

# **Consultation on Proposed Changes to the Current Catchment Area for King Edward VII Secondary School for the Academic Year 2021/22**

## **Summary Report of the Findings**

### **i. Background**

This proposal was part of a broader piece of collaborative work between all Secondary Schools in the South West area of Sheffield and Sheffield City Council. It was aimed at ensuring that all pupils have access to a good local school place. Forecasts suggest that newly-commissioned secondary provision will meet long-term permanent capacity needs across Sheffield; however, the City is experiencing a rise in the number of children who will transfer to its secondary schools, especially in parts of the South West of the City.

One of the schools that we expect to be oversubscribed by demand from within its own catchment area is Tapton Secondary School. If families cannot be accommodated at Tapton because of oversubscription, they may not be eligible for other locally-accessible schools under current arrangements.

Proposals that were consulted upon were:

1. Extending King Edward VII catchment area to include Hallam Primary School; (led by Sheffield City Council)
2. Prioritising catchment children attending Tapton feeder primary schools – Hallam, Lydgate and Netherthorpe (led by Tapton Academy Trust) <sup>1</sup>

The proposed extension of the King Edward VII catchment area is a proactive initiative in response to the forecast future demand. If agreed, this change would take effect from 2021/22.

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<sup>1</sup> This report does not include further details or results from Tapton Academy Trust's consultation.

## ii. Consultation on the Extension of King Edward VII Catchment Area

The main method of consulting was an online questionnaire, however people were also invited to get in touch by telephone or email if they preferred. They could contact the Pupil Admissions Team on 0114 273 5766 or at [admissionsconsultation@sheffield.gov.uk](mailto:admissionsconsultation@sheffield.gov.uk).

The consultation took place between **Monday 4 November** and **Sunday 15 December 2019** and it was publicised via the following channels:

- Made available on the SCC website: [www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/schools-childcare/admissions-consultation](http://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/schools-childcare/admissions-consultation)
- Circulated via Sheffield City Council's GovDelivery system on Monday 4 November 2019 to 5824 subscribers of the Children, Young People & Families topic. (It was recirculated on Monday 18 November to all subscribers of this topic *who did not open the previous bulletin* – 3720 recipients.)
- Added to the SCC Consultation Hub on Thursday 7 November
- Sent directly to all Headteachers, Governors and Early Years Providers
- Information distributed by Sheffield Parent Carer Forum to their network of over 2000 parents and carers
- A meeting was held with the Headteacher and Governing Body of King Edward VII Secondary School and the consultation was highlighted to all King Edward VII feeder primary schools and Hallam Primary

## iii. Overall Response to the Proposal

- **77 people responded to the consultation**
- **32% felt the proposal to extend King Edward VII catchment was a good idea and 34% felt it was a good idea but also had some reservations. 28% felt it was not a good idea and 5.4% felt unable to comment on the proposal.**

This report provides response statistics and a summary of the most common / recurring views and concerns. The full set of comments is attached at **Appendix 1**.

#### **iv. The Online Questionnaire**

The online questionnaire was accompanied by a statement outlining the proposal and a map showing the proposed change.

The questionnaire asked:

- In what capacity respondents were giving their views (e.g. parent, professional, school governor)
- Whether they lived in the catchment area for certain primary schools
- How clearly the proposals had been described
- What their views on the proposals were – a good idea, a good idea but with some reservations or not a good idea

Respondents were also given opportunities throughout the survey to submit additional comments, questions or suggestions.

A copy of the survey questions can be found at **Appendix 2**.

Key questions were extracted from responses throughout the consultation period and a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) report was posted on the website addressing these.

#### **v. Who responded?**

77 people completed the online questionnaire. The majority of these were parents and carers.

<b>Respondent type</b>	<b>Number</b>
Parent / carer	68
Young person	0
Headteacher	0
Other school staff	1
Governor	1
*Other	4
Not answered	3

The four other respondents were:

- Local resident, possible parent, teacher in post-16
- Local resident
- Grandparent of children affected
- Chairperson of Tenants and Residents Association

