



CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSAL TO EXPAND MALMESBURY CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (**updated 27th March 2023**)

These Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) will be updated as required, with the latest version available at <https://malmesburyprimaryschool.co.uk/expansion>

Summary of proposal

The Governors of Malmesbury Church of England Primary School are consulting for opinions on expanding the School, using a grant from the James Dyson Foundation to create seven new classrooms (expanding the School from 420 to 630 places) and to create a new dedicated Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics (STEAM) facility.

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Why are we doing this? What are the benefits for pupils and the town?

There are three key benefits to primary school age children from this proposal.

1. The creation of a first-class Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Maths (STEAM) facility. Children will be able to experience the school curriculum through new and innovative teaching approaches, devised in consultation with world-class engineers, in purpose-built facilities. The School aims to share the curriculum and make the facilities available to other schools in the community.
2. The School will be able to grow in line with future demand, ensuring the School will be large enough to offer a place to every child living in the town who wishes to attend.
3. The School's expansion will enable it to take possession of 1.48 acres of land adjoining the current site. As well as the STEAM facility, and additional classrooms, this will create enhanced play and outdoor learning facilities at the School, and create the opportunity for increased childcare provision.

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How will the expansion be paid for?

The School expansion will be paid for using the £6m grant from the James Dyson Foundation.

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Who are the James Dyson Foundation?

The James Dyson Foundation is Dyson's charitable arm. Their aim is to introduce young people to the exciting world of engineering, encouraging them to think differently, make mistakes and realise their engineering potential. Their main mission is to inspire the engineers of the future, but they also support medical research and community projects local to Dyson offices.

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What is STEAM?

It is an umbrella term used to group together the disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics.

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Will the School be focussing only on STEAM subjects?

Literacy is fundamental to children's success. Helping children to develop a rich vocabulary, self-expression and reading comprehension are essential tools they need to become lifelong learners, and exploit all the opportunities that life will offer them. The School is committed to developing these core skills and very proud of its pupils' outstanding attainment and progress in reading and writing.

The School currently teaches a broad and comprehensive curriculum, including English, Maths, Science, Art, History, Geography, Design Technology, Computing, P.E., French and Personal, Social, Health and Religious Education. This project will not detract from these disciplines, but give pupils the opportunity to explore them through STEAM activities.

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***Can the money be spread around the area rather than given to one school?**

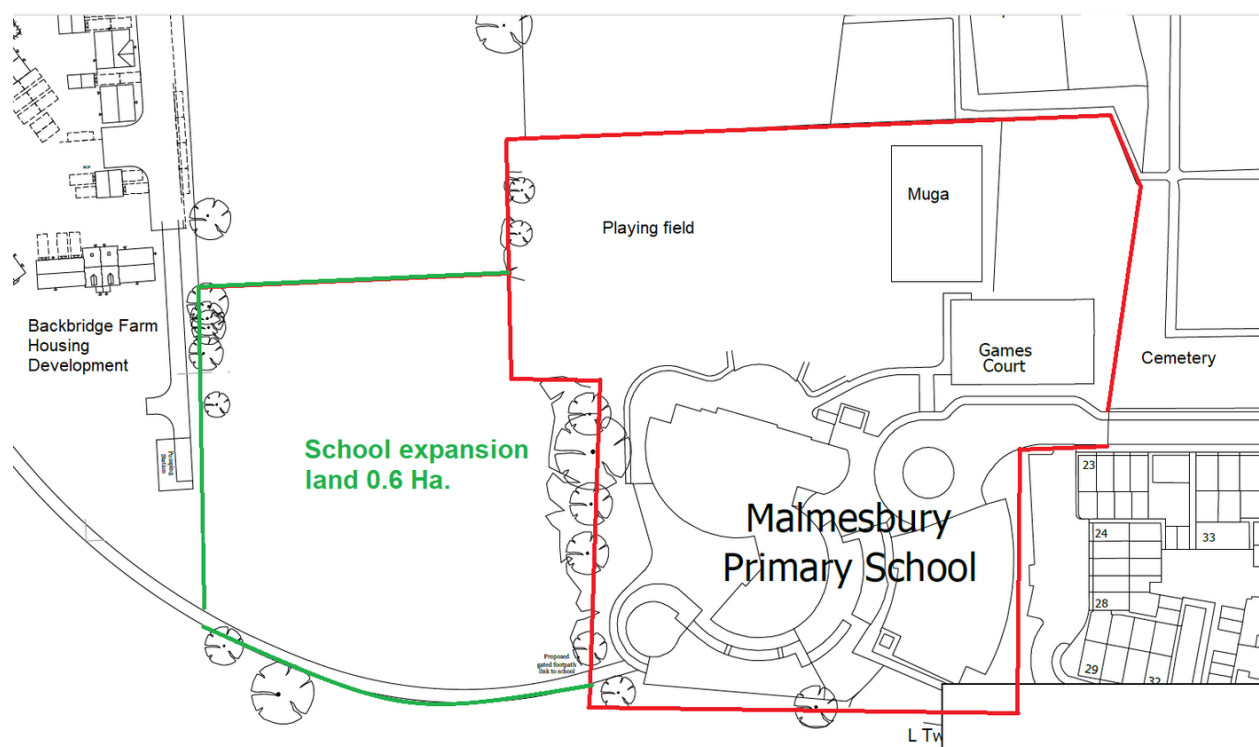
All of the generous donation from the James Dyson Foundation will be used to build STEAM facilities and create the seven new classrooms and facilities needed for the expansion. Splitting the money is not possible, and if it were, it would mean that the

