

## Space Consultation FAQs

### 1. There is more of a need for social space/private study space than teaching space at St Bart's

It is true that it would be good to enhance the space available for private study for Sixth Formers. We have made some improvements recently, with study pods for break out spaces and have plans to convert an ICT suite into a dedicated area for private study. The crucial requirement is classroom space and the only way to achieve this is to have access to additional classrooms, hence the intention to lease space at Newbury Hall.

### 2. Why not simply reduce the number of students you let in?

We would need some clear oversubscription criteria to be able to turn down students above and beyond a set maximum number. This would need to be along the lines of distance from school. This would bring many challenges in managing this process, would penalise students from schools without sixth forms who live beyond Newbury and is likely to result in a significant reduction in numbers. We rely on external student numbers to maintain our broad and balanced curriculum offer and the current staffing model.

We have already made a slight adjustment to the academic entry requirements for the Sixth Form for 2024-25. This will have the effect of reducing numbers, but not sufficiently to avoid the necessity to source additional space, given the increase in Y11s and Y10s across the local area. The only available route for us to reduce numbers considerably would be to make a significant adjustment to entry requirements. We have to apply the same entry criteria for internal and external candidates and so would risk disenfranchising a very large number of both internal and external applicants.

A further challenge is that numbers cannot be confirmed until the GCSE results are announced. Therefore if we applied an additional oversubscription criteria, this would need to happen in late August which would be unfair to students who need to make decisions about their continuing education based on as firm an offer as possible.

### 3. Why not continue with the 'structural timetable shift' (that enabled the timetable to be roomed in 2023-24, despite the large sixth form population) rather than renting additional space?

Until 2023-24, Y12 have 9 lessons per subject per fortnight and Y13 have 8 per subject per fortnight. For educational reasons, we wanted to swap this round giving Y13 the additional lesson to enhance their preparedness for exams. This was a one-off as Y13 in 2024-25 will require the additional lesson to avoid being short of teaching time, thereby enabling only one year where both year groups only have 8 lessons per fortnight. Therefore this year's circumstances cannot be repeated.

### 4. Will it be St Bart's teachers teaching sixth formers at Newbury Hall?

Yes, all lessons will continue to be taught by St Bart's specialist teachers.

### 5. Will the space be used by other people for other purposes? If so, how will safeguarding be managed?

The additional classroom space will only be used by St Bart's. Indeed, the space will have a separate, dedicated entrance and toilets. Even the outdoor space will be fenced from the rest of the site to ensure that only St Bart's students and staff have access.

**6. Will tutor rooms be at Newbury Hall or just teaching spaces?**

We anticipate that Newbury Hall will be used for teaching classrooms only

**7. Will you ensure that no student will spend their entire time down at Newbury Hall, feeling isolated?**

Yes, students will have a mixed offer with some classes at Newbury Hall, and some of their lessons in the main school.

**8. Will there be specialist classrooms at Newbury Hall, i.e. science labs and technology workshops?**

No, our timetable need is for normal general classrooms and not specialist classrooms.

**9. Have you considered whether the accommodation is up to the right standard (high ceilings, older buildings, cold conditions) and will this increase the stress on teachers?**

The buildings are absolutely fit for purpose; indeed some people might prefer the more characterful spaces. All will have the required infrastructure of WiFi and appropriate technology.

**10. Have you thought about how to operationalise this additional space, taking into account walking time/transition time between lessons?**

Yes detailed plans are in development and will be shared with all stakeholders in due course.

**11. Has St Bart's considered the risk to students of road accidents on the walk to and from St Bart's?**

It is a 5-7 minute walk (650m) and involves crossing only two roads. Fifth Road by the exit from St Bart's and Enborne Road. Students in the Sixth Form do make their way to school and home without supervision and are able to navigate the crossing of roads safely. Reminders will be issued to students to take extra care.

**12. Why not bring in temporary buildings onto the main school site?**

This option was thoroughly investigated. Unfortunately, the cost of this solution is surprisingly expensive and considerably more than the proposed solution at Newbury Hall. We need to retain the available hard standing space around the school to enable students to have appropriate places to congregate during break and lunchtime. Leasing space at Newbury Hall is the most cost effective way to provide more space for students.

**13. The school is noticeably busier this year than last year and there is not enough social space for existing students.**

There are more students this year (by about 30) than in 2022-23. This is why we have raised our entry criteria for the Sixth Form and why we did not proceed with the plan to put temporary spaces on existing social spaces for students in Y7-11.

**14. Will the students be involved in the consultation process?**

Yes!