



Oakbank

**Consultation Feedback Report
(Phase 1)**

January 2012

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Section 1: Executive summary

The proposal is to open a new secondary free school in the west of the Wokingham Borough in September 2012. The school, which will be known as Oakbank, will initially be a four form entry 11–16 school¹. The free school is sponsored by CfBT Schools Trust (CST), working in partnership with the West of Wokingham Parent Group (WoWPG). The school plans to open with its first cohort of Year 7 pupils in September 2012 and grow organically year on year until all year groups are in place in 2016/18.

The free school consultation process, conducted by CfBT Schools Trust and covered by this report, ran from 6 December 2011 to 16 January 2012. The objective was to inform and gather views from key stakeholders, particularly parents of potential pupils, local community members and local education providers regarding the Sponsor's proposal for the new free school. Electronic and hard copy information leaflets about the consultation process were circulated to as many stakeholders as possible and all were encouraged to respond by paper or via the school's website: www.oakbankschool.org.uk. Appendix A contains a list of the stakeholders who received copies of the consultation leaflet. Public notices announcing CST's intention to undertake a consultation exercise between these dates were also published in the Reading Evening Post and Wokingham Times during the week beginning 6 December 2011.

The purpose of this report is to present the key messages received by CST during the consultation process, including the main views gathered from questionnaire and other responses received.

Questionnaire responses

- In total 1,200 consultation leaflets were distributed. In total 108 questionnaire responses were returned to CST, indicating that the majority of stakeholders reached did not respond. Of the responses returned, 68.2% were from parents/carers of primary-aged children and 51.4% were from local residents.
- 95.5% of the respondents to the questionnaire were in favour or very much in favour of the arrangements for the proposed free school.
- 91.1% of the respondents to the questionnaire were in agreement or very much in agreement with the proposal to limit the size of the school.
- 95.8% of the respondents supported or very much supported the proposed academic focus of the curriculum, although a number of respondents also commented on the need to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum was provided at the school and that children of all abilities were appropriately catered for.

Main positive points raised during consultation

Overall we received overwhelming support for the opening of Oakbank School. The respondents who varied from prospective parents, local residents and community members to local authorities and neighbouring secondary schools had many positive things to say about the plans we have for the school.

A majority were happy with the proposed size of the school and the positive effect this could have on pupils' performance. We received positive feedback regarding the location of the school, as a majority are supportive of the Ryeish Green site being reused and the consensus is that a new school is very much needed within the area.

¹ Subject to approval of the Secretary of State for Education, Oakbank aims to open a sixth form by September 2017.

Most respondents feel it would be a positive boost to the area and the community. We received a letter from the Right Honourable John Redwood (local MP) which stated:

'I have no comments other than to endorse strongly the admissions and catchment proposals currently being put forward. I am pleased to see that these do seem to take into account the needs of my constituents.'

Main negative points raised during consultation

The majority of the negative points raised during the consultation related to the proposed admissions criteria for the school. Many respondents were concerned by the proposed allocation of places by segments and who should be given greater priority in terms of access to the school.

There were also some issues regarding the overall lack of clarity of the curriculum to be offered to pupils, particularly those who might find the proposed academic curriculum hard to access. We received the following comments:

'We would like to understand to what extent the curriculum will accommodate the spiritual development of the pupils'

'Whilst I support an academic focus, it is important to recognise that in a mixed ability/non selective environment, some children may struggle and will need dedicated extra support'

'Disadvantages those for whom the school was initially intended'

Section 2: Introduction and background

An application to the Department for Education to open a new secondary free school in the west of the Wokingham borough was approved by the Secretary of State for Education in the autumn of 2011.

The free school, which will be known as Oakbank, will be non-faith, inclusive and based at the heart of its local community. Families living in the west of the Wokingham borough currently do not have access to a local secondary school; children face the prospect of long journey times. They are also split up from their school friends when they leave their primary schools at the end of Year 6 to travel to a number of different secondary schools within West Berkshire, Hampshire, Reading and the Wokingham Borough. The opening of Oakbank is intended to address both these issues, as well as creating a community hub for everyone living in the area something which is also missing at present.

The school will open to its first cohort of 84 Year 7 pupils in September 2012 (and possibly a smaller cohort of Years 8 and 9 pupils) and will grow to become a full school of between 550 and 750 pupils over five to seven years. The school has currently been approved as an 11–16 school; however, subject to approval by the Secretary of State for Education, we plan to expand provision up to age 18 by 2017 at the latest.

The school has been proposed by CfBT Schools Trust, a Reading-based international not-for-profit education specialist, in partnership with the West of Wokingham Parent Group, an organisation of local parents and community representatives.

Section 3: Consultation process

In October 2011 the Secretary of State for Education approved an application from CfBT Schools Trust (CST), in partnership with the West of Wokingham Parent Group (WoWPG), to open a new secondary free school to the west of Wokingham.

As part of the post-approval process all free schools are required to undertake a public consultation exercise which assesses the level of support for the free school proposal and its proposed framework of operation this includes: pupil numbers; admission arrangements; and curriculum and must be completed before it enters into a Funding Agreement² with the Secretary of State which allows it formally to open.

The Oakbank free school consultation exercise undertaken by CST and covered by this report ran from 6 December 2011 to 16 January 2012.

Public notices announcing CST's intention to undertake a consultation exercise between these dates were also published in the Reading Evening Post and Wokingham Times during the week beginning 6 December 2011.

1,200 copies of the consultation leaflet were distributed to target stakeholder groups. Electronic copies of the leaflet were also widely circulated. Appendix A contains a list of the stakeholders who received copies of the consultation leaflet. As this is a new school we were unable to consult with any existing staff or pupils.

This consultation exercise formed Phase 1 of a two-stage consultation process. The second stage, which includes the publication and distribution of this report, runs from 25 January to 8 February. It will ask, based on the outcomes of the first consultation process and CST's responses to the issues raised, whether or not CST should enter into a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State to open Oakbank in September 2012.

Everyone who returned a consultation response, as well as everyone on our Oakbank mailing list, will receive a copy of the consultation feedback report and will be invited to complete and submit a response to our Phase 2 consultation questionnaire, which will ask:

Having seen a copy of the Oakbank Consultation Feedback Report, and our proposed solutions to the issues raised, do you believe CfBT Schools Trust should:

- enter into a Funding Agreement* with the Secretary of State for Education to open Oakbank Free School in September 2012;
- not enter into a Funding Agreement* with the Secretary of State for Education to open Oakbank Free School in September 2012?

The results of this second consultation exercise, together with the results of the first exercise, will be shared with the Department for Education (DfE) who will advise the Secretary of State as to whether or not he should enter into a Funding Agreement with CST with respect of Oakbank Free School.

² A Funding Agreement provides the framework within which Free Schools will operate i.e. those issues we have been consulting with you on including: pupil numbers, admission arrangements, and curriculum provision. A Funding Agreement must be signed before a free school can open.

Section 4: Questionnaire response summary

This section of the report summarises the responses received to the consultation questionnaire. The questionnaire provided respondents with the opportunity to comment on specific questions as well as allowing for general comments. CfBT Schools Trust and the west of Wokingham parent group's responses to comments and/or questions raised have been addressed as far as possible in Section 6 of this report.

Due to rounding of numbers to one decimal point and some respondents selecting more than one response to some questions, the total percentages for each question do not always equal 100%. Due to some questionnaires not being fully completed by respondents, and others submitting written responses to certain questions only, the number of total responses to each question may vary.

In total 108 questionnaires and nine other written responses were returned to CfBT Schools Trust. Of the questionnaire responses returned, 68.2% were from parents/carers of primary-aged children and 51.4% were from local residents.

Questions 1 and 2 asked for background information / contact details of each respondent.

Out of the 108 respondents, 86 completed this section. Of these:

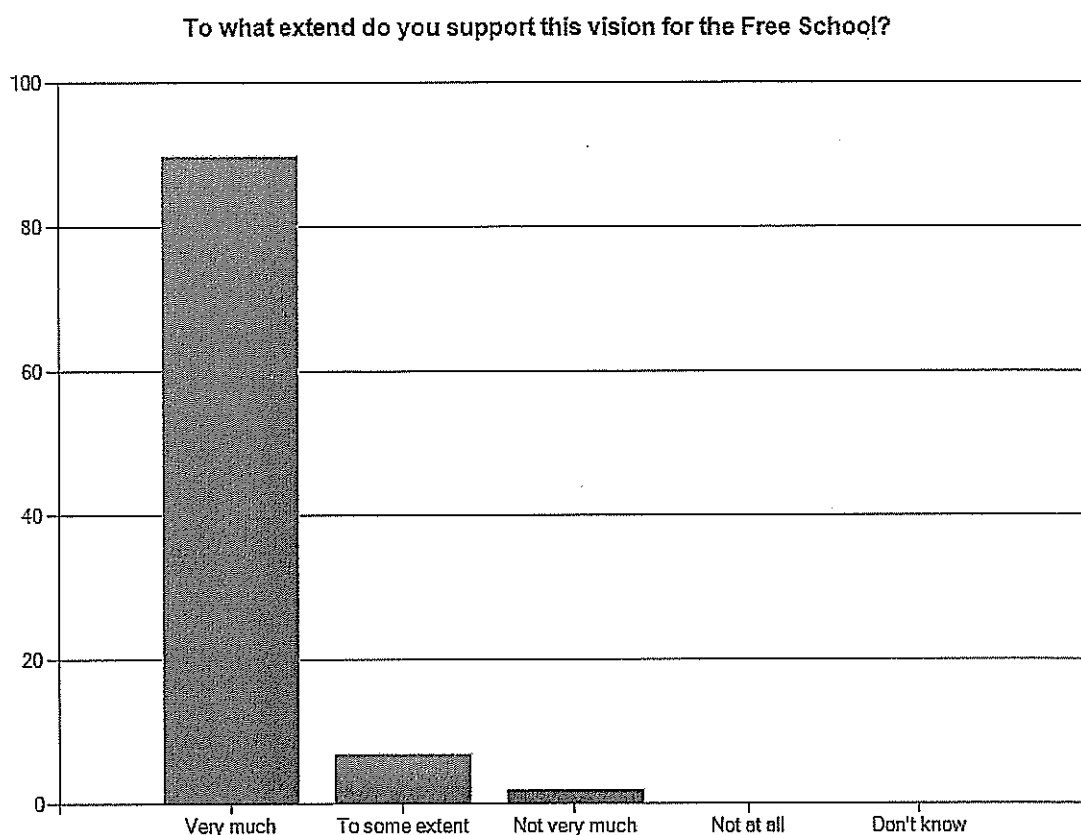
- 73 (68.2%) of the respondents who completed our survey were a parent/carer of a pupil at a Primary School;
- 4 (3.7%) of the respondents who completed our survey were a parent/carer of a pupil at a Secondary School;
- 3 (2.8%) of the respondents who completed our survey were governors at a Primary School;
- 2 (1.9%) of the respondents who completed our survey were governors at a Secondary school;
- 10 (9.3%) of the respondents who completed our survey were a member of staff at a Primary School;
- 5 (4.7%) of the respondents who completed our survey were a member of staff at a Secondary School;
- 55 (51.4%) of the respondents who completed our survey were local residents;
- 3 (2.8%) of the respondents who completed our survey were local councillors;
- 7 (6.5%) of the respondents who completed our survey were other interested parties.