facilities could not be built. However, the benefit from the enhanced curriculum can be spread to other schools in the area, and this is something the School is very excited about.

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Where is the new land?

The land is currently owned by Persimmon Homes, who are building the Backbridge Farm housing estate. It is next to Malmesbury Primary School and, if the build goes ahead, will be fenced off so that it is within the School site (see plan below).



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What are the proposed building works?

One of the exciting parts of the School expansion is that it is not just about new classrooms but also about purpose-built rooms equipped for design, technology, art, science, and mathematics-based activities, providing learning opportunities which most primary schools could only dream of.

The designs will be developed after the consultation and then subject to the normal planning process. The School would work with architects Wilkinson Eyre, who have produced multiple award-winning and innovative buildings, including the new cancer unit at Bath Royal United Hospital, the Dyson Research Facility in Malmesbury and a STEAM building at Gresham's School in Norfolk.

Some potential designs, from an earlier discussion about School expansion prior to the James Dyson Foundation's involvement, are included at the end of this document.

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How will the expansion be environmentally sustainable?

Environmental sustainability will be a key component of the expansion if it is approved. The James Dyson Foundation's chosen architects, Wilkinson Eyre have a strong background in

designing sustainable buildings focused on net zero carbon emissions. Pupils from the School's Environmental Group will also be involved in the project.

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When will the proposed work start?

There are many steps to go through before work can commence, including seeking approval from the South West's Regional Department for Education, the planning approval process and tendering a contractor to do the building work. We will keep stakeholders informed of progress through the website and other communications.

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How might the building work impact on my child who is already a pupil at the School?

Everything possible will be done to avoid impacting on children's learning. The position of the new building will ensure the work does not disrupt the normal daily running of the School. Disruptive aspects of the build would be scheduled for School holiday periods, and access to the building site would be from the rear and well away from pupil entrances. The building site would be securely fenced off from areas used by pupils.

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Will the Senior Leadership Team be able to remain focussed on the day to day running of the School?

Malmesbury Primary School is committed to delivering an outstanding education for each and every individual child at the School, now and in the future. If approval is agreed, the School will employ a Project Manager (funded by the grant from the James Dyson Foundation) to oversee the build. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) of the School will be heavily involved in setting the direction and specifying the details of the project, but will not be running it on a day-to-day basis. The Governors of the School, the majority of whom are parents of children currently at the School, have a vested interest in ensuring the SLT remain focused on educational attainment, and their work with the School will monitor that focus.

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Can the School start the new STEAM curriculum for existing pupils with Dyson before the expansion is completed?

Malmesbury Primary School already has a diverse and exciting STEAM curriculum. This term has seen the children making boats and testing whether they would float or sink; conducting experiments to see the fundamentals of plant growth; painting pictures in the style of Monet; learning about sgraffito; coding Sphero robots, and many, many more. The focus of this project is to develop new facilities and to enhance the existing curriculum, in conjunction with world-class engineers. The School is keen to explore what opportunities there are to work with the James Dyson Foundation to deepen the STEAM curriculum prior to the expansion being completed, and will be discussing this with them in the near future.

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How will the School include children in the design process?

Now that the possibility of expansion is in the public domain, the School is developing plans for how the children could be involved in the design process, if permission to expand is given. This could include discussions within classes, design and engineering projects focused on the expansion into the homework grid and other ideas. Some conversations

have already happened with the children, with one group keen that a giant human hamster wheel to provide energy for the building is included in the design.

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How will children be kept safe and secure while building work is going on?

Malmesbury Primary School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. The safety of our children will continue to be the primary concern throughout the building work. See [here](#) for the School's safeguarding and health and safety policies.

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When will the work finish?

It is hoped that the new building will be finished by September 2027. Pupils throughout the School will be able to benefit from all the amenities, including the new STEAM facilities and proposed additional wraparound childcare places, from that time. (Pupils currently in Reception and year 1 will be in years 5 and 6 in September 2027.)

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What happens if the allocated land isn't used for School expansion?

