

**CONSULTATION
BY**



NOAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

**In relation to a planned Proposal to join
the maintained sector as a voluntary
aided school**

January 2018

CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Consultation by Noam Primary School (“Noam”) in relation to a planned proposal for the school and nursery to leave the independent sector to join the maintained sector as a voluntary aided school and nursery.¹

1. Why you have received this document.

You have received this document as Noam is consulting with regard to its planned proposal for the school and nursery to join the maintained sector as a voluntary aided school (the “**Proposal**”). Before publishing its statutory proposal, Noam is required to consult with such persons as it appears to Noam to be appropriate. On entering the maintained sector (although it will remain a one form entry school) Noam will also be increasing its size as detailed further below.

Noam believes you may be an interested party and we are inviting your comments on the Proposal. Noam is also arranging a public consultation meeting which you may wish to attend. If you have any questions regarding this consultation you are invited to send them by email to consultation@noamprimary.org or you can contact the school. Further copies of this consultation document can be downloaded from www.noamprimary.org.

Please note that, following the consultation, if Noam decides to proceed, it may provide the following information as part of its Proposal, which includes details relating to any response you may provide:

- (a) a list of the persons and/or parties who were consulted;
- (b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
- (c) the views of the persons consulted; and
- (d) copies of all consultation documents and a statement of how they were made available.

At Annex A is a list of the parties that have been sent a copy of this consultation document.

2. How to Respond to this Consultation

If you would like to respond to this consultation, please send your response in writing to:

By Post: ‘Noam Consultation’, c/o The Secretary, Noam Primary School, 8-10 Forty Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 8JW

By Email: consultation@noamprimary.org

By Fax: 020 8908 5071 (please mark your fax ‘Noam Consultation’)

When responding, please provide details of who you are and, if you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please provide details of the organisation you represent.

You are asked to provide any response to this consultation by Monday 19 February 2018. The consultation will end after that date.

¹ **NOTE:** In June 2013, Noam undertook a similar consultation, which you may have received. At the time Noam did not pursue its proposal and therefore Noam is repeating the consultation before submitting its proposal to join the maintained sector.

Subject to confirmation of sufficient interest, Noam will also be holding a public consultation meeting. If you would like to attend, please confirm your attendance by using the contact details given above or by telephoning 020 8908 9491. The details of our consultation meeting are:

Date: 30 January 2018

Time: 8.30pm – 9.30pm

Venue: Noam Primary School, 8-10 Forty Avenue, Wembley, Middlesex HA9 8JW

The meeting will commence with a short presentation about Noam and will include an opportunity to put questions to the school governors.

3. What happens after this consultation?

If Noam decides to proceed with its Proposal the next step is for Noam to publish its Proposal. Legislation sets out how Noam must present its Proposal and the way in which it should be published (as a statutory notice). Following publication of the Proposal there is a further four week period when representations can be made about the Proposal to the London Borough of Barnet Council ("**Barnet Council**"). Barnet Council will decide whether or not to agree the Proposal for Noam to join the maintained sector and must do so within two months of the end of the representation period. If the Proposal is accepted by Barnet Council (and subject to any conditions) Noam will be able to implement the Proposal.

Subject to the approval of the Proposal and any conditions that may be applied, Noam presently aims to join the maintained sector as a voluntary aided school by September 2018.

4. An Introduction to Noam

Noam was established in 1999 as an independent school with five pupils and it has since grown year on year so that it now has approximately 160 pupils across all years from Nursery to Year 6. Noam was established to meet a demand for additional school provision which follows the National Curriculum but that was tailored to the needs of the Orthodox Jewish community in North West London.

The school is co-educational, one form entry with a school and nursery on the same site. The school currently relies solely on fees and donations to meet its operational costs.

As a school, Noam aims to achieve the highest educational standards in both secular and religious studies. It seeks to provide this education in a warm and caring environment, where children are happy and can grow into valued members of the community. These priorities are reflected in the vision that the governors together with the senior management of Noam have set for the school:

- **Education** - To provide pupils with an inspiring chol (secular) and kodesh (religious) education that instils in each child a love of learning and the tools and skills they need to progress when they leave Noam.
- **Each Child** - To educate each child as an individual, supporting the growth of the whole child and promoting good middos (character traits).
- **Environment** - To educate pupils in a caring, safe and happy environment, where they can make friends and develop confidence.