Question 3 asked to what extent respondents supported the proposed vision for the Free School – which was stated as:

Oakbank aims to be an outstanding and happy school where all children are empowered, through knowledge and self-confidence, to take responsibility for themselves and their community.

A total of 99 people responded to this question; of these 98% were supportive or very supportive of the proposed vision for Oakbank.

Summary of Responses



- 90 (90.9%) of the respondents said they very much support the vision
- 7 (7.1%) of the respondents said they support it to some extent
- 2 (2%) of the respondents said they do not support the vision very much
- 0 (0%) of the respondents said not at all.
- 0 (0%) of respondents said they don't know

13 respondents chose to include additional comments why they supported the proposed vision. Comments made included:

- *'There is a genuine need for high quality secondary education provision in the area.'*
- *'It will help create a sense of community in the local area.'*
- *'The school is exactly what the area and my child need.'*

Only one of the two respondents who did not support the vision made a comment as follows:

- *'The aspirations of the school are laudable but being an outstanding school is awarded from hard work and results not aspirations.'*

What we will do as a result of this feedback

On the basis of this feedback, there is evidence of strong support from the majority of stakeholders for the school's proposed vision. The school's Shadow Governing Body (CST and WoWPG) will therefore continue to work closely with our newly appointed Principal Designate and other members of staff as they come on board, to ensure we are able to deliver this vision for the school.

We will continue to communicate progress in all areas of development to prospective parents and other interested stakeholders via our website and monthly e-newsletter.

We will also be holding a series of further information/open days to update everyone on the progress being made towards our opening of the school in September. The first of these will be held in early March 2012.

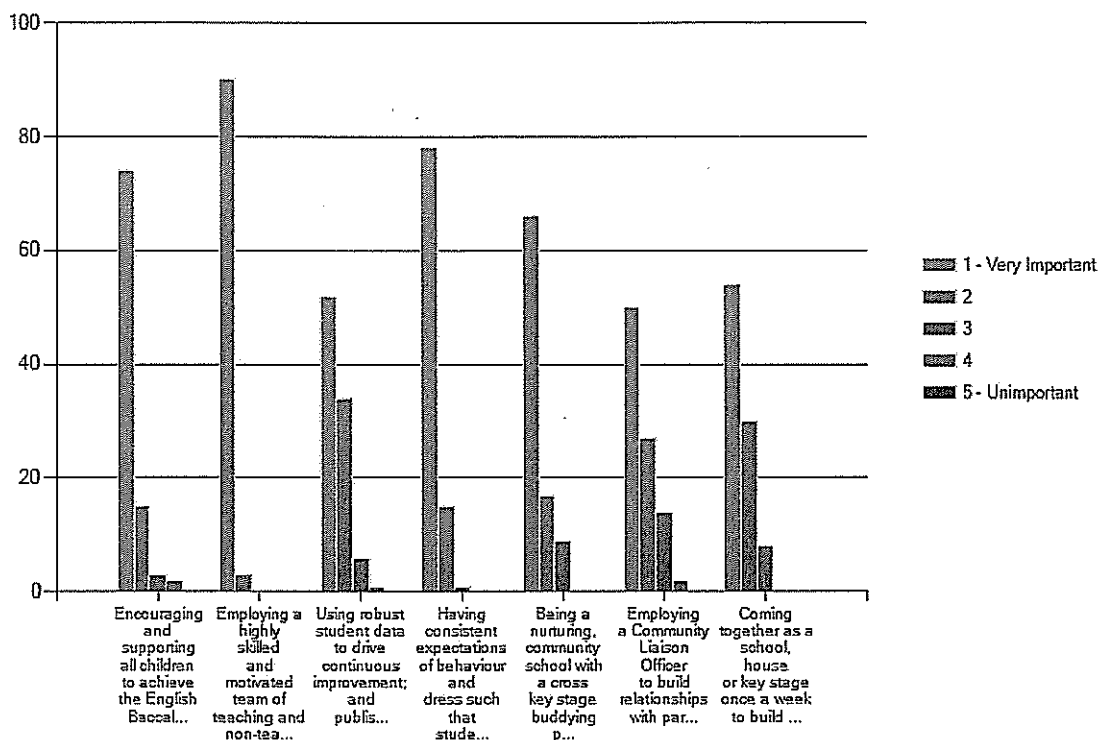
Question 4 asked respondents to indicate how important they felt the proposed features of the school would be in terms of its achieving its vision.

A total of 94 people responded to this question. They ranked the proposed features in the following order of importance:

1. Employing a highly skilled and motivated team of teaching and non-teaching staff who share the school's vision and are committed to achieving high aspirations for all students; 100% of respondents ranked these features as important or very important;
2. Having consistent expectations of behaviour and dress such that students take pride in themselves and their school, and are known locally for their courtesy and manners; 99% of respondents ranked these features as important or very important.
3. Encouraging and supporting all children to achieve the English Baccalaureate (GCSE at grade C or above in English, mathematics, a modern foreign language, at least two science subjects and a humanities subject) and as a minimum expecting all students to achieve a grade C in English and mathematics at GCSE; 94.7% of respondents ranked these features as important or very important;
4. Using robust student data to drive continuous improvement and publishing an annual impact report; 92.5% of respondents ranked these features as important or very important;
5. Coming together as a school, house or key stage once a week to build and continually reinforce the sense of shared endeavour and success; 91.3% of respondents ranked these features as important or very important;
6. Being a nurturing, community school with a cross key stage buddying programme, strong and competitive house system and mixed ability tutor groups; 90.2% of respondents ranked these features as important or very important;
7. Employing a Community Liaison Officer to build relationships with parents and carers, local employers and groups, and to arrange character, community and aspiration-building trips targeted at each student's particular strengths and needs; 82.8% of respondents ranked these features as important or very important.

Summary of Responses

Oakbank aims to achieve its vision in a number of ways. On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very important and 5 is unimportant, please indicate how important you think each feature is in terms of achieving this vision.



Summary of each question and score allocated

1. Encouraging and supporting all children to achieve the English Baccalaureate, and as a minimum expecting all students to achieve a grade C in English and mathematics at GCSE				
1 – Very Important	2	3	4	5 – Unimportant
74	15	3	2	0
78.7%	16%	3.2%	2.1%	0%
2. Employing a highly skilled and motivated team of teaching and non-teaching staff who share the school's vision and are committed to achieving high aspirations for all students				
1 – Very Important	2	3	4	5 – Unimportant
90	3	0	0	0
96.8%	3.2%	0%	0%	0%
3. Using robust student data to drive continuous improvement; and publishing an annual impact report				
1 – Very Important	2	3	4	5 – Unimportant
52	34	6	1	0
55.9%	36.6%	6.5%	1.1%	0%

4. Having consistent expectations of behaviour and dress such that students take pride in themselves and their school, and are known locally for their courtesy and manners				
1 – Very Important	2	3	4	5 – Unimportant
78	15	1	0	0
83%	16%	1.1%	0%	0%
5. Being a nurturing, community school with a cross key stage buddying programme, strong and competitive house system and mixed ability tutor groups				
1 – Very Important	2	3	4	5 – Unimportant
66	17	9	0	0
71.7%	18.5%	9.8%	0%	0%
6. Employing a Community Liaison Officer to build relationships with parents and carers, local employers and groups, and to arrange character, community and aspiration-building trips targeted at each student's particular strengths and needs				
1 – Very Important	2	3	4	5 – Unimportant
50	27	14	2	0
53.8%	29%	15.1%	2.2%	0%
7. Coming together as a school, house or key stage once a week to build and continually reinforce the sense of shared endeavour and success				
1 – Very Important	2	3	4	5 – Unimportant
54	30	8	0	0
58.7%	32.6%	8.7%	0%	0%

A number of respondents took the opportunity to highlight in the comments section what school characteristics were important to them; some examples are shown below:

- *'I would like all Oakbank pupils to be actively encouraged to have a positive attitude towards learning and enjoy attending school. I would like this school to be a strong community hub. I would also like each child to be stretched to reach his or her full potential, whatever that level is.'*
- *'Building a school that exceeds the expectations of parents is a key element to people wishing to live in Shinfield and the surrounding area.'*
- *'Preparing school leavers to cope with adult life in terms of further education and/or training and employment, financial literacy and civic awareness.'*
- *'Frequent opportunities for parents to receive feedback or discuss the progress of their child.'*

What we will do as a result of this feedback

These results demonstrate strong support for our proposed approach to achieving our vision for the school and its pupils.

We have appointed the school Principal, who has been working with the school's Shadow Governing Body since the start of January on a consultancy basis and will be taking up his appointment full time from the beginning of June. Other senior roles have recently been advertised and we hope to have all teaching staff appointed by Easter 2012. Staff will all be expected to attend a series of visits to the school before it opens and participate in a two-day induction workshop to ensure they are committed to, and able to deliver on, the school's vision.

All pupils joining Oakbank will be expected to sign a pupil-school promise, as will their parents. These promises clearly set out the school's expectations of their behaviour and how any unacceptable behaviour will be dealt with. The school's ethos puts a strong emphasis on the role of the Form Tutor and the house system to ensure clear expectations for pupil behaviour are set and managed. All tutors will receive training as required in effective behaviour management.

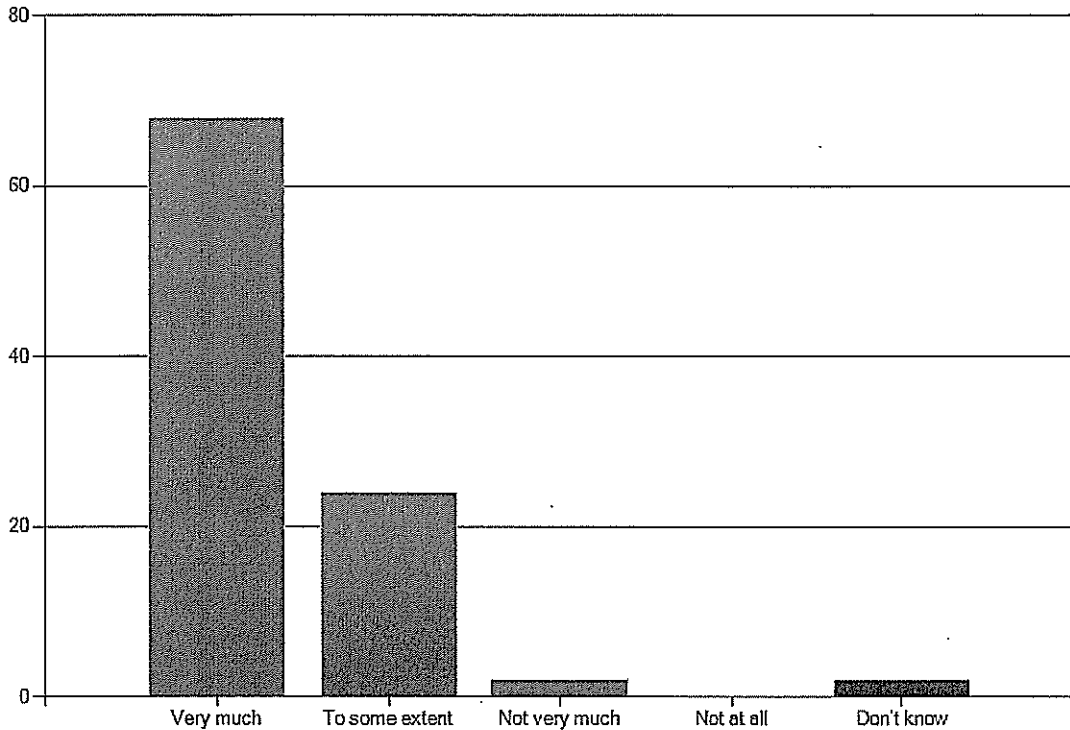
The Principal is currently working on the school's curriculum plan to ensure we have the best staff team in place to deliver the planned curriculum. Not just delivering high standards in English, mathematics and science, but also in wider aspects of the curriculum, for example the Arts, Sports and Technology.

