

From: BPDML Admin Centre bpdml@gmail.com
Subject: Fwd: Bristol Free School - Admissions Consultation
Date: 24 January 2016 at 16:16

To: philip.ward@russelledgeeducationtrust.org.uk, karen.lynych@russelledgeeducationtrust.org.uk, dave.hale@russelledgeeducationtrust.org.uk, admin@russelledgeeducationtrust.org.uk

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BC

Dear Sir / Madam

as we are now drawing towards the end of the consultation period, we are writing to you to request a meeting to update you on the results of our survey and to discuss our case for inclusion within the Bristol Free School APA. Would you be willing to meet with us at a mutually convenient time?

We look forward to hearing from you

Gill Brooks
BPDML Director

For and on Behalf of
BPDML
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Our website contains a wealth of useful information about the Royal Victoria Park Development: www.bpdml.co.uk

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Begin forwarded message:

From: BPDML Admin Centre <bpdml@gmail.com>
Subject: Bristol Free School - Admissions Consultation
Date: 16 January 2016 22:29:28 GMT
To: admin@russelledgeeducationtrust.org.uk

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing on behalf of the residents on the Royal Victoria Park Estate, Bristol BS10 regarding the admissions consultation for Bristol Free School.

Firstly we would like to say that we are delighted that Bristol Free School has initiated this consultation about admissions. We would like to register our recognition of the hard work and commitment the Parents Voice group, together with the Russell Group and the teaching staff have put into getting the school established. Many families and residents in the Royal Victoria Park estate supported the initiative Bristol Free School from before it was established, and remain committed to supporting its success. We believe the school has the potential to benefit the whole of the local community.

About Royal Victoria Park Estate

Royal Victoria Park estate is about 4-500 metres (mid point) away from Bristol Free School and represents the diversity of the whole of the community in microcosm – it has children from diverse socio-economic and cultural backgrounds – it has a wide range of dwellings covering all the main types: semi detached houses, terraced houses, social housing, detached houses (137 in total) and flats (98 in total). Our estate was developed between 2002 and 2003 on the old Brenchley Hospital site. The estate covers Royal Victoria Park, John Renton Gardens. Strathearn Drive. Renton Hall. Gainshorouah Mews and Tennvson Mews.

Our Request

We would urge you to consider and agree to our request for the APA for Bristol Free School to include Royal Victoria Park Estate. We believe the following reasons support our case for inclusion:

