

## **CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

### **Outline proposal for Edgware Jewish Primary School to become a Voluntary Aided Primary School**

#### **1. Introduction**

The Governors of Edgware Jewish Primary School are proposing that the school moves from the independent sector to become a Voluntary Aided school, maintained by the London Borough of Barnet.

The process for bringing an independent school into the maintained sector is set out in Government guidance. One of the early steps is carrying out a consultation exercise to elicit views from interested parties. We are seeking the views of your organisation and this document contains key information about the proposed school. An opportunity to visit the school and to discuss the proposals in more detail will take place at the school on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December 2008 at 8pm.

Annex A lists those being consulted.

Following this consultation, and taking into account views expressed, a full proposal will be published which will go through a further six week consultation period after which it will be considered by the London Borough of Barnet.

#### **2. Objectives**

Our objective is for the existing co-educational, one-form entry school at 261 Hale Lane, Edgware Middlesex HA8 8NX to enter the maintained sector by becoming a Voluntary Aided primary school. The school will cater for up to 210 children between the ages of 4-11. The school currently has 50 pupils across three school years and opened in September 2006. The site will also offer nursery provision for children aged 2-4.

The school will provide access for Orthodox Jewish children to Jewish and secular education within the maintained sector in response to considerable demand for such education within the London Borough of Barnet and neighbouring authorities (Hertfordshire County Council and the London Boroughs of Brent and Harrow).

The plan is to enhance the quality of education currently provided to pupils at the existing independent Edgware Jewish Primary School and to increase the diversity of provision within Barnet's maintained sector to better reflect the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of its population.

Subject to building works and the approval of the proposals by Barnet Council, it is proposed that the school would become maintained from September 2011.

#### **3. Is there a need for a new maintained school?**

In response to a shortage of primary school provision for Orthodox Jewish families, Edgware Jewish Primary School was opened in 2006 by the Jewish Secondary Schools Movement (JSSM) in partnership with the Edgware Adath Yisroel Congregation (EAYC) and a group of concerned parents who were not able to get their children into Orthodox, independent or maintained Jewish primary schools in Barnet or the neighbouring Local Authorities.

School places in Orthodox Jewish primary schools in the London Borough of Barnet and neighbouring authorities have, for some years, been stretched to their limit. Local demand is expected to continue to increase, due to the ongoing growth of the Edgware Orthodox Jewish community.

At present, there are many pupils who attend the independent Edgware Jewish Primary School because of the shortage of suitable places within the maintained sector. Edgware Jewish Primary School itself has been oversubscribed for the last two years, and, in a glimpse of the problems of tomorrow, the proportion of sibling applications to the nursery class for September 2008 was already over 50%.

Within the Orthodox Jewish community there is considerable diversity, which is reflected in the requirement for educational provision. The existing Jewish schools within the maintained sector in Edgware cannot meet the requirements of the members of the observant Orthodox community. The opening of a new maintained Orthodox Jewish primary school will provide additional parental choice and diversity of school for parents in Barnet.

#### **4. Demand for Orthodox school places in the London Borough of Barnet**

A significant growth in the Orthodox Jewish community in the London Borough of Barnet and neighbouring local authorities has taken place over the last 10 years. In particular, the Orthodox Jewish community in Edgware has grown significantly. For example, the number of Orthodox synagogues in Edgware has grown by over 50% in the last 10 years. The net result has been an increase in demand for a range of local services and amenities such as synagogues, kosher shops and schools. The lack of adequate maintained primary school places has led to the establishment of a number of Orthodox independent primary schools over the last five years in and around Edgware.

#### **5. Effects on other schools in Barnet?**

If the full proposal is approved, Edgware Jewish Primary School will:

- take its place alongside other local schools as part of the local educational system;
- not take a significant number of children away from other Barnet schools;
- receive the same funding as other local schools.

If the school is successful in its bid to become maintained, Barnet's central government funding will be automatically adjusted for the extra pupils.

We believe that the proposed new school can only enrich the diversity of education already available locally.

