

Windrush Church of England Primary School
Section 10 Consultation
Summary Report



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1. Executive Summary

RLT carried out a statutory consultation between 9 September 2020 and 23 October 2020 to establish whether there was local support for the plans and opening of Windrush Church of England Primary School in September 2021.

The local population and identified stakeholders were made aware of the consultation process through a variety of media (direct mail, leaflet drops, advert and articles in print media, notices in church bulletins, social media posts and virtual meetings).

There were 24 responses to the consultation. 79% (19/24) were in favour of opening the school). 16% (4/24) were unsure and 4% (1 person) was against the school opening.

Although this could be considered a low response rate, the majority response was positive and demonstrates local support for the opening of the school.

2. Consultation process

Identifying and engaging stakeholders

River Learning Trust carried out a six week consultation (between 9 September 2020 and 23 October 2020) to gather feedback on the plans for the new school, including the proposed Admissions Arrangements and whether the Trust should enter into a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education to open Windrush Church of England Primary School.

Consultees were contacted (see table below demonstrating method of targeted engagement) and invited to review the website or to request a printed version of our information and policies, and were invited to meet with the team virtually, due to Public Health Restrictions in place because of Covid-19, or submit questions through the website.

Stakeholders	Targeted Engagement
Other Own Admissions Authorities, and headteachers within, and around the Witney Liaison Group	A letter was sent in July 2020, followed by an email in September with a link to the website and consultation response.
Prospective Parents and residents within the planned catchment area of the school (Windrush Place and Colwell Green)	Postcard with details of the consultation and how to apply delivered to all houses within catchment.
Other wider local residents and community members in Witney	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Paid for advert in the Witney Gazette● Article in Oxford Times (print only) and Oxford Mail (https://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/18755851.building-work-new-windrush-primary-school-witney/)● Social Media sponsored adverts (through Facebook)● Notice in the Witney Benefice weekly newsletter● Three Public Information Events● 1:1 discussions (phone & video calls) with Religious Leaders and Elected Community Representatives

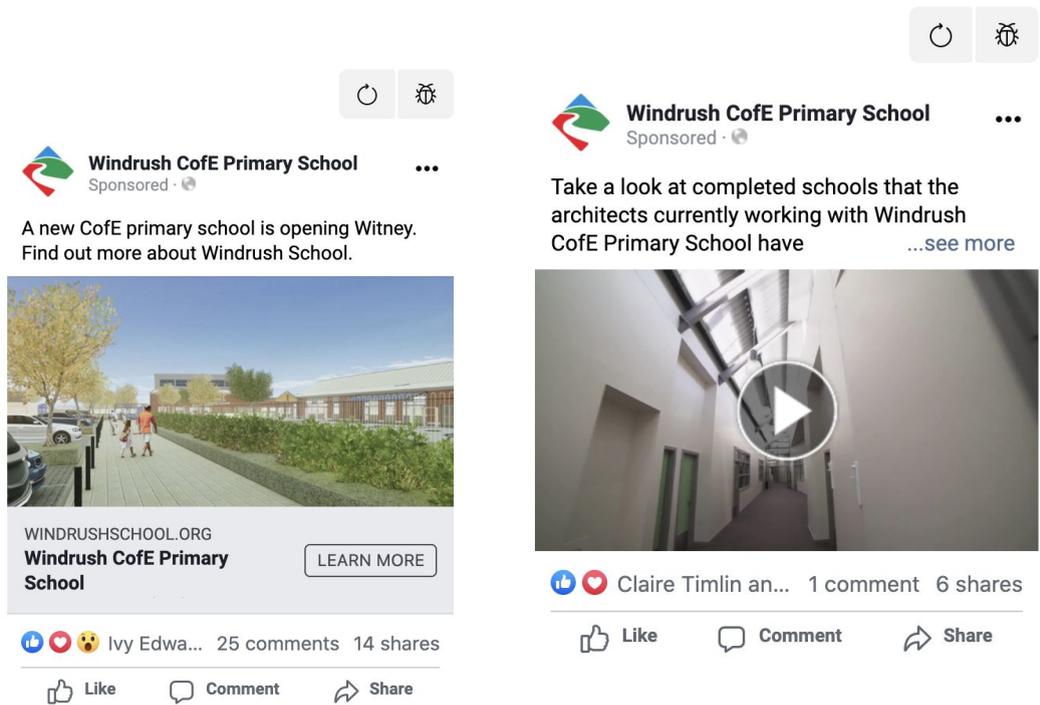
In preparation to the start of the consultation, information was shared with Oxfordshire County Council Admissions and Place Planning teams to develop robust Nursery and School Admissions Arrangements. Documents were also shared with the Diocese ahead of publication.

