20pm	Barnet Hill School Staff & Trade Union representatives	Barnet Hill School Hammond Close, Barnet EN5 2EQ
Day - Wednesday Date - 8 November 2006 Time - 4.30pm	Barnet Hill School Governing Body	Barnet Hill School Hammond Close, Barnet EN5 2EQ
Day - Wednesday Date –13 December 2006 Time - 6.30pm	Barnet Hill School Parents	Barnet Hill School Hammond Close, Barnet EN5 2EQ

Part 3 Detailed Proposals

Introduction

1. Barnet council is consulting on a proposal to improve the quality and standard of its educational provision through a re-organisation as part of its Primary Schools Capital Investment Programme (PSCIP).
2. This proposal is that Whitings Hill School be rebuilt and expanded to become a 2FE school with effect from the autumn term 2009. The proposal to create additional places at Whitings Hill School includes the absorption of some pupils from the closure of Barnet Hill School at the end of the summer term in 2009.
3. In accordance with section 31(4) of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the council is consulting with all interested parties before it decides whether or not to publish statutory notices.

Background

4. There are two main reasons why this proposal is being considered as part of the Primary Schools Capital Investment Programme (PSCIP) in Barnet:
 - The poor state of the current buildings at Whitings Hill School
 - The linked proposal to close Barnet Hill School
5. According to the asset management data which the council holds on Whitings Hill School, the school suffers from a range of condition problems. The flat roof and windows need replacing and the mechanical and electrical installations are at the end of their life and need replacing. The concrete block panelling is showing signs of damp and decay. These add up to a real need to address the school's condition problems.
6. The linked proposal is to close Barnet Hill School with effect from the end of the summer term in 2009.

Potential Options and Models for the Future

7. In considering how best to proceed a number of possibilities have been considered, including the amalgamation of nearby schools within the vicinity. However, in reviewing the options available the council believes that this proposal in the long term offers the greatest chance of establishing educational provision to meet the needs of local children and be attractive to parents and staff.

Proposal for Consultation

8. The proposal is to expand Whittings Hill School from a 1FE to a 2FE school in all years in September 2009. The proposal is linked to the parallel proposal for a closure of Barnet Hill School. Under the proposal the school would close from the end of the summer term 2009, when some pupils would transfer to Whittings Hill School and other local schools with places.

Building and Capital Implications

9. Whittings Hill School will be improved and enlarged with purpose built accommodation, including a swimming pool (subject to production of a robust business plan), a multi-use games area and state of the art ICT facilities. It will have playing fields which will meet Department for Education & Skills (DfES) standards. Section 77 statutory requirements will be applied to the disposal of playing fields at Barnet Hill School and the provision of suitable alternative provision at Whittings Hill School.
10. The nursery class at Whittings Hill School will retain its 39 full time equivalent (FTE) places. There will also be additional nursery places available for pupils at Underhill Infant School where a Children's Centre will be built (39 FTE children) for September 2007.

Implications for pupils currently attending Whittings Hill School and Barnet Hill School.

11. One of the vital issues in considering how best to move forward are the implications for pupils currently on roll at the schools in the area. The council has considered carefully the steps it would need to take to manage the process of expanding Whittings Hill School and closing Barnet Hill School with minimal disruption to its pupils, and pupils in surrounding schools.
12. Pupils at Whittings Hill School:
 - Pupils currently in Years 4, 5 & 6 (2006/7 academic year) in the school would be unaffected by the proposal as they would all leave the school by the end of the summer term in 2009.
 - Pupils currently in the Nursery, Reception and Years 1, 2 & 3 (2006/7 academic year) at Whittings Hill School will remain on the school roll as it is rebuilt and the school expands to 2FE.
 - Capacity at local schools is sufficient to accommodate the number of pupils affected by this proposal. Whittings Hill School was originally built as a 2FE school and so could cope with the additional pupils from the proposed closure of Barnet Hill School, regardless of any delays in the rebuilding programme.
 - When Barnet Hill School closes at the end of the summer term 2009, remaining pupils will transfer to local schools with places. It is anticipated that some pupils will transfer to Whittings Hill School.

Admission numbers for Whittings Hill School

Year/ Capacity Figures by Year Group	2006/2007	2007/2008	2008/2009	2009/2010 (Barnet Hill closed)
Nursery	39 FTE	39 FTE	39 FTE	39 FTE
Reception	30	30	30	60
Year 1	30	30	30	60
Year 2	30	30	30	60
Year 3	30	30	30	60
Year 4	30	30	30	60
Year 5	30	30	30	60
Year 6	30	30	30	60

13. Pupils at Barnet Hill School

The proposal is for the school to close at the end of the summer term in 2009. Under this proposal:

- Pupils currently in Years 4, 5 & 6 (2006/2007 academic year) would be unaffected by the proposal as they would all leave the school by the end of the summer term in 2009.
- Pupils currently in Nursery and Reception and in Years 1, 2 & 3 (2006/2007 academic year) would be encouraged to remain at Barnet Hill School until it closes, and then transfer either to the newly re-built Whittings Hill School or to other local schools with places.

New Applications for Whittings Hill School

14. Parents who wish to apply for places in Whittings Hill School for September 2007 and beyond will continue to do so using the new Co-ordinated Primary Admissions scheme via a common application form or the new eAdmissions process.

Implications for the Governing Bodies

15. In the event of the proposal being approved, the governing body of Whittings Hill School would need to be expanded as the school expands to 2FE on 1st September 2009.

16. It is proposed that a temporary governing body be established prior to the opening of the newly rebuilt Whittings Hill School which could involve joint membership of with the governing body of Barnet Hill School.