#### **6. Why should the school become Voluntary Aided?**

It has always been the intention of the school to enter the maintained sector and it was set up to mirror the curriculum, practice and policies of maintained primary schools. The Government is actively encouraging independent schools to move into the maintained sector and clearly states in the *Faith in the System* publication (2007) that it "remains committed to supporting the establishment of new schools by a range of providers – including faith organisations – where local consultation has shown that this is what parents and the community want, and where this greater diversity will help to raise standards."

We believe that:

- the standards of education will be improved by entering the maintained sector. This will contribute to increased quality of opportunity and greater choices for pupils in later life;
- a move to Voluntary Aided status will enable the school to access more funding for learning resources, greater access to in-service training and professional development; and general advice and support from the Local Authority and other Barnet Schools;
- moving into the maintained sector will provide additional parental choice and diversity of school provision for Orthodox Jewish parents in Barnet, by making this type of education available to all who seek it, without the financial burden;
- the school would be strengthened by the additional resources made available within the state system;
- the school would benefit from the experiences and skills of staff at other maintained schools in Barnet.

## **7. Information about the school**

Edgware Jewish Primary School is a co-educational, one-form entry school situated at 261 Hale Lane, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 8NX. It opened in September 2006 and now has three classes - Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 - with a total roll of 50 pupils. The school has been oversubscribed since inception. Each year, as the school grows an additional cohort is added to the school. The school also has a pre-school nursery for 3-4 year olds, and the present site hosts the EAYC nursery which caters for 2-3 year olds.

Edgware Jewish Primary School recently received a positive Ofsted report which judged overall effectiveness for the school as good and commented that the "spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding". We expect the standards of educational provision to continue to rise in the new maintained primary school. The annual Parents Survey shows that parents are pleased with the education that their children receive. The school is a venture of the JSSM. Other JSSM schools include the Hasmonean High School and Hasmonean Primary School which are high performing maintained schools.

When the school has its full complement of 7 cohorts of children, the roll will be 210 children between the ages of 4 and 11, with 30 children in each year. Edgware Jewish Primary School has recently been granted planning consent to redevelop the current site and the new accommodation, which we hope to open by September 2011. This will meet and exceed the sufficiency and suitability requirements as set out in legislation, by the Department for Children, Schools & Families and by the Local Authority. The JSSM owns the freehold of the site at 261 Hale Lane, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 8NX and is making the site available for a new school building.

### **a) Ethos and religious character of the school**

The maintained Edgware Jewish Primary School will be an Orthodox Jewish School which encourages a strong commitment to Orthodox Jewish practice, Torah values, positive citizenship and educational excellence. The teaching of Judaism will be a fundamental element of the school. The school's aim will be to offer educational excellence at all levels within an Orthodox Jewish framework.

The school will be committed to:

- promoting a lifelong love of learning;
- helping all pupils fulfil their potential and to become well rounded individuals; and

- equipping children with the necessary academic and life skills needed to participate confidently in society with pride in their Jewish identity.

The school will:

- provide an outstanding and inspiring Jewish studies curriculum that is integrated with an excellent secular education;
- teach modern Hebrew as a living language;
- create a warm and friendly community school;
- work in partnership with parents to help their children learn and develop;
- add to the life and well-being of the school's local community;
- foster a safe, supportive and nurturing learning environment;
- ensure that all children have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum;
- encourage children to have a respect for themselves and for others; and
- offer care and support to children with special educational needs.

### **b) Curriculum**

The proposed new school will follow the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and the National Curriculum. The school will:

- be fully committed to providing a broad and balanced curriculum;
- implement best practice in literacy and numeracy;
- be committed to equal opportunities for boys and girls;
- implement national and local policies in relation to pupils with special educational needs; and
- proactively engage in community projects.

### **c) Admissions to the school**

The proposed admission criteria are outlined in full in Annex B and will comply with the statutory requirements while recognising the ethos of the school. In brief, the policy gives priority to children with special educational needs (SEN), Jewish children in public care , children with siblings who are currently at the school and the children of parents who are members of the EAYC.

It is proposed that all pupils registered at the independent Edgware Jewish Primary School will transfer to the new maintained school unless their parents choose to place them elsewhere.

### **d) Special Educational Needs**

The school is aware of the responsibilities to provide education appropriate to the needs of a wide range of children, including those with special educational needs (SEN). The school already provides support for pupils with SEN mainly by in-class support or individual and small group activities where needed. Parents are fully involved in the regular reviews of pupils with special SEN.

