



# Baston CE Primary School

25<sup>th</sup> April 2016

Ms A Cant  
Lincolnshire County Council  
Planning Department  
Unit 4  
Witham Park House  
Waterside South  
Lincoln LN5 7JN

Dear Anne

Please see below our response to the Baston Parish Council's letter to you dated 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

1. *That the school is well aware of an ongoing parking problem caused by parents' vehicles in the vicinity of the school entrance at drop-off and pick-up times on school days, and to permit the school to refuse entry onto the school grounds by parents' vehicles will remove one potential aspect of a workable traffic management plan that might otherwise include permitting limited access to some parents, specifically only those resident outside of Baston, at specified times of the day.*

The first claim is that the school is well-aware of an on-going parking problem. We are aware that there have been some complaints from the local community about parents parking in the areas surrounding the school (very few of these have been brought directly to the school's attention) but our safeguarding visit reports have shown few parking problems (Appendix 1) in that we have found that the vast majority of vehicles have been parked in the Baskervilles car park or legally along roads with no restrictions.

There is a suggestion that 'a workable traffic management plan' can be achieved by encouraging more parents to bring their vehicles on to the school premises at drop off/pick up times. The school has never refused vehicular access on to the school site. The school promotes active lifestyles by encouraging families who can to walk – even if only a short distance from the public house next door.

The idea of allowing access to 'only those resident outside of Baston' could be considered a reasonable solution. However, when looking at the figures involved in this proposal it is easy to see that this would create a serious level of danger for the children. The school currently has 191 children and serves 141 families. From our analysis of postcode data, at least 71 of these families live over two miles from Baston CE School and therefore would not be expected to walk to school.

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2/... (cont.)

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committed to  
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development



Baston Church of England Primary School is situated in the Parish of Truesdale. Below is a breakdown of those children living within the Parish of Truesdale and those children living outside of the Parish who attend Baston Church of England Primary School. A new child has recently joined the school making our current number 191. The figures below were accurate at the time of publication:

Parish	Baston Pupils by Year Group							Totals
	R	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Truesdale	19	13	18	18	16	17	18	119
Others	11	11	12	12	14	6	5	71
<b>Totals</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>190</b>

The school serves a greater number of families from far further afield than perhaps local residents realise. These families have no other option but to drive to school.

The safety of our children is paramount and such a high number of vehicles on the school site dropping off and picking up children twice a day would create a serious hazard for the children.

The school site was designed and built in 1992 with only four classrooms (maximum capacity 120 pupils) and four teachers. The site had 10 parking spaces for parents because at this time the vast majority of pupils DID reside in the village of Baston itself. The 10 parking spaces for staff would have been considered more than sufficient provision. Over the last 25 years, the school has grown to seven classes with a maximum capacity of 210 pupils. Despite this great influx of children the physical site of the school has remained unchanged. We also now have seven full time teachers and the necessary body of support staff that comes with such growth. The car park has been re-marked for a clear space for disabled drivers and this has resulted in the overall number of spaces falling to just 18. The parking spaces on the school site are completely filled by staff on a daily basis. Within the current site constraints there are no longer any available parking spaces for parents.

2. *That the school's alternative traffic management plan is seriously flawed in that:*
  - a. *It relies heavily upon the continuing goodwill of the management of the nearby Baskervilles Hotel in unofficially permitting parents to park in the hotel patron's car park, permission that could be withdrawn at any time by a change of policy or a change of management.*

The school has had the on-going agreement with The Baskervilles Hotel for a period of at least five years. Over this time the management of the property has changed and, through good communication and strengthening relationships, we have managed to secure our parking agreement. The school accepts that this is not guaranteed to continue and as such it does not provide a perfect long-term solution. However, at this time we cannot see any reason why this should be removed.

- b. *It further relies upon parents exercising good parking judgement in Cardyke Drive, which they have so far consistently failed to do, a situation which also causes great inconvenience to residents of that street and to delivery, service and trade vehicles attempting to access the street in the course of their business.*

The school completes several 'safeguarding walks' across the school year and we have found during these visits that very few vehicles have ever been parked illegally or irresponsibly. As there are no parking restrictions in Cardyke Drive this is a difficult issue for

the school to tackle. That said, the headteacher of the school has reached out to parents on several occasions through letters and newsletters asking for parents to park courteously and safely in nearby areas with no restrictions. It could be argued that the drop off and pick up time slots are short (perhaps up to 15 minutes) and only twice a day. The school would hope that the community it serves should be happy for short periods of inconvenience if it safeguards the lives of its children.

- c. *It quotes the results of 'show of hands' classroom surveys regarding the number of children driven to school by their parents which greatly understate the extent of the parking problem and which are evidently not matched by reality.*

The school completes the 'Hands Up Survey' in accordance with the request from LCC for the data. It is acknowledged by the school that it may provide unreliable data because often a child (especially a four year old) cannot always reliably relay how he/she got to school.

We do, however go to great lengths to analyse the reliable data we have in school to seek the same information. Our safeguarding governor has spent a great number of hours analysing the postcodes of all children, which is how we know the real numerical data behind the number of families living outside of the village, as mentioned above.

3. *The existing parking situation is already the subject of discontent within the village:*

- a. *Residents of Main Street have taken measures to prevent parking on the grass verges, where vehicles had been restricting traffic flow and reducing sight lights thus increasing the risks to pedestrians crossing the road to access the school.*

We were made aware by the residents mentioned above that their reasons for placing tree stumps on their grass verge was out of concern for children's safety when crossing over the road. As far as we are aware, this measure had nothing to do with easing traffic flow in the village.