Noam was last inspected by Ofsted in 2013 when the school was rated “Outstanding” in one category (Pupils behaviours and personal development) and “Good” in all others. A full copy of Noam’s most recent Ofsted report is available on Noam’s website.

The success of the school to date is reflected in its results. In 2017 Noam achieved the following KS2 SATS results (% passes): Reading – 100%; Maths – 100%; Grammar & Spelling – 87%. For the 2016 year Noam’s KS2 SATS results were as follows: Reading – 95%; Maths – 100%; Grammar & Spelling – 100%. The school was also invited to join the Mayor of London’s Gold Club for two years running.

The school is presently located in temporary premises in an annex to Wembley Synagogue at 8-10 Forty Lane, Wembley, HA9 8JW. The present site is in the London Borough of Brent which is some distance from where the school population lives. The site is also now at capacity and Noam is prevented from expanding provision due to the size of the premises. A number of the smaller classrooms are already unsuitable for the size of classes.

5. About Noam’s proposal to become voluntary aided

The proposal is that Noam will enter the maintained sector remaining as a one-form entry, co-educational school and nursery. The school will, however, be seeking to increase its size, as set out below.

On joining the maintained sector Noam intends to relocate to new, purpose-built premises at East Road, Burnt Oak HA8 0AJ. In an ordinary year, this site will allow the school to provide 30 places per year for children from the ages of four to 11 (a total of 210 places). The nursery will cater for 30 children aged three and four. Construction of the new premises at East Road is due to begin shortly and is expected to be completed within 12 months of commencement.

The school and nursery 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.

By entering the maintained sector the governors of Noam believe that the school’s ability to provide high quality education will be enhanced. Becoming a maintained school will also support the diversity of provision within the Barnet maintained sector reflecting the religious, ethnic and cultural diversity of its population. By entering the maintained sector Noam will also increase the number of maintained school places that can be provided by Barnet Council to meet the current demand for such places that exists both for the Orthodox Jewish population and more generally for the wider Barnet population.

The foundation body for the new voluntary aided school will be the Noam Educational Trust, a company limited by guarantee and a registered charity. The Objects of the Noam Educational Trust are the advancement of education for the benefit of the public, in particular but without limitation the provision and maintenance of a school or schools and by ancillary or incidental educational activities for the benefit of the community in particular but not exclusively for Jewish children.

6. Is there a need for a new voluntary aided school?

There is currently a need for primary school places in the maintained sector at schools serving the needs of the Orthodox Jewish population of North West London. This reflects a generally recognised wider requirement for additional primary school provision in London.

Notwithstanding the creation of additional school provision over the past several years, there continues to be a high and growing demand for places at Orthodox Jewish schools in Barnet. Despite its current location, the requirement to pay fees and lack of a permanent home, this demand for places applies to Noam. In many of the recent years the number of applications to Noam's nursery, which is the main entry point for the school, has been significantly in excess of the number of places available. Recent increases in provision for primary schools providing for Orthodox Jewish pupils has somewhat reduced that pressure on places in the short term but demand is expected to remain high, requiring additional school places to be provided in the maintained sector.

The high demand for Orthodox Jewish primary schools in particular is likely due to a number of observable factors, such as population migration trends and the larger size of Orthodox Jewish families.

Being part of the maintained sector, Noam will increase the diversity of provision as well as providing additional capacity. Because places at the new maintained school will primarily be replacing existing places at the independent school with only a modest proposed expansion in the number of school places, the entry of Noam into the maintained sector will not lead to over-capacity in Barnet.

7. Is there a need for a new Voluntary Aided nursery?

Noam's nursery, which opened in 2001, currently offers approximately 24 places each year. The points made in the previous section in relation to the shortage of school places for the Orthodox Jewish community apply equally to nursery level.

8. Effects on other schools in Barnet

The governors of Noam believe that, in becoming voluntary aided, Noam will not have a detrimental impact on other schools in Barnet (or any nearby borough).

- Noam will not be taking children away from other schools: As a maintained school and nursery Noam will be mostly replacing the places currently provided by the school and nursery as an independent school.
- There will be a modest increase in places available as moving to larger premises will enable Noam to take more children in the higher year groups (in line with demand) than is currently possible. Furthermore, Noam currently takes approximately 24 children in each year group and, under the proposal, this would increase to 30 for the school and the nursery. This additional capacity will assist in meeting the demand for primary school places in Barnet.