**Annex A: Consultation to become Maintained****Letters to:**

- Parents of existing pupils
- Chair of Governors of maintained primary and nursery schools in the London Borough of Barnet (LBB) (91 schools)
- Chair of Governors of all secondary schools in LBB (21 schools)
- Chair of Governors of all primary and secondary schools within 5 mile radius of the site in other Boroughs (Brent, Hertfordshire, Harrow)
- Chair of Governors of all Jewish independent primary and secondary schools in LBB and neighbouring local authorities
- Local Authorities likely to be affected by the proposals where there may be cross border movement of pupils (Brent, Hertfordshire, Harrow)
- Nursery providers and other early years settings in Barnet
- Trade Unions who may represent staff at the existing independent school and who also represent staff at other schools who may be affected by the proposal
- The local Church of England and Roman Catholic dioceses.
- MPs for the relevant local constituencies
- All LBB councillors
- Local Authority (Director of Children's Services)
- A range of Jewish organisations: UJIA, Chief Rabbi's office, AJE, JLC, local synagogues, Board of Deputies, United Synagogue, Federation of Synagogues, Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations, Jewish Care and Norwood.

**Open meetings for:**

- Parents of existing pupils and future pupils and leaders/governors of Barnet/Hertfordshire/Brent/Harrow primary schools

**Proactive Meetings**

- Leader of the Barnet Labour Party
- Leader of the Barnet Conservative Party
- Leader of the Barnet Liberal Democrat Party
- Local Authority
- Specific councillors
  - Cabinet member responsible for Investment in Learning
  - Cabinet member responsible for Children's Services
  - GLA member for Barnet
  - Councillor(s) for Edgware Ward
- Meetings with LBB officers
  - Planning officers
  - Highways Department
  - Director of Children's Services

**Annex B: Proposed admissions criteria for Edgware Jewish Primary School when it enters the Maintained Sector (NB criteria are subject to change and may be amended as part of the statutory proposals process)**

This is the proposed comprehensive admissions criteria for entry into Edgware Jewish Primary School. This school was set up to serve the local community of EAYC. The school will admit 30 children to Reception each September.

**Admissions**

1. Priority will be given to Jewish Children, according to Halocho (Orthodox Jewish law). In the event of any dispute as to whether a child is Jewish, the ruling of the religious authorities of the foundation body (Jewish Secondary Schools Movement) is final.
2. Verification for an Orthodox Jewish education will include a reference from the Rabbi of the EAYC. Evidence will be sought of active Orthodox synagogue worship.
3. Children for whom a statement of SEN has been made and for whom the school has been named in the statement as the most appropriate will be admitted.

**Admissions procedure**

4. All applications for Reception places at the school must be made on the Local Authority Common Application Form.
5. Parents are strongly recommended to also complete the school supplementary form. Failure to complete this form may inhibit the school's ability to determine sufficient grounds of priority. Proof of the child's Jewish status will be required.
6. The closing date for all applications to the Reception class will be indicated on the Local Authority Common Application Form, Applications will only be considered for children who will reach 4 years of age within the school year (1<sup>st</sup> September to 31<sup>st</sup> August). The Governors can only guarantee to consider complete applications received by this date.
7. Places will be allocated by the date on the Local Authority Common Application Form. Parents will be notified on the Primary Offer Day. Parents must indicate in writing within 10 days their intention to take up a place.

**Oversubscription**

8. In the event of oversubscription the following criteria, in order of priority, will be applied:
  - Jewish Looked-after children (within the meaning of Section 22 of the Children Act 1989);
  - Jewish children of siblings who will be attending Edgware Jewish Primary School at the time of admission;
  - Children of EAYC members who are members on the closing date of applications;
  - Children of members of other Orthodox synagogues;
  - Other Looked-after Children;
  - Other children.

In the event of oversubscription within any of the categories and sub-categories, the school will apply the following tie-breaker: geographical proximity of the child's home to the school

gate at 261 Hale Lane, Edgware, Middlesex HA8 8NX as measured in a straight line with those living nearer the school gate being accorded the higher priority.

