



Wrexham County Borough Council

Post Consultation Report

Proposal to Increase the pupil Capacity at

Barker's Lane CP, Wrexham

Barker's Lane CP

Barker's Lane

Wrexham

LL13 9TP

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1. Introduction

Wrexham County Borough Council has recently completed a period of consultation in relation to the proposal to increase the pupil capacity at Barker's Lane CP. The consultation period began on **18 October 2018 and ended on 12 December 2018**.

The consultation has been carried out in accordance with the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 which requires the School Organisation Code 2013 to be issued to and give guidance to relevant bodies (Local Authorities, Governing Bodies).

This document will set out the steps taken during the formal consultation period, refer to findings obtained during the consultation and will aim to answer and tackle queries that have been put to the Authority.

2. Publication of Consultation

The consultation began with the bilingual publication of the Consultation Document on 18 October 2018 on the Council's website. Links to the documents were emailed to the full list of consultees. The detail below sets out the list of recipients, as guided by the School Organisation Code (2013), who received a copy of, or were directed to the Consultation Document during the consultation period.

List of Consultees

- The proposed maintaining authority Wrexham Council Borough Council (Executive Board).
- Other local authorities, including neighbouring authorities Flintshire County Council and Denbighshire County Council.
- The Governing Body of Barker's Lane CP.
- Wrexham Schools.
- Parents (and where possible prospective parents) carers and guardians, and staff members of Barker's Lane CP.
- The Welsh Ministers.
- Assembly Members.
- Members of Parliament.
- Estyn.
- Teaching and staff trade unions representing teachers and other staff at Barker's Lane CP.
- GwE.
- The Church in Wales/Diocese
- Wrexham Council's Transport Department.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner.
- Town Centre Community Councils.
- The Children and Young People's Partnership and The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships.

Consultees were invited to respond to the consultation by completing the consultation form provided, by emailing a dedicated email account or writing to the Education Department. Responses could be submitted electronically or in hard copy paper format.

The list provided above is not exhaustive. The School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 (Section 48) requires the Local Authority to consult with such persons as appear to them to be appropriate before considering the publication of any proposals.

3. Consultation Meetings

As part of the consultation process a communications campaign was carried out encouraging public engagement. A number of drop in sessions were held by Education Officers at Barker's Lane CP. Parents and interested parties were able to attend the sessions.

Venue	Stakeholder	Date	No. of Consultees Attended
Barker's Lane CP	Parents and Community	25 October 2018 8:45am – 9:30am	3
Barker's Lane CP	Parents and Community	25 October 2018 3:00pm – 4:00pm	6
Barker's Lane CP	Parents and Community	7 October 2018 5:00pm – 6:00pm	19

Further meetings were held at Barker's Lane CP where Local Authority Officers met with the Governing Body of the school and staff.

Venue	Stakeholder	Date	No. of Consultees
Barker's Lane CP	Staff of Barker's Lane CP	9 October 2018	All Staff
Barker's Lane CP	Governing Body	9 October 2018	Full Governing Body

All attendees of the various drop-in sessions were advised to provide feedback to the consultation. It was explained that there are several ways in which this communication could be made. Attached to the consultation document was a proforma. This could be completed and returned to the address indicated. Contact could also be made via email or letter.

It was also communicated that any responses at this stage were not treated as objections.

4. Consultation with Children

A bilingual children's version of the consultation document was published on Wrexham Council's website alongside the full consultation document.

During the consultation Local Authority Officers met with the School Council to discuss the proposals.

School	Stakeholder	Date	No. of Consultees
Barker's Lane CP	School Council	24 October 2018	10

During the school council meetings, the children were asked if they had seen copies of the children's consultation document and officers explained what the consultation was about. The children were encouraged to ask any questions and share ideas that they may have.

The following feedback was recorded on the day and the children were also asked if they could send their ideas and opinions to Wrexham Council via the school co-ordinators. It should be noted that the School Council did submit a formal response.

Feedback from School Councils:

Barker's Lane CP School Council – 24 October 2018

10 children from Year 1 through to Year 6

Initial Questions:

- Can you look at staff parking? They need a bigger place to park.
- If there are more children there will need to be more parking (parents) if another 20 or so cars are coming as it's already too busy.

