

## CONSULTATION

31<sup>st</sup> March 2016

### Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust Ltd [BEMAT]

**Dear Parents, Guardians, Head Teachers, School Leaders, Staff, Governors and Members of the Community.**

As you know, Etonbury, Robert Bloomfield, Gravenhurst, Langford, Gothic Mede and Samuel Whitbread Academies together form the multi academy trust of BEMAT Ltd. In partnership with its foundation, Bedfordshire East Schools Trust Ltd [BEST], BEMAT is working with Central Bedfordshire Council [CBC] in order to meet the Council's need for school places to serve the communities of Stotfold, Fairfield and Arlesey.

BEMAT is proposing to enlarge its Etonbury campus to increase the number of places it currently offers for children across the middle and upper school age range. If approved, this further expansion of Etonbury Academy serving children from Year 5 to Year 11 with a PAN of 150 would change it to a school serving the same age range but with a PAN of 180. This would increase the total size of the school from 900 places to 1260 places from September 2017.

This will increase the number of school places that are available to serve the Academy's local catchment from Year 5 and will also increase the GCSE provision in the Etonbury catchment area without enlarging the already extensive campus at Samuel Whitbread Academy. This new proposal for development builds upon the facilities at Etonbury due to be completed at the end of May 2016.

Further details can be found in our FAQ document and we would be delighted if you could take a little time to complete our questionnaire. This can be found on the BEMAT website and hard copies are available in the reception area of Etonbury Academy.

BEMAT will also be holding a public consultation meeting at Etonbury Academy on 12<sup>th</sup> April at 1830 in the Main Hall and we are eager to gauge local public opinion and receive the views of parents, the local community and local schools.



**Ian F Kite**

**On behalf of BEMAT and Etonbury Academy**

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Bedfordshire East Multi-Academy Trust BEMAT Registered Company Number: 07546141



Etonbury  
Academy



Robert Bloomfield  
Academy



Samuel Whitbread  
Academy



Gravenhurst  
Academy



Gothic Mede  
Academy



Langford Village  
Academy



## Frequently asked questions:

**Q – My child currently attends Etonbury, how can I be assured that standards and provision would be maintained as the campus grows?**

**A –** BEMAT, the Local Governors and staff at Etonbury are proud of their 'Good' Ofsted rating and are committed to continuing to improve to 'Outstanding', provide a curriculum that is well designed and matched to the needs, abilities, interests and aspirations of all of their pupils.

This development will enable the excellent work on standards at Etonbury to be fully accommodated. BEMAT and local Governors intend to build upon the 'best ever' key stage 2 results of last year and provide an all through learning experience for the children in Arlesey and Stotfold, 9 to 16 with outstanding facilities.

**Q - Would the expanded Etonbury Academy be able to continue to provide a full and varied curriculum?**

**A –** The curriculum of Etonbury Academy is well designed and matched to the needs, abilities, interests and aspirations of all children. Staff regularly review the current curriculum and would plan the curriculum for the extended school site to meet the requirements of the national curriculum and the needs of the community. The school would also work with the local community to develop relevant extra curricular and extended school activities.

**Q – What are you proposing to build on the Etonbury site and what new facilities would be available?**

**A –** The proposal is to expand Etonbury Academy to provide 180 places in each of the school's year groups from year 5 to year 11. The recent developments will accommodate pupils for sports and recreation and the proposed accommodation for this further expansion would mostly comprise of classrooms, a dance studio, offices and circulation space.

There will be a town planning application process for the planned expansion and therefore there will be a separate opportunity to comment on the plans as part of that process.

**Q – How would the new facilities be used, e.g. what age groups/pupils would it serve?**

**A –** The pupils will study at key stage 2, 3 and KS 4 [GCSE], aged 9 to 16. In the main pupils will transfer to Samuel Whitbread Academy at 16+ for Sixth Form programmes of study.

**Q – Will parents have the option to transfer their children to Samuel Whitbread at the end of year 8?**

**A –** Yes, parents will be able to complete the relevant admissions documents on the CBC website.

**Q – When would the new accommodation for the school's expansion be completed?**

**A -** Subject to obtaining all the necessary consents it is likely that the new accommodation would be subject to a phased completion from September 2017.

**Q – Does the Council have the funds to provide the accommodation needed for the school's expansion?**

**A –** Yes, the cost of the school expansion and fitting out would be paid for by developer's contributions and the Department for Education's Basic Need Grant via the Council's New School Places Programme.

**Q – How would admissions to the expanded school be managed? Would there be an intake from across the age range?**

**A –** The admissions arrangements would remain as they are for the existing Etonbury Academy site, with the same admissions criteria remaining in place. The catchment area for the academy would remain unchanged and a total of 180 places would eventually be available per year group. The admission to Etonbury would be based primarily on its catchment.

**Q – What provision would be made for early years and 'wrap around' care?**

**A –** The current consultation which the Council supports, is specifically related to provision for statutory aged pupils. The provision of extended school activities would be the subject of further discussions between the academy and community to establish the type of provision and/or activities which are to be sought or needed and could be provided within the available accommodation.

The Academy is seeking to establish nursery provision on the school site but this is not part of the current consultation and is a proposal that is being developed separately with further announcements to be provided in due course.

**Q – Would this expansion impact upon the existing staff?**

**A –** The school would need to recruit new teaching and support staff to enable the larger school to operate effectively in the long term.

**Q – Are there any interim proposals in advance of the new accommodation being ready?**

**A -** The Executive of Central Bedfordshire Council will consider the proposal to commence consultation on the proposal to expand Etonbury Academy at their meeting on 5 April 2016. If the Executive give their approval for the proposal, Etonbury Academy has indicated its willingness to accommodate catchment pupils over its admission number in September 2016, ahead of the availability of the new buildings in September 2017.

**Q – Have any alternative solutions been considered, other than the expansion of Etonbury Academy?**

**A –** Yes. A number of options were considered by the Council including the possible creation of a completely new school. However, by asking BEMAT to expand Etonbury Academy, the Council is following its Policy Principles for Pupil Place Planning, which underpins all council decisions regarding new school places. These policy principles include -

1. the need to provide local schools for local children, ensuring a sense of community belonging and also promoting sustainable modes of travel
2. the need to create schools that are of sufficient size to be financially and educationally viable
3. the ability to support the expansion of local popular and successful schools or to link expanding schools with popular and successful schools
4. the potential to further promote and support robust partnerships and learning communities



## Bedfordshire East Multi Academy Trust Ltd [BEMAT]

### The expansion of Etonbury Academy [phase 2]

Questionnaire – please circle your answer [YES/NO] and make a comment if you wish.

1. Would you be in favour of Etonbury Academy expanding to provide secondary education in the Arlesey and Stotfold area so that all children can be educated locally?

YES                      NO

Comment

2. Would you be in favour of the enlargement of the campus to accommodate up to 1260 pupils by 2017 to facilitate this?

YES                      NO

Comment

3. Do you have any concerns about these proposed changes?

YES                      NO

Comment

4. Is there anything else you would like to suggest to us as part of this consultation?

YES                      NO

Comment

[Optional]

Name: ..... Email: .....

Address: .....