**Waiting list**

9. When all available places have been filled, children not allocated places will be placed on a waiting list ranked in descending order according to the published admissions criteria. The waiting list will remain in operation from the day the original places are awarded and will be used to allocate places whenever they become available.

**Late applications**

10. Late and mid-year applications received after the deadline will be considered after all other places have been allocated.

**Incorrect or misleading applications**

11. The Governors reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a place where it is found that the place was offered on the basis of fraudulent or misleading information.

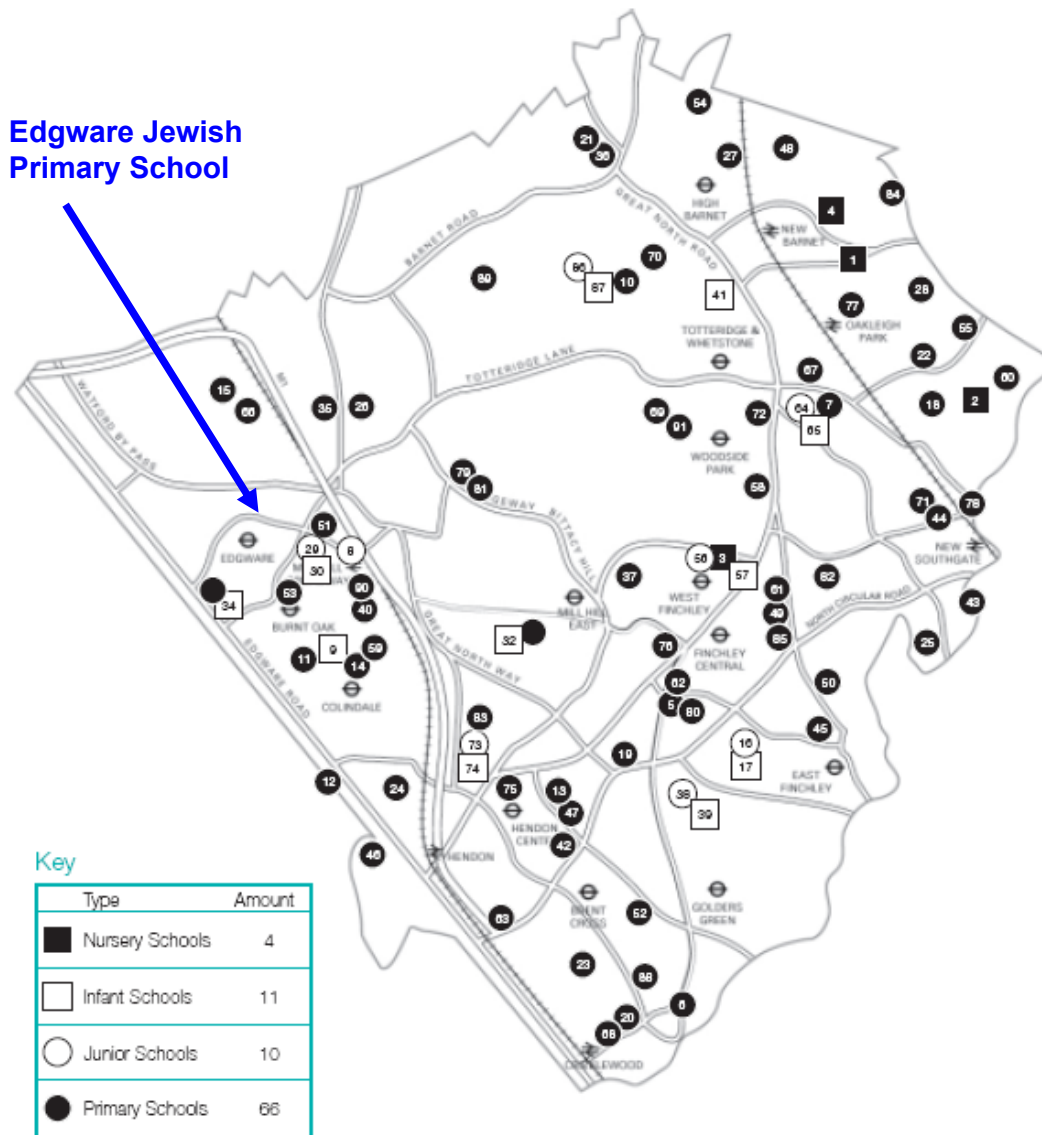
**Appeal procedure**

12. Parents may appeal against a refusal to admit a child to the school. They can do this by writing to the Chairman of Governors within 14 days of receiving the rejection letter.

