

St Mark's Primary School – Three Classroom Bulge & Hall Project LB of Ealing Responses to Frequently Asked Questions

1. How can the school and LB of Ealing ensure that my child will be safe at the school during the course of the construction programme?

Health and Safety legislation combined with Ealing Council's safe working policies and management activities ensure that children will be safe at school during the course of the construction programme. Although the school are responsible for the health and safety of pupils, staff, parents and carers and visitors whilst at school, all Contractors employed by Ealing Council have to abide by our Code of Practice for working in schools and we will be actively monitoring and managing all Project Contractors to ensure that these policies are implemented.

The proposed Contractor has worked with Ealing Council on a number of our schools and is familiar with our expectations with regard to health and safety and the management of construction works

The contractor's site manager will be responsible for implementing these policies on site on a daily basis and the school will have daily liaison, with regular walkabouts and inspections as the works progress.

The Council's School's Health and Safety Manager will also be inspecting the site on a regular basis to ensure expectations are being met. Additionally, all project personnel have a duty to raise any matters of concern.

The Contractor is required to provide construction phase Health and Safety Plans before commencing works on site and to undertake Risk Assessments and produce written Method Statements for all aspects of the work which could have an adverse effect on the health and safety to anyone present in the school buildings or grounds or adjacent to site.

The Council has also appointed a CDM (Construction Design and Management) Advisor who will review the contractor's Health and Safety policies, procedures and written documentation.

2. How will the Council and Contractor ensure access and egress into the school by pupils are not affected by the construction programme, and that pupils are kept away from the works?

The Contractor must ensure that there are measures in place to prevent pupils entering the work area. The location of the contractor's compound location and access route has already been agreed with the school along with separate access and egress routes into the school for pupils, staff, parents, carers and visitors.

Site deliveries will be co-ordinated with school operations and planned to ensure that access and egress is not affected by the contractor.

Ealing Council will monitor the performance of the Contractor and should there be any issues these will be promptly addressed. The Council's regular site inspections will also be used as a way to ensure that site operations are working as agreed and in line with the contractor's commitments.

The Contractor will segregate the site compound and works from school operations with a perimeter hoarding at least 2 metres high, to prevent access by unauthorised persons including children.

A plan has been provided of the site showing the anticipated lines of the compound which has been agreed with the school. Where internal works areas are adjacent to school operations any existing openings will be secured – for example doors locked and vision panels obscured or hoardings installed.

Any essential circulation routes sited close to the site works will be appropriately protected.

Any specific activities required outside the site compound within school occupied areas will be planned and co-ordinated with the school and only carried out in agreement with the school at appropriate times.

Deliveries will be planned to avoid peak times such as drop off, pick up, break and lunch times. Delivery restrictions will be in place between 8:45 and 9:15 and 2:45 and 3:30.

All vehicle movements will be controlled by a banksman and the main construction site entrance site gate will be managed and operated by the contractor.

3. Can you describe the approach LB Ealing and the Contractor will have towards maintaining a clean site that will not disrupt the operational activities of the school?

The Council will not tolerate mess, excessive dust or unmanaged debris. All waste materials must be collected and placed in appropriate skips and disposed of regularly by the contractor in accordance with their Site Waste Management Plan. No construction rubbish or rubble will be disposed of in school bins. Following the end of each working operation and at the end of each day the contractor must leave the work areas clear, clean and tidy, and to safely store all tools, equipment and temporary plant.

4. Will the contractors', sub-contractors and their operatives be using school facilities such as toilets, rest room, canteen and washrooms?

No, the contractors will have their own welfare facilities within the contractor's compound.

5. What about behaviour of contractors' on site within school premises, how will this be controlled?

Please refer to the Councils' Code of Practice. The Council will not tolerate inappropriate behaviour including but not limited to; bad or inappropriate language, inappropriate work wear, smoking. Professional behaviour is demanded of all contractor personnel.

All parties must sign in and out of the site visitor's book when they visit the construction site. The school will continue to operate their own signing in practices for visitors to the school. Site staff will not be required to sign the school signing in book unless they require access within the school outside of their own controlled areas e.g. planned meetings with school staff.

