

Frequently Asked Questions

A formal proposal to expand Slated Row Special School to include a new site at Kents Hill Park

We are keen for all stakeholders to provide their response to the consultation, whether they are in favour or opposed. It is important for stakeholders to be well informed before completing the online response form on our website <http://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/consultations/398>. Below are key questions received during the informal consultation in September/October. For further information please email sufficiencyandaccess@milton-keynes.gov.uk

The formal consultation will end on **10 February 2017**

- 1. *With the school being a distance from the original site, won't the schools resources be spread too thin? How will day to day management be executed on 2 sites?*** If this proposal goes ahead, the governing body and leadership team will have between March and December 2017 to plan staffing and resources for both the development and the operational phases of opening a new site. There will be better opportunities for staff development and career choice as part of a larger organisation which will have new facilities. Expansion will allow existing staff to share their outstanding practice to the benefit of the second site and its new staff and pupils.
- 2. *Will there be an impact on existing Slated Row quality if leadership and staff are stretched?*** The governing body would agree a staff structure and resourcing to best meet operational and curriculum needs across both sites and the leadership team will have time before the school opens in January 2018 to ensure that the expansion does not lead to disruption of education at the current site or to the detriment of existing pupils. Pupils who move into Key Stage 4/5 at Kents Hill Park will benefit from teaching styles and curriculum planning being consistent between primary and secondary provision across the two sites.
- 3. *Why are you opening this provision when there is need elsewhere in Milton Keynes? Does this proposal meet the type of need which is in highest demand?*** Slated Row specialises in supporting a range of complex needs in addition to Moderate Learning Difficulties. White Spire also caters for children with complex needs alongside MLD. Whilst Slated Row has been over-subscribed by only 10 places, this cannot be used as the indicator for understanding demand for places across our special schools. Special schools that had physical space to expand have been able to exceed their funded place numbers whereas Slated Row did not have space to expand, so was unable to significantly exceed funded numbers, even though the need was there. Data from Slated Rows 2015-16 roll shows that only 2% of their pupils had a single area of need. 98% of pupils on roll had at least two areas of need for example Autism and Moderate Learning Difficulty.
- 4. *How will the SEN department be segregated from the mainstream secondary school that is due to be opened at Kents Hill Park? What about the proximity of Kents Hill Park secondary school and concerns over safety and dignity of vulnerable SEN pupils?*** The special school will have its own distinct access and physical boundaries. It will have its own

distinct playing areas and will benefit from sharing some of the sports facilities at the secondary school. The new primary and secondary schools on the same site give opportunities for integration and joint projects which the council's SEND caseworkers and specialist teachers see this as a positive advantage. Slated Row already offers support to other schools informally and through the Denbigh Teaching School Alliance, and shares some activities such as hairdressing and forest school.

5. ***How will it be determined as to which site children will attend?*** Admissions to special schools are handled by the SEN casework team who place pupils individually according to their type of need and age. It is not based on where the family lives unless there is more than one suitable special school to choose from. The existing Slated Row site caters for ages 4 to 19. The new site will cater only for secondary school age, thus moving pupils aged 14 to 19 (Key Stages 4/5) to the new site. This operational structure is more effective than mirroring all Key Stages across two sites. This structure and resourcing between the two sites will allow for an additional 50 places to be created for SEN children.
6. ***Will there be transport provision for children moving between the current site and the new site? Will there be an impact on families who receive Home to School Transport to the Wolverton site?*** Special school catchment areas cover the whole borough since pupils are placed according to their need and age rather than geographically. Therefore families may already live nearer to either of the sites. Home to School Transport eligibility will be individually assessed. Because public transport accessibility of Kents Hill Park is easier than to Wolverton, some older students can be offered new independent travel training, developing their adult skills and making a step into life beyond Slated Row. Some pupils who have needed to go to out of area schools due to our shortage of places for complex needs will be able to access a school nearer to where they live. Pupils will be based at only one site depending on their Key Stage but there will be some whole school sharing activities e.g. Enterprise days, celebrations, indoor PE, drama, forest school. Slated Row already has transportation and safe arrangements routinely in place for pupils who attend activities away from their main site.
7. ***Have other alternative options been considered? We received suggestions that the Kents Hill Park site could be used for a girls only SEN school or for a sixth form SEN school.*** However there is a strong preference and evidenced need for the specialist education provided by Slated Row and the 50 extra places address a known shortage.