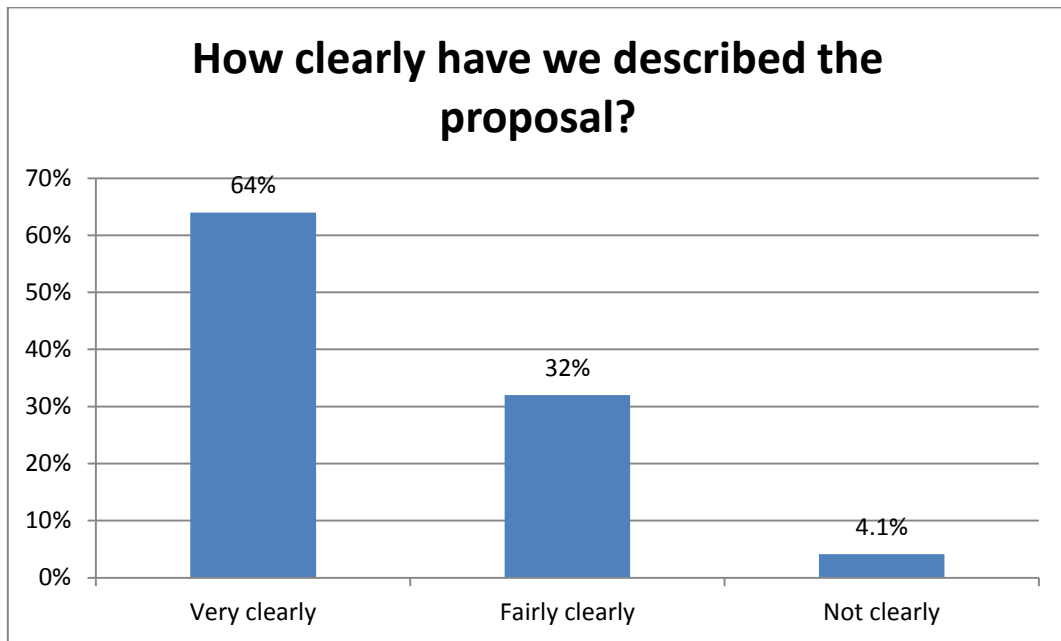
43 of the 77 respondents said they lived in one of the specified catchment areas.

<b>School catchment area lived in</b>	<b>Number</b>
Hallam Primary	8
Lydgate Junior	8
Nether Green Junior	1
St Mary's CE Primary	1
Sharrow Primary	1
Walkley Primary	5
Westways Primary	19
None of these	23
Don't know	1
Not answered	10

The consultation was anonymous but some optional equalities monitoring questions were asked at the end of the questionnaire. This information can be provided on request.

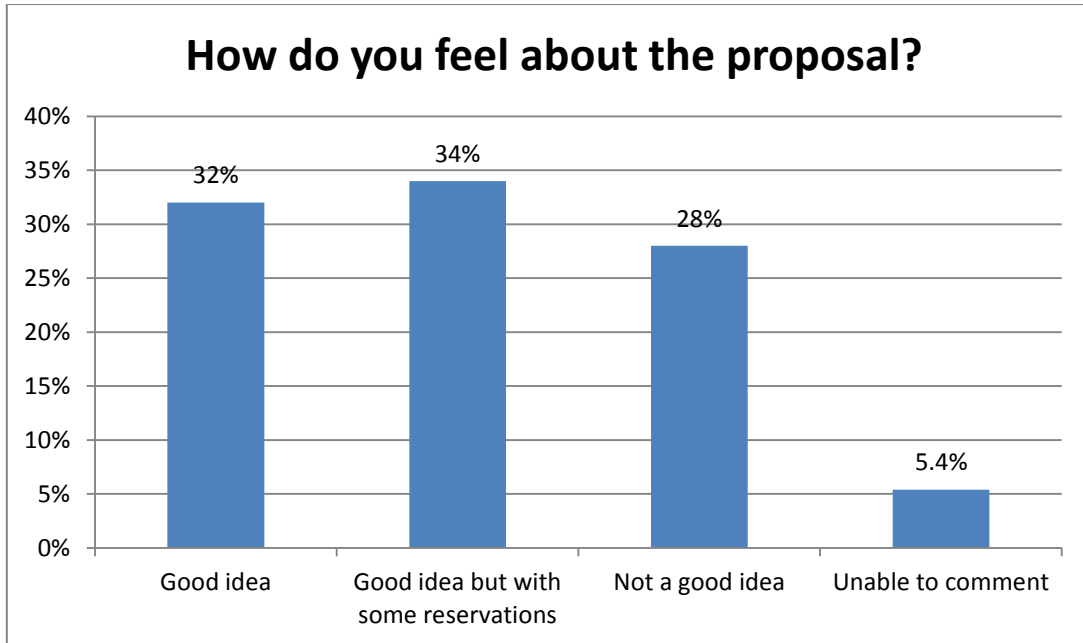
## vi. Views on the Proposal

64% of respondents felt the proposal had been described 'Very clearly' and 32% felt it had been described 'Fairly clearly'. 4.1% felt the proposal had not been described clearly.