Throughout the consultation period information shared on the school's website: www.windrushschool.org

Other engagement activities

At the same time that the consultation ran, there were 26 expressions of interest for a place at the school, 15 for Year R (all but one lives on the estate) and eight for the nursery. Three further applicants are out of age range.

Two Facebook awareness campaigns advertised the school between 5/10/20 to 30/10/20 and reached a total of 11,723 people, with 2,428 clicking through to the school's website.



Information Events

Due to the restrictions in place limiting face to face contact, the public consultation wasn't able to include public meetings. However, three virtual events were held:

- 28 September (6.30pm)
- 15 October (6.30pm)
- 19 October (1.30pm)

These sessions were attended by a total minimum of 25 people (some screens contained couples, and other screens were blank so it was not possible to count precisely how many people were active in the meetings).

The sessions introduced the Trust, the vision for the school, the role of the Church of England, Admissions and the consultation process.

3. Consultation Responses and Analysis

There were 24 formal responses to the consultation. 83% identified themselves as a Prospective Parent.

1. How would you define your connection with the school?

Elected Member	1
A teacher	1
Prospective Parent	20
Local resident / community member	2
Total Responses	24

Two respondents stated they had comments on the Admissions Arrangements, one challenged the approach to prioritising applicants within criterion.

2. Do you have any comments on the proposed Admission Arrangements for the school?

Yes	2
No	22
Total responses	24

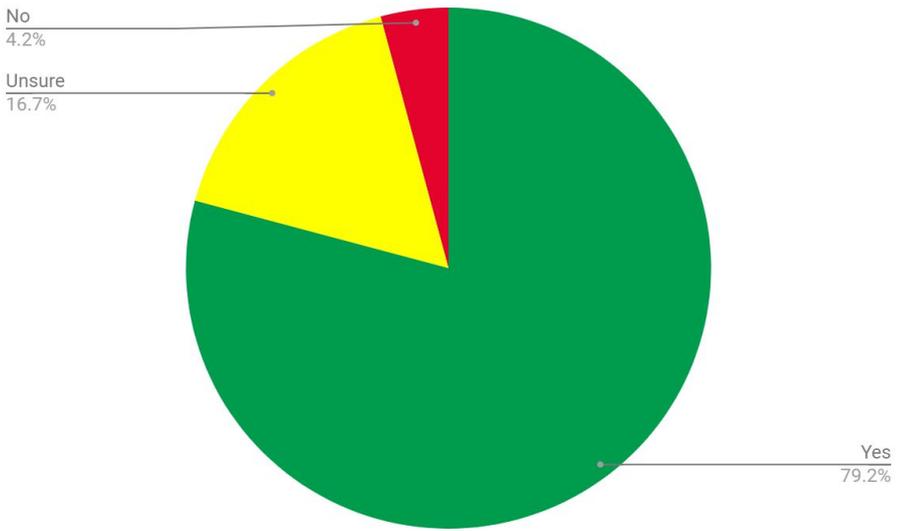
Question	Response
What will happen if the school is oversubscribed by parents within this catchment area?	<p>If the school is oversubscribed (ie there are more applications than the Published Admissions Number (PAN) of 30) then the oversubscription criteria will be applied to all applications (apart from those with an Education Health Care Plan naming the school), and applications will be ranked in line with the following criteria:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Children who are Looked After 2) Children with exceptional medical or social needs, or those of their parents 3) Children who live in catchment of the school with a sibling on roll 4) Children who live in the catchment area 5) Children who live outside the catchment with a sibling