6. Can you explain the roles of the Head, Governors, Council and Contractors' within the project and who is accountable for what actions?

The Head teacher is ultimately responsible for health and safety within the school premises; it is the role of the Governors' to effectively support the Head with the management of the school; the Council will act as Employers Agent (client) on behalf of the school, and will be in a direct contractual agreement with the selected contractor following a tendering and procurement procedure. The Council will manage the contractor and monitor their performance in terms of programme delivery, progress, health and safety and quality of finished build.

7. Where will the first bulge class be accommodated?

The first bulge class (3 reception classes + nursery) will be accommodated on the ground floor of the early years block.

8. Will there be a need to for temporary classrooms?

No modular temporary classrooms will be needed. Existing accommodation will be re-modelled to provide the accommodation required for the school in September 2016. Additional permanent accommodation will be available to the school from September 2017, when the main new build construction will be complete.

9. Which schools have you consulted on their experiences of construction during term time?

The Council consults all schools on their experiences of construction work. Lessons learned have all been incorporated into the Council's Code of Practice for working in occupied schools sites when works are carried out irrespective. The Council has delivered many similar projects and is familiar with and has extensive experience of managing the challenges of schools having building works during term time. Governors have taken the opportunity to visit various schools during the planning process.

10. Are there any schools where the construction has taken as long as is planned at St Mark's?

Many Ealing Schools have had projects of this length carried out where the school has remained fully operational; examples include West Acton Primary, Mandeville Special School, Horsenden Primary, North Ealing Primary, Montpelier Primary, Castlebar School, Fielding Primary and Little Ealing Primary.

11. Are there any schools where the construction is as close to the heart of the existing school as it is at St Mark's?

Yes, examples include Mandeville Special School, West Acton Primary School, Castlebar School, Fielding Primary and Little Ealing Primary.

12. What learnings have you been able to gain from schools who have already experienced construction projects?

Council project staff has many years' experience and expertise in the completion of school remodelling, refurbishment, extensions and new build projects. The Council aims to programme works as far as reasonably practicable within school holiday times, but where it is not possible to do so there are tried and trusted mechanisms in place to ensure the safety of all and to minimise disruption whilst the school is in operation. The Council will have regular liaison with the school management to ensure that any concerns can be freely raised and promptly addressed.

13. How many pupils has the new school kitchen been sized to accommodate – 2 form entry, 3 form entry or something in between?

The kitchen has been designed for approximately 510+ pupils taking into account the 90 pupils accommodated within the bulge classroom proposals over three years and anticipated school meal take up. It has been designed based on the Council's experience from kitchen design in other schools and following consultation with the Council's Catering Technical Manager.

14. Some information on the size of the hall has been provided, it seems to indicate that each child is projected to need 15 minutes to eat their lunch. Is this the assumption that has been used in the sizing?

The hall has been sized to accommodate up to 240 children at each sitting. The timings are not exact over lunch time as it depends on the proportion of packed lunches and what is being served as to how long it takes to get through the hall.

The following scenario is anticipated by the school;

Reception classes come to the lunch hall at 12, followed by year 1 and 2 at 12.15, The rest of the school flow into the current hall, as space allows, until just before 1pm. As there will be more space in the new hall, more children will be able to be seated at any one time, allowing for extra children to be seated at any one time.

15. Why was an increase in hard surface play space not seen as essential alongside the larger hall and kitchen if the school was to be properly equipped for 2 form entry + bulge?

The hard surface play area can only be increased by taking some of the grassed play areas. We have taken up 185m² of the grassed play areas to provide additional hard and soft surface play for the Early Years Unit.

A 2FE school requires 1650m² of hard play area. An additional 90 pupils will require 354m² of additional play space, making an overall hard play area of 2004m².

The play areas are to be split between the main school (1714m²) and the Early Years Unit (290m²).

The hard play areas for the main school will be 1936m² when the construction has been completed, this is compared to 1714m² requirement. Therefore there will be sufficient hard play area at the end of the contract.

During the construction period, the hard play areas for the main school will be reduced to from 1936m² to 1428m². During this time the school will consider staggering play times if the field is unavailable due to poor weather.

