



Lord Williams's School

Sic itur ad astra a tous venaunts

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Consultation on a proposal to expand Lord Williams's School, Thame

Dates of consultation 23/06/21 to 21/07/21

About Lord Williams's School

Lord Williams's School is a split site school located in the market town of Thame in South Oxfordshire. The Lower School, for Years 7 to 9 is approximately 1.9 miles from the Upper School, for Years 10 to 13, Lord Williams's School is an inclusive comprehensive school, serving the children of Thame and surrounding villages. We are committed to continue to serve the young people who live in our catchment area, and whose families have always considered Lord Williams's to be "their school". In the light of significant housing development in Thame, only by increasing the capacity of the school can we fulfil our commitment to our community.

The school is part of Thame Partnership Academy Trust and currently has a Published Admission Number (PAN) for Years 7 to 11 of 320. This has been temporarily increased to 350 every 3 years due to demand and capacity restrictions. Current Sixth Form of Roll 519.

The School was last inspected by Ofsted in October 2011 and was graded as Outstanding.

The total number of children on roll for the 2020/21 school year is 2166 and numbers per year group are shown below:

Year	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Number on roll	334	321	323	349	320	278	241

The school is regularly over-subscribed. For the September 2021 intake (of 350), all available places have been allocated with a waiting list held by Oxfordshire County Council. The school is already operating above capacity for its current building stock.

The need for more secondary school places in this area

Oxfordshire County Council is responsible for ensuring there are sufficient school places in each area. The Council works with local schools and multi academy trusts to expand existing schools, or plan for new schools, to meet population growth. Its assessment is that more secondary school places are needed in Thame to ensure a place for all applicants.

Demand for secondary school places in the Thame area is expected to grow over the coming years, for these reasons:



1. Pupil numbers have already risen in local primary schools, this is because the birth rate went up in the mid 2000s and the extra children are now reaching secondary school age.
2. In addition, there has been significant housing development in Thame and the surrounding villages.
3. Further new housing is expected. South Oxfordshire District Council adopted the New Local Plan for Thame which includes 753 new homes in addition to the 775 new homes included in the Thame Neighbourhood Plan between 2012 to 2035 – some have already been provided but there are still another 339 outstanding (minimum target).

Oxfordshire County Council has provided the following forecast pupil numbers for Thame:

Year (Sept)	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total Secondary
2020	333	321	326	351	319	282	245	2177
2021	350	334	322	328	351	281	251	2217
2022	350	350	335	322	328	311	250	2247
2023	350	350	349	333	321	289	277	2269
2024	348	350	350	348	332	283	257	2269
2025	350	346	350	350	346	293	252	2287
2026	350	350	345	350	350	305	261	2311

These pupil forecasts indicate that, without this proposed school expansion, there would be a sustained shortage of secondary school places for Year 7 pupils in Thame

The current pupil forecasts run to 2026, but most of the impact of Thame’s housing growth will only affect secondary school numbers beyond that time period. Demand for secondary school places is therefore expected to remain high in the longer term.

Oxfordshire County Council identified the expansion of Lord Williams’s School as being necessary to meet the housing growth underway and planned for Thame in the SODC Local Plan, and this expansion is included in the Council’s Pupil Place Plan.

What is proposed in the consultation?

Lord Williams’s School, supported by Oxfordshire County Council, has already undertaken a formal admissions consultation to expand from a Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 320 to a PAN of 350 to be applied to each Year 7 cohort with effect from September 2022. Its capacity would, over time, increase from 1600 to 1750 places in Years 7 to 11 across both school sites, or 2269 including the sixth form.

Subject to this consultation and approval by the Regional Schools Commissioner, the capital development project will then provide additional accommodation, initially at the Lower School (Years 7 – 9) and then the Upper School (Years 10 - 13) as the larger numbers move through the school. The planned project completion date is September 2023.

Building and Land

Lord Williams's School appointed consultants to identify what additional accommodation would be necessary for the scale of expansion and how it could best be provided within the available budget. The proposed solution will include:

Lower School Site:

- 2 additional general classrooms
- 1 additional Science Laboratory
- 1 New ICT suite
- Increased dining servery space
- Enhanced SEND facility
- Provision of new dedicated counselling room
- Increase to dining space by way of an external canopy and enlarged main hall (by removal of the stage area).
- Additional supporting accommodation including offices, toilets, wet room and storage

Upper School Site:

- 10 additional general classrooms
- 1 new ICT suite
- New sports changing facilities.
- Additional Sixth Form study area
- Enhanced SEND facility
- Additional supporting accommodation including offices, toilets, wet room and storage
- Works to include external communal areas and the creation of a new car park

The above works are achieved in part by remodelling existing buildings with the addition of one new block to the Upper School site.

Planning permission for the school's building works has been submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council with a decision expected by 15th July 2021.

The majority of the cost of expanding the school will be met by the County Council, using s106 funding secured from housing developers. In addition, some funds have been provided from trusts and grants from the Parents' Association.

Important points to remember:

- This consultation is about the principle of expanding Lord Williams's; School. It is **not** about any decisions to allocate housing development to the area made by South Oxfordshire District Council. Comments on housing development proposals need to be made direct to South Oxfordshire District Council.
- It is also NOT about the details / layout of the new building, which were subject to planning permission in the usual manner.

- This consultation is taking place until **21st July 2021**. You have until midnight on that date to give us your views. All responses received will then be considered.
- The next step, after consideration of consultation responses, would be for the Academy Trust to apply to the Regional Schools Commissioner to be allowed to expand. As Lord Williams's School is part of an academy, the Regional Schools Commissioner would then be the decision maker.

How you can respond to this consultation

This information is available online at the county council's website:

<https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/LWS2021/consultationHome>

We would like to hear from you if you support this proposal as well as if you have any concerns. There are several ways you can submit your views:

- Respond online at the above web address using the online form for this consultation, on the Oxfordshire County Council Current Consultations webpage
- Email your response to: office.4580@lordwilliams.oxon.sch.uk (please quote EXP2022 in the subject line);

You must respond by **21st July 2021**.