- Proximity to the School:
 - Bristol Free School is the closest secondary school to Royal Victoria Park estate. Children living on the Royal Victoria Park estate live c.4-500 metres away from the school but are excluded from the catchment area. Our view is it makes no sense that a local community school would exclude these pupils from the APA of their closest secondary school especially when the current Bristol Free School APA includes households that are over 3,700 meters away in Sneyd Park
- Environmental Impact
 - Excluding children from Royal Victoria Park estate from their closest secondary school promotes more traffic and travel across the city.
 - As a publicly funded body, we believe that Bristol Free School should have an obligation to consider the impact of its admission policies on the local community and the environment. By excluding children from Royal Victoria Park estate from their closest secondary school, the effect of the current Bristol Free School APA is to promote more traffic and travel across the city at rush hour. It makes little sense from an environmental impact / carbon emissions point of view that children who in all likelihood would need to be driven to Bristol Free School from the furthest reaches of BS9 get priority over those who would almost certainly walk from Royal Victoria Park Estate. The alternative is children from Royal Victoria Park estate will follow the route of many others before them by being driven or bussed out to St Katherine's or travelling across the city to Bristol Cathedral School or travel to Henbury school which is substantially further away from Royal Victoria Park than Bristol Free School.
- Community Cohesion / Social and Cultural Diversity
 - Royal Victoria Park estate has a wide range of dwellings including semi detached houses, terraced houses, social housing, detached houses and flats. Including children from the Royal Victoria Park estate in the Bristol Free School catchment area would enrich and enhance the cultural and social diversity of the school's life.
 - Common attendance of children from an area to one school helps to promote a feeling of community amongst both children, parents and neighbours. It remains a matter of deep concern that as a community school, Bristol Free School's current APA excludes children in the community it aims to serve, many of whom will have built up strong friendship groups within Westbury On Trym Academy. Inclusion of Royal Victoria Park Estate within the catchment would provide a common bond for our local community.
- Delivering True Local Choice
 - Excluding Royal Victoria Park estate from Bristol Free School APA does little to support the Education Secretary's view that parents should have real choice and means children who live on this estate can not go the secondary school closest to where they live whilst children who live thousands of meters away (and are unlikely to want to come to Bristol Free School) are included in the APA.
- Reflecting the Needs of the Local Community
 - The original case for Bristol Free School was made when the site for the school was expected to be St Ursulas, a site centrally located in BS9 between Henleaze, Emlea and Westbury on Trym Academy primary schools. As result of not getting the St Ursulas site the facts on the ground are now different as Bristol Free School is physically located within BS10, around 4-500 meters from the Royal Victoria Park Estate, and over 3,700 metres away from the furthest reaches of BS9.
- Local Demand For Access To the Closest Secondary School
 - There is exceptionally strong interest and desire from the residents on the estate for inclusion. Working through our residents association, a group of 12 of us have surveyed and canvassed opinion on this issue. We have asked residents to provide information and views on
 - Ages of their children
 - The schools their children currently attend
 - The mode of transport to reach school
 - Whether they would like the estate to be included in the Bristol Free School APA
 - The reasons for their preferences
 - If they have children, when they would want to go to BFS
 - Whether in their opinion including the Estate in the catchment area of Bristol Free School would reduce traffic in the surrounding area
 - Whether they would support moves to improve child safety near Bristol Free School, for example by putting a pedestrian crossing for BFS children on Concorde Drive
 - So far have received over 80 responses to our ongoing survey, from all quarters of the estate. Whilst the detailed results from our survey are still being collated there is over whelming desire of the residents for the Estate to be included in the APA and a growing body of factual evidence supporting the case for inclusion of our estate, that highlights the environmental and social effects of excluding Royal Victoria Park estate from the Bristol Free School APA. Whilst survey responses are still coming in we wanted to share some of they key points from the survey so far:
 - Of those surveyed on the estate and whose children are of school age:
 - Of those that attend Bristol Free School 100% walk and 0% take motor transport (e.g. car, bus).(8 pupils)

- Those that travel to schools other than Bristol Free School, 95.5% (43 pupils) take motor transport to another school (e.g. car, bus) and 4.5% (2 pupils) walk to school.
- Of the 81 households surveyed on the estate so far, 98.8% of those surveyed said they would either like our estate to be in the APA (12.3%) or strongly felt it should be in the APA (86.6%). Of the 98.8% of those surveyed who wanted Royal Victoria Park Estate to be in the primary APA for Bristol Free School, the reasons provided were as follows:
 - 98.8% of those surveyed believe children in the Royal Victoria Park Estate should be able to attend the secondary school closest to where they live
 - 84.0% of those surveyed believe that excluding children from Royal Victoria Park Estate from the Bristol Free School catchment area runs against the Core Values of Bristol Free School in terms of The Ethos of Fairness, Equality and Community
 - 77.8% of those surveyed believe that including children from the Royal Victoria Park Estate in the Bristol Free School primary APA catchment area would help reduce demand for places in other Central and North West Bristol secondary schools
 - 91.4% of those surveyed believe that the further children from the Royal Victoria Park Estate have to travel to secondary school, the larger the potential environmental impact
 - 80.2% of those surveyed believe that excluding children from the Royal Victoria Park Estate estate from the Bristol Free School catchment area increases demand for places in schools further away
- 100% of those responded said they would support moves to improve child safety near Bristol Free School, for example by putting a pedestrian crossing for BFS children on Concorde Drive
- We would be happy to share the detailed responses and summary of feedback from the survey once they have been collated

This consultation provides an opportunity to address these significant issues regarding admissions which will continue to have a significant environmental and social impact. We would urge you to agree to our request for the APA to include the Royal Victoria Park Estate.

Finally we would like to thank you for making the time to consider our petition, and we look forward to hearing from you.

About BPDML and Our Residents Committee

Brentry Park Development Management Company Limited (BPDML) was established by residents on the estate in 2011 to manage the shared amenity areas of the estate and to coordinate issues of common interest. It has become a central contact point for many issues on the estate. Each year we hold a residents meeting at St Peters Hospice that is open to all residents, where we review the maintenance of the estate and consider how we can improve our shared environment. Our website provides a wealth of information about the estate and the activities of the residents committee.

Gill Brooks
BPDML Director

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