



Complete Proposal To Expand Spalding Primary School

MATTERS TO BE SPECIFIED IN SECTION 19 OF THE EDUCATION AND
INSPECTIONS ACT 2006 ALTERATIONS TO SCHOOLS

2 February 2012

Contact details

This proposal has been published by Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln LN1 1YQ regarding the expansion of Spalding Primary School. Spalding Primary School is a Foundation school.

Implementation

The proposal is to expand Spalding Primary School with effect from September 2012.

Consultation

All applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposal were complied with.

Consultation originally began on 7 November 2011 with a letter sent to all parents/carers of children attending Spalding Primary School. A wide range of interested parties were also informed. As part of the consultation process all parents/carers and other interested parties were given the opportunity to respond by 18 November 2010. The Headteacher and the staff at the school have discussed the potential expansion of their school with the pupils currently on roll and the views of the pupils have been taken into account, together with the views of all interested parties, by the Local Authority (LA) as the decision maker in reaching the decision to publish this proposal.

Evidence of the consultation before the proposal was published -

- (a) a list of persons and/or parties who were consulted can be found in Appendix A.
- (b) the views of the persons consulted are summarised in Appendix B.
- (c) copy of the letter to notify the commencement of the consultation process including the form to send in responses is in Appendix C. This was also published online through the County Council website at www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/provisionplanning

Objectives

This proposal is made to enable the LA to meet its statutory duty to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in maintained mainstream schools in the area to offer places to all children of a statutory school age. The LA also has a duty to promote high educational standards, enable fair access to educational opportunity for every child and promote the fulfilment of each child's potential. The County Council believes that this proposal reinforces the priorities in the Children and Young People's Plan; provides the best solution to addressing and meeting the long term educational and social needs of the children in the area; and supports the Council's aim of ensuring that as many children as possible can reach their full potential.

Reasons for this proposal are summarised as:-

- To enable the LA to meet its statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in the area.
- To ensure that the provision of school places is planned so as to promote high educational standards, enable fair access to educational opportunity for every child and promote the fulfilment of each child's potential.
- The LA considers the proposal to be the best available solution to the expected shortage of primary school places in Spalding town. Officers have investigated alternatives and, following an analysis of the area and existing schools, consider this proposal to be the best available option
- To avoid placing increasing pressure on all primary schools in Spalding, where the numbers on roll are already at capacity, as this would likely lead to either overcrowded schools and/or additional mobile classrooms with insufficient infrastructure for the additional pupils leading to the consequent concerns over the impact on the quality of education provided.
- To provide additional places close to the communities where the children live to avoid the likelihood of children being offered places at villages outside of Spalding with increasing transport costs and car usage and also concerns over the impact of this extra travelling time on children and the impact on traffic in and out of the town.
- To enable the process to continue to the next stage and allow a further opportunity for people and organisations to express their views about the proposals and ensure that they will be taken into account by the Executive Councillor.
- To enable the statutory and legal processes to proceed in accordance with the guidelines laid down by the Department for Education (DfE) as determined by The Education Act 2002 and as explained more fully in paragraph 3, Consultation, later in this report.

The disadvantages of this proposal are:-

- Additional pressure on the local road infrastructure and access points. The LA would look to mitigate this with improving the infrastructure and implementing a travel plan to reduce car usage to these sites along with improving safety and would have to meet stringent requirements at the planning application stage.
- There would be some short term disruption for pupils, parents and staff but the building work to add additional accommodation beginning in 2012 would be managed to cause minimal disruption to the school during term time making the best use of school holidays. Temporary accommodation at the school would provide additional space in the short term whilst building work takes place.

The Council believes that this proposal provides the best solution to addressing and meeting the long term educational and social needs of the children in the area. The

reasons for recommending this proposal as detailed above far outweigh any disadvantages.

Effect on Standards and School Improvement

Under The Education and Inspections Act 2006 (EIA 2006) the LA has a duty to secure diversity in the provision of schools and increase opportunities for parental choice. Any proposals for school expansion must contribute to raising local standards of provision, lead to improved attainment for children and young people and meet the aspirations of parents. Proposals should also help every child and young person to achieve their potential in accordance with “Every Child Matters” principles.