16. Do the Senior Management believe this is a genuine bulge or that St Mark's is likely to be asked to become a 3 form entry school in the next 5 years based on the large amount of housing being built in the area?

The Council have confirmed to Senior Management that this is a bulge based on the GLA pupil planning projections which take into account local housing developments and that there is no plan for permanent expansion. It remains the Council's responsibility to carry out and manage pupil place planning and not the school's or the Board of Governors.

17. Why are permanent additional classrooms being built when the bulge is supposed to be temporary?

The school and Council consider that this accommodation provides additional space for the school that will benefit the pupils whilst the bulge classes pass through the school and will also provide long term benefits in future years, including an upgraded kitchen and much needed additional hall space which will provide the school with increased opportunities for indoor sport, games and education. The additional classrooms will allow the school to develop their curriculum to include for more specialist teaching spaces after the bulge.

18. Why have the bulge updates and opportunities to see the plans so few and far between?

Regular meetings have taken place between the Council's design and project management staff and St Mark's senior management and governors throughout the design process to discuss proposals, programme and to minimise any impact upon the school. The proposals have been presented by the school to parents and carers in October 2015 and a display with an open forum was held and attended by a significant number of stakeholders including pupils, staff, parents and carers and members of the local community in February 2016 as part of the planning application process.

19. Why are the bulge updates biased towards the plans for construction, rarely highlighting what the disadvantages are?

The school and governing body have discussed and agreed the options for development throughout the project development process and are supportive of the scheme, considering the advantages to the school outweigh any short term disadvantages. The project's feasibility was considered at an early stage and in consultation with the school and it was agreed that the project should proceed.

20. Will all workers on site have CRB checks and how will their proximity to the children be managed?

Any workers requiring ad hoc access to St Mark's school either for inspections or to work will either require an appropriate enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service (previously known as CRB checks) or will be escorted at all times by a supervisor from either the school or the Contractor's staff who have been checked.

Where a worker requires regular access to the school then it is expected that they will have successfully completed the check so that they need not be escorted.

The school will be responsible for checking proof of identity and accompanying DBS paperwork on sign in to access the school and Contractor workers are required to wear appropriate corporate personal protective equipment (PPE) to ensure that they are easily identifiable when in the school.

Works within the school will be programmed out of core hours in order to provide appropriate safe working, unless a specific operation is of low risk and/or the work zone can be effectively managed and any immediate access by pupils prevented.

Workers within the Contractor's own site and compound that do not have access to the school will not be required to hold a DBS check. The Contractor's compound and site will securely segregate all workers from children.

21. What will happen if health and safety standards re noise and dust cannot be met?

The contractors' will be required to comply with the Council's Code of Practice for working in schools. There is a duty of care by the contractor to manage dust and this will also be addressed in relevant works Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS), for example demolition, joinery, cutting and groundworks.

Additionally, the contractor will take measures to reduce dust including segregation of working areas from school activities, dampening down following works, and maintaining a clean and tidy site on a daily basis.

All work must comply with the Noise at Work Regulations 1989, and the Council will monitor the site to ensure that the contractor uses the most effective noise reduction measures available. Plant likely to cause disturbance can only be used within periods agreed by the Council, the Site Manager and the Children's Services Safety Officer.

The impact of demolition noise within the first phase of the works has been mitigated as the demolition of the former caretaker's property will be undertaken in the school holidays.

22. Does the school have the power to stop the construction work immediately should major issues arise until those issues can be resolved?

In the event of an urgent Health and Safety issue that the school considers is putting any person at immediate risk of significant injury then the school can demand that the operation be ceased, if necessary directly with the operative involved and then with the site manager. The school should then contact the Project Manager and Council's Schools Health and Safety Manager so that they may follow up. For less immediate concerns, the school should contact the site manager in the first instance in order that they be promptly addressed and also then inform the Council's project manager. If necessary the Council will instruct the contractor to cease any operations.

23. What are the accountabilities of the Senior Management Team in the management of this project?

The school SMT maintain overall responsibility for Health & Safety for pupils, staff and visitors to St Mark's but are not accountable for management of site operations. The Council will appoint a Design and Build contractor to manage the construction of this project, working in partnership with Ealing officers and the school. The school will continue to be consulted on elements of the detailed design of the project and representatives involved as part of the project team to review progress and attend project meetings as identified in the project communications plan. Representative for the SMT will be involved in the project on a daily basis in line with the aforementioned Communications Plan.

