

**Title: ARK Atwood Primary Academy**

**Author: Department for Education (DfE)**

### **Annex A: Impact assessment – Section 9 Academies Act Duty**

Section 9 of the Academies Act 2010 places a duty upon the Secretary of State to take into account what the impact of establishing the additional school would be likely to be on maintained schools, Academies and institutions within the further education sector in the area in which the additional school is (or is proposed to be) situated.

Any adverse impact will need to be balanced against the benefits of establishing the new Free School.

### **Background**

ARK has worked closely with Westminster City Council, who is strongly supportive of the proposal. As part of the consultation exercise, ARK has been proactively seeking the views of a broad range of people within the local community, both in public and private meetings, and through correspondence. Recipients included the local MP, Karen Buck, all councillors, local school heads and early years' centres.

The ARK Atwood Primary Academy proposal is for a 2FE mixed primary school catering for an age range of 3-11. The Academy will build to 420 pupils at full capacity with 30 nursery places from 2013 or at the point of moving in to the permanent site at Amberley Road. This is an area of high levels of deprivation being within the most deprived 20% of the Borough (Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007).

ARK has proposed this Free School primarily to respond to the significant pressure for additional primary places in the local area and have worked closely with a local parent group and Westminster City Council who support the plans for the new school and is providing the permanent site in Amberley Road on a lease for a peppercorn rent. Although there is strong primary place pressure in the area, delays in confirming the school's permanent location initially meant that the evidence of parental demand, and by consequence, consultation was less well developed. However, every effort has been made by ARK to address the issue and ARK has allowed for additional consultation since announcing the permanent site by holding four additional information sessions at both the temporary and permanent sites.

Response to the consultation process has been largely positive with 22 parents signing up to the mailing list and several committing to applying for a place for September 2011. Online and paper feedback indicates broad support to open a school in north Westminster. Key issues among parents were concerns about progress of the project and the likelihood of a school opening by September. Parents were also concerned about the admissions policy and whether they would secure a place. To date, ARK Atwood has 49 pupils enrolled for September 2011 and ARK remain confident that they will

reach a full role of 60 for September.

### Local Authority Perspective

The whole of the City of Westminster is located in London's central sub-region (along with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, and the London Boroughs of Camden, Islington, Wandsworth, Lambeth and Southwark), as identified in the London Plan, and is the heart of the UK's capital city.

According to the 2001 census, the city had a population of 181,279.

Westminster City Council undertook several studies, supported by both political parties on the council, and indicated that this figure was too low. The Office for National Statistics eventually added 17,500 people to Westminster's population. The official population is now 198,779, but some estimates put it at 220,000.

The Westminster City Council's pupil place planning report for primary schools shows that Westminster's child population for 4-10 year olds is currently at 14,872 and is projected to rise by 5.5% to 15,692 by 2020 with just over 10,000 children attending Westminster primary schools, (including maintained VA schools). Of this number, about 80% are Westminster residents with the remainder residents from other boroughs. The geographical distribution shows Westminster as being divided into six planning areas for school purposes: Maida Vale; Marylebone; St. John's Wood; Bayswater; South; and Central. Maida Vale currently has the largest proportion at 2650 with South, Bayswater and St. John's Wood being similar in size of each other and averaging 2150, with the remainder of places being near equally between the other two. The growth in demand for state sector primary school places is driven by several factors namely, natural growth, immigration, new housing development, changing economic climate (fewer children being educated at independent schools) and popularity. The Council's Admissions Manager believes that borough-wide demand for places will plateau at the current level before rising again in 2014 (September 2013 entry) and peaking in 2016 and 2017.

The WCC's Place Planning research in 2010 concluded that there was a need for one possibly two additional forms of entry (30 places per form) in North Westminster. The Council has already expanded three schools: Gateway, Paddington Green and Edward Wilson to provide an additional 456 places (Reception and Years 1-6). In addition, ARK's King Solomon Academy opened in September 2007 with 60 reception places, which will rise to 420 places across Years 1-6 by 2013-14. The Council also provided an additional 90 reception places for the 2010 intake in the area of the highest demand in the north of the borough. Westminster City Council also expect, with the opening of the ARK Atwood Primary Academy, to have the additional 420 reception places made available.

### **Nearby maintained schools and Academies**

As this is a proposal for a primary school and children of primary age are more likely to attend a school closest to home for domestic reasons, it is

schools within the immediate area of the proposed ARK Atwood Primary Academy that are considered likely to be more affected for impact assessment purposes. However, in a one mile radius of the permanent Amberley Road site, 11 primary schools have been identified. For impact assessment purposes, the five closest schools to the permanent site have been summarised below as potentially being most affected, mainly due to oversubscription and Ofsted rating. However, within the geographical limit of 1 mile distant, it can also be assumed that additional schools further afield could similarly be affected by the establishment of ARK Atwood. Again it is seen as a positive move in reducing oversubscription (see table below). If ARK Atwood was not established in this location, unsustainable pressure would be placed on these schools in particular Edward Wilson (+135), St. Saviours (+29) and St. Mary Magdalene (+17).

