



**Formal Response to Haringey School Place Consultation 19 January - 24 February 2015**  
**Submission for and on behalf of Muswell Hill Primary School**

If you would like to feedback further to the Full Governing Body please email:

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**Question 1: Haringey needs to provide at least two forms of primary school entry of high quality value for money school places in the Muswell Hill area. Please set out your proposal for achieving this.**

Re-build and expansion of Muswell Hill Primary School

*The parents / carers, staff, senior leadership and Governing body of Muswell Hill Primary School propose that Muswell Hill Primary School should be re-built as a FOUR form entry school.*

Why do we believe that this is the best outcome for Haringey?

- a) Muswell Hill Primary is an outstanding primary school. Our core values are Joy, Discovery and Diversity. The school is mostly a single story pre-fabricated building occupying a large level site in the heart of the community both physically and metaphorically with our strong community ethos and active Staff Parent Association.
- b) The school is well established, perennially oversubscribed and enjoys dedicated leadership which is both challenged and supported by a pro-active Governing body. Our Ofsted [outstanding] was in 2006 with a further inspection in 2010 maintaining that grade. A more recent LEA inspection in June 2014 commented:

“Key Strengths:

- There is a clear vision for the school which is supported by all stakeholders
- The new Headteacher and the subsequent changes in the leadership structure have refocused the school on the monitoring and raising attainment agenda with all leaders knowing their roles and responsibilities within this agenda
- The SEF [Self Evaluation Form] feeds into the school plan and is part of a very clear cycle
- The quality of teaching staff, the engagement they have with the pupils and the learning environments they create
- The involvement and engagement of the Governors in supporting and developing the school
- The pupils who are polite, engaged and wanting to learn and participate in school life”

- c) The school has three key issues which endanger its medium viability
  - i. **Property.** The School fabric and facilities were constructed in 1968/69 with a 30 year life expectancy. They are now over 45 years old. In a number of significant respects, the school buildings and equipment have exceeded their useful working lives. As a

result, there are fundamental issues that go with the ongoing functionality of the fabric and installations. Most of the M&E installations and services are now becoming increasingly prone to problems and inefficiencies that results in the school finding that a disproportionate amount of time and income is being diverted to the upkeep of the property. This places a strain on overall school finances.

The condition of our School premises is the single biggest issue that is raised by our parents / carers and staff. A full survey of the fabric of the school, including M&E equipment has been carried out by CBRE, which has highlighted that, in addition to the ongoing regular maintenance schedule, the school needs substantial capital investment on

- New electricity supply
- Re-plumbing
- Up to date fire alarm system
- New lighting, including emergency lighting
- Re-wiring
- New heating system
- IT infrastructure

We believe that the building is increasingly restricting our ability to provide the type of education that the children in our care aspire to. Although problems are well masked by a dedicated staff ruthlessly focusing on what we can achieve; we are none the less restricted and can only see the situation deteriorating without investment.

- ii. **Income.** The school's intake area is increasingly attractive to young families. This is fuelling residential development and the growing population that is increasing demand for primary education. The net result for Muswell Hill Primary is high demand for places, low mobility and low deprivation scores. All these factors limit the school's budget. On per pupil income, we rank 58<sup>th</sup> of 61 within Haringey and given the increasing demands of our property, the school is reliant upon SPA funding to enhance our education offering. Expanding the school roll, and the economies of scale that follow, will help to fund additional necessary education resources for all our pupils.
- iii. **Catchment.** Muswell Hill Primary is proud to be a community school, however we are oversubscribed with a 2014 intake area of 382 meters. This will be dramatically reduced as a result of the number of residential units being developed inside this small catchment [ex Raglan Hotel, ex Offices opposite, LCCCP adjacent, Land on Muswell Hill, ex-Library]. Inevitably our ability to serve our diverse community will be reduced dramatically as our catchment shrinks. Many of our parents / carers believe that local schools are for local people and without expansion we will not be in a position to deliver for our community.

A number of options have been explored [doing nothing, bulge class, expansion via portacabin classrooms, complete re-build]. The only option that meets both the school's medium term objectives and Haringey's desire for high quality value for money school places would be a re-build with all 60 additional places being made available to the whole community. We also believe we have sufficient space for innovative use in order to provide wider and better *extended day care*, a *nursery* as well as allow for *income generation* for the school.

- d) Whatever decision is taken significant capital investment will be required in the near term to keep the current building functional and safe. At some future date Haringey will need to address the fundamental point that the current structure and fabric of the building will negatively impact learning. All these costs can be off set against the investment of a re-build and expansion. Significant funds are also accruing to Haringey via Section 106 obligations within the Muswell Hill area; these should also be directed to offset costs of a re-build. In fact some S106 money is specifically earmarked for education purposes. Expansion will help give the school a budget that will drive even better results and learning. Re-build will reduce maintenance costs and allow more precious resources to flow into teaching and learning. Imaginative use of school grounds could open up new income streams to augment the education budget and provide for wider community facilities.
- e) School grounds are more than sufficient to support a larger intake; indeed if we were to build a multi-storey school, play space could actually be increased as a result of a re-build. In addition, the school grounds could be extended temporarily, or permanently, further into The Grove where a small parcel of little used land could readily be incorporated.

The Senior Leadership team at the school together with the Governing body are ambitious and support this project. Meetings have already taken place with parent / carers in order to assess their appetite for investment and expansion. 61 families attended meetings on 12/13<sup>th</sup> of February: 95% supported some form of re-build, with 60% happy to consider expansion to FOUR-form entry subject to more information on:

- A clear plan outlining how construction will be managed together with continued excellent education
- How to ensure preservation of our cherished school ethos as the school expanded
- How we could expand the school and yet retain the small community feel [careful architecture]

By openly communicating and sharing with the parent / carer community already, the School Leadership and Governing body is demonstrating that there is both understanding and support for change. The status quo of aging facilities, low income per pupil and a reducing catchment is increasingly unacceptable to all stakeholders. Investment, with the associated expansion, is seen as the best [and for some the only] way forward.

## **Question 2: Do you have any further comments?**

The largest local building development is at St Luke's Hospital N10. This development is expected to add 98 children to local school rolls. The development is 0.6 miles from Muswell Hill Primary – walkable in 10 minutes along the pedestrian Parkland Walkway. Further planning developments have been approved with the current school's catchment – all mean that Muswell Hill Primary will continue to be oversubscribed with a shrinking catchment unless investment and expansion is supported.

Other local schools have already been expanded / had significant capital investment [Coldfall, Tetherdown, Rhodes Avenue, Eden], some are too far from the main local building developments to impact [Bounds Green, St Martin of Porres] and others deemed less than suitable [Our Lady of Muswell, St James'].

**Only Muswell Hill Primary has the need, the space and the appetite for expansion.**