



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

*To follow in Jesus' footsteps, caring for each other when we work, play and pray.*

## School Expansion

### New Reception Class for 2014 and proposed additional permanent 1FE from Sept 2015

#### FAQ's

**Q: Why do we have to expand the school - surely it's better to leave things as they are?**

A: As a popular and heavily over-subscribed school we have a long waiting list for all of our classes and would like to offer more places to children in our local parishes and community particularly for the Catholic families. Furthermore, projections for Birmingham show that there is a need to provide additional primary school places to meet increased birth and migration rates. We are helping by creating additional Catholic places thus freeing places in local schools.

**Q: Who is asking the school to expand?**

A: The Local Authority initially approached the school because of the reasons outlined above. The Academy Committee, Board of Directors, the Diocese, myself (Principal) and all staff are immensely proud of the level of academic attainment achieved at our school as well as achieving "Outstanding" Ofsted reports - to give more children access to these achievements and successes is the right thing to do for the local parishes and community. The Diocese and its Board of Directors for the local parishes approached all Catholic schools to express interest in expansion in order to create additional Catholic provision. We are working closely with the local authority on developing the expansion project and there will be a period of consultation led by the authority before any further expansion to the school. A final decision on the permanent expansion of the school to include associated building works lies with the Secretary of State.

**Q: Will the expansion affect the quality of teaching my child will receive?**

A: Not at all. If anything it will continue to improve it. Class sizes will remain the same with no pupils asked to move classes during the academic year. The new intakes will form two new classes and we are in the process of recruiting new teachers who will supply the same high levels of quality teaching we expect. We are confident in maintaining the excellent provision which we currently offer. Birmingham has excellent primary schools of all sizes, some up to 6FE.

**Q: Where will the new children come from?**

A: We have a current waiting list and so most pupils will come from this list, others will come from other local schools, which will alleviate their pressures on waiting lists – the school's admissions policy will still apply however for all new pupils, with priority always being given to Catholic children.

**Q: What will be the impacts on the current teaching staff?**

A: Without exception, the current teaching staff see the expansion as a natural progression for the school. Having a larger school creates career development and leadership opportunities for current staff and enables us to recruit more outstanding staff to work alongside our current team. The increase in staff numbers will allow for a greater spread of workload across personnel allowing teachers to focus on the teaching. A 2FE structure will allow for even greater flexibilities in catering for the children's needs through setting when appropriate.



**Q: Will the teaching structure change?**

A: Yes - as the school expands we will receive additional local authority funding - this will allow us to create additional leadership roles such as Assistant Vice Principal and phase leaders as well as having more staff responsible for different areas of the curriculum. This is an exciting time for the school so we will be looking to incorporate the building works and expansion programme into the curriculum for the children.

**Q: How will you have enough space for these extra children?**

A: We are currently in the planning process of changing the internal structure of the school to create extra classroom space for this September's additional 30 FY intake. We are also hoping to have the extra buildings on parts of the school site that will have the least impact on the playground space and fields, this will involve internal reorganisations and redefining the use of certain rooms without losing any of the valuable teaching resources and other rooms used as 1:1 rooms small intervention space, music/art rooms. You will be able to have a look at the substantive plans once finalised and granted, and also be able to view the school on parents evening to see our exciting new developments! The changes for a 60 FY intake will be up and running by September 2014 with work commencing from the autumn term ready for Sept 2015, subject to Secretary of State approval.

**Q. How will the building works be funded?**

A: All of the building works will be funded through the local authority, who will ensure that the spaces provided are in line with government standards on classroom, hall and play space size, as well as the number of toilets. The school will also receive additional revenue funding for the extra pupils.

**Q. Traffic and parking on site is already dangerous, won't additional pupils and families exacerbate the problem?**

A: With the local authority, we are already starting to think about options to improve the safeguarding and security of the site. We are aware of the difficulties that parents face coming in to the site and will need to review the School Travel Plan in light of the expansion. The issue of parking will continue to rely on the cooperation of staff and parents. We will establish a communication strategy to inform local residents of the expansion and will be working with Highways to consider appropriate and affordable options for the school site and entrance.

**Q: What about assemblies and plays? How will we all fit into the hall?**

A: Many 1.5 and 2 form entry schools exist with one hall. We will look at all the fantastic events that happen in our school (such as assemblies and Christmas plays) and timetable them carefully to ensure that all parents are still able to come and share in these events with their children. The new proposals for Sept 2015 will increase the hall capacity to accommodate this.

**Q: With the Government's plan to introduce free school meals for all KS1 children from September, how will you manage lunchtime and how will the kitchen cope with all the extra meals!?**

A: Again, we will look at the timetabling of the day and make sure that all children are able to have their lunch and have some time outside with their friends. Part of the development work will ensure that the kitchen has enough ovens to enable them to cater for a 2FE intake of children. Our cook has been involved in the consultations.

**Q: Will there be additional secondary Catholic places in place for when the large primary cohorts move through?**

A: St Joseph's Catholic Primary is one of the feeder schools to Bishop Walsh Catholic School and this gives the pupils here priority in their applications to Bishop Walsh. The local authority has commenced an additional secondary school place programme across the City and will be working with schools in Sutton Coldfield to provide additional places from 2015 onwards.



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If you have additional questions please do not hesitate to email me personally via the school office ([enquiry@stjosb75.bham.sch.uk](mailto:enquiry@stjosb75.bham.sch.uk)) or catch myself or Mrs Hill on the door in the morning and we will be happy to answer your questions.

In addition, with your permission, we will publish your question (anonymously) on our school website and then share the answer with all the other parents.

As we progress through the process we will add information to the school website, please do have a look at this to keep to up to date with information about our school.

Regards

G M O'Hara



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