	<p>6) Other children</p> <p>Applications will be ranked within each criteria based on a measured distance between the home address and the school.</p> <p>Unsuccessful applicants will be added to our continuing interest list, and a place will be offered to one of the other preference schools. If no other application has been made, or the council is not able to offer a place at one of the other schools applied to, the council will allocated a place for the child at the nearest school with an available place, after everyone else's places have been offered, which is why it is important to apply to more than one school.</p> <p>The council monitors the housing completion rate, and does not anticipate there to be more than 30 pupils currently living on the development within each cohort. When more houses are complete, the PAN of the school will increase to 45. If, in the future, the demand in the town and on the development is such that more physical accommodation is required the school site has been planned in a way that an extension to the building can be added (subject to planning) to enable the school to accommodate 60 pupils per year group.</p>
<p>"within priority 2-6, by children who live closest to the school by a straight line distance as measured on Oxfordshire County Council's Geographic Information System"</p> <p>Please consider using an alternative prioritisation to include a consideration of ALL available schools, rather than just straight line distance to one school.</p>	<p>The guidance from the Department for Education is to try to keep admissions arrangements as simple as possible, we are required to have a tie-break, distance is just one option - we could also consider random allocation. The straight line distance calculation is used across all maintained schools in the county, and most of the schools in River Learning Trust.</p> <p>The council has assured us that the school should provide sufficient capacity to accommodate residents in the catchment area, and it has even been suggested that we might also be able to accommodate other children from Witney who are perhaps seeking a Church of England School. You will have noted from our oversubscription criteria that we have prioritised in area pupils ahead of out-area siblings and we have no faith based criterion to ensure the local community is</p>

	<p>prioritised in the process. Our intention is to be able to offer a place for children from the local community, and the admissions rules allow us to exceed our Admissions Number should we need to and we have the capacity to safely accommodate additional pupils (although please be aware that infant class size legislation restricts classes to a maximum of 30). If we find that consistently the council's planning projections are incorrect and that we are unable to accommodate local families, an alternative approach to prioritising applications will be considered.</p> <p>Our school is being built to accommodate 45 pupils per year group, although we are only opening with an admission number of 30. Should the development generate more than 45 pupils per year group, and at the established school place provision in Witney is unable to accommodate this increased demand, there is scope for the school to have an extension to take 60 pupils per year group.</p>
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79% responded positively to the Statutory Question of whether RLT should open the school

3. Do you agree that River Learning Trust should enter into a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education to open Windrush Church of England Primary School?



A clear majority of respondents (79%, 19/24) were in favour of the Trust entering into a funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education to open Windush Church of England Primary School. A further 17% (4/21) were "Unsure". Each 'unsure' respondee was

contacted directly to ask if they needed any additional information, but no further questions were asked.

Comment	Response
<p>What facilities will there be? Will the school specialize in any areas?</p>	<p>Thank you for responding to our consultation.</p> <p>Schools don't have defined specialisms, like they previously have had. However, as a school we want to ensure Sports and Science are recognised as important to our broad and balanced curriculum. As such our school will be working towards the Gold Sports Mark once we have enough Key Stage 2 children to meet the criteria as well as a Science Mark.</p> <p>As with all new schools opening in Oxfordshire, our school will have a special resourced based unit for 8 children with Education Health Care Plans naming the school. Once the unit grows, children in mainstream and children in the unit will benefit from each other. Children requiring more specialised teaching will be able to integrate and enjoy mainstream education alongside their peers as well as having specialist SEN staff to support their individual learning needs. Children in mainstream will benefit from an integrated environment as they grow up with the values of respect, tolerance and understanding of people's disabilities as they will work and play together everyday.</p>
<p>When might you plan to bring in other higher years?</p>	<p>Our plan is to open the school for Nursery and Year R students only, in line with the council's forecast projections. The school would then grow from the bottom up - taking seven years to be open in all year groups. Other local schools in Witney have previously expressed their concern with local politicians and the council about opening Windrush CofE in multiple year groups as there is sufficient capacity in the town to accommodate children in higher year groups already. But there is recognition that with all the new housing a new primary school will open at some stage.</p>
<p>Having moved to Witney and onto the estate in 2018 with</p>	<p>Thank you for responding to our consultation. I note your disappointment with our plan to only open the</p>