The Headteacher explained that there is a lady coming to look at traffic and cars and how fast they are going after half term so this is already being looked at.

- Playtimes – we need to extend the field and yard so that we can still have playtimes.
- We might need more iPads and laptops so that it is fair and we don't have less things. We only have 15 iPads between two classes and it wouldn't be fair to have more children and not more iPads.
- I think we should have more Olympics on the field when we have PE. We have a sand pit and do long jump but we need more Olympics on it.
- We need more of everything if there are more children coming here.

All Children thought it would be a good idea to have more children come to the school. One little girl had to move closer to the school to get a place in reception. She hadn't got a place at nursery as she didn't live close enough. She thought it would be a good idea to let more children in. Another child had a cousin in a different year and some had younger brother or sisters.

- Can we have a bigger hall for dinner?
- If we pushed the tables closer together we might put more tables in there
- One child said she was having an extension at home and knew what we're doing.
- Can we ask for someone to cut the grass on the field? We need someone to cut it now.
- We need more things to do on the yard as pick up times are different and the little ones need to have something to do.

We Need...

More places to enter the school so we don't get flooded in one gate.

PE Equipment

Writing Equipment

More books, there aren't enough now for the children that are here.

More tables and chairs.

5. Consultation Feedback

During the course of the consultation period Wrexham County Borough Council received **27 responses** to the consultation document.

The table below demonstrates the preferred format of response used by stakeholders.

Format of Response	Number of Responses Received
Email/Letter	27
Total Received	27

Responses were received from the following stakeholders:

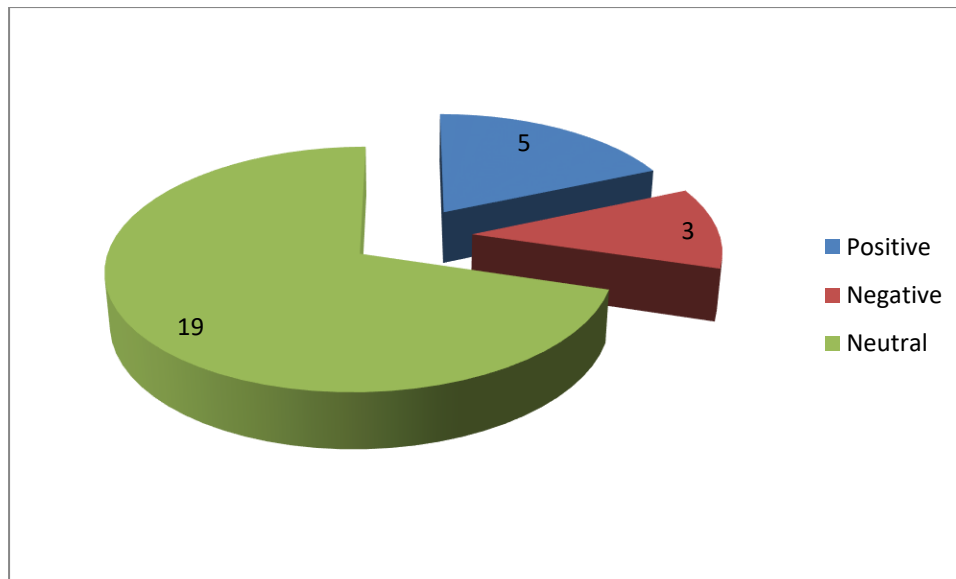
Parents/Prospective Parents	2
Residents	15
School Council	1 (a total of 10 children)
Governing Body	1
Councillors	1
Community Council	1
Estyn	1
MP	1
NASUWT Teaching Union	1
Unknown	3

All responses received are accessible for Councillors to view in full.

6. Parent/Governor & Community Feedback

Feedback from the consultation is summarised below:-

Positive Responses	5
Negative Responses	3
Neutral* Responses	19



*Respondee did not actively object to the proposal to increase pupil capacity at Barker's Lane CP, rather they raised concerns which are addressed within the report.