24. What skills / qualifications do the Senior Management Team to equip them to manage this project effectively?

St Mark's School are not expected to manage the project, St Mark's School has the support of the Council who are responsible for the overall management of the project.

The Councils Property Services Delivery Unit have the technical, professional and programming skills to manage the contract effectively, and to procure a contractor who is experienced in delivering schools' projects. Management of construction works, detailed design, procurement site health, safety and welfare, and detailed programming are integral to the Design and Build Contractors role, all of which is overseen by the Councils Project Manager and Monitoring team.

25. What is the education continuity plan whilst the construction phase is in progress to ensure teaching and learning are still possible in a noisy, dusty environment?

The works will be scheduled and planned to minimised disruption, noise and dust whilst the school is in operation. Where practical the contractor will protect against noise and vibration by the use of silencers on equipment and dampeners. Noisy work will be kept to a minimum programmed in consultation with the school for example, prior to the school day starting and after school activities have ceased or during school holidays.

26. How will the pupil and parent/carer entrance be made safe with a much larger volume of people using it?

The school currently has two main pedestrian access points, one from Lower Boston Road and the other from Green Lane. The proposal is to keep these points of entry for the majority of the school children once the build is completed, however, during the build the main gate on Lower Boston Road will only be used to access the school building during the day. Parents and carers will be asked to use Marlow Court gate and Green Lane gate at the beginning and end of the day. Access for the Nursery will be off Marlow Court; however this will be restricted to lunchtimes only once the build is completed. At the end of Phase 3, the visitor's entrance will be moved from Lower Boston Road to Green Lane. This will also be provided with an access ramp.

27. Has a risk assessment been done for how the building dust will affect asthmatics? Please can this be made available to parents and carers?

There is a duty of care by the contractor to manage dust and this will also be addressed in relevant works Risk Assessments and Method Statements (RAMS), for example demolitions works / joinery works / cutting works / groundworks. The RAMS apply to anyone affected by the works. RAMS will not be made available to parents as this is not practical. If the parents and/or carers have a particular concern over any specific operation then this can be raised with the school and further information provided by the project team if necessary.

The majority of works that could generate dust (for example large scale demolitions) have been programmed for school holiday periods. Dust levels will be controlled to ensure that there are not issues for staff or pupils.

28. What health and safety metrics will the Senior Management be asking the contractors to provide?

The contractor must provide a Construction Phase Health and Safety Plan prior to any works on site commencing. The Main Contractor will be CHAS accredited. (Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme) in order to tender for the works.

The Contractors own corporate in-house Health and Safety Monitoring team will carry out regular site inspections and on-site support for projects – co-ordinated from head office. The Council will be provided with copies of written site inspections and the contractor will maintain a matrix for all active sites to monitor performance and identify any new training or refreshment requirements on site.

29. How will the impact of construction on Year 2 and 6 SATS students be mitigated?

The school will look to manage the impact of construction on Year 2 and 6 throughout the year, including the consideration of where these classes are placed within the school building. During the administration of SATS in 2017 any potentially disturbing work will be restricted.

30. What is the communication plan to ensure parents and carers have the information they need throughout the project?

A communication plan has been developed by Council officers and has been uploaded onto St Mark's website alongside plans and drawings of the proposed works. The Main Contractor will also develop their own communication plan for agreement with the Council and school.

31. How will pupils flow around the building both inside and outside as the building transitions during the construction phases?

Please refer to the site plans and logistics drawings on the St Mark's website. Detailed plans can be developed by the Contractor at each phase.

32. How will fire exits be managed with so much of the centre of the school blocked-off? Where will the fire assembly points be?

The school will produce interim emergency escape plans in co-ordination with the contractor on a phase by phase basis. Initial plans have been developed. The Council's School's Health and Safety Office will support this process.

33. Will there be any parts of the building that will not have disabled access?

Existing Buildings

St Mark's School has two main buildings, the main school building (B1) and the Early Years Building (B2).