Question 5 asked respondents to what extent they supported the proposed academic focus of the school's curriculum.

A total of 96 people responded to this question. Of these only 4 (4.2%) said they did not support or were not sure whether or not they supported the proposed academic focus of the school's curriculum.

Summary of Responses

To what extent do you support the proposed academic focus of the school's curriculum?



- 68 (70.8%) of the respondents said they very much supported the academic focus of the school's curriculum
- 24 (25%) of the respondents said they supported the academic focus of the school's curriculum to some extent
- 2 (2.1%) of the respondents said they did not really support the academic focus of the school's curriculum
- None (0%) of the respondents said Not at all
- 2 (2.1%) of the respondents said they didn't know if they supported the academic focus of the school's curriculum.

19 of the respondents to this question chose to make additional comments why they did or did not support the proposed academic focus of the school. Ten of these comments were made by respondents who were supportive of the proposal and included comments such as:

- *'Starting with getting the basics spot on is vital.'*
- *'with a good foundation in the core subjects other learning is made easier.'*

Other comments were made by respondents who were not supportive of the proposal and included comments such as:

- *'The curriculum, as outlined, appears very prescriptive and rather limited compared to that available in neighbouring schools. Not to have a vocational pathway seems strangely at odds with the notion of an inclusive community school.'*

- *'The focus on such high academic achievement is at odds with the vision of a good education for all in the west of Wokingham area. Those parents with such high academic aspirations will be looking, in the first place, towards the grammar schools.'*

A further five respondents who were generally supportive of the proposal said they would welcome further clarification with regard to the curriculum to be delivered at the school.

What will we do as a result of this feedback

We will work with our principal designate on the detailed planning of the curriculum taking into account the specific feedback about the need to offer a broad and balanced curriculum to all pupils, in particular to ensure the curriculum is accessible and appropriate for those for whom a purely academic curriculum may not be suited. This will include the provision of subjects covering the arts, technology and sports which will be available to all pupils.

We have also revised the proposed timetable to give more time to Science and Modern Foreign Languages (MfL) and slightly less to English and Mathematics. We have also decided all pupils will have the same allocation of subject lessons.

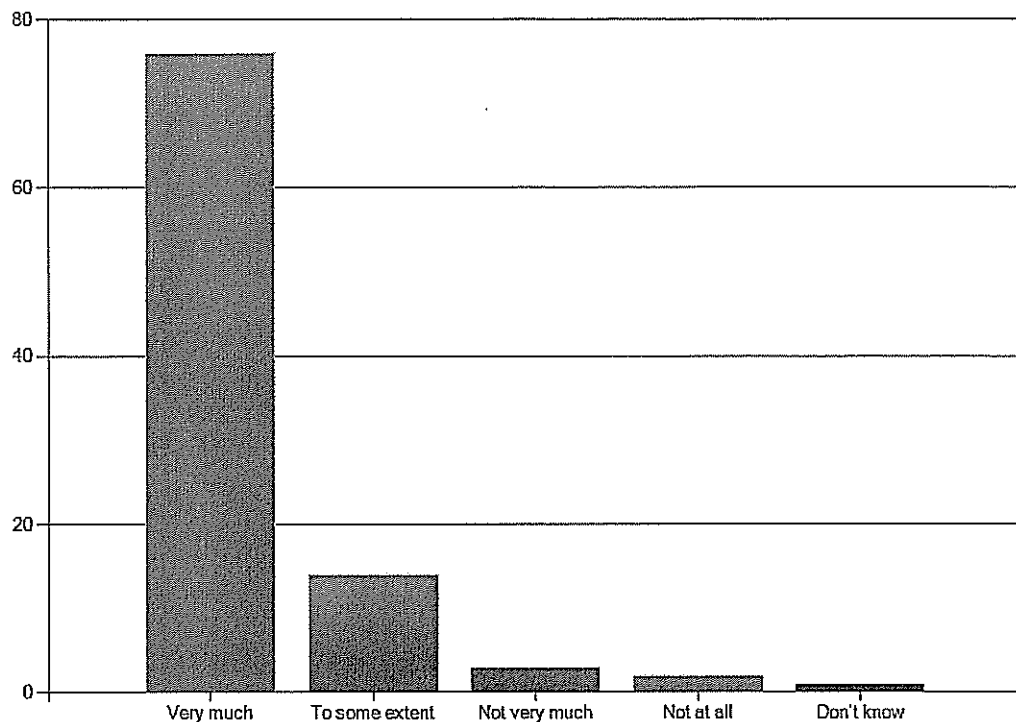
Question 6 asked respondents how in favour they were of the proposal to use the former Ryeish Green school site for the new Oakbank Free School.

A total of 96 respondents answered this question. Of these 93.8% said they were in favour or very much in favour of this location for the new school.

Summary of Responses

- 76 (79.2%) of the respondents said they are very much in favour of this location
- 14 (14.6%) of the respondents said they are in favour to some extent
- 3 (3.1%) of the respondents said they are not really in favour of this location
- 2 (2.1%) of the respondents said they are not at all in favour of this location
- 1 (1%) of the respondents said they do not know if they are in favour.

How in favour of this location are you?



29 respondents chose to make additional comments with regard to why they did or did not support the proposed location.

21 of the comments were made by those who supported the proposed location and included statements such as:

- *'This would be a perfect site. A large number of children would be able to walk or cycle to school. There are already a good number of established school buildings which could be made good use of and would cost a lot less than building a brand new school.'*
- *'From a catchment perspective it is ideal and very much needed. Less open-minded people will of course still refer to it as "the new Ryeish Green" but if all that is proposed is upheld at Oakbank, this hopefully should quickly be diminished.'*
- *'It's at the heart of the community, is easily accessible and sustainable as the buildings already exist. With the proposed development south of the M4 there is a great opportunity to increase catchment and obtain additional funding via the Section 106 contribution from the developers.'*

Eight of the comments were made by people who were less supportive of the proposed site. These comments included statements such as:

- *'The site is aged and in poor condition. The Strategic Plan for Wokingham clearly identifies the need to build a new secondary school for the Borough – rather than occupy a site associated with a school that was shunned by the local populace and is in out of date accommodation.'*

What we will do as a result of this feedback

On the basis of these results we believe that the majority of stakeholder's feel, as we do, that the former Ryeish Green school site is the best location for the new secondary free school. It provides the best value-for-money solution for the Government as well as creating a community facility that is currently missing in the local area.

The school's Shadow Governing Body and the Principal are working closely with Partnerships for Schools (PfS) to negotiate the lease of the school site from Wokingham Borough Council. In the meantime a number of site visits have already taken place with the PfS Technical Adviser team, which includes an architect who is starting to draw up some plans for the site. PfS will help us ensure we make the most effective use of the current facilities and can create a high quality teaching and learning environment for the new school population.

We acknowledge that opening the school on the site of a former school creates some potential image problems but we are very clear that this is a new school with a new vision, ethos, curriculum and student group. We are determined to work closely with pupils, parents, the local community and staff to ensure that Oakbank's reputation is exemplary and the school becomes the number one choice of secondary education for local parents.

Question 7 asked how in favour respondents were of each of the proposed, non-statutory, admissions criteria.

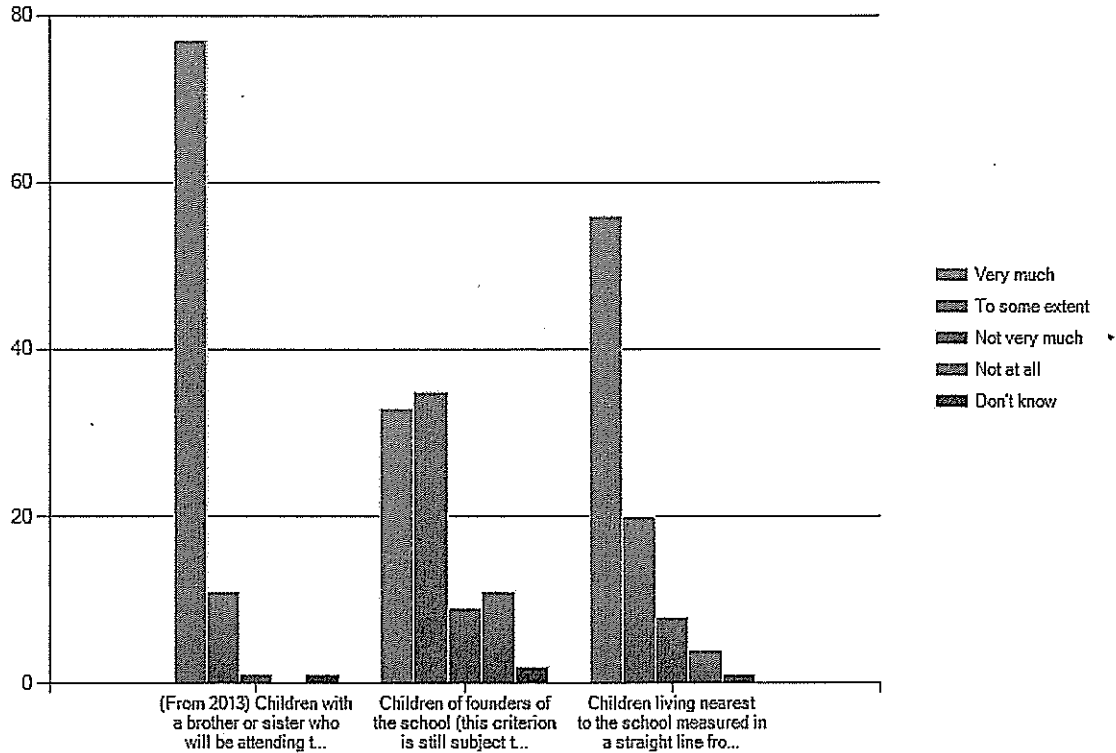
A total of 90 respondents answered one or more parts of this question. The proposal to accept siblings as a priority received almost universal support 97.8% (88 responses) and 68 (75.6%) respondents supported giving founders' children priority.

