



Consultation on a proposal to expand Blessed George Napier School, Banbury

DATES OF CONSULTATION
17th May to 27th June 2021

About Blessed George Napier School

Blessed George Napier Catholic School is an 11-18 academy located to the south of Banbury, in the Cherwell District.

The school is part of The Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Company. It currently has a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 150 (i.e. the school admits up to 150 children each year into Year 7), with a total capacity of 847.

The school was last inspected by Ofsted in June 2017 and is graded as Good.

The total number of children on roll for the 2020/21 school year is 889 (as at September 2019) and numbers per year group are shown below:

Year	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Number on roll	149	151	147	139	139	87	77

The school is regularly over-subscribed. For the September 2021 intake, all 150 available places have been allocated. The school is already operating above the capacity of its current buildings

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 Banbury to ensure a place for all applicants.

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

1. Pupil numbers have already risen in the 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 Banbury and surrounding villages.
3. Further new housing is expected. Cherwell District Council's adopted Local Plan includes 7,106 new homes in Banbury between 2014 and 2031.

The three Banbury secondary schools - Blessed George Napier, Wykham Park and North Oxfordshire Academy between them currently provide a total of 540 Year 7 places per year.

Oxfordshire County Council has provided the following forecast pupil numbers for the combined Banbury secondary schools plus the studio school (Futures Institute*).

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11	Year 12	Year 13	Total
2020	482	521	522	488	477	203	204	2897
2021	540	492	539	527	498	232	188	3016
2022	553	553	509	551	539	242	215	3162
2023	553	562	572	519	560	262	224	3252
2024	548	561	584	579	542	272	243	3329
2025	557	556	574	588	592	263	252	3383
2026	573	563	566	584	598	288	244	3416

*Futures Institute is a 14-19 school and therefore admits pupils from yr.10

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 Banbury.

The current pupil forecasts run to 2026, but most of the impact of Banbury'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.

Expansion of secondary school capacity has been planned by the county council in phases, to keep it in line with population growth.

Phase 1: completed 2019

- The Warriner School in Bloxham, which attracts many Banbury pupils, expanded from 1,195 places to 1,600 places, increasing its admission number from 228 to 284.

Phase 2: this proposal

- It is now proposed that Blessed George Napier expands, subject to this consultation and the approval of the Regional Schools Commissioner.

Phase 3: a new school – longer term

- In the longer term, a new secondary school is expected to be required in Banbury. A site for this has been identified south of the Bankside/Longford Park housing development. This site will not become available for construction of the new school until the related housing development progresses sufficiently.
- The timing and nature of this new school cannot be confirmed at this stage, but it will not be open before the late 2020s.

What is being proposed in this consultation?

Blessed George Napier Catholic School, supported by Oxfordshire County Council, is proposing to expand from an admission number of 150 to an admission number of 210. Its total capacity would increase from 847 places to approximately 1,250 places.

Subject to this consultation and approval by the Regional Schools Commissioner, the admission number would then permanently increase to 210 for September 2023, by which time the capital project to provide additional accommodation at the school should be completed.

If the proposed expansion target date of September 2022 is achieved the school in consultation with OCC will agree to accept pupils over PAN for Year 7, to help meet the growth in demand for secondary school places.

Buildings and land

The Pope Francis Catholic Multi Academy Company appointed consultants to identify what additional accommodation would be necessary for this scale of expansion, and how it can best be provided.

The proposed solution will include:

- 9 new classrooms
- 3 new science labs
- A 6th form common room
- A separate new build large hall for dance, drama and full school assemblies
- Additional supporting accommodation including offices, toilets and storage
- External works to create new artificial turf pitches and additional car parking

Additional playing field for the school will be provided on land south of Salt Way, secured by the council through a 'Section 106' agreement as part of the planning permission granted for the housing development in that location.

Planning permission for the school's building works has been granted by Cherwell District Council.

The cost of expanding the school will be met by the county council, using funding secured from housing developers.

Important points to remember

- This consultation is about **the principle of expanding Blessed George Napier Catholic School**. It is **not** about any decisions to allocate housing development to the area made by Cherwell District Council. Comments on housing development proposals need to be made direct to Cherwell District Council when they are submitted for planning decision.
- This consultation is taking place until **27.06.2021**. 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 submit an application to the Regional Schools Commissioner to be allowed to expand. As Blessed George Napier is 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:

<http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/blessedgeorgenapier>.

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: school.planning@oxfordshire.gov.uk (please quote 'BGN Expansion' in the subject line);

You must respond by 27.06.2021