Themes from the responses have been collated and analysed as follows:

Theme	No of times occurred
Traffic/Parking	19
Pressures on Teaching Staff/More children in classes	2
After School Club noise level.	1

Theme	Local Authority Response
<p>Traffic/Parking</p> <p>'Each School day Barker's Lane becomes an obstacle course for residents. One side of the Lane has cars parked from top to bottom all day long'. Resident</p> <p>'With the intention to increase the number of children by fifty percent, (equivalent to one hundred children) would mean a fifty percent increase in the number of vehicles arriving in the same time frame, this would increase the problems dramatically, bringing the area already congested into total grid-lock' Resident.</p>	<p>Cars parked 'all day long' are likely to be staff as currently there is no staff parking on site. As part of the development the Local Authority propose to introduce parking on site ensuring adequate spaces for all staff. This will free parking spaces outside of the school premises for parents to drop off/pick up their children.</p> <p>A traffic survey was completed as part of the development with further recommendations that will be considered, some of which are outside of Local Authority control and relate to the behaviours of motorists.</p>

Transport Survey

A survey has been sent home with all current parents at Barker's Lane CP, the Local Authority undertakes this survey to support the site development by gathering as much information as possible from stakeholders.

Parking

It is recognised that parking issues at pick up and drop off times are an issue around almost every school within the County Borough. However, new proposals have always considered this issue and aim to mitigate the impact.

Should this proposal go ahead it is intended that a scheme is submitted for outline planning permission and officers would consult with the planning authority to ensure that a suitable solution is developed in order to minimise any impact caused.

Initial feasibility studies have been carried out by education officers and architects and the following mitigation measure will be considered.

- Introducing parking spaces on site.

	<p>Planning permission would not be approved without ensuring all relevant officers such as Highways were satisfied that the design with mitigations were both appropriate and sufficient to allow the project to proceed.</p>
<p>Class Sizes 'The pressures on teachers and pupils at present and the plans which are ahead by the council to build more houses in and around Wrexham should surely have been enough to prompt a no vote to more children in classes the plans should be to build more schools and other.....there are no resource as it is no no no to bigger classes' respondent.</p>	<p>There is no intention for there to be any classes of above 30 pupils as per the Foundation Phase Class Size Regulations. The intention of the development is to reduce class sizes throughout Barker's Lane and other town centre schools. Wrexham has carefully considered the gradual increase at the school ensuring sufficient time to plan for upcoming cohorts.</p> <p>The decision on class structure remains a decision for the School and the Governing Body.</p>
<p>Afterschool Club 'as the number of pupils increase more will want to use the after school club even though it is at its full capacity now and also the increase of numbers in after school club would increase the noise level'. Cllr.</p>	<p>This proposal does not include provision for after school club. The decision to expand provision would be made by the Governing Body or the local provider.</p>

There were a number of questions and comments received that are **not directly connected to the current consultation** on increasing the capacity at Barker's Lane CP

Theme	No of times occurred
Red Tarmac Area	2
Building Works: Concern about draft plans/Object to Car Park Entrance	8
Building Works: Concern about draft plans/Siting of MUGA	2
Building Works: Removal of Hedge to Boundary	2
Environment/Litter	2
LDP/Housing Developments	3
Play Pledge	1

Theme	Local Authority Response
<p>Red Tarmac Area</p> <p>the red tarmac which is on the corner of Lisburne Grove/ Chelston Avenue, is in badly need of repair, due to parents parking on there when they drop off / pick up their children from school. They should not be parking on there. If the proposal goes ahead more vehicles are going to be parked on the red tarmac and blocking residents drive ways. I would appreciate it, if this could be looked at within the plans so that parents can no longer park on the red tarmac'. Cllr</p>	<p>We can confirm that the 'red tarmac' area which is on the corner of Lisburne Grove/Chelston Avenue is not owned by the Local Authority or the Highways Department. We cannot therefore consider this area as part of the development.</p>

