



## Education and Care Services

Civic Centre, Stockwell Close, Bromley, BR1 3UH

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Direct Line: (020) 8313 4088 Internet: [www.bromley.gov.uk](http://www.bromley.gov.uk)  
Email: [riverside.consultation@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:riverside.consultation@bromley.gov.uk)

Your Reference:

Our Reference: ECS/MB/KG

Parents/Carers, Staff and Governors of  
Riverside School (St Paul's Cray & Beckenham Sites)

11 June 2012

Dear Parent/Carer, Member of Staff and School Governor

### **Consultation: Proposed Expansion of Riverside School**

This letter outlines the case for the expansion of Riverside School and how you can respond to the consultation. **The deadline for responses is Friday, 20 July 2012.**

#### **Our Proposal**

To expand Riverside School by one form of entry at the St Paul's Cray site, admitting 8 additional children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder to Year 7 each year.

#### **Our Reasons**

##### **Why we Need this Additional Provision?**

There is an increasing need for additional, in-borough provision for secondary aged pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). We believe that as many of our children with special educational needs as possible should be educated within our special needs provision in Bromley and too many children with autism are currently placed outside the borough.

The number of children now diagnosed with ASD is growing, resulting in a projected shortfall of specialist ASD places by 2021 of 120 11-16 year olds and 36 post 16 places. If no action to increase maintained in-Borough provision is taken, these additional 156 places would need to be commissioned from the independent sector at a higher unit cost. It is a statutory requirement to provide these places.

Currently there are 30 children of secondary age with ASD who are placed in non-maintained day settings at an average cost of £35k per annum compared to the cost of a day place at Riverside of £21k p.a. Some of the children with severe and profound ASD are in very expensive independent placements costing circa £200k p.a. The cost is a concern because it diverts money away from improving schools in Bromley. However, we are also very concerned about the long journeys some children have to get to school and the difficulty of monitoring the quality of this provision.

## **Why Riverside?**

We do not think it is a sensible use of resources to set up a completely separate school for 52 children.

Riverside School already caters for a large number of children with autism and has developed a considerable level of expertise in this field. The proposed secondary provision would meet the needs of learners with severe and profound ASD who will access the lower P level curriculum offered there. This will be building on the success of the primary ASD unit at Riverside Beckenham and will offer an in-Borough maintained setting to continue those children's ASD specific offer into the secondary phase.

The Head Teacher and Governors have expressed an interest in working with us to develop this provision into a centre of excellence for autism which will also support other schools and units in the borough.

The Council has allocated £1.2 million of capital funding to provide the required additional accommodation at Riverside School.

## **Timescale**

We propose to open the additional provision on the St Paul's Cray site from September 2013, admitting 8 year 7 pupils.

As an additional 8 children will require a specialist secondary ASD placement in the 2012/13 academic year a spare classroom has been identified at the Riverside Beckenham site from September 2012 to accommodate these pupils until there is a decision on the permanent expansion of the St Paul's Cray site. If the proposal is agreed, these pupils will transfer to the St Paul's Cray site for September 2013.

The number of places for post-16 pupils will also increase by 12 in order to accommodate some of the additional pupils within the school for their post-16 education. By 2018/19 the expansion of the school would be providing education for a total of 40 additional secondary age pupils (11-16 years old) and 12 post-16 pupils (17-19 years old); therefore expanding Riverside School by a total of 52 places, from 200 to 252.

## **Consultation Meeting**

A Consultation meeting for parents/carers will be held at Riverside School (St Paul's Cray site) on **5 July at 10am**. The meeting is scheduled to last for a maximum of 1½ hours.

## **How to Respond**

We would welcome your views and comments on our proposal. The outcomes from consultation will be reported to the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on 11 September 2012 – this is a public meeting which starts at 7 pm. If approved, the increase in school places would be effective from September 2013.

You can respond to this consultation in the following ways:

- Complete the attached form and return to Bromley Council (quoting Freepost MB1140)
- Write directly to Kevin Gerred at Bromley Council, BR1 3UH (quoting Freepost MB1140)
- Email Bromley Council at: [riverside.consultation@bromley.gov.uk](mailto:riverside.consultation@bromley.gov.uk)
- Online: complete the feedback form on Bromley Council's website [www.bromley.gov.uk](http://www.bromley.gov.uk), search on: Consultation-proposal to expand Riverside School

When responding please give your name and address and clarify whether you are a parent/carer, member of staff or School Governor – this will help with the analysis of responses.

A telephone helpline has been set up on 020 8313 4088 and is staffed between 8:30am and 5:30pm, Monday to Friday. Telephone the helpline if you require large print, audio or Braille versions of this letter, or you require language translation services.

While all responses will be acknowledged, it will not be possible for us to enter into correspondence with individual respondents. However, Bromley Council's website will be updated with information as the consultation progresses.

All views and comments received will be represented in the consultation outcomes report to the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee on 11 September 2012. This will be available to view on the Council's website a week before the meeting. Information provided in response to this consultation will be published in accordance with access to information regimes including the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

We look forward to receiving your views and comments. The closing date for receipt of responses is **Friday, 20 July 2012**.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Barnes". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mike Barnes  
Deputy Assistant Director (Education)



## Response to Bromley Council's Proposed Expansion of Riverside School

The deadline for responses is Friday, 20 July 2012.

To: Kevin Gerred  
Education and Care Services (3<sup>rd</sup> Floor Stockwell)  
**FREEPOST MB1140**  
London Borough of Bromley  
Civic Centre  
Stockwell Close  
Bromley BR1 3UH

**Do you agree with the proposal to expand Riverside School by one form of entry at the St Paul's Cray site, admitting 8 additional children to Year 7 each year?**

YES

NO

DON'T KNOW/UNDECIDED

Please make any comments here (continue on a separate sheet if necessary):

To help us in the analysis of this feedback please tick which category applies to you:

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Riverside Parent/Carer | <input type="checkbox"/> Riverside School's Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Riverside School Governor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> St Paul's Cray Site    |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beckenham Site         |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prospective Parent     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____              | (please specify)                                   |

Name:

Address:

**Note:** While all responses will be acknowledged, it will not be possible for us to enter into correspondence with individual respondents. However, Bromley Council's website at [www.bromley.gov.uk](http://www.bromley.gov.uk) will be updated with information as the consultation progresses. Responses to this consultation will be published. Consultation outcomes will be reported to the 11 September 2012 meeting of the Education PDS Committee.