

Brent Council carried out a borough wide survey between December 2007 and February 2008, to gather the views of residents on the Council's strategy for developing school places. The methodology consisted of a survey questionnaire, inserted into the Brent magazine and an on-line version on the Council's website. Almost 900 responses were received of which 75 were completed on-line.

The findings from the survey will be used to inform the future provision of school places and the siting of new schools or the expansion of existing school sites, where sufficient site space exists. Information gathered will be helpful in determining which communities are more willing to accept new school provision, and what the borough might consider important in raising standards in schools. The findings of the survey will be displayed on the Council's Consultation Tracker (www.brent.gov.uk/consultation.nsf) from May 2008.

Key Findings

Overall approach to providing school places

A strong pattern of support emerged from the survey for Brent's educational vision for providing school places (70% of participants agreed) and for Brent's approach to expanding schools (60% agreed). Around half of the participants, (51%) stated they felt the provision of school places in Brent was not adequate.

Options for the provision of school places

More than two thirds of participants supported each of the three proposed options the council is considering:

- Rebuild schools on existing sites (79% agree);
- Building new schools on new sites (if new sites could be identified – 68% agree);
- Expanding existing schools (66% agree).

Expanding existing schools

The main factors participants felt should be taken into account when considering the expansion of existing schools, were:

- The success of a current school (81% agree):
- Parental choice (79% agree);
- The impact on local residents (77% agree);
- Linking with regeneration projects (67% agree).

Participants were also asked to raise any specific concerns that had about expanding existing schools:

- Concern about the impact on traffic - (around 100 comments)
- Pupil behaviour - (77 comments)
- This would not necessarily impact positively on those areas where there were already insufficient school places - (44 comments)

Where are additional school places needed in Brent?

- 40% - in the South of the borough;
- 27% - identified all areas across Brent;
- 17% - in the North of the borough;
- 16% - non-specific areas.

Extended school provision

- Three quarters, (76%) of participants agree that opening school facilities up to the local community 'out-of-school hours' has had a positive impact in their area.

School year group sizes

Primary schools in Brent have up to 120 pupils per year group whereas secondary schools in Brent have up to 315. To what extent do you agree that these are suitable numbers?

Primary Schools		Secondary Schools	
Agree	Not agree	Agree	Not agree
31%	44%	26%	50%

Managing and running Brent's schools

Who should have a role in managing and running Brent schools?

- Local authorities - (89% agree)
- Parent groups - (73% agree)
- Charities - (38% agree)
- Faith groups - (37% agree)
- Private sponsors (36% - agree)

Ensuring equal access to school places in Brent

Do you consider that you feel disadvantaged feel disadvantaged in obtaining a school place ---- for any of the following reasons?

Factor	Yes	No
Ethnic background	23%	77%
Gender	7%	93%
Faith	34%	66%
Disability	15%	85%
Other	38%	62%