Summary of Responses

1. (From 2013) Children with a brother or sister who will be attending the school at the time of proposed admission. The children concerned must be living at the same address.				
Very much	To some extent	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know
77	11	1	0	1
85.6%	12.2%	1.1%	0%	1%
2. Children of founders of the school (this criterion is still subject to approval by the Secretary of State for Education)				
Very much	To some extent	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know
33	35	9	11	2
36.7%	38.9%	10%	12.2%	2.2%
3. Children living nearest to the school measured in a straight line from the child's home to the main entrance of the school (travel by private car or public transport is not taken into account) in line with proportion drawn from three segments: 1) Shinfield segment (30% of total places), 2) Grazeley and Three Mile Cross segment (30% of total places), 3) Spencers Wood and Swallowfield segment (40% of total places). Please see map in Appendix C				

Very much	To some extent	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know
56	20	8	4	1
62.9%	22.5%	9%	4.5%	1.1%

How in favour are you of each of the proposed, non statutory, admissions criterion?



22 respondents chose to make additional comments in relation to this question.

Comments generally related to the following themes:

- **Catchment area**

Overall feelings were very mixed as to where the school should draw its pupils from, with one group of respondents' arguing strongly that the school should offer the majority of its places to children living in the villages in the west of the Wokingham borough and revert to the original proposal to specific attendance at one of the five local feeder schools within the subscription criteria; and with another smaller group arguing that the school should cater more directly for children living to the north of the borough, in particular those living in Lower Earley who also have difficulty accessing a local secondary school.

We were advised by the Department for Education (DfE) that it was not lawful within the terms of the Schools Admissions Code to name the five village feeder schools, and that our admissions area should cover communities to the north of the M4 for whom Oakbank would be their nearest school. However, we were also strongly against the introduction of a simple distance-from-school criteria as the basis of place allocation as this criteria does not work well in rural settings and would fail to address the primary reason behind applying to open this school – namely to provide a viable, local secondary option for those families living in the west of the Wokingham borough.

As a result of these two factors and in consultation with the DfE, we developed the proposed to develop a segment solution to the allocation of pupil places.

- **Segment boundaries and pupil allocations**

As with the issue above, comments tended to be polarised, with one group of respondents arguing for a greater allocation of places to the Shinfield/South Reading/Lower Earley segment and others for more places to the Spencers Wood/Swallowfield segment. Unfortunately, given the need for secondary school places in the local area, Oakbank will not be able to accommodate all local pupils but believes the current admissions proposal allows for access for the widest group of children possible, given its proposed size and location.

The number of places allocated to each segment will be reviewed by the school's Governing Body year on year and adjustments made as required. The large-scale housing developments planned for Shinfield, Three Mile Cross and Spencers Wood will impact significantly on the school in the future, as will Wokingham Borough Council's plans to relocate Emmbrook School to the Arborfield Garrison site and to create additional pupil places linked to the housing developments on that site.

- **Founders' children**

A large number of respondents felt that given the time and commitment the founders have contributed to the creation of the school, the criteria to allow founder's children priority was reasonable. A small number felt very strongly that founders should not receive priority when accessing places at the school over other local families. As stated on the consultation leaflet this oversubscription criterion is still subject to the approval of the Secretary of State for Education at both a national and Oakbank level and will only be applied if approval is granted. If enforced, the criterion will only apply to five families and a maximum of six pupils over a period of two years. We would be happy to supply details of those founders affected by such a clause if approved.

What we will do as a result of this feedback

On the basis of these results we seek approval from the Secretary of State for the proposed admission arrangements. However, in response to some comments received we have sought to provide greater clarity regarding where the segment boundaries fall and have proposed that we follow, where possible, major roadways to define the segments. Please see Appendix C for more details of the new proposed segment boundaries. We have also added an outer limit to the segments at a radial distance of four miles from the school.

We will, depending on the outcomes of the Secretary of State for Education's decision regarding founders' children, confirm or amend our proposed oversubscription criterion.

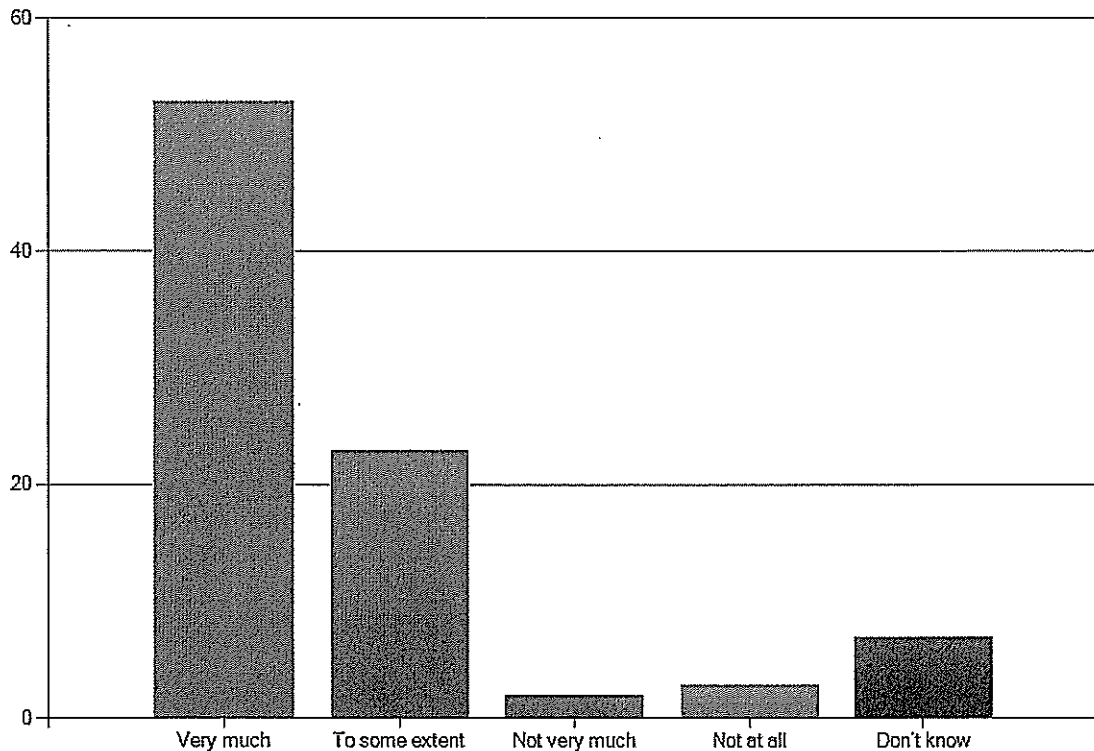
We have sought to provide further clarification of some of the terminology used in our Admissions Document, e.g. 'siblings' and the process we would apply if one or more segment was under-subscribed or a tie-break arose between the application of two pupils equally weighted under our oversubscription criteria. See Appendix B for further details.

Question 8 asked respondents to what extent they agreed with the proposal to admit 84 pupils to Year 7 in 2012 and in 112 pupils in subsequent years.

A total of 88 people answered this question. Of these 86.3% agreed to some extent or were very supportive of the proposal.

Summary of Responses

The proposal is that Oakbank admits 84 pupils to Year 7 in 2012 and in subsequent years 112 pupils. To what extent do you agree with this plan?



- 53 (60.2%) of the respondents very much agreed with the admission numbers plan
- 23 (26.1%) of the respondents agreed to some extent with the admission numbers plan
- 2 (2.3%) of the respondents did not really agree with the admission numbers plan
- 3 (3.4%) of the respondents didn't agree at all with the admission numbers plan
- 7 (8%) of the respondents didn't know if they agreed with the admission numbers plan

16 respondents chose to make a comment in support of their response to this question. Nine of the comments received were made by those supportive of the proposed admission numbers and included statements such as:

- *'I would be greatly discouraged if it were to be any more, as even a school with the best of intentions (such as Oakbank) faces difficulties in maintaining such standards when there are ever growing pupil attendance.'*
- *'I think a smaller school is much better for the local community.'*

A further seven comments were received from respondents who did not agree with the proposed pupil numbers and included statements such as:

- *'In my view at three forms of entry the school will struggle to provide a high quality, well-rounded education, support and opportunities. Attracting and retaining quality teachers will be a challenge.'*
- *'This number may be too low with all of the planned development and the existing growth in numbers of children.'*

What we will do as a result of this feedback

On the basis of this feedback we will offer 84 Year 7 places to our first cohort of pupils who will start at the school in September 2012, and increase this offer to 112 in 2013.

We will work with the new Principal Designate to ensure we can attract the highest-calibre staff to the school by promoting the merits of working in a small school, and ensure that as a team they have the skills and attributes required to deliver our planned curriculum and wider school vision. We will work with prospective parents to ensure they fully understand what Oakbank is offering them and their child(ren) and be clear about the benefits and disadvantages of selecting a smaller school. We will work closely with the local community to ensure the support they have offered the school enables us to provide a rich and varied educational experience for all pupils.

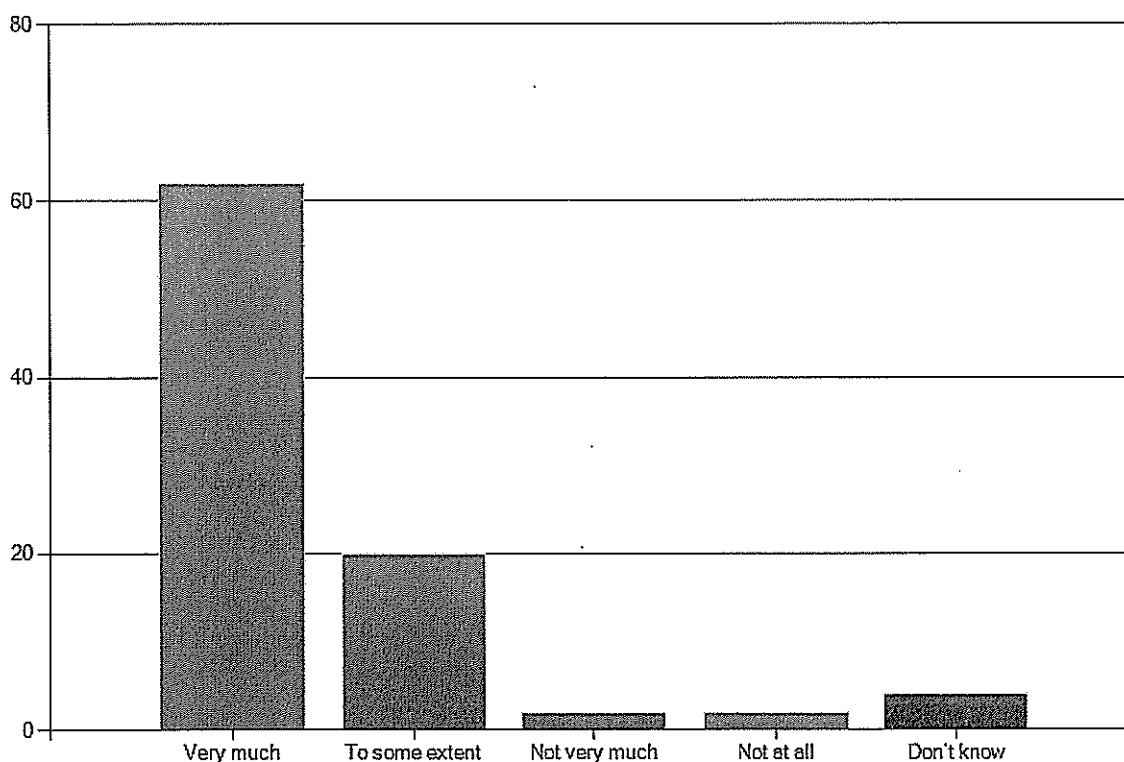
Question 9 asked respondents to what extent they supported the proposal to limit pupil numbers to 112 (4 forms of entry) per year group from 2013 to ensure it can deliver on its vision of being a small, nurturing community school.