<p>Building Works</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Siting of car park Removal of hedge to boundary Siting of MUGA <p>‘For the Teachers and staff to gain access to the car park and service vehicles to gain access to the school they will have to use Lisburne Grove, as stated above this is a narrow cul-de-sac road and totally unsuitable for this purpose and will bring further problems to an already congested and potentially grid-locked area’. Resident ‘We are also concerned about the siting of the MUGA. It is directly opposite number 16 Lisburne Grove, who will have views of it every time they open their front door, or look out of the window. It is also far too close to numbers 18 to 24, and .. number 14. Because the school has large grounds it should be straightforward to reposition the MUGA so that it does not cause any problems for any of the residents’. Resident</p>	<p>Indicative site plans that were available at the drop in sessions illustrated the site could accommodate the increase in pupil numbers included in the proposal. It was made very clear that it was not a final design or layout and was not intended to be observed as such.</p> <p>Decisions on any design work would only be completed should the proposal be approved by the Executive Board after the Statutory Notice period. Plans would be subject to the planning process, thereby providing interested parties with an opportunity to support or challenge proposals at this stage.</p>
<p>Environment/Litter</p> <p>‘The majority of parents bring their vehicles to the school in the afternoon to pick up their children, and everybody wants to get as close as possible to the school gates, when the children come out, the air pollution as a result of exhaust emissions from the parents vehicles is at its highest, this situation will only be compounded when the exhaust emissions of a further fifty vehicles or more are added to the equation.</p>	<p>These are concerns that are outside the remit of this consultation, but the comments/requests have been passed to the relevant department for their consideration.</p>

<p>Also with regards to environment issues, a growing trend is emerging of people leaving their litter on the roads and footpaths close to the school, this could increase as the numbers arriving at the school increases, I would respectfully request the council to put in place an effective road and footpath cleaning schedule, as we do not have one at the moment'. Resident</p>	
<p>LDP/Housing Developments 'I have also begun to receive representations from residents who are concerned about the plans for new houses off Dean Road, Cefn Road and Holt Road. Residents are very concerned about additional pressures on schools and roads in this part of Wrexham, as a result of all the new housing. If children from these areas are also trying to access Barker's Lane, this could result in a further increase in traffic. It may also use up the extra places created originally with the intention of reducing class sizes. I believe that the Council needs to consider the whole of this side of Wrexham in its plans'. MP</p>	<p>Future housing developments are outside the remit of this consultation, however we can confirm that the Education Department is working very closely with the Planning Department to ensure there is adequate education facilities to meet future demand. Should strategic sites be developed the expectation is that pupils generated from these developments would access a school on site, which would also reduce traffic burden across the town centre.</p>
<p>Play Pledge 'The Community Council recommends to Wrexham County Borough Council that in carrying out its Play Pledge and as part of this consultation, it gives serious consideration to enabling "Open Access" to the school grounds outside School hours to ensure safe play for the children who reside in the Borrass Park Ward, and to enable improved access for children to the public realm' Community Council</p>	<p>This request is outside the remit of this consultation, but the comment/request has been passed to the School for their consideration.</p>

It should be noted that there were many **positive comments** made, a sample of which are included below:-

'the increase to 45 in nursery and reception places would result in an overall reduction in class sizes which can only be beneficial for a child's education'.

'our only reservation about Barkers' Lane up until now was in the single class entry as our daughter is extremely sociable and would benefit from a wider group and this would ultimately prepare her better for secondary'.

'the planned increase seems likely to reduce the possible stress of being refused a place at our first choice nursery school, something that others have talked about previously. In recent years, there has been an increase in demand for such places and I commend both the school and WCBC for planning to address this with the proposed increase' Parent/Prospective parent

In Summary

The majority, 19 of the 27 representations received during the consultation period, **18 October 2018 to 12 December 2018**, were neutral to the proposal, not actively objecting rather raising concerns which we have addressed in the report. A further 5 representations were in support of the proposals.

7. ESTYN Feedback

Estyn response to the proposal from Wrexham County Borough Council to increase the pupil capacity at the Barker's Lane Community Primary School from 210 to 315 from 31 August 2020

Introduction

This report has been prepared by Her Majesty's Inspectors of Education and Training in Wales.

