

# Fleet Primary School

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29<sup>th</sup> April 2016

To London Borough of Camden, Development Control Team

Planning Ref: 2016/1590/P

Address: Hampstead Police Station Rosslyn Hill, NW3

Description: Change of Use to Abacus School.

Case Officer: Zenab Haji- Ismail

From the Governors of Fleet Primary School, Camden

## **Re: Abacus Primary School**

Abacus Primary School was set-up to resolve a shortage of secular, primary school places in Belsize Ward. The school's application upon set up in 2012 was clear and unequivocal, in that it related to the establishment of a single form school to serve a specific area of need within Belsize Park:

"The school will be a single form entry primary school catering for 4 – 11 year olds with a maximum of 30 children per year. We will begin with a reception class of 30 in September 2013 and grow each year by a further cohort of 30 until the school is full in 2019/20." (Page 18 Application 2012).

To date, Abacus has been unable to fill their single form entry school, and as stated in Camden's Annual School Places Planning Report for 2015, there is no evidence of additional need for school places for 2016-17. Indeed, the report states that any permitted increase in the size of Abacus will impact negatively on other local schools such as ours: 'Latest school places planning evidence and analysis suggests the additional places are not needed, and this could create vacancies at this and other neighbouring schools.' (Point 4.2.5).

We were disappointed, therefore, to see in the planning application the misleading statements that:

"Abacus is a mixed two-form entry primary school."

"The proposal is for a two form entry school that will increase in capacity gradually to a maximum of 420 pupils by 2024/25. This is in line with the school's current phasing strategy, slowly increasing its capacity in order to carefully manage growth."

It has not, in fact, been the case that Abacus is a two form entry school or that their new growth projections are in line with that agreed by Camden upon the school's establishment. We believe that

the desired doubling of pupil intake will have a severely negative impact on other local primary schools, including Fleet Primary School.

Any proposed school expansion needs to be demonstrably in response to need. Camden has stated clearly that it does not believe there is need for this, and Abacus has failed to produce any evidence of this need. In fact Abacus's own evidence has shown falling birth rates in both Belsize and Swiss Cottage wards – the very areas they are intending to serve (Page 15 Application 2012).

Fleet Primary School Governors believe this unnecessary over-development is contrary to the requirements of the area, and a two form entry will by necessity lead to a cannibalisation of Fleet Primary Schools intake.

We therefore request that you reject planning application 2016/1590/P.

Yours Sincerely

Governors of Fleet Primary School

Data taken from:

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/392909/MS\\_027\\_W3\\_Abacus\\_Belsize\\_Primary\\_School.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/392909/MS_027_W3_Abacus_Belsize_Primary_School.pdf)

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