

## **Parents' Forum**

Wednesday 12th October 2016 9am

Present: Mr Goddard (HT), Ms Beckett (DH) and 4 parents.

Agenda: Proposed expansion of the school

### **Key points shared:**

We currently have a PAN (agreed number of children we can have in each year group) of 40. We currently have 35- 45 children in each year group.

When there is building of new housing, money is provided to support the infrastructure of the local area. For the expansion to be considered the Local Authority states that the school needs to be successful (.i.e. graded 'good' by Ofsted) and popular. The funding is still under discussion and the plans shared at the meeting are not agreed yet. The proposed plans deliver a lot, but not all, of what a school needs.

We have a group of Governors who have been involved in the process who understand the planning and design processes involved.

Mr Goddard shared key elements of the proposed plans:

- The external space provided by the field will be protected.
- There is as much playground space, but in a slightly different place.
- The staff car park will be slightly expanded to cater for the additional staff.
- 14 classes planned for. (There are currently 11.)
- Areas have had to be set aside for Great Crested Newts, which inhabit the area and which are a protected species.
- Trees and their roots have needed to be taken into consideration.
- The plans allow for up to 420 children in 14 classes eventually. (Currently 270 children in 11 classes.)
- Potential adaptations to the existing building: The current hall to cease being a hall by cutting it in half. The current Year 5 classroom to be extended into the cupboard and cubby hole into an EYFS classroom. A cover to be put on the outside for the EYFS outdoor area. The other half of the current hall will become a studio/ activity area for two KS1 classes at the end of the hall where currently the two Year 5/ 6 classes are. The current Year 1 classroom will become an activity area for the two classrooms currently used as EYFS classrooms. The current library, cookery room and PE cupboard are planned to become one larger library. The existing staffroom to be used as a meeting/ community room. The mobile will remain and potentially be used as a Special Educational Needs room. The current SEN room could then be used as a children's kitchen. The current Year 1 / 2 and Year 3/ 4 classrooms with their activity areas could all then be used for Lower Key Stage 2.
- The new building is planned to include: a new hall, four new classrooms, a new kitchen and a new staffroom to cater for the increased number of staff.
- If these plans are accepted, there are three natural potential projects for the PTA: the EYFS outside area; creating a covered quad where the current red brick area is outside the entrance hall towards the rest of the school and the development of the library.

## **Questions from the parents who attended:**

### **What is the planned process for this to all happen?**

*It is proposed that the new building will start in Easter 2017 for completion Easter 2018. The internal building work on the existing building could then start Easter 2018. This work could take place during the Summer Term and the Summer holiday to be ready for September 2018. This would mean that from September 2018 our PAN (Pupil Admissions Number) for each year group could be up to 60 children.*

### **What is the five year projection? Will this mean that the school will be maxed out again?**

*It is likely that the school will be full by then and be at the optimum size, but we have no way of knowing, at this stage, if there are further building projects planned within the village. Within five years the proposed school expansion should have addressed the current issues. By 2020/2021, we may be unable to take children from outlying areas or Maidstone as we will only have children attending who live in Marden.*

### **Do the plans factor in changes beyond the school which may be needed? (For example, allowing for extra traffic.)**

*Children who live in Marden are encouraged to walk to school. The Parish Council may consider creating additional designated parking spaces or a pelican crossing.*

Parents who attended were pleased that the school field was going to be preserved. Mr Goddard explained that one of the reasons was that the field was prone to flooding which enabled us to resist it being used for being built on.

### **Where would points of access be?**

*The school will be even more secure, especially as it is proposed that there will be high fencing around the staff car park.*

### **If there are three extra classes, will there be more staff?**

*With three extra classes there will be three more teachers and three teaching assistants. Our Senior Leadership and Middle Leader structure is already set up and ready for a two form entry school.*

Parents present felt assured that the proposed plans benefit the whole school, also ensuring there is flow throughout the whole school as it currently feels quite 'compact'. They were pleased it was not a case of simply building extra classrooms.

### **What are the stages involved in this proposal being accepted?**

*A public consultation to take place on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2016 4pm-6:30pm*

*Then Kent County Council would need to approve the budget and the plans. Once approved, more detailed plans would need to be drawn up. At this stage, the process is still on track for an Easter 2017 start.*

### **Can you foresee any problems?**

*Hopefully, comments received through the consultation will be positive or constructive. (e.g. like the need for parking / pelican crossings discussed today.)*