



Prescribed alteration proposal – Permanent expansion of St John’s CE Primary School, Mosley Common

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers ‘Making significant changes (‘prescribed alterations’) to maintained schools, August 2025’, that Wigan Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to:

St John’s CE Primary School
Commonside Road,
Mosley Common,
Manchester,
M28 1AE.

Local Authority Details

Wigan Council
Town Hall,
Library Street,
Wigan, WN1 1YN

Description of alteration

It is proposed to enlarge the school by extending the school premises to increase the capacity of the school to admit more pupils. The school currently has an admission number of 22 pupils per year group. It is proposed that St John’s CE Primary School is permanently enlarged so it can admit 60 pupils into Reception Class from September 2027 and for subsequent years.

The alteration will provide a new stand-alone block at the school that will accommodate the additional classrooms and facilities required to increase capacity at the school. Section 106* contributions will primarily fund the new building, this will be topped up by Basic Need funding if required.

*Basic need funding is the money the Department for Education give local authorities each year to help them fulfil their duty to make sure there are enough school places for children in their local area. Section 106 contributions are sought from developers towards the costs of providing community and social infrastructure, such as school places, the need for which has arisen as a result of a new development taking place.

Evidence of demand

A large-scale development in Mosley Common prompted the need to consider a school expansion in the area. The combined site, composing of land to the North and South of the guided busway, is expected to be around 1143 homes. Based on Wigan Council's pupil yield calculations, the development could yield around 34 pupils per year group.

The development is located in the Tyldesley Primary Place Planning Area (PPA). This area is consistently oversubscribed for pupils starting in reception class and growth in higher year groups. This has been driven by a combination of fluctuating birth rates, with significant peaks requiring bulge classes in some years, and housing completions in the area. This significant potential pupil yield, combined with high oversubscription in the area, which is expected to continue, makes additional primary school places necessary.

St John's CE Primary School is located on the edge of the developments. This allowed land to be allocated specifically for the expansion of the school as part of the Section 106 and planning arrangements for the sites.

To demonstrate the need for a school expansion in the area, the below tables show future projections for the Tyldesley PPA –

Table 1 - Projected demand for school places -

Reception class entry	Births	Projected demand on reception class places	Current reception class capacity	Shortfall based on current capacity
2027/28	260	289	277	-12
2028/29	295	328	277	-51
2029/30	259	288	277	-11

This projected shortfall does not take into account the yield from the Mosley Common developments.

Whilst pupil yield from housing takes time to come through, due to rates of housing sale and building completion, we must ensure that places are available when they start to be needed. The table below highlights what the local position would be if the pupil yield from all housing at the Mosley Common developments (1143 homes) and other housing with full planning permission (209 homes by 2030) in the Tyldesley Primary PPA came on board now.

Table 2 - Projected demand with pupil yield from housing

Reception class entry	Births	Projected demand on reception class places	Current reception class capacity	Potential yield from Mosley Common developments	Potential yield from other sites	Shortfall with projection and yield from housing
2027/28	260	289	277	34	6	-52
2028/29	295	328	277	34	6	-91
2029/30	259	288	277	34	6	-51

This demonstrates that the existing capacity in the Tyldesley Primary PPA is exhausted year on year and is insufficient to meet the potential yield expected from the Mosley Common developments, necessitating the need for expansion.

Objectives of the proposal

The objectives of the proposal are to permanently enlarge St John's CE Primary School by increasing the physical capacity of the building so that it can admit up to 60 pupils in Reception Class 2027 and subsequent years. This will:

- ensure there are sufficient good or better school places to educate primary age children living in the area who will be of school age with effect from 1 September 2027; and
- increase the opportunity for parental choice as projections indicate that schools in the Tyldesley Primary PPA will be oversubscribed.

Educational standards at St John's CE Primary school are graded Good by Ofsted (using previous Ofsted grading system).

The effect on other educational institutions within the area

There are 7 primary schools in the Tyldesley Primary PPA. These are detailed in the table below –

Table 3 – Schools in the Tyldesley Primary PPA

School	Places available per year group	Religious character
Garrett Hall Primary	60	None
Holy Family Catholic Primary	30	Roman Catholic
St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary	30	Roman Catholic
St John's CE Primary	22	Church of England
St Stephen's CE Primary	30	Church of England
Tyldesley Primary	60	None
Tyldesley St George's Central CE Primary	45	Church of England
Total	277	

As the proposal relates to expansion and not reduction, combined with the demonstrated need for additional school places in the area (see tables 1 and 2), the proposal is unlikely to result in a loss of diversity of provision or reduce parental preference. The proposed expansion will mitigate the additional pupils generated by significant housing developments in an area which is already at capacity.

