

11th June 2019

Dear Parent/ Resident

Future Expansion of Melksham Oak Community School

Background

Melksham Oak School needs to expand because of a growing primary school population and new housing being developed in the town. Melksham Oak School is the only secondary school serving the Melksham community area and converted to an Academy in April 2015. There were 2,370 houses identified in the Wiltshire Core Strategy to be built in the Melksham community area. The remaining housing is predicted to generate a further 300 - 380 secondary aged pupils. Although there is a level of surplus currently it is anticipated expansion of Melksham Oak School will be required.

2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
1260	1260	1260	1260	1260	1260	1260	1260	1260	1260
1197	1275	1380	1445	1520	1550	1578	1544	1522	1487
63	-15	-120	-185	-260	-290	-318	-284	-262	-227

Forecasts: Red figures show when school reaches/exceeds capacity, indicating that Melksham Oak School capacity will start to exceed its current capacity by the academic year 2020 and by a larger amount in 2021. Although forecast number will rise slightly above the proposed capacity of 1500 between 2023 to 2026, by 2027/28 the school is expected to have 1500 pupils.

The proposal

The White Horse Federation, School Governors and Wiltshire Council are seeking views on a proposal to expand the school from 1260 to 1500 students aged 11 to 16. This would start in 2021 with 48 extra students in each age group. The expansion will be funded by the Council from funds provided by the DfE and developer contributions secured by legal agreements as part of the planning process.

To enable the school to expand it is proposed to provide additional classrooms and learning spaces. Extra teaching and non-teaching staff would be recruited. In developing the plans further, the school will seek to maintain as much as possible of the external play space on site. The accommodation would be built to government requirements and guidelines.

Planning permission for the building works will be required should the proposal proceed.

The views of Melksham Oak School

We have discussed the proposal and support the principle of expansion so that we can help meet the need for school places in the local area. There are disadvantages as well as advantages to expansion and we summarise below some of these. We recognise that this list is not exhaustive and have left space on the attached questionnaire for you to add your views. Should the plans progress we will keep you informed at every stage.

Advantages

- The school would be better able to meet the needs of more of the local community who wish for their children to attend their local school.
- Additional places would be available for children living nearby
- Job creation and greater career progression opportunities for members of staff. The expansion of the school would provide further teaching posts and other related roles from 2021.
- Increased financial flexibility and resourcing for the school.
- New facilities for teaching and learning.

Disadvantages

- The school size will increase, but this will happen incrementally over five years. We will preserve a “family” feel so that students know the staff in their area and don’t feel lost.
- Some disruption may occur during the building works on the site and in the local area which would need to be managed very carefully.

Have your say

We need your views to assist us in making a decision on expansion.

IMPORTANT

There will be a meeting at the school to discuss the expansion proposal. This will be held on Thursday June 27 2019 at 5pm to 6:30pm.

What happens next?

- June 2019 consultation starts;
- July 2019 deadline for responses to the consultation
- September 2019 The White Horse Federation considers consultation responses about Melksham Oak School and decide whether or not to proceed. Update for parents on progress.

Please take time to complete the attached questionnaire so that we can get your feedback. In order for us to collate your responses, please return the questionnaire to school by midday on Monday 22nd July 2019

Melksham Oak School - feedback form

Please indicate your views on the proposal to expand Melksham Oak from September 2021 by ticking the most appropriate box.

Expansion of Melksham Oak would mean we could:	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
Improve educational facilities for students						
Help meet the growing demand for school places:						
Offer more places to students within the area						
I support the proposal:						

Please add other comments on the proposal (continue overleaf if necessary):

For your views to be counted, you must provide your full name and address. Only one response per person will be accepted. We will not pass on your personal information to a third party. Your views will be treated as strictly confidential.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode _____

I am a:

Parent/Carer Member of Staff Local Resident
Governor at School Prospective Parent Other, specify _____

Please return the questionnaire to school by midday on Monday 22nd July 2019. Boxes for completed forms will be placed in the school office reception area. Alternatively, please post to:
Melksham Oak School Expansion, Bath Road, Bowerhill, Melksham SN12 6QZ