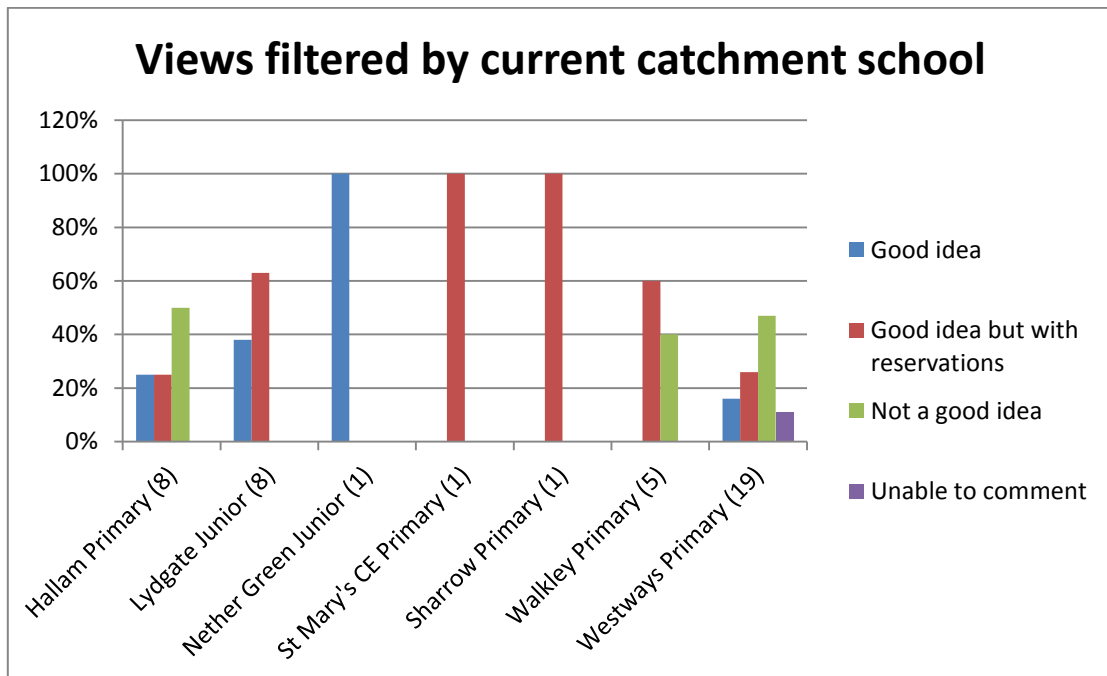


Those who answered 'fairly clearly' or 'not clearly' were asked what they had found unclear.

The main themes which people felt could have been made clearer concerned catchment areas and feeder schools. See **Appendix 1** for the specific comments made.



The following graph shows views broken down by the current catchment area lived in, however, due to the low response rate, this comparison is not necessarily representative.



## **vii. Comments on the proposal**

We separated the comments on the proposal into three sections. Those who said they were:

- a) A good idea**
- b) A good idea but with reservations**
- c) Not a good idea**

### **a) Good idea**

Broadly speaking, those who felt the proposal was a good idea believed this was because they offered more choice of secondary schools to parents:

- *“Increased choice of decent school for children to attend.”*
- *“Will allow more choice and help ease the oversubscription of schools.”*
- *“Gives parents a wider option for secondary schools.”*

Others stated that the proposal was more practical, particularly around factors such as transport and distance:

- *“Help is needed to children to be able to go to school as locally as possible.”*
- *“Living in Lodge Moor at the edge of the city, if my children weren't offered a place at Tapton, without King Edwards there isn't another local school that is accessible by public transport. Mercia School is too far away and High Storrs not accessible by bus. King Edwards is on the 51 bus route so would be a suitable alternative. This is a very sensible proposal.”*

### **b) Good idea with reservations:**

Respondents who felt the proposal was a “good idea with reservations” gave a number of reasons why they felt this way.