<p>primary school aged children (now Reception and Year 4), it is extremely disappointing to only now learn that the proposed phased opening means it is unlikely either of my children will attend this school despite only 2 minutes walk from our home.</p>	<p>school in Nursery and Year R and to grow the school incrementally. The plan of the Local Authority was originally to open the school with classes available for Nursery, as well as Years R, 1 and 2. However, since the inception of this plan there has been a change in birth rates in Witney, and the rate of housing completions has not been as originally forecast. As such, there is capacity in the town to accommodate children in older year groups, allowing families to settle their children in existing schools. This means that parents are generally less likely to move their children.</p> <p>You will note that we have said we will take expressions of interest for older year groups, and if there is sufficient interest and a commitment from parents to move their children, we will request to change our plan, which would need to be agreed by the County Council and the Department for Education. As it currently stands, we have not had sufficient interest in any school year group other than Year R.</p> <p>We are working with community groups (like the scouts and the Church) to enable our school to be a community hub for Windrush Place and Colwell Green residents, so I hope that you will still be able to enjoy the facilities at the school, even if your children won't be able to attend the school.</p>
<p>“Any details on applying for a nursery place?”</p>	<p>Please see our website for further information. I note you have since made an application for your child, so I hope you have been able to find the information you were looking for. We will continually be adding to our website, so if you have a specific question, please do not hesitate to contact us.</p>
<p>“Interested to know how the school build and opening will be phased. Is it the first year just be a small part of the school open?”</p>	<p>We have added a new section to our website to provide information about the progress of the build.</p> <p>In terms of how the opening of the building will be phased. The building work is scheduled to complete by August 2021 and at that point the whole building will be ready for use. However, given that we will be a small number (less than 100 people - 2 classes)</p>

	<p>compared to the capacity (315 plus staff - 11 classes), we will stick to one part of the building.</p> <p>We are in discussions with various community groups who have expressed an interest in making use of our space for drop in sessions and health activities, so it is unlikely that the space will be completely mothballed!</p>
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Only 4% of respondents (1 person /24) did not want the Trust to open the school. The comment was from a Witney school teacher and related to a perceived lack of demand for primary school places in the local area, which is a concern previously raised by heads with the council, which has been addressed.

Comment	Response
<p>Having seen the data provided by OCC regarding birth rates in West Oxfordshire I am concerned that there is insufficient demand in the Witney area for an additional school. I am concerned that opening a new primary school will have a negative impact on the primary schools in the area in terms of pupil numbers and this in turn will impact on the financial viability of those schools.</p>	<p>Oxfordshire County Council is responsible for ensuring there are sufficient school places across the county. They have commissioned our new school (located in Windrush Place) to meet the demand of four new housing developments in the town, eventually adding more than 1500 new homes to Witney. The Council has previously stated that there is not sufficient capacity in the town to accommodate all the pupils from these new housing developments, and the developers (through their section 106 agreement) have committed to invest in Witney by delivering a new primary school to be ready in line with a pre-determined timeline. This means the school is on track to open in September 2021, subject to the agreement of the Secretary of State for Education.</p> <p>As a Church of England School, it is likely that the school will attract some pupils from beyond Windrush Place, as parents exercise parental choice. However, this is balanced with the catchment area prioritising residents within the development and not prioritising Church attendance or baptised children. The other significant developments (Burford Road and Springfield Oval) are in the catchment area of existing schools in Witney. Downs Road IS in the catchment for Windrush.</p>

	Windrush Church of England Primary School is planned to grow from the bottom up (a new Reception class every year) to reduce pupil movement and avoid destabilising other local schools.
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During the period, questions were raised at meetings, captured through the website, and also discussed on the Facebook page. Answers to Frequently Asked Questions were added to the website (see Annex 2).

