

# **OUTWOOD ACADEMY PORTLAND EXPANSION PROJECT**

**Consultation process from 1 November 2022 - 13 December 2022**

**This is the formal consultation document for the proposed physical Expansion of  
Outwood Academy Portland creating an increased admission number for Year 7 from  
300 to 360 in September 2024**

## **Overview**

Outwood Academy Portland has been asked by Nottinghamshire Local Authority to increase its Published Admission Number (PAN) from 300 to 360, commencing in 2024 and starting with Year 7.

Because this is considered to be a “significant expansion” we must consult in line with guidance from the Department for Education. This is the consultation document.

In order to accommodate an increase in numbers, we must also build additional capacity. We must also consult over this through a separate Building Application process, details of which are included in this consultation document.

*Some of you may be aware that we have previously consulted with relevant stakeholders on this proposal, however, we are required to repeat this to ensure that we have an up to date view on these plans.*

## **An introduction from the Principal, Danielle Sheehan**

Exciting plans are being developed to invest significant capital money to support the expansion of Outwood Academy Portland so that it can meet the anticipated increase in the number of students in the town. Following careful scrutiny and planning, the Local Authority identified the need to increase the number of secondary places following the significant level of new housing developments in the area. They approached Outwood Academy Portland and Outwood Grange Academies Trust (OGAT) and we were keen to support this initiative. We consider this a fantastic opportunity for the school as it also allows us to provide a solution to the growing pressure on school places

However, we also want to make sure that as part of any expansion we keep all our stakeholders fully informed, giving them the appropriate opportunities to consult and feedback their views.

For the sake of clarity, this consultation document addresses the physical increase in the school, allowing an increased admission from 300 to 360 starting with Year 7 in 2024. The consultation over the Building Application is a separate process.

In the light of the proposed increase to our numbers, we must, as an academy, follow the guidance published by The Department for Education in “Making significant changes to an open academy and closure by mutual agreement. Departmental guidance for all types of academy trust. Published November 2019.” A copy of this can be found here:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/84745/1/Significant\\_change\\_and\\_academy\\_closure\\_151119.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/84745/1/Significant_change_and_academy_closure_151119.pdf)

The most relevant section relates to any proposed changes detailed in “Expansion of physical capacity” where it says:

“A ‘significant expansion’ is defined as an enlargement that increases the overall physical capacity of an academy (as recorded in its funding agreement) so that it can increase its overall teaching space enabling the school to provide places for more than 30 additional pupils.....Permanently changing the internal configuration of a school building to accommodate more than 30 additional pupils would also be classed as an ‘increase in capacity’ and requires the significant change process to be followed.”

To comply with the significant change process, we must “demonstrate that a fair and open local consultation has been undertaken with all those who could be affected by the proposed change, and that the academy trust has considered all responses received. Comments or objections can be made on any grounds and opportunities for feedback should be given at all public and stakeholder meetings. The LA will hold important contextual information on the requirement for places locally and must be consulted in all cases.”

Details of how you can feedback comments or objections are contained later in this document.

### **The position of Nottinghamshire County Council**

In order for the local authority to meet its statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places available for the local high school population, Outwood Academy Portland has been identified as being geographically best placed to cater for this area of growth in the town and surrounding villages.

The Local Authority will be liaising closely with Outwood Academy Portland as it develops the site and expands the school roll to ensure as smooth a transition as possible. Over time we expect to see the PAN for each year grow from 300 to 360. However, we recognise that this will be phased in line with the completion of the new housing and is unlikely to happen immediately. The subsequent increase will be calibrated in line with additional demand for school places and we do not consider that there will be any change to the current catchment area.

### **The school's context**

Outwood Academy Portland is a large, 11-18 co-educational, secondary school. The School converted to an academy in May 2012 and is part of Outwood Grange Academies Trust (OGAT) which comprises thirty seven schools across the North of England and the East Midlands. Outwood Academy Portland would usually admit 300 pupils into the Year 7 cohort each year. Due to significant housing developments creating the need for additional places, as well as the current basic need for more pupil places as evidenced by applications over the past 3 years, the proposal is to permanently expand the school’s Pupil Admission Number (PAN) from 300 to 360. This would start in September 2024 with initial growth in Year 7 only.

### **Why there is a need for more places in the Worksop area**

Nottinghamshire County Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to meet the current and future demand for pupil places.

Outwood Academy Portland's Published Admission Number (PAN) is 300. Demand for places at the school has exceeded available places consistently over recent years.