Implications for Staff

17. As the closure of Barnet Hill School is linked to the expansion of Whittings Hill School there would obviously be new posts created in Whittings Hill School. The temporary governing body would decide on staffing levels and needs and make the

necessary appointments. It would be expected that applications from staff at Barnet Hill School would be treated sympathetically. Any displaced member of staff who has not secured a post either at Whittings Hill School or elsewhere will be offered assistance in seeking alternative employment. Redundancy or early retirement will be the last resort of the options available to current staff.

Timescale and the Consultation Process

18. This document marks the start of a period of consultation. This enables all interested parties to give their views on the proposal before any notices are published. This period of formal consultation will last until 10th January 2007. Meetings will be organised for parents, staff and governors. The council will consider carefully any comments made at meetings and all comments and observations made in writing by this date. As a result of this consultation the council may decide not to proceed any further with the proposal or to go ahead with the proposal or a modified version of it. Any formal proposal would be set out and published in the form of a public statutory notice.
19. The council has the powers to propose the expansion and closure of community schools. If proposals are published then there follows a statutory six week period during which further representations and formal objections can be made.
20. The decision to go ahead with any formal proposals does not rest solely with the council. If there are objections both the proposal and the objections are referred to the School Organisation Committee (SOC) and it is this body, representing different groups concerned with schools in Barnet, which can approve or reject the proposal. If the SOC is unable to reach a unanimous decision then the proposal is referred to the Schools Adjudicator who is independent of all local interests and who has the power to make the final decision.

Action	Timescale/Deadline
Consultation period begins	30 th October 2006
Parents, Staff and Governors meetings	6 th , 7 th and 8 th November 2006
Revised Consultation document issued	27 th November 2006
Parents Consultation Evening	13 th and 14 th December 2006
End of Consultation period (8 weeks)	10 th January 2007
Consideration of comments received by Cabinet members	11 th and 12 th January 2007
If proceeding, statutory notices to be published	25 th January 2007
Period for formal objection (6 weeks)	25 th January 2007 to 15 th March 2007
Any objections forwarded to SOC Meeting. <i>(If no objections council will determine to proceed).</i>	By the end of March 2007
Refer to Schools Adjudicator, if SOC meets and cannot reach a unanimous decision	April 2007
Decision from Schools Adjudicator	April – June 2007
Assuming approval to proposal: Barnet Hill School closes	31 st August 2009
Opening of new re-built and expanded Whitings Hill School	1 st September 2009

Current Admissions Criteria at Whitings Hill School

Offers of places at Whitings Hill School will be made unless the number of applicants for the school exceeds its admission limit (30). If the school were oversubscribed, the following criteria would be applied, in order, to allocate the places available.

1. Children whom the Chief Education Officer accepts have an exceptional medical, social or exceptional need that the school is particularly able to meet. These will include children 'looked after' by a local authority under the provision of the Children Act 1989.

Note: Applications in this category will be considered only if they are supported by an attached written statement from a doctor, social worker or other appropriate professional. Parents must demonstrate that there is a very specific connection between the child's need and the particular school. The medical condition of parents or other family members, or difficulties with child care arrangements because of work or other commitments would not be grounds for priority under this category. Information not provided at the time the application is submitted may not be considered at a later date.

2. Children who, when the places are allocated, have a sibling living at the same address who already attends the school, or the linked school in the case of separate infant and junior schools. Siblings would include half, step, adoptive and foster siblings provided they also live at the same address as the applicant.
3. Children in attendance at a nursery class at the school. If there are insufficient places available to offer to all children in attendance at a nursery class at the school, categories 4 and 5 below will be applied in order.
4. Children living within the individual school's defined area, with priority given to those who live closest to the school when measuring distance in a straight line.
5. Children living outside the individual school's defined area, with priority given to those living closest to the school when measuring distance in a straight line.

A map showing a school's defined area may be viewed at the school.

Parents whose child is not originally offered a place are asked to indicate whether they would still be interested in a place should subsequent vacancies occur and a waiting list will be maintained accordingly. When vacancies do occur everyone on the waiting list is considered and the places are offered according to the above criteria.

Vacancies continue to be offered to children on a waiting list as they arise. Although parents whose children are not offered a reception place will have the right of appeal to an independent committee, an appeal can only be upheld if the committee is satisfied that:

- i) the decision to refuse admission was not one which a reasonable admission authority would have made in the circumstances of the case, or
- ii) the child would have been offered a place at the school if the admission arrangements had been properly implemented.

Part 4 Consultation Questionnaire

**Consultation on the proposal to expand
Whitings Hill Community Primary School**

Barnet council would appreciate your response to this consultation paper which will help them in deciding future primary provision in the area. Please let us have your views and observations by completing and returning this response sheet.

Please tick the appropriate box in response to each question

Question 1

Do you agree there is a need to provide Whitings Hill pupils with more suitable accommodation to support their education?

(tick one box only)

Yes 1

No 2

Question 2

Do you agree with the proposal to rebuild Whitings Hill? If not, please give reasons below

(tick one box only)

Yes 1

No 2

Question 3

Do you agree with the proposal to expand Whitings Hill? If not, please give reasons below

(tick one box only)

Yes 1

No 2

Question 4

In which area do you live

Barnet Other

(tick one box only) 1 2

Other (please specify)

Question 5

Are you:

Whitings Barnet Another
Hill Hill School

A pupil at 1 2 3

A parent of a pupil at 1 2 3

A member of staff at 1 2 3

A governor at 1 2 3

Other (please specify)

Question 6

Are there any other comments you would wish to make on the proposals?

(please write in your answer)

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Thank you for completing this questionnaire. Please return it to:
School Organisation & Admissions Team, North London Business Park,
Building 4, Oakleigh Road South, London N11 1NP by 10th January 2007.
If you wish to complete this form electronically please email:
school.admissions@barnet.gov.uk