Against a backdrop of recent shortages of primary school places in the maintained sector and overall growing demand, particularly for places in the Orthodox Jewish schools, the governors of Noam believe that the school will only have a positive impact on the overall provision of primary school places by increasing the diversity, flexibility and overall supply.

9. Why should Noam Primary School and nursery become Voluntary Aided?

Noam's intention since its establishment has been to enter the maintained sector at such time as the school was sufficiently established and able to meet the requirements of the maintained sector. This, in particular, required Noam securing a suitable permanent site for the school, which Noam has now done.

To prepare Noam for joining the maintained sector, Noam has sought to put in place suitable structures that align it with the maintained sector. This includes following the National

Curriculum, inspection by Ofsted and following best practice for maintained schools wherever possible. In this way, Noam seeks to provide the very best education to its pupils in a warm and caring environment.

In seeking to enter the maintained sector, Noam believes that:

- A move to voluntary aided status will enable the school to access more funding for learning resources (without taking funding from other schools in Barnet). It will also allow greater access to in-service training and professional development as well as general advice and support from the Local Authority and in partnership with other Barnet schools;
- In turn, the standards of education will be improved. This will contribute to increased quality of opportunity and greater choices for pupils in later life;
- 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 requirement to pay fees;
- The school would benefit from the experiences and skills of staff at other maintained schools in Barnet and would provide mutual support.

10. Noam's proposed approach to ethos, admissions, curriculum and SEND

The following sections provide further detail on certain elements of Noam's Proposal to become voluntary aided.

a) Ethos and religious character of the school

Upon entering the maintained sector the governors of Noam intend to apply to the Secretary of State to designate the school and nursery as having a religious character. The governors intend that Noam will be an Orthodox Jewish school providing the Orthodox Jewish community in North West London with access to a high quality general education that meets the National Curriculum as well as excellent religious education in accordance with Orthodox Jewish law and practice.

The ethos of Noam is reflected in its mission statement which states that Noam's aim is to:

Provide children with the tools, skills and confidence to go out into the world as responsible members of society.

Noam seeks to achieve this by ensuring that its students succeed academically. But in addition Noam seeks to develop the whole child by imbuing in each child a love of Orthodox Jewish practice and Torah values with its focus on developing positive personality traits. Jewish prayer and the study of Orthodox Jewish sources, including Chumash, Mishnah and Talmud as well as programmes that aim to encourage positive character traits are therefore integral to the overall programme followed at the school. In addition Noam places a high value on developing pupils as well-rounded individuals who can play a part in British society. Teaching British values is therefore integrated into the curriculum and is an important part of the pupil's education.

Noam therefore will:

- provide an outstanding and inspiring Jewish studies curriculum that is integrated with an excellent secular education
- create a warm and friendly school for the local community
- 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 respect for themselves and for others
- offer care and support to children with special educational needs

b) Curriculum

The proposed new school and nursery 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
- proactively engage in community projects

c) Admissions to the school

The proposed admission criteria for the school and nursery are set out in full in Annexes B and C and will comply with all statutory requirements while recognising the ethos of the school. In brief, the policy of the school and nursery gives priority to (1) looked after or previously looked after Orthodox Jewish children; (2) Orthodox Jewish children with siblings who are currently at the school or, in the case of the nursery, either at the nursery or the school and (3) other Orthodox Jewish Children. The school additionally gives priority to children whose statement of special educational needs (SEN) or Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan names the school – this is dealt with as a separate process to the normal admission procedure.

It is proposed that all pupils registered at the independent Noam will continue at the new maintained school unless their parents choose to place them elsewhere.

d) Special Educational Needs

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

Annex A: Consultation to become Voluntary Aided

This consultation document has been sent to the following parties:

Staff of Noam

Parents of existing pupils at Noam

London Borough of Barnet Councillors for the Burnt Oak Ward

London Boroughs of Brent and Harrow

Hertfordshire County Council

Mr Matthew Offord, MP for Hendon

Mr Michael Freer, MP for Finchley & Golders Green

Ms Theresa Villiers, MP for Chipping Barnet

London Borough of Barnet Strategic Director of Children & Young People

Barnet Early Years Strategy Group

Unison

GMB

NEU

NASUWT

All secondary schools within three miles of the proposed site

All primary schools within two miles of the proposed site

All Jewish independent and maintained primary and secondary schools which are members of the National Association of Orthodox Jewish Schools (NAJOS)

Office of the Chief Rabbi

National Association of Orthodox Jewish Schools (NAJOS)

Partnership for Jewish Schools (PaJeS)

Jewish Leadership Council (JLC)

Board of Deputies

United Synagogues

The London Beth Din

Federation of Synagogues

Union of Orthodox Hebrew Congregations

S&P Sephardi Community

A copy of this document has also been published on the school website.