For example, in September 2022 applicant numbers were as follows:

No. of 1st preferences received – 342

No. of 2nd preferences received – 226

No. of 3rd preferences received - 17

Total number received - 593

Total number taken on roll - 300

Similar to many other areas in Nottinghamshire, Worksop has been facing a growth in the demand for school places. Housing developments at Gateford, Shireoaks and Thievesdale will yield in excess of 1,000 new dwellings with the majority designated for family occupation. As the local community and population expand there is likely to be an increase in the demand for pupil places at Outwood Academy Portland.

### **Why Outwood Academy Portland is best placed to meet this need**

Nottinghamshire County Council has assessed and analysed a complex range of data before coming to the decision to expand Outwood Academy Portland including all of the following:

- Pupil numbers and planning forecasts for the short and medium term
- Capacity at neighbouring schools
- Location and size of the school site
- Ability to expand the school
- Catchment area and proximity of housing developments/increasing demand
- School performance (Attainment, Progress, OFSTED rating, etc.)
- Parental preference and applicant numbers

### **The expansion proposal**

If the proposal goes ahead, 60 additional places will be offered to children applying for Year 7 places from September 2024. This means that construction will have to take place to enlarge the school ready for September 2024 if not before. This construction will create more teaching space and enhance facilities in the school. We will eventually receive additional funding for the increase in pupils to allow for extra teachers and the resources and equipment needed to accommodate this increase.

In considering this proposal a feasibility study has been commissioned to explore different options for the sites and the possibilities for construction including all associated costs. The details of these options will be negotiated with the Trust's representatives and their architects in partnership with Nottinghamshire County Council to ensure minimum disruption to existing pupils in the creation of high-quality learning spaces and facilities to meet the needs of the local school community.

Once these have been finalised they will form the basis of a planning application that will need to follow the normal planning application process with Bassetlaw District Council.

## **The broad educational implications**

The first thing to acknowledge is that ultimately the number of students in each year group will increase by 60. Therefore, we will increase the number of classes proportionately. Currently across KS3, classes are taught in two half year blocks with 5 classes in each band. This will increase to 6 classes in each band. Within the Core at Key Stage 4, classes are currently taught in two half year blocks, with 6 classes in each band, this will increase to 7 classes.

## **How will you manage the increase in numbers?**

The average state funded secondary school in England has 986 students (2019 data).

Source:

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/school-pupils-and-theircharacteristics>

As a large school, we are used to managing large numbers of students. In addition, the site itself has plenty of capacity to expand. As a Trust we also run a school with an admission of 360, so have experience of timetabling this number of students.

We will also retain the organisational structure of having two bands. These will continue to be equally balanced in terms of gender and ability. Both bands will follow the same curriculum. The only difference will be the addition of one extra teaching class in each band.

As the number of students increases so will our revenue. We will therefore ensure that this increased revenue is spent proportionately and in line with national benchmarks.

## **Will the increase in numbers affect the level of pastoral care available?**

We are confident that we will retain the high quality of pastoral care we currently have. We will retain the band system and its associated pastoral support structures. We will also look to increase the level of pastoral support proportionately as the number on roll grows.

## **Will the increase in numbers affect the level of support for students with SEND?**

We see no reason why any increase in numbers should impact upon the provision for students with SEND. As the school grows in all aspects there will be a proportionate increase in terms of the funding we receive and therefore where we spend it. We will therefore grow any additional support in line with our current provision whilst ensuring it is appropriately benchmarked against national guidance.

## **Will you be changing the admission criteria when you expand?**

There are no plans to change our current admissions criteria. However, because we will be expanding our PAN from 2024 there is a statutory requirement to consult with stakeholders. This process is a formal Nottinghamshire wide consultation and you will be invited to take

part in the process should you wish. Nearer the consultation period we will write to you explaining the process.

### **Managing the expansion project**

OGAT Trustees have ultimate oversight of this expansion project in conjunction with Nottinghamshire's Local Authority. The Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) and the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) will also monitor the progress of any expansion.

### **Will there be any change to Governance and Administration?**

We believe that the capacity of the Local Governing Body and that of OGAT Trustees is sufficient to provide on-going and appropriate scrutiny and support for this development. Therefore, we are not envisaging any changes.

In terms of administration, as numbers grow the administrative infrastructure will need to expand proportionately and this will be carried out in context of national benchmarks.

### **Who is paying for the expansion project?**

The Local Authority has been able to access central government funding to meet its statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places available for the local high school population.