**Edgware Jewish Primary School nursery**

13. The above admissions criteria applies to the school nursery.
14. Admission to the school nursery will not guarantee a child a place in Reception.

**Annex C: Location of Maintained Primary Schools in London Borough of Barnet**



See next page for list of Maintained primary schools in the London Borough of Barnet. The Jewish schools are highlighted in italics.

Source: *A Guide to Primary Education in Barnet 2008, London Borough of Barnet, page 26*

**List of Primary Schools in London Borough of Barnet**

1. Brookhill
2. Hampden Way
3. Moss Hall
4. St Margaret's School
5. *Akiva Jewish VA Primary*
6. All Saints' C of E VA Primary
7. All Saints' C of E VA Primary
8. The Annunciation RC VA Junior
9. The Annunciation RC VA Infant
10. Barnet Hill Community Primary
11. Barnfield Community Primary
12. *Beis Yaakov Jewish Girls VA Primary*
13. Bell Lane Community Primary
14. Blessed Dominic RC VA Primary
15. Broadfields Community Primary
16. Brookland Community Junior
17. Brookland Community Infant
18. Brunswick Park Community Primary
19. Chalgrove Community Primary School
20. Childs Hill Community Primary
21. Christ Church C of E VA Primary
22. Church Hill Community Primary
23. Claremont Community Primary
24. Colindale Community Primary
25. Coppetts Wood Community Primary
26. Courtland Community Primary
27. Cromer Road Community Primary
28. Danegrove Community Primary
29. Deansbrook Community Junior
30. Deansbrook Community Infant
31. Dollis Foundation Junior
32. Dollis Community Infant
33. Edgware Community Junior
34. Edgware Community Infant
35. Fairway Community Primary
36. Foulds Community Primary
37. Frith Manor Community Primary
38. Garden Suburb Community Junior
39. Garden Suburb Community Infant
40. Goldbeaters Community Primary
41. Grasvenor Avenue Community Infant
42. *Hasmonean Primary Jewish VA*
43. Hollickwood Foundatiin Primary
44. Holly Park Community Primary
45. Holy Trinity C of E Primary
46. The Hyde Community Primary
47. *Independent Jewish School VA Primary*
48. Livingstone Community Primary
49. Manorside Community Primary
50. Martin Community Primary
51. *Mathilda Marks Kennedy Jewish VA Primary*
52. *Menorah Primary VA*
53. *Menorah Foundation Jewish VA Primary School*
54. Monken Hadley C of E VA Primary
55. Monkfrith Community Primary
56. Moss Hall Community Junior
57. Moss Hall Community Infant
58. Northside Community Primary
59. The Orion Community Primary
60. Osidge Foundation Primary
61. Our Lady of Lourdes RC VA Primary
62. *Pardes House Jewish Boys VA Primary*
63. Parkfield Community Primary
64. Queenswell Community Junior
65. Queenswell Community Infant
66. *Rosh Pinah Jewish VA Primary*
67. Sacred Heart RC VA Primary
68. St Agnes' RC VA Primary
69. St Andrew's C of E VA Primary
70. St Catherine's RC VA Primary
71. St John's C of E VA Primary School
72. St John's C of E VA Primary
73. St Joseph's RC VA Junior
74. St Joseph's RC VA Infant
75. St Mary's & St John's C of E VA Primary
76. St Mary's C of E VA Primary
77. St Mary's C of E VA Primary
78. St Paul's C of E VA Primary
79. St Paul's C of E VA Primary
80. St Theresa's RC VA Primary
81. St Vincent's RC VA Primary
82. Summerside Community Primary
83. Sunnyfields Community Primary
84. Trent C of E VA Primary
85. Tudor Community Primary
86. Underhill Community Junior
87. Underhill Community Infant
88. Wessex Gardens Community Primary School
89. Whitings Hill Community Primary
90. Woodcroft Community Primary
91. Woodridge Community Primary