Annex B: Proposed admissions criteria for Noam 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 comprehensive admissions policy and procedure for entry into Noam Primary School.

Noam Primary School was founded to provide a sound Jewish religious and secular education and priority for admission is given to those children of families where both parents are members of orthodox synagogues and whose doctrines, principles and practices are in accordance with strictly Orthodox Judaism as determined by the Rabbinical Authority of the school. The decision as to whether or not an applicant qualifies for priority consideration will be based on the information provided by the applicant in the Supplementary Information Form ("SIF"). In this policy those who qualify for priority are referred to as Orthodox Jewish Children and in the event of any dispute as to whether a child is an Orthodox Jewish child the ruling of the Rabbinical Authority of Noam Primary School is final.

Admissions

- The school has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 30 children.
- In the event that the school is oversubscribed priority will be given as follows.
 - Looked After and Previously Looked After Orthodox Jewish children
 - Orthodox Jewish children with siblings who are currently at Noam Primary School at the time of the application. For these purposes "siblings" shall include half-siblings, step-siblings and adopted siblings who are Orthodox Jewish Children and who are living at the same address.
 - Other Orthodox Jewish children
 - Other Looked After and Previously Looked After children
 - Other children
- If in any category there are more qualifying applicants than there are available places, a random ballot will be used to determine which children will be admitted under the criterion in question, in the presence of an independent observer.
- A "Looked After child" is a child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. A "Previously Looked After child" is a child who was in public care, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order immediately after being in public care. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. A special guardianship order is defined by section 14A of the Children Act 1989.
- Verification of Orthodox Jewish practice will be obtained from the Rabbi of the orthodox synagogue where the applicant family regularly attends. Evidence will be sought of active orthodox synagogue worship and observance of Orthodox Jewish laws and practice.

Admissions Procedure

- All applications for places at the school must be submitted on the Barnet CAF form and, if the applicant seeks consideration for priority admission, the applicant should provide a completed SIF. This must be sent to the school at the same time as the CAF is completed.
- The closing date for all applications to the Reception class will be a date set each year in line with nationally set dates for the making of offers for admission in the school year (1 September to 31 August) in which the child will attain four years of age. Late applications will be dealt with in accordance with the London Borough of Barnet Coordinated Admissions Scheme.
- Parents will be notified by the London Borough of Barnet in accordance with its Coordinated Admissions Scheme. Parents must indicate in writing within 10 days their intention to take up a place

Waiting List

- 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 open until the end of the academic year. Those who wish to remain on the waiting list after this period should notify the school each year in writing.

Applications on behalf of Twins or Triplets (Multiple Births)

- If only one place is available at the school and the next child who qualifies for a place is one of multiple birth siblings, those children will be admitted in excess of the Published Admission Number to avoid a situation where the children have to attend different schools. The children admitted over the PAN will be “excepted pupils” until the class size falls back to 30 pupils.

Request to delay entry to school (known as deferred entry)

- Children reach compulsory school age at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. Where a child has been offered a place at the school, that child is entitled to a full-time place in the September following the child’s fourth birthday. Parents of children below compulsory school age may, however, defer their child’s entry to a Reception class until later in the school year. However, a Reception class place must be taken up by the start of the summer term. Where parents wish, children may attend part-time until later in the school year but not beyond the point at which they reach compulsory school age. If parents want their child to take up a Year 1 place in the following academic year a fresh application must be made.

Summer-born children

- Parents of summer born children may choose not to send that child to school until the September following their fifth birthday and may request that their child is admitted out of their normal age group – to Reception rather than Year 1.
- If parents wish to apply for their summer-born child to join a Reception class, instead of Year 1, in September of the following year, they must complete an application for Reception of the current admission year **and** must submit a separate written request

to the Governing Body. Summer-born children are those born between 1 April and 31 August.

