

Reigate Parish School: Proposed Expansion Q&A

Introduction

Thank you to all staff, residents and families who have submitted comments and questions relating to the proposal to expand Reigate Parish Infant School. Based on your comments and questions so far, we have collated a set of frequently asked questions that should provide additional clarification on key issues.

Background

The current consultation is relating to the proposal to expand Reigate Parish Infant School to a Primary School (increasing the intake from 180 to 420 over four years). The consultation regarding any new buildings/refurbishment is a separate planning consultation process. The two processes are intricately related, but they need to be conducted at slightly offset phasing in order to meet statutory deadlines and to ensure no additional financial risk is incurred.

Even if the current consultation to expand Reigate Parish Infant School to 420 children is approved, the expansion cannot practically take place unless the Planning Consultation (to add new buildings/refurbish existing buildings/ parking/trees/traffic) is also approved. Similarly, we would not build an extension/refurbish the school if additional children were not going to be admitted.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Communication and Decision Process

- Who has pushed for the expansion of the school?
- What is the impact on the local area if the school is not expanded?
- Has the decision been finalised?
- Is Planning Consent approved?
- Who has been included in the initial consultation to expand?
- Have other schools been considered for expansion in the area?

As you know from living in Reigate there is a shortage of places at Infant and Junior ages. Seven months ago Surrey County Council approached the school to explain that the majority of schools in the area had already expanded and asked if the Governors would consider increasing to a Primary School. Dovers Green School is currently expanding to pick up much needed Infant places. After extensive consideration and visits to other schools that have increased in size recently, the Governors decided to agree to the Consultation. This initial thinking was done by the Governors and the SLT. If the Consultation process ends with the Governors agreeing to the school expanding, Surrey would proceed to the planning stage. If both parts are agreed by the Governors and Surrey, this would mean Reigate Parish Church School expanding to a Primary School, starting with year 3 in 2016.

The consultation process involves two parts, Educational Consultation and Planning Consultation. The process the Governors are undertaking at the moment is the Educational Consultation; the Planning Consultation will then take place.

2. Building Size and School Capacity

- How many additional pupils will be added to the school?
- How many additional classes will be included?
- Will other areas of the school be expanded?
- How will playtime and lunchtime accommodate the expanded number of children?
- Does the build have any impact on existing school budgets?

The proposed expansion is for Reigate Parish Infant school to grow to a Junior School. This is an additional 240 pupils. This will mean that from 2016, parents will have the choice to keep their child at Reigate Parish or to apply as usual for a year 3 place at one of the four local schools that have a year 3 intake. These four are Priory, Sandcross, Salfords and Earlswood.

We have seen some preliminary designs that propose a state of the art, purpose-built Junior block. The block will house the additional eight Junior classrooms and one Infant classroom. Each classroom would include integrated technology and class library. The hall extension means that one year 2 classroom will be in the new block, as the dance studio will have limited natural light, great for a dance studio, not a classroom. The new proposals also include a hall extension, dance studio, AstroTurf, group rooms, larger offices and staff room.

As with other primary schools we would look to stagger playtimes to accommodate a range of different ages and styles of play. Effective timetabling and staffing will ensure that between 12:00 and 1:30pm all children will have their lunch and play. Some children will choose to attend a range of lunchtime clubs on offer. We remain committed to actively considering, discussing and seeking how we can broker an agreement or arrangement to use the facilities in our immediate local community for lunchtime and PE. Please wait to hear more when we have confirmation.

The leadership team has already started thinking about what the new KS2 might look like, using their extensive experience in Junior and Primary Schools. For us it would be a privilege to continue to work in partnership with you and your child(ren). We know what "Outstanding" looks like and we would continue to ensure that this was planned in very carefully.

The new building would generate "growing schools funding" which means additional money to pay for the staffing and resources required for Key stage 2 it would not impact on the current budget.

3. Expansion logistics and Building Works

- How would you limit the impact of the building works?
- What steps will be taken to ensure my children's access to activities will continue during building works?
- How will you continue to keep my child safe during building works?
- Will breakfast club and afterschool clubs remain in place during works?
- How long will building work take?

The safety of the children on site will always be the priority.

If the consultation is successful and planning successful, we have been advised that building work would need to start in January at the latest to be completed by September. We are unable to specify exactly what construction work will be required until the Design Phase. This will need to take place both during term time and in the school holidays. Work that may cause major disruption e.g. hall, is usually programmed in consultation with the school for periods when the disruption can be avoided / minimised.

During the Planning Consultation, stakeholders will be able to give their views. The AstroTurf would also be the first thing completed so the children could have access to an outdoor area during the construction period.