B1 has an upper and lower level as the site levels drop from Lower Boston Road towards the playing field. The upper level provides level access to the following areas:-

- Visitors reception
- Breakfast club
- Main hall
- Small Hall
- Two classroom, including Nursery and
- Accessible Staff and pupil toilets

The lower level provides access to:-

- Six classrooms
- ICT/Library
- Accessible Staff and pupil toilets

All areas have level access from their classrooms to the external hard play areas with the exception of the Nursery and one classroom facing Green Lane and the proposal is to provide a stair lift to ensure that the playground is accessible to all

B2 has four classrooms on the ground floor with level access and two classrooms on the first floor accessible via a lift.

Access into New Extension

The new hall and three classroom extension will form part of B1 and will be connected to the upper level of the existing building. It will include a lift to the first floor classroom.

The main hall will be accessible from the playground via a ramp.

Accessibility Statement

With the re-organisation of the Early Years Building (B2) and the relocation of the main visitors' entrance, the balance of classrooms accessible across two levels will improve from two to five classrooms.

Access – Access provisions will be in line with the requirements set out in Approved Document Part M.

The scheme will meet the following requirements:

- Provide disabled refuge space with sufficient width and length near the lift
- Adding an external ramp from hall ground floor leading to ground floor external space.
- Colour schemes – Interior colour schemes will be contrasting to assist persons of impaired vision.

Vertical

- Vertical movement through the two storey section is achieved using the staircase. The staircase will have a refuge point for wheelchair users and there will be lift which can be used for disabled access between the floors.

Doors

- All doors will be designed in accordance with Approved Document Part M and BS 8300.
- All internal and external doors will have a minimum effective clear width greater than 800mm.
- All doors will have vision panels located between 500mm and 1500mm above floor level.
- All doors will have door closers in-line with the requirements of fire safety and have an opening force at the leading edge of the door no greater than 20N.
- All doors will have door handles that can be operated using a closed fist and are of contrasting colour to the door leaf.
- The door material itself will be of a colour that will contrast with the adjacent walls.
- The corridors will be 1860mm wide and are of a sufficiently small length as to not require a passing point.

Windows

- All ground floor external windows have opening fanlights and fixed glazing below, therefore eliminating any potential hazards to users walking along the perimeter of the building.
- All ground floor windows will be accessible for cleaning from ground level and all first floor windows can be cleaned via a cleaning pole from ground floor.

Accessible WC

- There is one Accessible WC in ground floor in the new extension.
- The ground floor Accessible WC is within 40m of the furthest point in the building.
- The proposed Accessible WC's will be compliant with Equality Act 2010; alarm pull cords are supplied next to the toilet pan, grab rails fitted in accordance with Part M of the Building Regulations

and are of contrasting colour, the floor finish will be a non-slip material, all ironmongery will be contrasting in colour and the taps can be opened using a closed fist.

WC's generally

- All WC's will have ironmongery and fixtures contrasting in colour.

Colour Scheme

- The internal colour scheme is to be agreed with the School.

Internal Finishes

- Floors will be of a contrasting colour to the walls to aid visually impaired users. Any floor areas subjected to potentially wet conditions will have a floor covering with high slip resistance.

34. What plan does the school have should the building work overrun at key phases e.g. the start of term in September 2016 and 2017?

The contractor will be managing the programme of the building work, in partnership with the Council and the school who will monitor the works; we consider this to be low risk. Any alternative plans would need to be considered dependant on the situation approaching those end dates. There is float in the main construction Phase (2) as it is programmed to complete by the beginning of the summer holidays 2016.

35. Please confirm the phases of the project and the timings of them.

A set of phasing plans have been uploaded on the schools web site with timings.

36. Does the Senior Management plan to ensure they have powers to influence the hours of operation on the construction project?

Hours of operation have been already been agreed between the Council and the school.

37. Do the Senior Management plan to ensure deliveries and construction staff movements do not endanger or interfere with staff and pupils entering and exiting the school?

It has been agreed that deliveries and movements will be managed and planned to prevent any kind of inconvenience to the school and to ensure that they do not endanger or interfere with staff and pupils entering or exiting the school. Restrictions on deliveries have been agreed at pick up and drop off times (8:45am – 9:15am & 2.45pm – 3:30)

All vehicle movements on site will be controlled.