Without the additional capacity at St John's CE Primary School, the local authority is at risk of not fulfilling its obligation to provide sufficient school places to ensure every child requiring a mainstream school place receives an offer on National Allocation Day.

It is acknowledged that any expansion needs to be carefully planned to ensure that additional capacity is only made available when needed, so that other local schools are not negatively impacted upon.

Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long-term value for money will be achieved

The cost of the expansion is anticipated to be circa £8,000,000. It is assumed that scheme costs will be funded from S106 contributions, subject to housing developments progressing as per the S106 agreements. Should there be a shortfall in S106 contributions received then Basic Need funding will be used to gap fund to the value stated above.

The local review of schools in the Tyldesley Primary PPA area indicated that the expansion of St John's CE Primary School would be favourable because it's far easier to expand than other local schools given that its proximity to the developments would allow additional land for expansion and access to be secured. Any construction activity at the school can be separated wholly from the school, resulting in a safe, efficient, and cost-effective build period.

Long term value for money will be achieved through permanent expansion. Modular or temporary solutions have been discounted because they do not represent good value. Their primary advantage is speed of construction. Once that is not a significant factor, they offer a worse solution in terms of cost, suitability, condition and crucially perception.

In the medium to long term, standard modular buildings at best cost more than traditional construction. Bespoke solutions are cost equivalent in the short term and more expensive in the medium to long terms. If a standard "off the shelf" modular solution is adopted, the school needs to adapt its working practises to standard sized spaces of the building, and not the other way around. They have a shorter design life and are less robust than traditional forms of procurement and require more maintenance.

Temporary modular solutions are non-compliant with building regulations and can only secure short-term and temporary planning permission. A standard modular building will also crucially always be perceived as "a mobile" by pupils, parents and carers, the staff and the public.

Pre-publication Consultation

A non-statutory pre-publication consultation took place between 12th January and 23rd February 2026. The main themes raised by consultees were –

Transport and Environmental Factors	Community, Social and Educational Factors
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased traffic and congestion • Parking • Road safety • Loss of open space to accommodate expansion • Building works causing disruption, noise and dust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact on local Catholic schools • Concerns over a larger school • Impact on the feel of the school/school community/standards • Impact of building work on pupils • Expand a different school or build a new school somewhere else

The most significant theme highlighted by consultees during the pre-publication consultation was the impact any expansion would have on traffic and congestion.

If approved, once the 5-stage process is completed by the School Organisation Team, planning permission will be required for the proposed expansion of St John’s CE Primary School. The planning application will be supported by a Transport Assessment and Travel Plan.

The Transport Assessment will consider the impact of the development on all transport modes, set out proposals to minimise the impact of the development on the transport network and promote measures to encourage sustainable transport. The impact of the remaining development traffic that cannot be reduced further through sustainable transport measures is assessed on the local road network. The Transport Assessments will be tailored to local circumstances and as such will account for any existing road safety issues in the area, the additional traffic generated by the new residential development Mosley Common and any associated mitigation.

The primary purpose of a Travel Plan is to identify opportunities for the effective promotion and delivery of sustainable transport initiatives such as walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport in connection with the proposed development and through this to thereby reduce the demand for travel by less sustainable modes.

It is acknowledged that the majority of the responses received to the consultation referenced the negative impact on traffic and congestion in the area. In addition to the 5-stage process and the planning application transport assessment travel plan, the council’s transport strategy provides

more information about transport across Wigan, including the Mosley Common area.

A further theme which received a high number of comments was the impact on Catholic provision in the area.

Catholic demand in the area has been carefully assessed. Over the last five Reception intakes, both Holy Family Catholic Primary School and St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School have been able to offer places to all baptised Catholic children who applied by the closing date and named the school. There is no evidence of unmet demand for Catholic places, and therefore no sufficiency rationale for expanding Catholic provision in this planning area based on there not being enough Catholic places available.

Based on all current data, the proposed expansion is not expected to have an adverse impact on Holy Family Catholic Primary School or any other Catholic school. Demand for Catholic places is stable, and admission patterns show Catholic families are securing places at Catholic schools, where they have chosen to express preferences for these schools.

Implementation

The proposed permanent expansion should be completed by September 2027 and will provide the facilities required to allow the school to admit 90 pupils per Reception Class intake from September 2027. The new admission number will phase in as each new Reception Class cohort starts.

How to make representations on the proposal to permanently expand St John's CE Primary School

Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, that is by 18th May 2026, any person may support, object to, or make comments on the proposal online at www.wigan.gov.uk/consultations

Or by sending their representations to:

By Post: Wigan Council, School Organisation Team, Town Hall, Library Street, Wigan, WN1 1YN

By email: consultation@wigan.gov.uk

Comments previously made during the pre-publication consultation will be made available for decision makers.