Concerns around space, capacity and oversubscription formed the majority of the reservations:

- *“Will open the door to a lot more applicants, however, will lead to slower application process and more people applying for the same schools.”*
- *“If King Edward’s became oversubscribed, it would impact on students of other feeder schools such as Westways, who may not be in their catchment.”*
- *“Will there be enough space?”*
- *“As long as it doesn’t create large class sizes, that’s fine.”*
- *“I can understand the rationale for the proposal but I am worried that this will mean that it will be harder for my children to be accepted into King Edward’s.”*

Some respondents felt that more clarity around the proposal was required:

- *“Unclear what other additional measures you are proposing to manage short-term oversubscription. Unclear the extent of any likely impact on people outside of catchment for King Edward’s but attending a designated feeder school (other than Hallam). Unclear the extent of any likely impact on people outside of catchment but with a sibling at King Edward’s.”*

The proposal should be wider was a concern of two respondents:

- *“Why not also include Hunters Bar Primary in the mix?”*
- *“Good idea because it's important that people have choice. Having access to two secondaries plus Mercia puts parents in a great position. Mercia gives a very different style of school as an option to parents and children, while having the choice of two local secondaries helps with picking a school for the child's strengths and picking school that can logistically work for you. Note, Mercia's style is not a good fit for everyone, so if that school is not an option for you, you should still have at least two reasonable (admissions-wise) options near you. My reservation is this does not go far enough. As said, for residents in this part of Sheffield, having access to two local secondaries plus Mercia is a great set of options. At the moment though, some residents have*



*this, whilst others don't. I am asking you [to] consider widening this proposal. My personal example is that the Greystones, Brincliffe and Sharrow Vale area residents still only have priority admissions options of High Storrs and Mercia, whereas those in Greystones and Brincliffe could easily benefit from also being in the Silverdale catchment, and those in Sharrow Vale could benefit from either King Edward VII or Tipton. This is just my local example; I'm sure there are many other pockets of the city who could benefit from increase options too."*

**c) Not a good idea:**

The majority of people who felt the proposal was not a good idea argued that it would have a negative effect on their choice or preference of school.

- *"As Westways School is now a very large school, I worry that the children who attend will have problems getting a place at King Edward's even though it is a feeder primary school."*
- *"We are in catchment for Walkley Primary which is currently a feeder school for King Edward's. Even families who don't live in catchment for King Edward's haven't previously had issues getting places if they've come from Walkley Primary. I would worry that by sending more children there from other schools would mean a lot of the children at Walkley Primary would be forced into going to Forge Valley."*
- *"I understand that this is a selfish perspective to the issue, but we worry that pupils from Walkley Primary, who are not in the catchment for King Edward VII, but actually live closer to that school than to Forge Valley, will be pushed out of a chance to be accepted to King Edward's... I will support this change, as I realise that it will potentially solve a demographics problem, if there are guarantees that this will not create negative consequences elsewhere."*
- *"King Edward's had such a big catchment area anyway, and the children directly affected have a choice of two good schools. Is it fair for them to choose a third and potentially push out other children?"*

- *“More Walkley parents will be denied the option of their children attending King Edwards.”*
- *“I feel that the catchment area of King Edward’s is already very large, and to add another primary school into the catchment may put the places at risk for the parents / children that have chosen their primary school place with the intention of going to King Edward’s at risk. King Edward’s already as a significant amount of primary schools as feeders.”*

The second major concern from this cohort of respondents is that the proposal offers extra choice to families who don’t require more choice – and not those who would benefit from it:

- *“People living [in] the catchments of Tapton and Mercia already have two good schools to choose from. I don’t think it is fair for this catchment to have a third good school to choose from while in my catchment we only have one school which is further away from our home than two of these schools and not to the same standard as any of the three schools above. Tapton and King Edward’s are the nearest schools to us in Walkley yet we don’t fall in the catchment for these.”*
- *“You are creating a situation of privilege for children attending Hallam, Lydgate and Netherthorpe whereas existing catchment schools, some from less privileged areas will be disadvantaged. Primary schools from [the] Tapton feeder area already have access to Tapton Secondary so I feel that children attending other primary schools should have priority on choosing King Edward’s as their secondary school.”*
- *“I find the proposal very unfair. We are currently in King Edward’s catchment (by two houses from Tapton catchment) with a catchment boundary that makes very little sense. We only have the choice of one catchment school whereas parents all around us have the choice of three already and if this consultation succeeds it will enable more parents to have the choice of three too. This is not fair on the children of those on the borders of the catchments.”*

A final comment included suggestions around extending catchment areas so as to not disadvantage this family:

- *“We live in Broomhall, just below the Hallamshire in Springfield catchment. We want our children to go to their LOCAL secondary school, King Edward’s. This is by far the nearest and the easiest to travel to. The upper school is 400m from our house. Yet we are in the Silverdale catchment. This is miles away and takes two buses or one bus and a long walk. Giving Hallam Primary catchment children an advantage in getting into King Edward’s will disadvantage our children from getting into their nearest school. Please extend this proposal to make King Edwards a catchment school for children living in Springfield Junior catchment area too. This will avoid further disadvantaging pupils in Broomhall who are already at a disadvantage in many ways.”*