

Proposed expansion of Baytree School



In September and October 2019, the Council asked for views on its proposal to expand Baytree School onto a second site. The expansion, if agreed, will take the school from operating as a single site school at The Campus in Weston-super-Mare, that currently caters for around 72 pupils, to a two-site school with a new provision for between 65 and 85 pupils on the new location, off Brookfield Walk in Clevedon.

The two sites should be able to offer around 120 school places across both locations. Subject to all approvals, the second site is scheduled to be available to pupils in the 2022/23 school year and officially open to new pupils from September 2023.



Baytree School is the only school in North Somerset designated to provide education to children with profound and complex learning difficulties. The school needs the capacity to offer more places to meet increasing demand. Statistics outlining the reasoning behind the proposed Baytree School expansion can be found in the following document: [Baytree consultation key facts and figures.pdf \[228.08 KB\]](#)

Where we are now

The consultation responses, in 2019, showed that whilst there was overwhelming support for the need for extra school places on a new site, there was considerable opposition from some to its proposed location in Clevedon. Working through the necessary steps to secure a site with planning approval has delayed the progress of the school expansion. This is because, before a decision is taken that will result in the allocation of places to named individuals, the Council needs to be certain that it can deliver the new site (if approved) and that the school will be ready to receive pupils. Only when there is a reasonable expectation of delivery can a decision to deliver the expansion be made.

Work to get to this point has included:

- Determining an application made to the Commons Registration Authority (North Somerset Council) in October 2019 for the land at Brookfield Walk to be designated as a **town and village green**. The application was rejected at a meeting of our Planning and Regulatory Committee in August 2020.
- Undertaking a **wider review of sites** (528 in all) across North Somerset to be able to satisfy the Local Planning Authority that 'special circumstances' exist that could enable the use of green belt land to be considered in a planning submission. The review determined that the Brookfield Walk site was the only location that could reasonably deliver a new building to best match the requirements for the school and the pupils it serves.
- Developing a robust **planning application** that could meet the statutory tests to enable planning consent to be considered. A planning application was registered in April 2020 and a **Notice of Decision granting consent** to the 'Erection of an up to 85 place, single storey Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties School (use class D1) for 3yrs to 19yrs including classrooms, recreation hall, dining hall, hydro-therapy pool and therapy rooms plus external play areas, parking and amenity space' was made on 6 September 2021.

- Overcoming designated green belt land concerns and **objections to the scheme from a statutory consultee**, in this case the Environment Agency, in line with regulations. These considerations meant that in both cases the application had to be referred to the Secretary of State (SoS) for Housing, Communities and Local Government. The SoS determined in January 2021 that he would not conduct a public inquiry to inform his decision and he has allowed the Local Planning Authority to make their own determination.
- Undertaking **further, local noise and air quality assessments** to meet the conditions of the planning consent provided by the Planning and Regulatory Committee on Thursday 16 September 2020. This included the collection of data over a 6-month period. Reports were submitted and approved in August 2021 as the air quality and noise mitigation met planning requirements.
- Securing a positive outcome when **appropriating the site**. This is the process that allows the Council to change the purpose for which it holds a piece of land. A decision was made by the Executive Member for Asset Management in July 2021 to allow this change to proceed.

Next Steps

Whilst there is no legal requirement to carry out consultations before publicising an intention to make changes to a school through a statutory process, it is right that the Council seeks the views of stakeholders to these changes before a public notice is published.

It has been almost two years since we completed the original consultation, so we need to check that the initial views of respondents have not significantly changed. Last time around

- 96% of those responding agreed there is a need to create more places for pupils with Severe and Profound Learning Difficulties. Slightly less than 2% opposed the recommendation and just over 2% had no view
- 93% of consultees agreed that to take more pupils, Baytree Special School needs to expand onto a second site. 4% of consultees disagreed with this proposal whilst 3% had no view

- When asked if the second site should be located within easy reach of most homes and within easy reach of the current Baytree Special School, 87% agreed with this proposal. Just under 5% disagreed and 8% had no view.
- Overall 90% supported the suggested proposals, 8% opposed the recommendations and just over 2% had no view.

The need for the school places is urgent, so this review is likely to overlap with work starting on site. Without planning approval to build or expand a school site, the process to enable extra school places and the publication of a notice confirming all approvals are or are expected to be in place cannot be easily progressed.

We expect many earlier responses will still stand, but we want to hear from those who may have changed their opinions since 2019. These may or may not influence the formal publishing of the public notice that will set out our firm proposals. This publication is expected later in the autumn/early winter of 2021.