A total of 90 respondents answered this question; of these only 8 (8.8%) did not agree with the proposal.

Summary of Responses

- 62 (68.9%) of the respondents very much agreed with the limit of 112 per year group.
- 20 (22.2%) of the respondents agreed to some extent with the limit of 112 per year group.
- 2 (2.2%) of the respondents do not really agree very much with the limit of 112 per year group.
- 2 (2.2%) of the respondents do not agree at all with the limit of 112 per year group.
- 4 (4.4%) of the respondents don't know if they agree with the limit of 112 per year group.

One of the key characteristics of Oakbank is that it will be a small, nurturing community school. To achieve this aim we plan to limit pupils numbers to 112 (4 forms of entry) per year group from 2013. To what extent to you agree with this plan?



16 respondents chose to make a comment in support of their response to this question. Nine of the comments received were made by those supportive of the proposed size of the school and included statements such as:

- *'this allows it to remain a small, nurturing community school'*
- *'this should ensure the school really will be a "local" school'*
- *'the impact on traffic congestion should not be too unpleasant'.*

A further seven comments were received from respondents who did not agree with the proposed size of the school and included statements such as:

- *'will limit aspects of a broad and balanced curriculum'*
- *'four groups at entry is still quite small and larger numbers would allow for greater choice of options at KS4'*
- *'as of 2015 there is a huge increase in the number of children in the villages, before any further housing is built. It may be necessary to increase the numbers to 6FE'.*

What we will do as a result of this feedback

On the basis of this feedback we will continue with our proposal to manage Oakbank as a four form entry school.

We will work closely with the local community to ensure the support they have offered the school enables us to provide a rich and varied educational experience for all pupils.

We will ensure all pupils not only receive a broad and balanced curriculum during the core school day but also have access to varied and interesting extra-curricular activities at the school, led by school staff and other specialist providers such as local sports and music coaches/tutors.

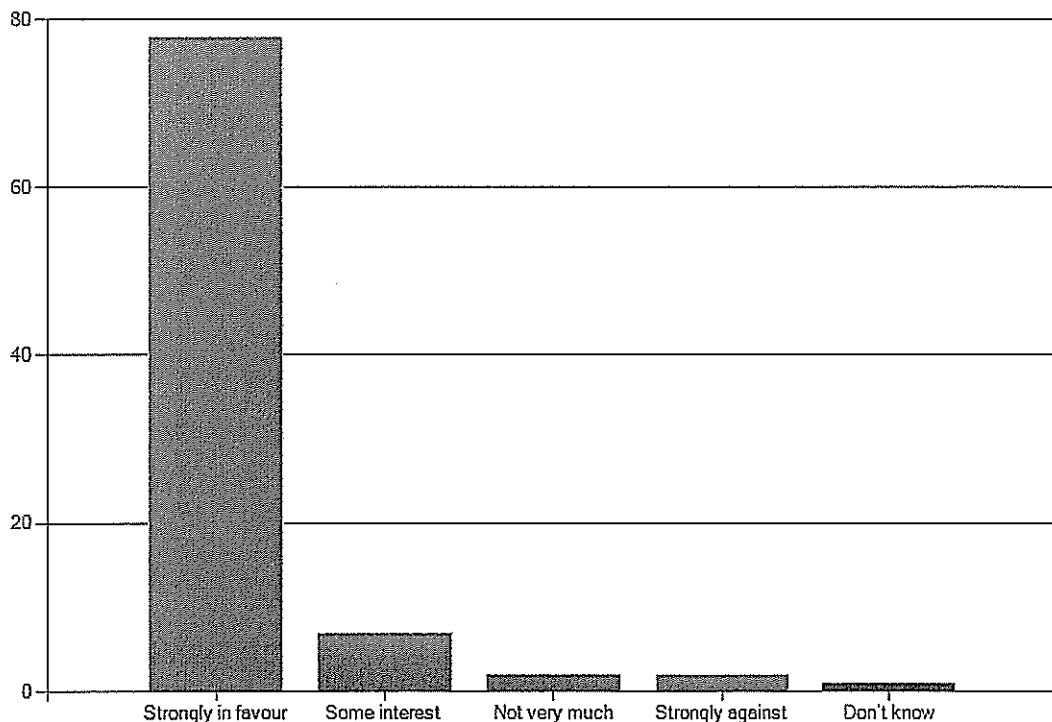
As the local population grows as a consequence of new housing development, we will review our pupil numbers and consider, if supported by public opinion (via a formal consultation exercise), putting in an application to the Secretary of State for Education to increase our pupil admission numbers i.e. to become a 5FE or 6FE school. To a great extent any decision to expand will also be affected by Wokingham Borough's current plans to relocate Emmbrook School to the Arborfield Garrison site and create additional local secondary school places.

Question 10 asked to what extent respondents were in favour of the proposal overall for Oakbank Secondary Free School as set out in the consultation document.

A total of 90 respondents answered this question; of these 94.5% had some interest in or were very strongly in favour of the proposal.

Summary of Responses

Overall, to what extent are you in favour of the proposal for Oakbank secondary Free School as set out in the consultation document?



- 78 (86.7%) of the respondents were strongly in favour of the proposal for Oakbank Secondary Free School
- 7 (7.8%) of the respondents had some interest in the proposal for Oakbank Secondary Free School

- 2 (2.2%) of the respondents were not very interested in the proposal for Oakbank Secondary Free School
- 2 (2.2%) of the respondents were strongly against the proposal for Oakbank Secondary Free School
- 1 (1.1%) of the respondents didn't know if they were in favour of the proposal for Oakbank Secondary Free School.

Seven respondents chose to submit comments supporting their response to this question.

Five of the comments made were from those respondents who supported the free school proposal, with statements including:

- *'A real boost for the area'*
- *'It is exactly what the area needs!'*
- *'I agree with quality and not quantity and hope that it will still be a very good school even if the pupil numbers are less.'*

A further two comments were received from respondents who were not in favour of the proposal. These individuals felt:

- *Having had two sons recently out of secondary education I would need persuading that a small secondary would meet their needs. If I were at this stage again, it would be a large risk sending my children to the school. Children only get one chance at schooling and it's a risk I would want to minimise.*
- *The teachers will probably teach in two or more curriculum areas. In larger neighbouring schools the vast majority of teachers are able to focus on a single curriculum area and this in turn impacts on the quality of student outcomes.'*

What we will do as a result of this feedback

We are very encouraged by the overall level of commitment to the new school proposal by all stakeholders, and will therefore, subject to the outcomes of the Phase 2 consultation, move towards the signing of a Funding Agreement with the Secretary of State for Education.

In the meantime we will continue to work with those stakeholders who have particular concerns with aspects of our proposal to ensure, where possible, we can address their concerns. We will continue to work very closely with our prospective parents, local schools (primary and secondary), community groups, local authorities and Parish councils to ensure the new school can deliver on its promises and add real value both educationally and socially to the local area.

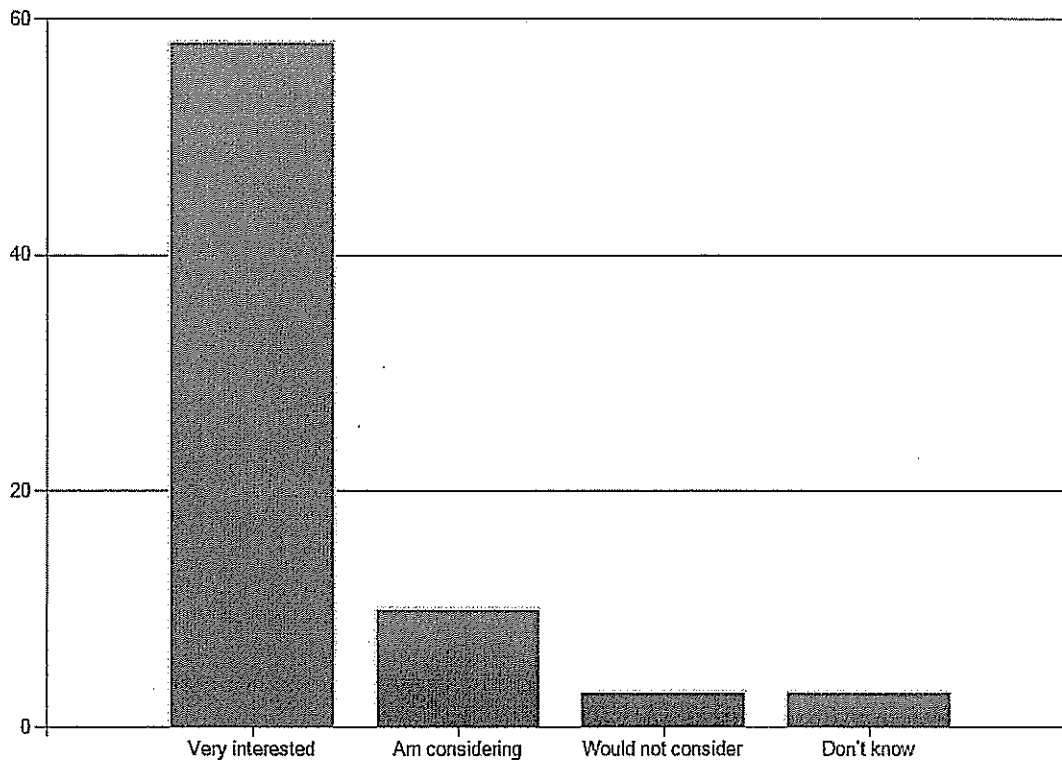
Question 11 asked: If relevant, how interested would you be in sending your child/children to Oakbank?

Of the 74 people who responded to this question, 91.9% said they would be interested in sending their child(ren) to the school.

Summary of Responses

- 58 (78.4%) of the respondents were very interested in sending their child/children to Oakbank
- 10 (13.5%) of the respondents were considering sending their child/children to Oakbank
- 3 (4.1%) of the respondents would not consider sending their child/children to Oakbank
- 3 (4.1%) of the respondents didn't know if they would consider sending their child/children to Oakbank.

If relevant, how interested would you be in sending your child/children to Oakbank?

