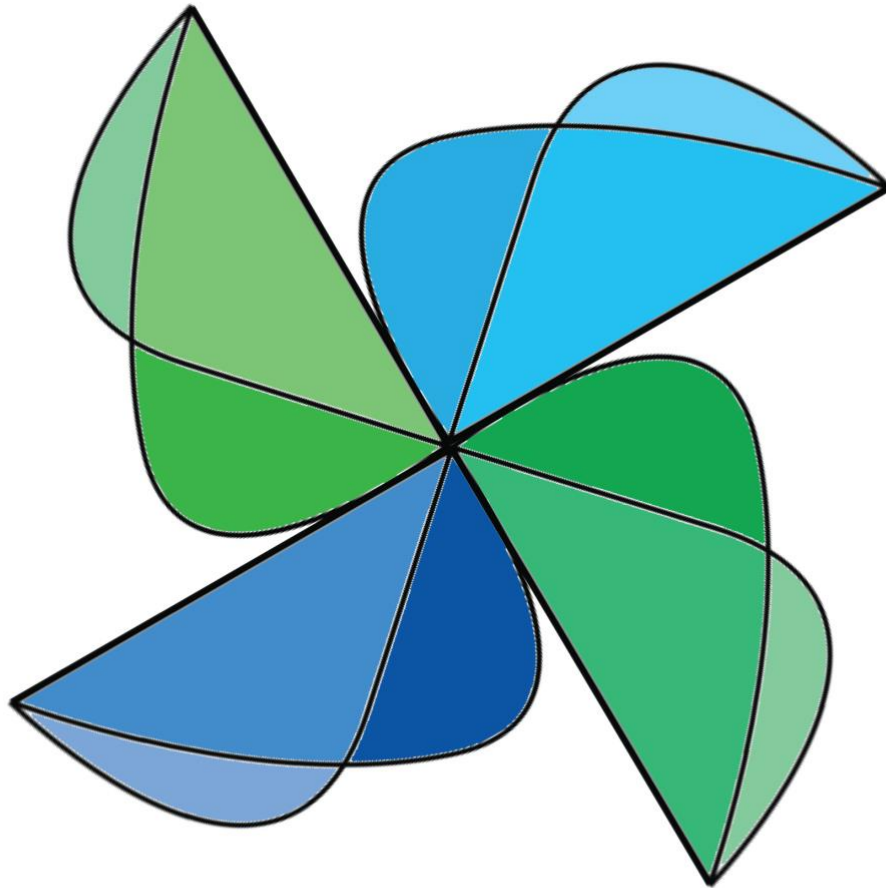


Barnet Special Education Trust



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The Windmill School

FS0613 - Proposed Free School – Opening 2023/2024

Section 10 Consultation Report

13th September 2021 – 15th October 2021

Barnet Special Education Trust



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Barnet Special Education Trust



Executive Summary

Barnet Special Education Trust was initially established in 2016 by a group of senior teachers and education consultants associated with Oak Lodge School in Barnet, in order to open a new special free school in the Barnet area with a specialism in autism.

The Windmill School will cater for those whose profile is not matching age expected expectations in some or most aspects of the curriculum, but where individuals have academic strengths in some academic subjects. The school was approved by the Department for Education in September 2016 and moved into pre-opening immediately after.

The Windmill will be a mixed school for up to 90 pupils aged 5 - 18, all of whom will have an Education Health and Care Plan that gives a medically confirmed diagnosis of autism as their primary need. Admissions in our first year are targeted to the upper primary/lower secondary age range, where there is currently significant local need.

The need for this school has been acknowledged by local parents/carers, the Local Authority and the Department for Education. It has been included as a core part of Barnet Council's Strategic Development Plan for addressing the needs of pupils with SEND in the Barnet London Borough. There is currently a shortage of specialist places for children with ASD in the Barnet area. A 2021 review identified that a further 238 special provision places were required by 2024 for pupils aged 4 to 18, with Autism requiring at least 36% of those places.

As part of the pre-opening work, the Trust has completed an appropriate consultation exercise (as set out in Section 10 of the Academies Act, 2010) to determine whether they should enter into a Funding Agreement with the Department for Education, pending approval of the Secretary of State. The consultation ran from 13th September to 15th October 2021.

This document reports on:

- Activities undertaken prior to the formal consultation, which served to increase awareness;
- The information provided to stakeholders on the nature of the proposal;
- The range of stakeholders consulted;
- Final results of the formal consultation;
- Conclusions of the Trust.

The local community has responded positively throughout the period of the consultation. A variety of stakeholders have engaged with the consultation and the overarching response demonstrated significant support from local residents, other community stakeholders and prospective parents. Respondents set out a high level of support for the school with 85% of respondents stating that they agreed that the Trust should enter into a funding agreement with the Secretary of State. (The remaining 15% answered 'don't know'.) Example comments shared with the Trust via the consultation survey are included in this document. As a result of the consultation, Barnet Special Education Trust will continue its plans to enter into a funding agreement with the Secretary of State.