- In 2021 are you taking all school Years or just reception?
- What are your class sizes and student-to-teacher ratios?
- How do you integrate technology into the classroom and curriculum?
- How can parents get involved in school life?
- What will the landscape look like, and where is the entrance to the school?
- What is the planned provision for secondary schools for the developments?
- What influence will the Church have on the school and school life?
- Will the curriculum be any different to other local schools (RE)?
- How much will children integrate across the different year groups?
- How much does it cost to send my child to nursery?
- How do nursery admissions work?
- Will you take paid 2 year olds in nursery?

4. Conclusion

Although the number of responses to the formal consultation is disappointing, there is clear evidence that even though engagement was limited due to Covid restrictions, local stakeholders are aware of the new school proposal and have had the opportunity to ask questions and respond to the consultation. The majority response was positive and demonstrates local support for the opening of the school. It is therefore concluded that there is sufficient evidence to support the Trust entering into a funding agreement with the Secretary of State for Education to open Windrush Church of England Primary School.

Annex 1 Samples of materials used to advertise the consultation

Postcard for residents



WINDRUSH
Church of England Primary School

OPENING SEPTEMBER 2021

At River Learning Trust (RLT), we are really excited to have been given the opportunity to open a new primary school in Windrush Place. With the support of the Diocese of Oxford, we are working hard to make sure that Windrush Church of England Primary School will be a great place for all children to learn and grow.

Consultation

We are consulting on our plans for Windrush Church of England Primary School and whether there is local support to open the school in September 2021. Our website outlines our vision, key policies (such as proposed admissions arrangements) and information about what the school will be like. We have arranged some virtual information events where you can meet our team and find out more. Please see our website for more details of these and how to book, and to also respond to the consultation.

The consultation closes on 23rd October 2020.

Apply for a place

We are planning to open the school in September 2021 for children in Nursery and Reception (i.e. children born between 01.09.2016 and 31.08.2019). The application process is now open on our website, where you will also find details of our planned admissions arrangements and catchment area.

If you would like an alternative application method then please contact the RLT office on 01865 558727

WWW.WINDRUSHSCHOOL.ORG

RLT RIVER LEARNING TRUST **ODBE** Oxford Diocesan Board of Education

Advert placed in the local newspaper

**Windrush Church of England
Primary School - opening September 2021
Section 10 Consultation**

River Learning Trust (RLT) is excited to announce the planned opening of Windrush Church of England Primary School in September 2021 in Witney, Oxfordshire.

The school would open with places in nursery for two, three and four year olds as well as up to 30 places in Reception for rising five year olds. The school has been commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council in response to the demand for school places from 1,500 new homes being built in west Witney, predominantly the Windrush Place development.

RLT is working with the Diocese of Oxford to provide an excellent school for families living in these 1,500 new homes. The school is being built by a consortium of developers.

As part of the process to open the school, RLT is legally required to hold a consultation exercise (under Section 10 of the Academies Act 2010) to determine whether the trust should enter into a Funding Agreement with the Department for Education.

The consultation period is running from 11/09/2020 to 23/10/2020 and will enable interested parties to learn more about the proposal for the new school and to share their views.

How to find out more and respond to the consultation

Information about the school is available online at www.windrushschool.org. To share your views please either complete the online form at www.windrushschool.org/consultation or request a printed copy from RLT by emailing office@windrushschool.org, where you can also book to participate in one of a number of information events, which are planned on:

- Thursday 15 October 18:30 – 19:30
- Monday 19 October 13:45 – 14:45

Article in the Oxford Mail 29/09/2020

The screenshot shows a news article on the Oxford Mail website. The article is titled "Building work at new Windrush Primary School in Witney" and is dated 29 September. It is written by Liam Rice, a reporter. The article features a 3D architectural rendering of the school building. The text of the article is partially visible, starting with "Builders start work building on big building site." and mentioning that it is not much of a story and certainly not one that would expect any local newspaper to cover. It also notes that building is what happens on building sites. The article is attributed to Louise Aiken, head of governance at River Learning Trust. To the right of the article, there are social media sharing icons and a "Send feedback" button. Below the article, there is a "Most read" section with two items: "Health Secretary unable to rule out lockdown release" and "Labour's on its upes but for all the wrong reasons".