

## STAKEHOLDER DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

### **Proposed expansion of St Nicholas School to create an additional 56 Special Educational Needs places from September 2017**

**Initial discussion period: 23 September 2015 to 19 October 2015**

**Public meeting: Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 at 6pm at St Nicholas School**

Croydon Council is exploring ways of increasing the number of places available in the borough for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN). We would like to enable more children and young people to remain in their local communities and be educated in local special schools, or in mainstream schools with properly equipped facilities and specialist staff.

There is a continuous rise in demand for SEN places in schools and there are more children with complex learning needs both locally in Croydon and nationally. We have consulted with head teachers and other professionals about the new learning opportunities we need to offer. As well as building new schools, we are also proposing to expand some existing special schools to provide additional places to meet pupil's special educational needs.

#### **What are the plans?**

Building and enlarging schools is an exciting but challenging task. Therefore, in developing our plans for expansion we are clear about the reasons for carrying out this work. Our priorities are as follows:

- **Meeting the increasing demand** for school places in Croydon: ensuring that schools offer a variety of facilities to meet the complex needs of children
- **Making more SEN facilities available in mainstream schools** so that children will have a wider choice of education options in Croydon
- **Providing local SEN places** so that fewer children will need to travel out of the borough to go to school
- **Reducing the cost of transport** to the Local Authority, and the impact for families in taking children to and from SEN schools outside of Croydon

In developing our plans and proposals for providing additional SEN places, we will be engaging and consulting parents/carers, local residents and other stakeholders.

#### Proposed expansion of 2 SEN schools in Croydon

We are currently working with 2 SEN schools in the borough, including St Nicholas, to provide an additional 56 each, total of 112, SEN places from September 2017.

#### Specific proposal for expanding St Nicholas School

At St Nicholas School, we plan to offer 56 additional places for children with moderate learning difficulties and autism.

## What are the next steps?

### Initial discussion period

Following initial discussions and any recommendations from governors, work will continue with the school and governing body to engage with stakeholders, including parents/carers on the proposal to expand the school.

### Statutory consultation

After the initial discussion period, there will be another opportunity to express your views and make representations (support or object the proposal) during a 4 week statutory consultation period. During the statutory consultation period, the Council will publish a notice in the Croydon Guardian newspaper, on the school gates and on the Council/school websites.

All feedback received during the consultation period will be analysed and a consultation outcomes report produced. The consultation report will form part of a report to Croydon Council's Cabinet Committee in January 2016, to help the Committee in deciding whether to approve the implementation of the proposed expansion of the school.

If the proposed expansion is approved by the Council's Cabinet Committee, the school will receive additional funding for building works and to meet the other extra costs associated with the additional children in the school.

### **Timetable**

Event	Date
Engagement on the proposed expansion	23 September – 19 October 2015
Public meeting at St Nicholas School	01 October 2015 at 6pm
Deadline for initial comments on proposal	19 October 2015
Publication of Statutory Notice	04 November 2015
Period for representation (formal consultation)	04 November – 02 December 2015
Public meeting at St Nicholas School	24 November 2015
Decision by Council on proposal	18 January 2016
Implementation of proposal (if approved)	September 2017

### **How to give your views on the proposed expansion?**

Your views are important in the consideration of this proposal. You are warmly invited to attend the public meeting at St Nicholas School on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015 at 6pm where officers of the Council will be available to set out the proposal and receive views and answer questions. You can also share your views by completing the attached response sheet and return to:

- St Nicholas School, Old Lodge Lane, Purley CR8 4DN; or
- Denise Bushay, Croydon Council, School Place Planning & Organisation Team, People Department, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor, Zone D, Bernard Weatherill House, 8 Mint Walk, Croydon CR9 IEA; or
- Email [school.org@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:school.org@croydon.gov.uk)

**Please respond by 19 October 2015**