- b. *Residents of Cardyke Drive attended a recent Parish Council meeting en masse to request parking measures in their street.*

The school supports any application for parking restrictions at Cardyke Drive and would then continue to liaise with parents to park in accordance with those restrictions.

- c. *A resident of Pannell Court made representation to the council following an incident where a child was almost hit by a vehicle turning at speed.*

This is certainly an issue. There are no pavements at Pannell Court and the school understands that this is no longer a private road that can be controlled by residents. The school often asks parents to avoid parking in Pannell Court in its written communications.

- d. *Residents of Hadrian Drive (and streets accessed from it) have made representations regarding the numbers of vehicles parked approaching the junction with Main Street, making entry and exit unsafe.*

Safeguarding walks have shown that vehicles parked close to the junction of Hadrian Drive have always been parked within the legal limit. Again, with no designated restrictions, it would be unfair for the school to challenge this with those parking.

- 4. *School authorities have failed to engage with the community to address the existing issues, and chose not to consult on this current application prior to making it. No*

*representative from the school attended the Parish Council meeting at which this application was considered.*

The school has only directly received six concerns from families regarding parking. We conduct termly safeguarding walks and make it our business to engage with members of the community at these times. The school responded to a letter from the Parish Council (Appendix 2) back in September 2014 and received no response. This was unfortunate as the school expressed a desire to work with the Parish Council to come up with a shared solution for all parties.

It is not common practice for a representative of the school to be present at Parish Council meetings. The school was neither made aware of the date of the meeting nor invited to attend.

5. *We note that no Governor survey of parental parking in 2016 is included as input to the school's travel plan.*

Traffic Surveys are completed at regular intervals and in the case of needing to respond to any concerns from residents/members of the community about parking. Since only 6 complaints have ever been directly received, fewer surveys have been triggered. The traffic management plan was submitted in January 2016. Due to the school Christmas holiday, there was no opportunity to complete a survey. A recently dated 2015 survey was included. The school is unaware of any significant change in circumstances and considers that survey remains valid.

6. *Lincolnshire County Council and Lincolnshire Police both deny responsibility for addressing illegal/unsafe parking.*

This is not a point on which the school can comment. The school has never contacted LCC or Lincolnshire Police to address illegal/unsafe parking.

*The Parish Council suggests that the school should be required to address the issues caused to the community at large by adhering to its current planning requirement for allowing vehicle access to the school site, whilst mitigating the perceived risks of such access by implementing a traffic management plan to reduce the number of parents choosing to drive their children to school. The Parish Council is happy to work with the school to develop a comprehensive solution to this issue.*

The school already adheres to its current planning requirement for allowing vehicle access to the school site. We mitigate the perceived risks of such access by implementing a traffic management plan to reduce the number of parents choosing to drive their children to school.

We cannot find a better solution to lower the number of vehicles travelling to and from school due to the geographical location of the family home. There are at least 71 cars which have to drive to and from school as a matter of necessity.

In addition to our written response to the Parish Council objection the case officer has informed that there have been 4 objections and 1 letter of support.

The letter of support expresses concern about 'allowing any number of parents to drive up the school road during peak pick up and drop off times given the narrowness of the road and pavement'.

This support is welcomed and should be read alongside the information in my letter re Baston Parish Council about the amount the school has changed in the 25 years since the current site opened.

The individual letters of objection raise, collectively, the following points:

- *The school currently does not allow vehicles onto the site to park despite there being parking on site. The school should adhere to the planning restrictions and allow parents' vehicles into the school.*

The planning condition was written for a school in different circumstances to that operating now. Now that the school has grown as it has there are no spaces on site for parents and the traffic generated by more than double the number of parents (than when the school opened) would endanger the children.

- *They are fortunate that the pub allows use of its facilities for drop-off/pick-up but that does not stop irresponsible and dangerous parking by parents.*

We are extremely fortunate that they do and thank them for this. We continue to liaise with The Baskervilles Hotel in the hope that this arrangement can continue.

- *Vehicles park on Hadrian Drive within ten metres of the junction with Main Street. Parents cause severe congestion with their parked cars on Main Street and inside Cardyke Drive as a result of not being permitted to use the drop-off/collection point within the school grounds.*

Parents are permitted on site. They are also encouraged to find alternative safe means of transport/parking when bringing their children to school. If all parents drove on to the school site utilising the small turning circle and minimal on-site parking, it would almost certainly result in harm to the children on the site. It is the school's understanding that parents are not parking illegally in the streets around the school and we would support residents in applying for parking restrictions on the neighbouring streets, which make it clear to parents where they can and cannot park.

- *The school would have more support for their application if they took some responsibility for monitoring the parents' parking. The school is creating an unsafe environment for other road users and pedestrians and should not be allowed to continue.*

The school monitors parental parking as far it is able to through the school's Travel Plan and has made arrangements for parents to park in The Baskervilles Hotel car park.

- *The school should be working with the community and taking into consideration the feelings of and implications for local residents.*

The school wishes to actively work with the community and find arrangements that work for all parties and remain safe for the young and vulnerable users of the school site. The school would encourage any local residents with a potential problem to contact the school and discuss it directly with them.

Yours sincerely



**Rebecca Mills**  
Headteacher

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