Any special deliveries to isolated areas outside the main compound (i.e. landscaping) will only be made if necessary and with prior agreement of the school and Council, in these instances a specific plan will be agreed.

38. Where will cycle and scooter storage be sited during construction and afterwards?

The existing cycle stands were planned to be re-located behind the Early Years Building B2. With three separate locations for the scooters and bicycle stands planned for completion of the building works as indicated on the planning drawing no. AL – 102 Proposed Site Plan.

The Senior Management Team are currently reviewing, with the Council whether this remains the best solution for siting scooters and considering parking them behind the court area from September 2016, subject to any necessary approvals.

39. Will the Senior Management insist on approving the contract with the building contractor before it is agreed?

Senior Management are supportive of the planned works. The contract will be approved by the Council in-line with all policies and governance procedures.

40. Do the Senior Management plan to ensure specified health and safety monitoring and metrics are a contractual obligation of the building contractor?

Please refer to earlier responses on health and safety monitoring which will be employed under the contract.

41. Have the Senior Management considered what independent verification of various aspects of the project they may require and requested these services from the Council. e.g. Structural surveys post demolition, air quality monitoring, building control approval, fire officer approval etc?

Numerous site investigations, surveys and assessments have been undertaken by specialist consultancies employed by the Council, inclusive of ground investigation, asbestos, topographical and acoustic surveys. Any specific planning conditions that require resolution by the contractor prior to or during the work will be monitored by the Council along with requirements within the Employer's performance specifications and any other necessary statutory approvals.

42. Have pupils been allowed to play on the field throughout the winter of 2015/2016? If not how would the school manage with only the hard surface play space remaining during construction?

The field has been in use for the majority of the winter 2015/2016 if needed the school will consider staggering playtimes

Refer to question 14.

43. Has a risk log been started so that mitigations to the risks can be found?

A contract phase risk register will be developed with the main contractor by Ealing Council and in consultation with the school. Risks identified at earlier stages that remain unresolved will be incorporated.

44. When is the planned demolition of the caretakers / headmasters house to take place?

The demolition is scheduled to take place within the school summer holidays 2016. Please refer to the phasing Drawings.

45. What assurances are there that the demolition of the caretaker's / headmaster's house will not undermine the structural integrity of the remaining building? We were told when the infant block was built that such a demolition would result in the remaining school being unsafe.

The design and build Contractor has ultimate responsibility for safely demolishing the former caretaker's accommodation and ensuring that the structural integrity of the retained elements of the building are not affected. Our monitoring structural engineer will review the Design and Build Contractors proposals

46. Will the Senior Management insist that the structural integrity of the remaining school is verified post demolition before any children or staff are allowed to attend?

The Councils safety officer will attend site to confirm that he is satisfied with any temporary or permanent works prior to completion of each phase.

47. When will there be a meeting with parents and carers so that Senior Management can clarify the above issues?

A meeting is being arranged for parents and carers to attend at which they can meet the Contractor and Ealing Council Project Management.

48. Will there be a Governors' working group assigned to this project in order that sufficient attention can be given to making it work?

A Governors' representative group is being set up to meet regularly to discuss progress and programme of the project.

49. What parental and carer concerns raised in feedback to the plans in October 2015 and February 2016 have been addressed by revisions of the plans?

The following are examples of changes that have been made to the design following our consultations with the school and other stakeholders including parents:-

- Visually separate the playground from the bins and storage.
- Logistics to take in to account the impact on Marlow Court in terms of access and parking
- A Traffic Impact Assessment Survey was completed and consultations with highways on parking.
- Canopies added to early years classrooms.
- Storage for up to 50 scooters
- Changed the design of the new extension roof from a flat roof to a pitched roof following issues raised by the planners, school, governors, parents and carers.
- External layouts had been be revised and phasing and logistics plans to identify storage
- Double door to be added to Hall for improved access
- Changed WC door G04 to inward opening
- The tray serving shelf moved inboard of the hall to ensure the use of the hall is not compromised.
- Stair lift to be added to improve access.
- Size of the soft play area reduced adjacent to early years block
- Revisions to proposed fencing adjacent to early years block