Under the terms of the School Standards and Organisation (Wales) Act 2013 and its associated Code, proposers are required to send consultation documents to Estyn. However Estyn is not a body which is required to act in accordance with the Code and the Act places no statutory requirements on Estyn in respect of school organisation matters. Therefore as a body being consulted, Estyn will provide their opinion only on the overall merits of school organisation proposals.

Estyn has considered the educational aspects of the proposal and has produced the following response to the information provided by the proposer and other additional information such as data from Welsh Government and the views of the Regional Consortia which deliver school improvement services to the schools within the proposal.

This consultation proposal is from Wrexham County Borough Council. The proposal is to permanently increase the pupil capacity at the Barker's Lane Community Primary School from 210 to 315 from 31 August 2020.

Summary/ Conclusion

It is Estyn's opinion that the proposal is likely to at least maintain the current standards of educational provision in the area.

Description and benefits

The proposal sets out clearly the need for additional nursery and pupil places arising from a sustained growth in demand for pupil places across the fourteen schools in the town centre area of Wrexham. The proposal explains how the demand for pupil places means not all parents are able to have their children placed in their first choice school.

The proposal clearly sets out the local authority's assessment of current capacity for expansion in each of its town centre primary schools. This data shows that many schools are at or nearly at their full capacity. As Barker's Lane has the capacity to increase the size of its building in order to increase pupil numbers, it is reasonable for the local authority to suggest this is a good site for expansion. By creating the additional spaces in this school the local authority expects the other town centre schools to benefit from a more even spread of pupils, thus potentially reducing the numbers in each class to below 30.

The proposal appropriately considers the advantages and disadvantages associated with the expansion of the school, and the implications for other local schools. Increasing the Barker's Lane site to accommodate the additional demand alleviates the need to use temporary accommodation in other schools and avoids possible overcrowding at these alternative sites. The conclusions that the additional places will reduce pressure on other schools and enable more parents to access places at Barker's Lane, are consistent with the detail in the proposal.

This proposal is unlikely to impact on Welsh medium pupil numbers, and Welsh medium education. The need to increase capacity within the Welsh medium sector is acknowledged in this proposal, and a strategy to meet those needs are set out in another document.

The proposal reasonably suggests that there will not be a detrimental impact on home to school transport, rather the impact may be beneficial as more pupils will be able to access their nearest school places. Also there is unlikely to be a detrimental impact on pupils with special educational needs (SEN). The current local authority arrangements for such pupils will automatically apply.

The proposal identifies the impact the expansion of the school will have on staffing levels, and suggest this will be addressed as and when necessary as the capacity expands. The proposal could be strengthened through identifying the capacity benchmarks that may trigger the need for additional staff, and the financial implications and how these are offset by increased pupil funding, as this has not been set out.

Educational aspects of the proposal

The proposals sets out clearly how the school will increase capacity year on year, through increasing the number of places in the nursery and foundation phase in year 1. The increase in numbers will then feed through the school on an annual incremental process from 2020, leading to phased expansion of the school over the succeeding years. This should not represent a risk to the school and its education provision.

The proposal considers the likely impact of the new school on standards, provision and leadership by to the Regional Consortium's categorisation of the school. The most recent inspection of the school by Estyn in 2016, evaluated the school's current performance to be 'Good', with the school's prospects for improvement as: 'Good'. The local consortium categorises the school as green, which is 'A highly effective school which is well run, has a strong leadership and is clear about its priorities for improvement'. The local authority has categorised the building stock as 'Grade A', which means the quality of buildings are 'good', and are 'performing as intended and operating efficiently'. This information supports the proposer's reasonable claim that Barker's Lane should be able 'maintain and continue to improve the current standard and quality of education within the area'.

8. Executive Board Decision

Wrexham County Borough Council Executive Board will meet on **12 March 2019** to discuss the consultation for the proposal to increase the pupil capacity at Barker's Lane CP.

The Executive Board will be asked for approval to continue to the **Statutory Notice** for determining the increase in pupil capacity at Barker's Lane CP. This consists of a 28 day formal Objection Period whereby any objections to the proposal must be made in writing. Following this the Local Authority will return to the Executive Board with an objection report to determine the final decision.