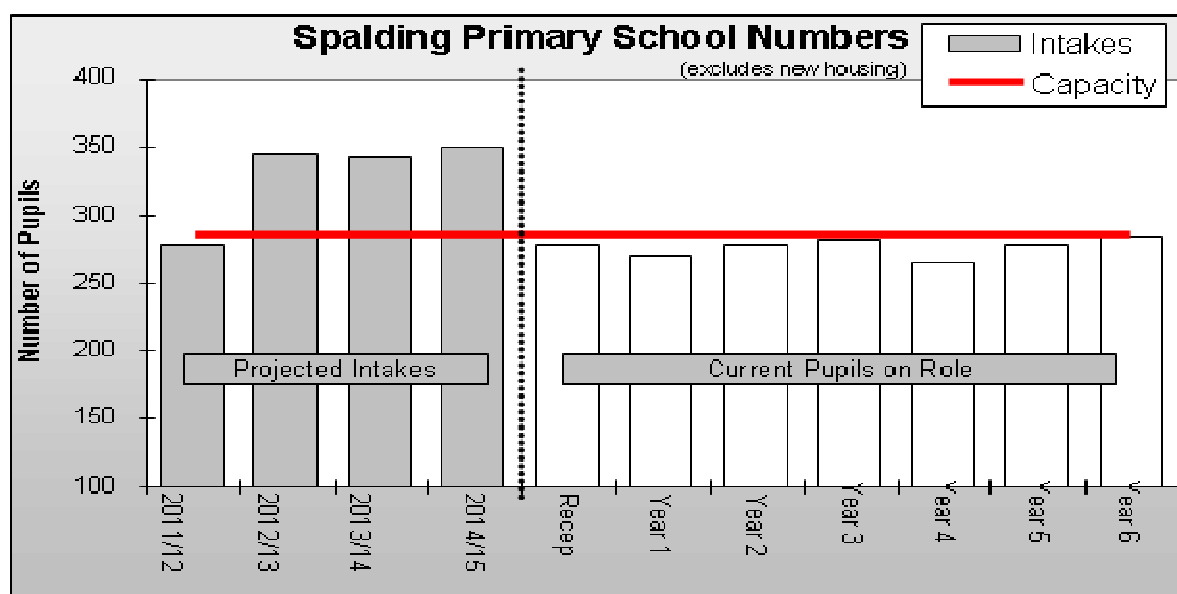
Based on the reasons for the proposal stated earlier the LA believes this proposal is the best option to maintain and improve standards and promote the fulfilment of each child’s potential whilst maintaining diversity and maximising parental choice in the area.

Need for places

For an expansion proposal to be approved there must firstly be evidence of the need for places such as a planned housing development or demand for provision although even where there is surplus capacity in an area a proposal may be approved if there is a strong case on parental preference or standards grounds.

National birth rates, mostly concentrated in towns and cities (urban areas), have been steadily rising in recent years. These increased births, combined with a rise in population of families from EU countries in some areas, are now starting to reach primary school age and are putting significant pressure on schools across the country where there is a shortage of Reception places.

Spalding is one of the urban pressure points in Lincolnshire where there will be a shortage of available places if capacity in the town is not increased. The graph below shows the known pupil numbers across all Spalding primary schools of children aged 0-3 that will be needing primary places in the years ahead (darker columns), compared to existing pupil numbers aged 4+ already in Spalding schools (lighter columns).



Based on information from the Office of National Statistics, combined with local NHS birth data, there is expected to be a long term requirement of at least 30 additional places per year group in Spalding. A permanent sustainable solution is needed to accommodate these extra children. The proposed solution is to expand Spalding Primary School from its existing capacity of 420 to 630. This will increase its intake (Published Admission Number – PAN) from 60 to 90 per year group. The aim is to have the new facilities ready for the September 2013 intake and for temporary accommodation to be in place to take 30 additional reception pupils from September 2012.

Secondly, the Government is committed to ensuring that every parent can choose an excellent school for their child and therefore the wishes of parents should be taken into account in the planning and management of school estates. There is a presumption that proposals to expand successful and popular schools should be approved and only be turned down if there is compelling objective evidence that such expansion would have a damaging effect on standards overall in the area. The proposal is based on phasing in the increase to 90 for each Reception intake over a number of years. This will help maintain pupil numbers at other Spalding schools preventing any imbalance and enabling schools to manage their staffing and teaching structures so avoiding any negative impact on standards. The proposal will enable Spalding Primary School to eventually have three year group classes and also provide an opportunity to address condition, suitability and sufficiency issues with their buildings, both of which are likely to lead to an improvement in standards.

Further, in the consideration of an expansion proposal, accessibility and travel implications must be considered. Facilities should be accessible by being close to those who will use them. A proposal should not unreasonably extend journey times or increase transport costs, or result in too many children being prevented from travelling sustainably due to unsuitable routes. This proposal will provide additional school places in the Wygate area of Spalding and will avoid the likelihood of children being offered places at villages outside of Spalding with increasing transport costs and car usage and also concerns over the impact of this extra travelling time on children.

Funding and Land

Proposals should not be approved conditionally upon funding being made available and there should be confirmation that any land, premises or capital required to implement the proposal will be available. Should this proposal to expand be approved capital investment will be provided and any revenue implications will be financed by the Dedicated Schools Grant.

Following an expansion proposal school premises must continue to meet the requirements of The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 including minimum areas of team playing fields to which the school should have access. The design at the school will seek to avoid using any areas which would impact on either the amount of team games areas or playing field. Land has been secured on the nearby Wygate Park housing development to ensure that sufficient team games and playing field areas are provided for a school of this size.

Related Proposals

This proposal is not related to any other proposals which have, are, or are about to be published.

Special educational provision

The LA will continue to provide suitable provision for children with special educational needs with the expansion proposal giving the opportunity for the provision of enhanced facilities.

What will happen now?

Any person or organisation may object to or make comments on this proposal by sending them to Provision Planning, Children's Services, Lincolnshire County Council, County Offices, Newland, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN1 1YQ or by emailing provisionplanning@lincolnshire.gov.uk within the four week period commencing from the publication of the Statutory Notice on 2 February 2012.

At the close of the statutory representation period on 1 March 2012, responses will be collated and analysed and a final report will be presented to the Executive Councillor for a decision on the future of the school in February. The representation period is the final opportunity for people and organisations to express their views about the proposals and ensure that they will be taken into account by the decision maker.