### **Will students and staff be involved in the process?**

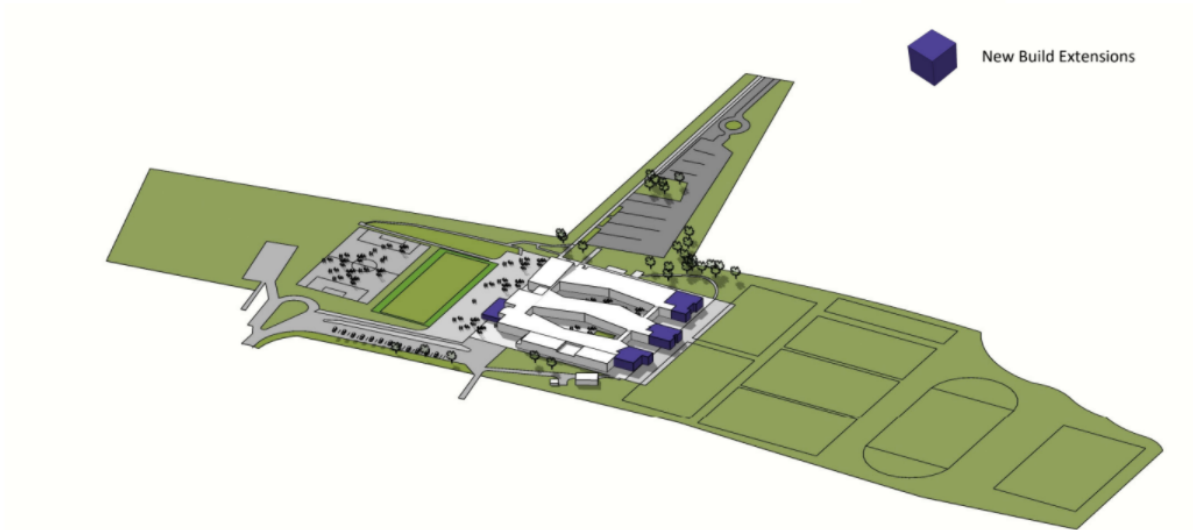
Yes. There are many opportunities to involve students in all aspects of the building and design process. We will have an "educational programme" that will sit alongside the building project involving students in as many aspects of the new build as we can. Students and staff will also be involved in some of the design decisions we will be taking.

### **Will there be an impact on the learning of other students?**

Any impact will be kept to a minimum with as much work as possible being completed over holiday periods. However, we will be assigning a senior colleague to oversee this process to ensure that learning is not interrupted even if there have to be, at times, room changes to facilitate building works.

### **An overview of the Building plans**

This building project looks to expand existing provision. Additional classes will be built as extensions to the three main corridors. There will also be a programme to expand existing dining facilities as shown below:



On the ground floor this extension will contain an extended dining hall, additional toilets, 6 general teaching rooms, 3 ICT classrooms and a new drama space.

Proposed Ground Floor Plan



On the first floor the new rooms will be 2 Science classrooms, 6 general teaching classrooms, 1 ICT room and additional toilets. New staircases are also added to meet fire safety regulations.

Proposed First Floor Plan



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The following shows an architect's impression of the external view at the front of the school with the extended dining hall:





This picture shows an architect's impression of the external view at the rear of the school with the extended corridors:



### **Feeding back your views**

Your views can be registered through our online consultation form using this link <https://forms.gle/fRYxBozJ5Yzgpkjc6>

We will regularly monitor this and provide interim feedback where appropriate.

If you prefer to write directly to the school please direct any questions or queries to Danielle Sheehan, Principal, Outwood Academy Portland, Netherton Road, Worksop, Notts, S80 2SF by the closing date of 13 December 2022. Please mark any correspondence with the heading Portland Expansion Project. Likewise, if you prefer to email the school, please do so to the following address: [enquiries@portland.outwood.com](mailto:enquiries@portland.outwood.com) with the title EXPANSION CONSULTATION.

### **Concluding the consultation**

When the consultation is concluded, the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) will reach a conclusion as long as we demonstrate that:

- a fair and open consultation has taken place.
- the proposed changes are aligned with local pupil place plans
- any change is unlikely to have a negative impact on educational standards at the academy or at other local schools or colleges
- appropriate planning permissions and other consents required have been secured
- the proposal does not displace existing pupils

The RSC will then consider a range of factors and make a balanced judgement when deciding whether to approve or reject a proposal. They may also decide to refer that matter to the Secretary of State for a decision.