Requests for admission outside the normal age group

- Children are educated in school with others of their age group, with the curriculum differentiated as necessary to meet the needs of individual children. However, parents may request that their child is exceptionally admitted outside their age group, for example if their child is gifted or talented or has experienced problems such as ill health. The Governing Body will decide whether or not the individual circumstances make this appropriate on educational grounds and in the best interests of the child. This will include taking account of the parents' views; information about the child's academic, social and emotional development; where relevant, their medical history and the views of a medical professional; whether they have previously been educated out of their normal age group; and whether they may naturally have fallen into a lower age group if it were not for being born prematurely. The Governing Body will also take into account the view of the Head Teacher of the school.

Special Needs

- Children with a statement of special educational needs or an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan that names the school will be admitted. This is a separate process to the normal admission procedure.

Incorrect or Misleading Applications

- If the information given in the application form is not accurate or up to date, your child may lose priority. In such a case, the Governing Body will have discretion to refuse the offer of a place. The Governing Body reserves 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

- If a place is not offered, parents will be advised as to their right to appeal to the Independent Appeal Panel and will be advised on the process for appeal.

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

Noam Primary School nursery was founded to provide a sound Jewish religious and secular education and priority for admission is given to those children of families where both parents are members of orthodox synagogues and whose doctrines, principles and practices are in accordance with strictly orthodox Judaism as determined by the Rabbinical Authority of the school. The decision as to whether or not an applicant qualifies for priority consideration will be based on the information provided by the applicant in the Supplementary Information Form ("SIF"). In this policy those who qualify for priority are referred to as Orthodox Jewish Children and in the event of any dispute as to whether a child is an Orthodox Jewish Child the ruling of the Rabbinical Authority of Noam Primary School is final.

Admissions

- The nursery has a Published Admission Number of 30 children.
- In the event that the nursery is oversubscribed priority will be given as follows.
 - Looked After and Previously Looked After Orthodox Jewish children
 - Orthodox Jewish children with siblings who are currently at Noam Primary School or Nursery at the time of the application. For these purposes "siblings" shall include half-siblings, step-siblings and adopted siblings who are Orthodox Jewish Children and who are living at the same address.
 - Other Orthodox Jewish children
 - Other Looked After and Previously Looked After children
 - Other children
- If in any category there are more qualifying applicants than there are available places, a random ballot will be used to determine which children will be admitted under the criterion in question, in the presence of an independent observer.
- A "Looked After child" is a child in the care of a local authority or provided with accommodation by that authority in accordance with Section 22 of the Children Act 1989. A "Previously Looked After child" is a child who was in public care, but ceased to be so because they were adopted or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order immediately after being in public care. Child arrangements orders replace residence orders and any residence order in force prior to 22 April 2014 is deemed to be a child arrangements order. A special guardianship order is defined by section 14A of the Children Act 1989.
- Verification of Orthodox Jewish practice will be obtained from the Rabbi of the Orthodox synagogue where the applicant family regularly attends. Evidence will be sought of active Orthodox synagogue worship and observance of Orthodox Jewish laws and practice.

Admissions Procedure

- All applications for places at the school must be sent to the Noam Primary School

nursery. If the applicant seeks consideration for priority admission, the applicant should provide a completed SIF. This must be sent to the school at the same time as the application.

- The closing date for all applications to the nursery class will be a date set each year (in line with nationally set dates for the making of offers for admission, if any) in the school year (1 September to 31 August) in which the child will attain three years of age. Late applications will be placed at the end of the waiting list.
- Parents will be notified by Noam Primary School nursery and must indicate in writing within 10 days their intention to take up a place.

Waiting List

- 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 open until the end of the academic year. Those who wish to remain on the waiting list after this period should notify the school each year in writing.

Applications on behalf of Twins or Triplets (Multiple Births)

- If only one place is available at the nursery and the next child who qualifies for a place is one of multiple birth siblings, those children will be admitted in excess of the Published Admission Number to avoid a situation where the children have to attend different nurseries. The children admitted over the PAN will be “excepted pupils” until the class size falls back to 30 pupils.

Incorrect or Misleading Applications

- If the information given in the application form is not accurate or up to date, your child may lose priority. In such a case, the Governing Body will have discretion to refuse the offer of a place. The Governing Body reserves 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.

Places at Noam Primary School

- Admission to Noam Primary School nursery will not guarantee the child a place in Reception.