### **Summary of local primary schools**

Our Lady of Dolours Roman Catholic Primary School is situated off the Harrow Road, 0.2 miles from the permanent site of Amberley Road. This is a mixed school with an age range of 3-11 and has 319 pupils on roll being just above its capacity of 315. The school, which has Nursery and Reception provision, gives priority to baptised Catholic children from three named parishes. Priority is then given to baptised Catholic children in the local area. All children with older siblings in the school received a place in the round of admissions to Reception. Small numbers from other Christian and non-Christian faiths are admitted each year as places permit. The school was last visited by Ofsted Inspection on 6 June 2008 and was assessed as Good.

St Peter's CoE primary School is a voluntary aided oversubscribed, average-sized mixed primary school, 0.2 miles from Amberley Road. The school is fully subscribed at 210 catering for an age range of 5-11. The number of pupils with learning difficulties is above average for a school of this size. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and for whom English is an additional language is higher than in most schools. The school has experienced difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff in recent years and has made some temporary appointments. Ofsted judged the school as Good at the last inspection in January 2008.

Edward Wilson Primary School, is 0.4 miles from Amberley Road and is a larger than average mixed community school with an age range of 3-11. The pupil roll is 42% above capacity (315) having 450 pupils with most coming from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. The majority of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above average. The proportion of pupils with a first language other than English is well above that found nationally. The proportion of pupils with statements of SEN or supported at School Action Plus is 11.5% also being well above the national average, and most of these have moderate learning difficulties. The last Ofsted inspection assessed the School as Satisfactory in March 2010.

St Mary Magdalene CoE Primary School is a voluntary aided mixed school some 0.4 miles distant from Amberley Road. The age range at the school is 3-

11 with a capacity of 210. However, the school is oversubscribed having a pupil roll of 227. The school is an Extended School offering a Breakfast Club and a wide range of after-school clubs as well as access to the Westbourne Play Centre. The last Ofsted inspection in January 2010 assessed the school as Satisfactory.

St Saviours CoE Primary School is an oversubscribed at 240 pupils on roll against a capacity of 210. It is a voluntary aided 1 Form Entry school admitting up to 30 pupils plus another 30 in to nursery class and draws its pupils from a wide area. The school is 0.6 miles distant from Amberley Road. The proportions of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and for who English is an additional language is much higher than in most schools. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is also higher than in most schools. These are mostly pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The school experienced high staff turnover for two years prior to this academic year. The school was assessed as Outstanding in their last Ofsted inspection in October 2008.

### List of nearest primary schools (within 1.0 mile)

Name of institution	Form Entry	Age range and pupil numbers above capacity	Distance from the Amberley Road site
Our Lady of Dolours Roman Catholic Primary School	2FE	3-11 +4 0%	0.2 miles
St Peter's CoE Primary School	1FE	5-11 +0 0%	0.2 miles
St Stephen's CoE Primary School	1FE	3-11 +10 5%	0.3 miles
Edward Wilson Primary School	2FE	3-11 +135 42%	0.4 miles
St Mary Magdalene CoE Primary School	1FE	3-11 +17 8%	0.4 miles
St Saviours CoE Primary School	1FE	3-11 +29 14%	0.6 miles
Essendine Primmary School	2FE	3-11 +47 11%	0.8 miles
St Augustine's CoE Primary School	1FE	3-11 +42 20%	0.8 miles
St Joseph's RC Primary School	1FE	3-11 +116 55%	0.8 miles
Paddington Green Primary School	2FE	3-11 - 20 - 5%	1.0 miles
St Mary Angels RC Primary School	2FE	3-11 +24 7%	1.0 miles

Source: Edubase

### Conclusion

Taking into account the projected shortage of primary places in the north of the borough in the coming years, and with the likely impact on any individual school across the range being potentially small due to spread and other faith based schools and therefore have a distinctive offer, establishing ARK Atwood is likely to have a much more positive effect in helping to reduce the deficit of places in this area. Given that information above, the Academy will largely attract residents from within the immediate vicinity of Amberley Road and is therefore unlikely to impact further than the one mile assessed.

Apart from Edward Wilson, which is the most oversubscribed (rated Satisfactory by Ofsted), the possible loss of pupils from St Saviours (Outstanding) and St Mary Magdalene (Satisfactory), will be a matter of parental choice but with the added competition, as well as ARK's Academy experience and reputation will no doubt serve to drive up standards. Both of these features are key aims of the Free Schools policy, which we would expect ARK Atwood to fully contribute to.

Given all this information, we consider that the impact of establishing the ARK Atwood as a 2FE Academy on maintained schools and Academies in the surrounding area to be outbalanced by the positives.