We have a commitment to working parents and would accommodate breakfast club in the hall for as long as possible, relocating to a classroom when needed. The AstroTurf and hall would be used in the same way for clubs.

4. Admission and Impact on other schools in area

- Will sibling priority remain at Reigate Priory?
- Can parents still choose the Junior School of their choice or will the council introduce new criteria?
- How will the percentage of Faith places be managed?
- How will Secondary School admissions be managed?

We would love it if all families chose to stay with us, but are realistic that older siblings and a “known path” will see some families continue to move to Reigate Priory in year 3. We will do our best to convince you to stay with us!

Extensive discussion with Admissions has exacted this statement:

“The proposal to extend Reigate Parish in to an all through primary school will have no impact on the ability of parents to apply for a Year 3 place at Reigate Priory or indeed any other school with a Year 3 PAN. Parents can still apply for Year 3 places at other schools and will be considered alongside other applicants according to the published admission criteria for those schools. The law gives parents the right to make a preference for a school and this applies whether or not a child is already in school.

For 2016 admission, Reigate Priory will continue to give priority to those children who have the school as their nearest school ahead of those who do not. When assessing a child's nearest school for the initial intake to Year 3, only schools with a Year 3 PAN will be taken into account. In this way, as Reigate Parish will not have a Year 3 PAN, it will not be considered in the assessment of nearest school. Therefore the proposal to expand Reigate Parish into an all through primary school will have no direct impact on the success or otherwise of parents' applications for other schools at Year 3.

Admission arrangements for each school must be determined every year. In this way, whilst the admission arrangements for all schools have now been determined for 2016, it is not

possible to say at this stage whether changes will be introduced for any schools in 2017 or beyond. However any proposals to change admission arrangements must undergo formal consultation for at least 6 weeks between 1 October and 31 January. As such if changes were proposed parents would have an opportunity to submit their views. Once determined, parents may also submit an objection to the Schools Adjudicator if they believe that the admission arrangements that have been determined are unlawful or not compliant with the School Admissions Code.” Claire Potier, Principal Manager Admissions and Transport Strategy

The admissions criteria for the school will stay 50% foundation places and 50% open places.

As with good practice in all primary schools we would support parents in their Secondary School of choice. Admissions criteria for our local Secondary Schools would need to be met.

5. Traffic and Parking

- What would happen to parking on the road?
- Will there be increased traffic during pick-up and drop-off times?
- What would the impact on road users and pedestrians be?
- Will school times be impacted or changed to accommodate Junior learning?

Safety in and around our school is our number one concern. We are talking to Surrey about increasing parking inside the school for staff so as not to affect parking on the road. We encourage all parents and carers to walk, scoot or cycle to school as they do at the moment.

Consideration for staggered start and finishing times, extensive clubs (before and after school) and “drop zones” are all ways to limit this. We will also still need to consider start and finish time of other local schools whilst we have siblings going through and by year 5 and 6 a lot of children are walking to school by themselves.

The Planning Consultation is the time for parents and other stakeholders to raise questions about parking and traffic.

6. School Standards, Class Sizes and Resources

- How will you keep the sense of community friendliness you currently have?
- How would you ensure smooth transition to a primary school?
- How will you maintain delivering an “Outstanding” education?
- Will there be an Extended After School Club?

We know that we are viewed as a nurturing, caring and “Outstanding” school with our Christian values at the heart of everything we do. Our school values are essential to us and as such would be woven into all aspects of KS2. The four year transition to a full and thriving primary school would be very carefully managed and communicated. The School Leadership Team are very experienced and have had previous experience of “growing” a Primary School.

All schools are measured against OSFTED criteria and from September 2015, we would be inspected under the following headings:

- Overall effectiveness
- Effectiveness of leadership and management
- Quality of teaching, learning and assessment
- Personal development, behaviour and welfare
- Outcomes for children and learners
- The effectiveness of Early Years.

These headings make up all our current work at Reigate Parish and would continue to do so. Our very strong and experienced leadership team would continue to work with Governors and local schools to maintain the excellent progress that all pupils make.

As a through Primary School we would be keen to also set up an Extended After School Club.

Additional Questions and Considerations

We will update the FAQs as further questions and considerations are raised by the Staff, Parents and Community. In order to capture these please send them to the following e-mail address: shapingthefuture@reigate-parish.surrey.sch.uk

The opportunity to discuss your concerns will be provided during a number of planned meetings at which we can also provide a continued update on the progress of the proposal. The first meeting is Tuesday 9th June at 8:00pm at Reigate Parish School.