

## **Questions and Answers – Epinay Business and Enterprise School**

### **Why are these proposals being made?**

The last three to four years has seen a marked increase in the numbers of pupils at Epinay Business & Enterprise School, which has meant that the school is very full and has had to make use of other off-site buildings to accommodate additional pupils and the sixth form. There has also been an increase in demand for places to support pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) which has Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) as the primary need. To meet the increase in demand for ASD places we have looked with the Local Authority at extending accommodation on the current site, but the availability of space and the layout of the site means that options to do this are very limited.

### **Why the former South Shields School site?**

Options for the expansion of Epinay Business & Enterprise School are limited. South Shields School closed in August 2020 and the buildings, facilities and site are available for community and/or educational purposes. The building and grounds are very large and architects have worked with the Local Authority and the school to produce plans to remodel part of the building and grounds to provide facilities for an expanded Epinay Business & Enterprise School, on a bigger site, developing the space to meet the needs of all of its current and future pupils.

### **Are there any alternative options?**

There are currently no alternative suitable sites for the school to relocate to.

### **Will the facilities at the school be as good as the current Epinay Business & Enterprise School?**

Because of the size of the space that is available, there is scope to replicate and enhance the facilities at the newly remodelled school in part of the South Shields School building and part of the extensive grounds. A specialist architect has worked with the Local Authority and the school on the design and remodelling to maximise the benefits of the space and facilities whilst also ensuring that the requirements of the most vulnerable pupils are met. The redesign will incorporate optimum sized classrooms, specialist facilities and outdoor provision. The school has been heavily involved in the design process to ensure maximum use is made of the spaces available and that facilities meet the needs of the school.

### **How many pupils will be in the school?**

There are 172 pupils in Epinay Business & Enterprise School currently, aged from 4-19. The relocated school will be designed to take up to a maximum of 215 pupils, with the increase being phased over the following period of years:

2020/21 - 172  
2021/22 - 186  
2022/23 - 195  
2023/24 – 210  
2024/25 - 215

**Will class sizes be bigger?**

Class sizes will continue to be determined as they are currently, which is on the basis of the needs of pupils.

**Will the same staff be teaching and supporting pupils?**

Although the school would be relocating onto a different site, pupils will continue to be taught and supported by the same staff as currently.

**Will it mean longer travel times for pupils?**

Epinay School provides for pupils with SEND from across the whole of South Tyneside and neighbouring authorities therefore, for some pupils the travel time from home to school may be longer but for others travel time will be shorter. At the time of preparation of the table below there were 172 pupils on roll at Epina Business & Enterprise School. 51% of pupils live nearer to the former South Shields School site, and 49% live closer to the current Epina Business & Enterprise School site. However, no pupil lives further than 2.85 more miles to the proposed new site.

<b>Distance between home to current Epina site and former SSS site</b>		
<b>Number of pupils</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Difference</b>
87	51%	Closer to new site
25	15%	Up to 1 mile further to new site
23	13%	Up to 2 miles further to new site
36	21%	More than 2 miles further to new site
<b>171</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>

Maximum increased distance is 2.85 miles

**Will my child still get transport to school?**

Parents and carers will still be able to apply for support with home to school transport, as set out in the council’s transport policy.

**Will the school still have the same name?**

There are currently no plans to change the name of the school.

**What will the current school building and site be used for?**

If Epinay Business & Enterprise School is relocated then the future use of the empty school buildings and site would be considered at that time.

**How will pupils, parents and carers be able to give their views on the proposals?**

Due to coronavirus risks, current government restrictions on large gatherings and the social distancing requirements mean that it is not possible to hold meetings in school. However, details of the meetings, to be held via Zoom, with parents/carers/pupils, staff and other interested parties, to outline proposals more fully and to give the opportunity for questions to be asked and responded to, both in the meetings and in writing, are included in the letters to the respective parties.

Responses, or any queries relating to the proposal to relocate Epinay Business & Enterprise School should be sent to:

Email address: [Epinay.queries@southtyneside.gov.uk](mailto:Epinay.queries@southtyneside.gov.uk)

Alternatively you can post to:

Postal Address: Epinay Business and Enterprise School, Clervaux Terrace, Jarrow NE32 5UP

Responses must be received by **12 April 2021**