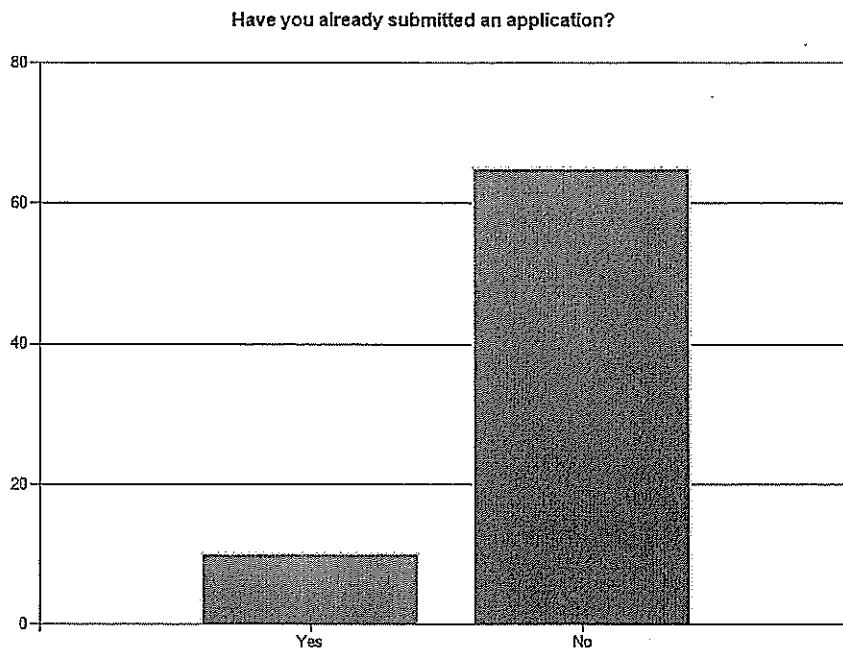


What we will do as a result of this feedback

This response demonstrates a strong pipeline of future students for Oakbank. We will ensure we work closely with these families both directly and via the feeder schools to ensure they are well informed about developments and achievements at Oakbank and that they have all the information required to decide whether or not Oakbank is the right school for their child(ren) in the future.

Question 12 asked those who responded positively to Question 11 above whether or not they had already submitted an application for a place at the school.

A total of 75 people answered this question, of these 65 (86.7%) said they had not submitted an application at this stage.



Question 13. In which calendar year would your child/children start at the school?

A total of 67 people answered this question 13; nine of these respondents are planning to send their children to Oakbank in September this year (2012). A total of five respondents' children do not require a place at Oakbank and the remaining 53 hope their child will be accepted into Oakbank within the next five years.

Question 14 invited respondents to make any further comments they had regarding the Oakbank proposal.

A total of 33 respondents entered additional comments in this section. Many positive comments and messages of support for the school were submitted with the questionnaire and included comments such as these below:

- *'We wholeheartedly support and have helped with this Application throughout the entire process. We have no doubt that this school will be a wonderful and inspiring institution.'*
- *'I am fully supportive of the proposal and believe that a genuine need exists for high quality secondary education provision in the area to the west of Wokingham. The proposed site will give a new lease of life to a range of purpose-built, very accessible school buildings set in a convenient and pleasant rural location. It is an ideal setting for a new school with a new vision.'*

Respondents generally used this section of the questionnaire to comment on the admission arrangements and the curriculum. The concerns raised were mainly related to the catchment areas and how this affects the admission criteria. For example:

- *'I think the admission criteria need to be clearer as I have read the criteria as that possibly, if there is high applications in future, children in Arborfield, Farley Hill and Swallowfield may not get a place as children applying from Lower Earley etc would??? Surely this is not your intention. I was considering this school but now may not.'*
- *'West Berkshire schools are concerned about the admission arrangements for 2012/2013, which are being arranged outside of the coordinated admissions round, and this may have a detrimental impact on pupils and families.'*

Section 5: Other consultation feedback

In addition to the 108 online consultation questionnaires returned we also received nine written responses to the consultation, three of these were from local secondary schools, two from local authority officers, one from a local parish council, one from a local developer, one from a member of the local community and one from a parent from Lower Earley. These respondents felt that the online questionnaire had not allowed them to comment in sufficient detail on areas of particular concern.

Eight of the letters/emails were critical of one or more aspects of our proposal – one was very supportive.

The letters covered the following specific issues:

1. The technical application of the Admissions Code.
2. The proposed allocation of pupil places across the west and north of the Borough.
3. The limitations of the proposed curriculum due to its academic focus and the small size of the school.
4. The strategic need/lack of strategic need for additional secondary school places in the Borough.

Further details of the points made by the respondents can be made available on request.

Section 6: Questions and answers for key issues raised during consultation process

Q. What will the total school population be when it is fully operational? The consultation booklet suggested the school will grow to accommodate up to 800 pupils which seems high given you are only proposing 4 forms of entry each year?

A. We apologise that this figure was misleading. If the school stays as a 4FE school it would only accommodate about 560 pupils at full capacity without a sixth form and 700-750 pupils with one, which is less than stated in the consultation leaflet.

Q. Is the inclusion of the founders' children oversubscription criterion permissible within the current Admissions Code?

A. As stated on the consultation leaflet this oversubscription criterion is still subject to the approval of the Secretary of State for Education at both a national and Oakbank level and will only be applied if approval is granted. If enforced, the criterion will only apply to five families and a maximum of six pupils over a period of two years.

Q. Is the use of segments permissible within the current Admissions Code?

A. We discussed this proposal with the Department for Education who advised us that the use of segments and percentages within those segments are lawful within the terms of the schools Admission Code.

Q. Why can't you apply simple 'distance from school' criteria in determining who is allocated places at Oakbank?

A. CfBT School Trust (CST) and the West of Wokingham Parent Group (WoWPG) did not want to apply simple radial distance oversubscription criteria as this does not work well in rural settings. Doing so would put those families living in the villages to the west of the Wokingham borough at the same disadvantage when trying to access a place at Oakbank as they currently find with regard to other Wokingham Borough schools. They believe the adoption of the proposed segment approach balances the need to provide children south of the motorway with a viable local secondary school option whilst also providing those who live north of the motorway with an additional choice of schools to consider.

Q. What alternatives to the distance criteria (in the case of oversubscription) have been considered by Oakbank and why are they not being proposed?

A. We considered a number of alternative oversubscription criteria for the school before settling on the segment option.

- We looked at creating a catchment (designated area) which ran south of the M4 and covered all the west of Wokingham villages. However, we were advised by the DfE that this would not be permissible as it excluded children from north of the motorway for whom Oakbank would be their nearest school.
- We looked at naming feeders schools in the west of Wokingham but again were advised by the DfE that this would not be lawful within the terms of the school's Admission Code.
- We looked at applying a straight line distance from school but felt this would disadvantage west of Wokingham village children over Reading/north Wokingham borough children and replicate the problems created by all other schools currently applying this criteria i.e. west of Wokingham families having problems gaining a place at a local secondary school.

Q. What will happen if one or more segment is under subscribed?

A. In the case of one or more segments being undersubscribed remaining places will be allocated to the other segments in line with the original proportions allocated, for example if the Grazeley/Three Mile Cross segment is undersubscribed by seven places, four of the remaining places will be allocated to the Spencers Wood/ Swallowfield segment and three to the Shinfield/Earley/south Reading segment.

Q. Why do the proposed catchment segments have no outer boundaries?

A. We have now set an outer boundary limit at four miles. Families living beyond this boundary will still be able to apply for places at the school but will be covered by the oversubscription criteria: Other applicants.

Q. Please explain how the weightings across the segments were derived, and show how they are linked to the population of children of relevant age within each of the segments and the access to other secondary provision within reasonable travelling distance.

A. The original idea for a free school in the west of the Wokingham borough came from a group of local parents frustrated at the lack of local secondary school places in the area following the closure of Ryeish Green School in 2010. They wanted a good quality secondary school serving the local community which would provide reduced travel times for pupils and allow them to progress to secondary school alongside their primary school friends.

Aware of the issues caused by the application of a simple 'distance from school' criterion for school admissions, which is the root cause of many of the village families' problems in gaining a place at a Wokingham borough school, Oakbank has proposed the creation of a number of segments as the basis for the allocation of school places. The rationale for the allocation of percentages within the sectors has been based on the density of housing in each sector, and the opportunity of gaining a place at another school within a reasonable distance.

The **Shinfield** segment has been allocated 30% of the available spaces on the basis that, although it serves a fairly densely populated area of north west Wokingham (including Lower Earley) and South Reading, many pupils have access to other Reading and Wokingham secondary schools including: Bulmershe; Maiden Erlegh; John Madejski Academy and Reading Girls School which are all located within a reasonable travel distance of children's homes i.e. within three miles.

The **Grazeley and Three Mile Cross** segment has been allocated 30% of the available spaces on the basis that, although it serves a much less densely populated area, these pupils are most disadvantaged when trying to secure places in any secondary school in Hampshire, West Berkshire, Wokingham or Reading owing to their relative distance from all local schools which they might look to apply to i.e. a travel distance of more than 3 miles. A further 274 houses are also already under construction in this segment, with more expected to begin by the end of the year.

The **Spencers Wood and Swallowfield** segment has been allocated 40% of the available spaces on the basis that the area is fairly densely populated, taking in a number of fairly large settlements including Arborfield/Arborfield Cross, Swallowfield and Spencers Wood and that families also find themselves with very limited choice over which secondary school they are allocated. All secondary school options, even if available, involve long travel times/distances for most children i.e. more than 3 miles.

Oakbank believes that this allocation ensures that children living near to the school will be able to attend, while also ensuring that those living in the rural area which struggle most with accessing local secondary places of their choice, have the opportunity to attend a local school.

Q. Why can't each village be in the same segment – Arborfield (around Church Lane) currently falls in two segments. Would it be possible to correct this anomaly?

A. Unfortunately however the segment lines are drawn one community or another ends up being split. We needed to ensure that segments are as near as possible of equal size. However we have now redrawn the segment boundaries so that they follow roads rather than arbitrary lines so it is clear which segment each household lies within. See map provided in section C.

Q. If the weighting of the PAN (Pupil Admission Numbers) is changed as a result of oversubscription from one segment, how will this be corrected for future years?

Like all other schools, Oakbank is able to propose changes to its admission criteria on an annual basis via a formal consultation process. If we find that our initial assumptions re segment allocations were wrong, or if significant changes in populations occur i.e. a large number of families with secondary-aged children move into new housing developments within the local area, we will certainly review and amend the current segment allocations as appropriate.

Q. Will the PAN weightings be reviewed in line with development of the various Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) that fall within the catchment area?

A. Yes, as detailed above. At present it appears that planned development will affect all segments but some more than others. However until the outcomes of any planning decisions are known it is difficult to predict the impact of any such developments accurately. Further we are advised by the developers that the housing is likely to cause a peak in demand for primary places initially and that the impact on secondary places may lag a few years behind.

Q. Why do we need this new school when there are surplus places in other schools within the Borough?

A. CfBT Schools Trust and the West of Wokingham Parent Group acknowledge that there is currently excellent education provision within the borough. However, due to the geographical location of most of the schools, families living in the west of the borough either cannot secure places at these schools, or are not happy with the long travel times they create for their children. They do not believe that Wokingham Borough Council's Core Strategy takes their needs sufficiently into account, hence their decision to submit a Free School application.

