

OUTCOME OF CONSULTATION ON A PROPOSAL TO EXPAND SPRING BANK PRIMARY SCHOOL USING THE GRAMMAR SCHOOL AT LEEDS (GSAL) ROSE COURT SITE

Since the consultation period ended in spring 2016, responses to the consultation have been analysed, further site feasibility has taken place, new DfE guidance has been published and further communication has taken place regarding site acquisition. Taking these factors in to consideration, it is not possible to progress this proposal for the following reasons:

- New DfE guidance issued after the consultation period ended (April 2016) requires that anyone proposing a school expansion onto a split-site must ensure it is a change to an existing school rather than the establishment of a new school; otherwise the free school presumption process must be followed. Given the distance between the Spring Bank and Rose Court sites and the government target for creating 500 free schools, it is likely that the DfE would view this as new school provision and insist on the free school route being followed.
- During the consultation period a significant number of respondents (33%) objected to the proposal, with many raising concerns about the practicalities of operating a split-site primary school. Some respondents did express support for a split site school, but most of these indicated a preference for the school to operate as Reception to year 6 on both sites. As stated above it would be difficult for Leeds City Council to demonstrate that this would genuinely be a split-site school and not new school provision.
- Concerns were raised about possible increases to the volume of traffic in the area, the inconvenience to parents of having children at school on both sites, increases to the distance that some children might have to travel to get to school, the impact of friendship groups being split up and the impact on the close community ethos of the school. Similar views were also expressed by several parents during the consultation drop in meetings.
- There was an increase in valuation of the site from GSAL following initial discussions with the Council and in addition to acquisition costs, some internal remodelling works would be required to re-designate the site as primary school provision and ensure classrooms were designed to accommodate 30 children. Taking all cost estimates in to account, the Rose Court site no longer offers good value for tax payers' money.

Children's Services will continue to investigate other options to meet the need for primary school places across Headingley and the surrounding areas.

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