Any final school organisation determination will be submitted to the Council's Executive Committee in the spring or summer of 2022 for a decision. Only the Church of England Diocese or the Roman Catholic Diocese have the right of appeal.

This additional short consultation will run from 20 September to 12 noon on 22 October 2021 inclusive. All responses should be returned either by email to School.Organisation@n-somerset.gov.uk or by post to School Organisation Officer, North Somerset Council, Castlewood, Tickenham Road, Clevedon, BS21 6FW by noon on 22 October 2021.

Response sheet

This document forms part of the extra consultation process that is being undertaken, following the time elapsed since originally asking whether there is a need for more school places for pupils with profound and complex learning difficulties. If so, extra places will be provided by the creation of a second site for the school in Clevedon. It is aimed at staff, parents/carers, pupils, governors and any other interested parties of this and other local schools.

Whilst regrettably we will not be responding to the replies to this consultation, all comments will be recorded publicly and will be available for scrutiny by decision makers before the final decision to progress to the publication of a statutory notice is considered by the Executive Member for Children's Services and Lifelong Learning.

Please complete the following sections:

Name: _____ Postcode: _____

We have explained why we need your personal details on page 9 of the document.

Please tell us about your relationship with the school (tick which one applies):

- Staff – teacher
- Staff – teaching assistant
- Staff – care staff
- Staff – admin/support staff
- Parent of a Pupil at Baytree school
- Pupil
- Other employee of the school
- Governor
- Member of the community – health, care, early years, etc
- Member of the wider school community
- Resident of Clevedon
- Neighbour of the Brookfield Walk site in Clevedon (within 1 mile)

Neighbour of the current school in Weston-super-Mare

Other (please specify):

1. Based on the information you have been given, do you agree there is still a need to create more places for pupils with profound and complex learning difficulties at Baytree School, now from September 2023 onwards?

Yes

No

No view

If you wish to expand your responses or if you have a child and he/she wishes to make any comments and/or observations on the proposals, please use the spaces below.

2. Based on the information you have been given, do you still agree the proposals to expand Baytree School, now from September 2023 onwards require the expansion and development on a second site?

Yes

No

No view

If you wish to expand your responses or if you have a child and he/she wishes to make any comments and/or observations on the proposals, please use the spaces below.

3. Based on the information you have been given, do you still agree the second site should be located within easy reach of most homes and within easy reach of the current Baytree School?

Yes

No

No view

If you wish to expand your responses or if you have a child and he/she wishes to make any comments and/or observations on the proposals, please use the spaces below.

4. Based on the information you have been given, do you still support the proposals outlined in this consultation to expand Baytree School, now from September 2023 onwards?

Yes

No

No view

If you wish to expand your responses or if you have a child and he/she wishes to make any comments and/or observations on the proposals, please use the spaces below.

5. Based on the information given, do you have any new concerns about equality impacts that you would like to raise?

Yes

No

No view

If 'yes', please specify.

6. Additional comments:

If you wish to make additional comments, please use the space below.

Your response will not be recorded unless it is signed and dated.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

North Somerset Council is registered with the Information Commissioner's Office for the purposes of processing personal data.

We are obliged under the law (The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013) to consult with interested parties over any proposed alterations to a school, like Baytree School, which is maintained by the local authority.

In responding to the consultation, you will be asked to provide some personal information:

- Your name
- Your postcode

We require this information so that we can determine if you have submitted more than one response as this may unfairly affect the outcome of the consultation. In processing your personal information for this purpose, the council complies with Article 6(1)(c) of the General Data Protection Regulation.

We are obliged to publish the consultation responses we receive. When we accept your response as not being a duplicate, we will electronically store the information you provide and destroy any original paper form. We will not store your name and postcode so that it will not be possible for anybody to attribute to you any comments you make. We may also remove any references you make in your response which could identify another living person.

The law gives you certain rights over the personal information we hold about you. We explain about this on our web site at <https://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/my-council/data-protection-foi/data-protection/dataprotection/> . Alternatively, you can search for "Rights of Data Subjects" on the home page www.n-somerset.gov.uk.

If you have any questions or concerns about the way we process your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer at DPO@n-somerset.gov.uk. Should you wish to make a complaint about the way we process personal information, you should contact the Information Commissioner through the web site of the Information Commissioner's Office at www.ico.org.uk.

Please return your completed responses by 12 noon on Friday 22 October 2021 to:

School Organisation Officer
North Somerset Council
Castlewood

Tickenham Road

Clevedon

BS21 6FW

Tel: 01275 888 888

Email: school.organisation@n-somerset.gov.uk