Q. What will happen to Oakbank School when the new school planned for the Arborfield Garrison site is opened?

A. CfBT Schools Trust and the West of Wokingham Parent Group believe that there will be sufficient demand for places at both Oakbank and the relocated Emmbrook School on the Arborfield Garrison site, given our stated intention to limit the size of Oakbank School and the large-scale housing developments planned for the local area. Even when built the new school will still be located at a considerable distance from some of the village families who believe Oakbank will provide a more local and community based provision for their children.

Q. Why are admissions to Oakbank being handled by the school directly and why is the process not aligned to the Wokingham Borough Council system?

Unfortunately it was not possible, owing to the timing of the Secretary of State's approval of our Free School application, to align our 2012 admissions round with that of Wokingham Borough Council. However from next year the two processes will be aligned.

Q. How will your proposed curriculum address the needs of students who are less able to cope with academic subjects?

We will work with our Principal Designate on the detailed planning of the curriculum taking into account the specific feedback about the need to offer a broad and balanced curriculum to all pupils, in particular to ensure the curriculum is accessible and appropriate for those for whom a purely academic curriculum may not be suited. This will include the provision of subjects covering the arts, technology and sports which will be available to all pupils.

We have also revised the proposed timetable to give some subjects more/less time and we have also decided all pupils will have the same allocation of subject lessons.

Section 7: Conclusion and Next Steps

On the basis of the responses received in phase 1 of the Oakbank consultation process as detailed in this report, we believe that the majority of stakeholders support both the overriding principle of setting up a new secondary free school in the West of Wokingham and for the specific characteristics of Oakbank we are proposing. Having taken into account the feedback provided we have revised certain aspects of our proposal and feel we are now in a position to move into phase two of the consultation process which asks whether or not we should now enter the funding agreement with the secretary of state to open Oakbank. This consultation phase runs from 8th to 22nd February 2012. We will continue to work with all stakeholders up to and beyond the opening of the school to address all concerns and issues, groups or individuals may have.

If you have any questions about this report or phase two consultation please contact Jayne Soanes c/o enquiries@oakbank.cfbt.com in the first instance.

Please find below a link to the second phase of the Oakbank consultation process

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/oakbank_consultation2

Appendix A: Stakeholder consultation list

1. Local primary schools

The following state primary schools received sufficient copies of the consultation leaflet for every Year 5 and 6 child in the school. These were sent home with pupils, via the pupil book bags or other means, as agreed with the individual school headteachers.

- The Ridgeway
- Whiteknights
- Hillside
- Shinfield St Mary's
- Grazeley Parochial
- Lambs Lane
- Farley Hill
- The Coombes C of E Primary

The following primary schools were offered multiple copies but did not respond to the invitation. Instead, 10 copies of the leaflets were sent to the headteacher and the chair of governors.

- Geoffrey Fields
- Whitley Park

The headteachers and chairs of governors of the following local state/non-state primary schools were also sent 10 copies each of the leaflet.

- Vine Christian School
- Sefton Park
- Crossfield School
- Christ the King School

2. Local secondary schools

The headteachers and chairs of governors of the following local state/non-state secondary schools were also sent 10 copies each of the leaflet.

- The Holt (Wokingham)
- Forest School (Wokingham)
- Maiden Erlegh (Wokingham)
- Bulmershe (Wokingham)
- Emmbrook (Wokingham)
- St Crispin's (Wokingham)
- Yateley School (Yateley – Hampshire)
- Willink School (Burghfield – West Berkshire)
- Madejski Academy (Reading)
- Leighton Park (Reading – Independent)

3. Local authorities

10–20 copies of the leaflets were sent to each of the following local authorities.

- Wokingham Borough Council (10 to the Schools Admission Team and 10 to the Strategic Commissioner for Young People)
- Reading Borough Council (10 to the Schools Admission Team and 10 to the Education Assets Manager)
- West Berkshire Council (10 to the Corporate Director for Children's Services)
- Hampshire County Council (10 to the Director of Children's Services)

4. Other stakeholders

The following groups/individuals were also send personal copies of the leaflet.

- The Right Honourable John Redwood (local MP)
- Barton Willmore – local construction consortium
- Gleeson's – local construction consortium
- Berkshire Maestros
- Shinfield Parish Council officers
- HIVE at Arborfield Garrison
- Swallowfield Preschool
- Chapel Lane Nursery
- Tree Tops Nursery
- Shinfield Infants
- Red Kite Children's Centre
- The WI
- Shinfield Volunteer Group
- Reading Rockets
- Spencers Wood Football Club
- Whiteknights Estate Agents
- Davis Tate Estate Agents

Numerous copies of the leaflet were also left in the following public service points/meeting points:

- Swallowfield Medical Practice (plus surgeries at Arborfield and Shinfield)
- Shinfield Health Centre
- Spencers Wood Library
- Cafe Active, St Michael's Church
- Shinfield Baptist Church
- Barkham Church
- St Mary's Parish Hall
- Spencers Wood Village Hall
- Swallowfield Village Hall
- Grazeley Village Hall
- Arborfield Village Hall
- Barkham Village Hall
- Anita's Hair & Beauty
- Chandlers Hair Salon
- Shinfield Post Office
- Grovelands Garden Centre
- Spencers Wood Post Office

5. Local residents

Hard copies of the leaflet were posted through the doors of all the houses in Hyde End Lane, Church Lane and the surrounding lanes.

6. WoWPG/Oakbank supporters

An email with a link to the consultation document was sent to all registered WoWPG/Oakbank supporters which includes 420 names.

7. Oakbank prospective students

An email with a link to the consultation document was sent to all (90) families who have submitted applications for places at Oakbank School in September 2012.

8. Attendance at local community events

Members of the WoWPG group attended a 'Respect' evening at Spencers Wood Football Club on 14 January where they provided information to local residents about Oakbank and the consultation process.



Oakbank

**Proposed Oakbank admission arrangements for
Year 7 students 2012-2013 only**

January 2012

Admission to Oakbank (Secondary Free School)

1. Oakbank is a publically funded, co-educational, secondary free school, sponsored by CfBT Schools Trust (CST).
2. Responsibility for the admission of pupils in 2012 rests with the School's Shadow Governing Body who are authorised to undertake this activity on behalf of CfBT Schools Trust.
3. All applications for places at the school will be considered in accordance with the arrangements set out below.

Admissions to Year 7 in September 2012

Agreed admission number

4. The school will admit 84 pupils to Year 7 in September 2012. From September 2013 the school will admit up to 112 pupils per year.

Application Form

5. Applicants for admission to Year 7 in 2012-2013 must complete the CST Oakbank application form which should be returned directly to CST.
6. The application form must be completed and returned to the CST by midnight on **19 February 2012**¹. This date takes into account the need to accept applications up to the point when formal consultation on our proposed admissions arrangements has ended.

Late applications

7. Applications received after the closing date of 19 February will be treated as 'late' applications and be considered after all on-time applications have been allocated. However, applications that are received late for a good reason will be treated as on time if received before midday on **27 February 2012**³. Such good reasons might be if illness prevented a single parent/carer from returning the form on time, or the family moved to the area after the closing date. The reason for lateness must be supported by a medical professional or documentary evidence to confirm the family move. If no evidence is provided it will be assumed that an application could have been made by the closing date and the application will not be processed until after 15 March 2012. Late applications will only be considered in exceptional circumstances and entirely at the discretion of a nominated CST Trustee and the Principal Designate, acting together on behalf of the Shadow Governing Body.
8. After 15 March and before 31 August 2012 late applications will be considered in line with the published admissions criteria. If the school is oversubscribed the pupil's name will be added to a **waiting list** in accordance with the oversubscription criteria. You will be asked if you wish your child's name to be added to/remain on the waiting list.

³ The application process for places at Oakbank from 2013 will follow standard Wokingham Borough Council timescales.

Verification of information

9. All applicants will be required to produce proof of residence (i.e. a utility bill) and an original or certified copy of a birth certificate. The Governing Body also reserves the right to seek verification from the local authority in which the applicant is resident.
10. False information, or the omission of material information, may result in disqualification or the loss of a place after it has been offered, accepted or taken up.

Offer of places

11. Letters informing applicants of the outcome of their applications will be sent by first-class post on **1 March 2012**.
12. Applicants to whom places are offered will be required to inform the Governing Body of their decision whether to accept or reject the offer by the date given in the letter of offer.

Appeals procedure

13. Parents/carers whose applications for places are unsuccessful will be given an opportunity to appeal against the decision to an Independent Appeal Panel, set up in accordance with the Statutory provisions in force at the time.
14. The determination of the appeal is binding on all parties.
15. Full details of the procedure will be sent to parents with the decision letter on 1 March 2012.
16. In addition to the right to appeal, unsuccessful applicants will be offered an opportunity to be placed on the waiting list.

Waiting list

17. After 1 March 2012 a 'waiting list' will be kept where it has not been possible to offer every child who applied a place at the school. The waiting list will be ranked according to the oversubscription criteria for the school. When a place becomes available this will be offered to the next pupil on the waiting list. Positions on the waiting list may go up or down due to student withdrawals or new arrivals and no account is taken of the length of time spent on the waiting list.
18. Waiting lists will be maintained until such time as the policy is changed, to fill places that may become available during the school year. Parents will receive periodic requests to see if they wish to remain on the list.
19. Children who are the subject of a direction by the local authority to admit or who are allocated to Oakbank School in accordance with an in-year fair access protocol will take precedence over those on the waiting list.

Oversubscription criteria

20. If there are more applicants than places, places will be offered in accordance with the following criteria in order of priority:
1. Children with a statement of special educational needs that names Oakbank on their statement will be allocated a place above all other applicants.
 2. Children in public care (children looked after by a local authority under section 22 of the Children Act 1989⁴) at the time an application for admission to the school is made, and who the local authority has confirmed will still be looked after at the time when admitted to the school.
 3. From 2013, children with a brother or sister who will be attending the school at the time of proposed admission. The children concerned must be living at the same address.
 4. Children of founders of the school (please note this criterion is still subject to approval by the Secretary of State for Education at a national level as well as in relation to Oakbank).
 5. Children living nearest to the school measured as the crow flies, that is in a straight line from the child's home to the main entrance of the school (travel by private car or public transport is not taken into account) within each of three identified segments in the following proportions:
 - a. Shinfield segment (30% of remaining PAN)
 - b. Grazeley and Three Mile Cross segment (30% of remaining PAN)
 - c. Spencers Wood and Swallowfield segment (40% of remaining PAN)
 - d. The boundaries of the segments are set out in the attached map. In the case of one or more segments being undersubscribed, remaining places will be allocated to the other segments in line with the original proportions allocated, for example if the Grazeley and Three Mile Cross segment is undersubscribed by seven places, four of the remaining places will be allocated to the Spencers Wood and Swallowfield segment and three to the Shinfield segment.
 6. Other applicants. After places have been filled under the first five criteria, any remaining places will be offered to children living beyond the identified segment boundaries i.e. at a distance of more than four miles from the school. Where the number of applicants in this category exceeds the number of places, offers will be determined by random allocation.

Sibling priority

21. 'Siblings' means two or more children who have at least one parent/carer in common and who reside in the same home as one another. Where a child has been legally adopted, he or she will be regarded as the sibling of any other children with the same legal guardian, all of whom reside in the same household.