The Section 106 agreement, agreed by Wiltshire County Council and Persimmon Homes as part of the planning process, allocated the land for school expansion for a period of 10 years, which will expire in November 2031. If the School has not been expanded by then, the land will return to Persimmon Homes, who would likely build additional housing. The land would then be lost for community usage.

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Will the look and feel of the School change?

The School is currently able to make use of the indoor and outdoor space to provide separate areas for groups of children, (for example, pupils in Reception have their own dedicated playground space and toilets). Our plans are to continue this ethos, ensuring the School exploits all the advantages of the enhanced facilities, while feeling like a safe, welcoming place to grow, develop and discover life in all its fullness.

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How will the expansion impact the play/outdoor space available to the School?

Under these proposals, the School will increase the amount of outdoor space per pupil.

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Will the admissions arrangements for the School be changing?

We are not proposing to change the admissions arrangements for the School. We envisage that the School would grow by one additional class of 30 places per year, coming into Reception year, starting with the intake in 2027/28, as per the table below.

Number of children	Current status	2027 / 28	2028 / 29	2029 / 30	2030 / 31	2031 / 32	2032 / 33	2033 / 34
Reception	60	90	90	90	90	90	90	90
Year 1	60	60	90	90	90	90	90	90
Year 2	60	60	60	90	90	90	90	90
Year 3	60	60	60	60	90	90	90	90
Year 4	60	60	60	60	60	90	90	90

Year 5	60	60	60	60	60	60	90	90
Year 6	60	60	60	60	60	60	60	90
Total number of pupils	420	450	480	510	540	570	600	630

This will allow the School to grow slowly. See [here](#) for the School's current admissions policy.

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If there are additional classrooms, why can't the School take children of any age from the date of building completion?

The School will grow by one additional class of 30 places in Reception, each year from 2027/28 (as illustrated in the table above). This approach will ensure that places fill steadily and other local schools are not de-stabilised. It will also allow the School to ensure we have sufficient staff and resources in place, and remain financially stable.

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Will the School maintain the same child to teaching staff ratios?

Yes. The proposals will not affect the child to teaching staff ratios but may see the School able to expand specialist teaching support.

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How will the School be able to recruit enough teaching staff?

Additional teaching staff will be required over time, in line with the growing pupil numbers. We will recruit all new staff according to our HR policies (which can be found on the School website), and are looking forward to new members joining our enthusiastic, experienced, and exceptional team.

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Will the wraparound childcare, also known as Peas in the Pod (PITP), provision expand in line with the proposed pupil expansion numbers?

At the moment, PITP is restricted due to lack of space in the School. As the School grows, it is anticipated that the PITP provision will be expanded, subject to demand and financial viability.

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Will money raised by the Friends of Malmesbury Primary School be used to further fund the expansion?

The costs of the build and the Project Manager will be paid using the grant from the James Dyson Foundation, so fundraising by the Friends of Malmesbury Primary School for improvements, along with the School's maintenance budget, can continue to be used as normal to make the School a fun, well cared for facility.

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Where will everyone park?

Parking will be considered under the planning process. The School will maintain the barrier on Poole Road, to only allow those with prior agreement to enter the School grounds. The School encourages as many pupils as possible to walk to school.

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How will the expansion affect parking and transport, particularly around Poole Road?

The School appreciates the parking issues experienced by residents of Poole Road and repeatedly sends messages to parents asking them to not park in the Poole Road area. The School's admissions policy is designed in part to ensure as many children as possible who attend the School live within walking distance, and expanding may reduce hundreds of journeys each week from Malmesbury to village schools. Minimising transport impact from the expansion will be developed within the planning process.

The expansion offers a unique opportunity to reimagine the site access and traffic flow. We look forward to working with architects and local residents to find creative solutions to the existing problems.

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How will we manage the additional traffic coming into/near School?

Traffic and highways will be considered under the planning process. A path is currently being built by Persimmon which will connect the School to the new houses on the Backbridge Farm development (at the back of the School). This path will also cross the river to allow pupils who live up towards the secondary school to walk to School too. This path will minimise the number of pupils and parent and carers who need to drive or use the front entrance to the School.

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***What will the impact be on other schools in the area?**

Data from Wiltshire County Council indicates that by 2027 there will be over 150 additional pupils living within Malmesbury who need primary school places. The strategy of Wiltshire Council is that these children will attend village schools. Beyond this time, with additional housing forecast, Wiltshire Council's medium to long term plan is to expand Malmesbury Primary School. This expansion proposal fits with that strategy and is designed to meet the future needs of families in our area.

The local schools in the area will also be able to benefit from the STEAM curriculum that will be created working with engineers from Dyson. It is anticipated that this will be a fantastic positive impact for pupils in all local schools.

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Indicative designs of expansion School from previous discussions in 2016/17

Please note: these three designs are for information only. New designs to include STEAM facilities will be developed, and options that include a separate building may be considered.