Twins and same-year siblings

22. Where applications are received from twins, triplets or same-year siblings the following procedures of normal oversubscription criteria will be applied. In the event that it is not possible to offer places to all children of multiple births, an additional place(s) would be allocated to the other sibling(s).

⁴ The classification of children within this group will be amended for admissions to Oakbank in 2013 in line with the new DfE Schools Admissions Code.

Distance from the home to the school

23. The distance from home to Oakbank School is the straight-line distance measured from the front door of the child's residence to the main entrance of the school site. The data for the property is the unique address point for each property as supplied by Ordnance Survey.
24. A child's permanent address is the place of normal residence during term time. Where parental responsibility is shared, the address of the parent/guardian who receives Child Benefit Allowance for the child will be taken as the permanent address.
25. Proof of residence can be requested at any time throughout the admissions process. If false or misleading information is used to gain entry to the school, the offer of a place will be withdrawn and an appeal offered.

Tie-breaker

26. In the event of two or more applicants tying when any of the admission criteria are applied, positions will be determined by random allocation. For example, this may occur when children in the same year group live at the address e.g. in a block of flats or if the distance between the home and the school is exactly the same.

Other admissions (in-year or casual admissions)

27. Applications for vacancies that arise outside the normal annual admissions round for Year 7 will be considered at any time during the year. Information and application forms may be obtained from the School c/o CfBT Schools Trust. Where there is more than one application for a vacant place, the offer of the place will be determined in accordance with the following criteria in order of priority:
 1. Children with statements of Special Education Needs in which the School is named on the statement
 2. Children in public care (children looked after by a local authority under section 22 of the Children Act 1989)
 3. Children who will have siblings in the school at the time when they are admitted to the school
 4. Children who live nearest to the school, measured by the straight-line distance from the school to the child's home.
28. If no places are available the child will be placed on the waiting list with their position ranked according to the above criteria.
29. The School may refuse admission to applicants who have been permanently excluded from two or more other schools. The ability to refuse admissions runs for a period of two years since the last exclusion. Exclusions which took place before the child concerned reached compulsory school age do not count for this purpose. The school will consult and co-ordinate its arrangements, including over the rapid re-integration of children who have been excluded from other schools, and who arrive in an area after the normal admissions round, in accordance with local in-year fair access protocols for securing schools for unplaced children.

Appendix C: Proposed Revised Admissions Area

The attached map has been revised to make it clearer which of the three proposed segments of the schools catchment households fall within.

Instead of drawing the segment boundaries as arbitrary lines on the map, the segment lines now follow, as far as possible, major roadways. Households will be designated as living either one side of the road or the other in terms of their segment position. The new road boundaries follow as closely as possible the original boundary lines set. Unfortunately some communities are still split by the segment boundaries but it was impossible to achieve equally sized segments without doing this.

The segment boundary between the Three Mile Cross/Grazeley segment and the Spencers Wood/Swallowfield segment will run from the school north west along Hyde End Lane, south west along Church Lane, and then south along Basingstoke Road towards Spencers Wood before going in a south west direction towards Beech Hill.

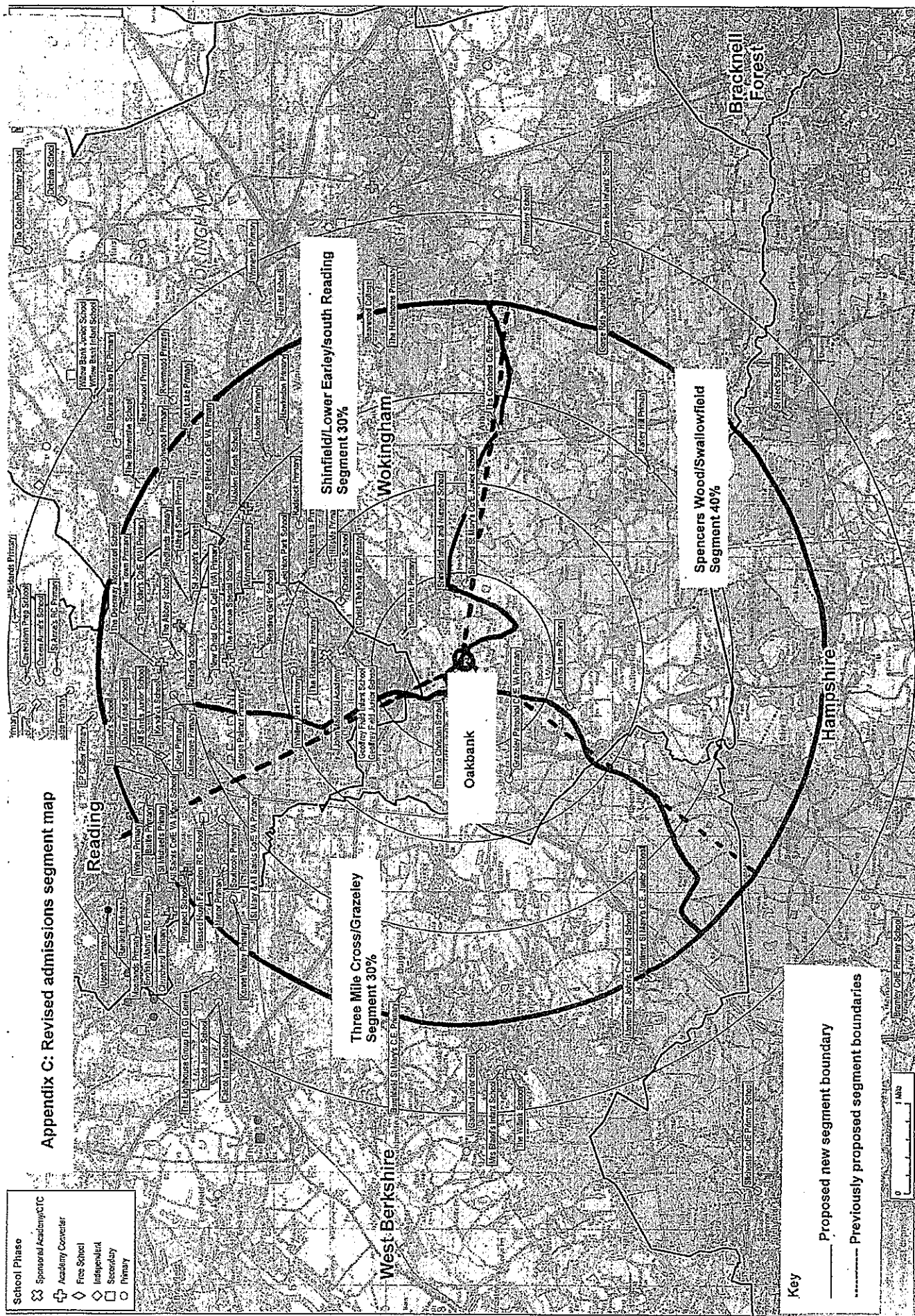
The segment boundary between the Spencers Wood/Swallowfield segment and the Shinfield/South Reading/Lower Earley segment will run from the school south east along Hyde End lane down to the B3349 (Hyde End Road), north up to the A327 (Arborfield Road) to Arborfield Cross, then along the B 3349 towards Barkham.

The segment boundary between Shinfield/South Reading/Lower Early segment and the Three Mile Cross/Grazeley segment will run from the school north west along Hyde End Lane, south west along Church Lane and then north along the Basingstoke Road, before joining the A33, crossing the M4 and running north along the new A33 (Reading Relief Road).

A new outer limit to the segment boundaries has also been set at a radial distance of four miles from Oakbank School in all directions.

We will produce an updated version of the map as soon as our admissions criteria are approved.

Appendix C: Revised admissions segment map



School Phase

- Specialist Academy/CTC
- Academy Converter
- Free School
- Independent
- Secondary
- Primary

Key

- Proposed new segment boundary
- Previously proposed segment boundaries

From: Sue Riddick
Sent: 08 February 2012 17:35
To: 'jsoanes@cfbt.com'
Cc: Brian Grady; Piers Brunning
Subject: Oakbank

Importance: High

Dear Jayne

Thank you for forwarding the revised admission arrangements for the school. Please note that I am not commenting on the main consultation, but I have now had the opportunity of looking through the revised admission arrangements and would like to make the following observations:

- o The policy refers to footnote 1 under point 6 but there is no footnote reference; neither is there a footnote 2.
- o Point 9 – Code 2.5 states that admission authorities may ask for proof of address where it is unclear whether a child meets the published oversubscription criterion but must not ask for any evidence that would include information prohibited in Code 1.9 or 2.4. Admission authorities may only ask for proof of birth date but must not ask for a 'long' birth certificate or other documents which would include information about the child's parents. Therefore this section does require clarification to ensure that it does not breach this mandatory requirement of the Code. Checks on dates of birth are more appropriate after the allocation as part of the registration or acceptance procedure.
- o Point 12 – The regulations state that parents should be given two weeks to accept the offer.
- o Point 13 – Appeals procedure – this point must comply with the timetable published on page 10 of the new School Admissions Appeals Code.
- o Point 17 – Waiting lists – clarification is recommended on how the waiting list will operate for criterion 6 children where random allocation is the tiebreaker; will this be carried out whenever a place becomes available, how will places be randomly allocated, by whom and witnessed by?
- o 20.1 – Children with a statement do not form part of the oversubscription criteria and should be a separate statement within the policy.
- o 20.2 – Children in public care are required to be the first criterion of any admission arrangement.
- o 20.3 – This policy only refers to 2013/14 admissions; therefore this criterion is not relevant to this policy.
- o 20.5 – Whilst I do understand the concept of percentage of remaining PAN; clarification is still required what the school will do where the percentage split does not provide for a whole child. If, for example, the Spencer's Wood and Swallowfield segment is undersubscribed by seven places, how will the remaining places be allocated to the two remaining segments which both have an equal 30% split?
- o 20.6 and 26 - my previous comments relating to allocating by random allocation applies.
- o 21 – Whilst the school has defined what is meant by the term 'sibling', is it the school's intention to exclude foster siblings?
- o 23 – The tiebreaker should be expanded to include an explanation on how this is measured; by what system.
- o 27.1 – My previous comments relating to children with statements and looked after children apply.
- o 27.2 - Should have a note 4 reference regarding the change for previously looked after children.
- o The revised segment map does not provide for a complete line for the border with the Three Mile Cross and Shinfield segments in the fourth outer circle.

I would comment that as the arrangements are radically different to those adopted by other schools in the local authority that I am concerned that parents will not easily understand how places for the school will be allocated, which is a clear overall principle behind setting arrangements in the new School Admissions Code. However I do trust that my comments will assist the school having a compliant policy if the decision is taken to continue with the proposed arrangements.

I also note that the new Code requires local authorities to publish on its website by 1 May the proposed admission arrangements for any new school or Academy which is intended to open within the determination year. As all admission authorities will be determining their arrangements for 2013/14 and submitting those by 1 May, 2012; I would be grateful, if the school is awarded its Funding Agreement, that the 2013/14 arrangements are forwarded by that date.

Regards

Sue Riddick

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