



# Controversial academy proposal at Martin Primary

Dozens of parents have written to the headteacher and governing body of Martin School expressing their concerns about plans to turn the primary school into an academy.

The proposal was announced at the end of October shortly before the half-term holiday and a month-long consultation with parents was due to finish as this edition of The Archer went to press.

## Opportunities

Headteacher Helen Morrison and the governors are suggesting that the school in Plane Tree Walk joins forces with Northside Primary School in North Finchley and Foulds School in High Barnet to form a multi-academy trust, which in turn could be appointed to open and run a new primary school in Mill Hill from next year. All three primaries have been classed as 'outstanding' by Ofsted inspectors.

In a letter to parents, Mrs Morrison stated: "We believe this academy partnership will provide important educational benefits for our pupils and operational benefits for our school without diminishing our freedom to run the school as we believe best. As an academy, we would become a Sponsor which would enable us to have greater opportunities to support the development of excellent schools for local children across the borough of Barnet."

## Too much, too soon

Some parents, however, responded with an open letter expressing their worries that the 'community' ethos of Martin Primary could be seriously disturbed and that their children's education could suffer if the headteacher and other senior staff have to spend a large amount of their time establishing both the academy and the new primary school.

Their concerns are heightened by the fact that Martin Primary is currently in the middle of a major

expansion programme to turn it into a three-form entry school. This is a significant change in itself, they say, and needs time to bed in before the school is subjected to further significant changes.

See Soapbox, page 11. Do you have a view on the Martin academy proposal? Write to us by email at [the-archer@lineone.net](mailto:the-archer@lineone.net), by post to The Archer, PO Box 3699, London N2 2DE, or contact us on Facebook/Twitter via TheArcherN2.



The Halloween dancers get jiggy at Woodhouse College. Photo by Julian Robbins

## Zombie Zumba

Latin Soul hosted a Hallowe'en extravaganza at a spooky Woodhouse College in North Finchley on 30 October.

The Zumba-inspired event went off with a bang when guests were treated to specially brewed Hallowe'en drinks on arrival, followed by a Thriller Salsa and Pachanga professional dance show.

Latin soul hold Zumba classes every Monday and Wednesday evening at the college. Please see [www.latinsoul.co.uk](http://www.latinsoul.co.uk) for more information.

## Now scammers target drivers

By Janet Maitland

**If a stranger told you your car was leaking oil while you waited at a traffic light, you'd assume they were just being helpful, wouldn't you? But it's almost certainly a scam.**

Barnet Borough Watch has issued a warning after a report from a Barnet driver. He said that while he was waiting at the lights at the junction of Frobisher Road and Green Lanes, an elderly man crossing the road signalled to him that there was something 'wrong' with his car.

When he got out, the driver could see oil streaming from his front grille. The old man told the driver he was a mechanic, pointing to an ID card he had round his neck. After looking under the bonnet, he told the driver the oil pipe was broken, but that he knew of a nearby garage who could fix it.

The driver said that wouldn't be necessary as he was a member of the RAC. When he contacted the RAC the engineer immediately asked, "Was it an old man on crutches?" A similar

stunt had been tried at the same junction a few days before.

The way the trick works is that the nearby garage repairs the car for £30 - £50. But there is nothing wrong in the first place. The man crossing the road simply sprays oil onto the grille as he walks past.

In another variation, which targets women drivers, a 'good samaritan' warns the driver that the engine will catch fire if she carries on driving but she's in luck because he happens to be a mechanic and can fix it for much less than a garage would charge.

He goes off and 'buys' a new oil pipe, while the woman waits in the car. He then 'fixes' the leak, showing her a broken oil pipe which he already had in his pocket, and charges her 'only' £70 which the woman gratefully gets from an ATM.

## Wi-Fi comes to our library too

Barnet Council announced in November that the Borough's "14<sup>th</sup> and final library" (that means the one at East Finchley) now has Wi-Fi coverage, bringing the number up to 100%. At the time of writing though, it still doesn't have self-service facilities. That should be achieved by the New Year. A notice in the library warns us that the building will be closed for three days some time during the week of December 9-16, when self-service booths will be installed.

The Council has said that East Finchley lagged behind the other branches because it is in a Grade 2 listed building, meaning permission had to be obtained for the necessary alterations.

So let's make the most of our unique library. Did you know that members can download free audiobooks, access reference books, encyclopaedias and newspapers online in your own time and place, and tap in to the automated telephone renewal service? Libraries will also supply sets of books (free of charge) to reading groups.

Visit [www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries](http://www.barnet.gov.uk/libraries) to find out more. Or pop along to the library, just remembering the self-service induced closures.

## ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

35a Durham Road, East Finchley, London N2 9DP

### Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> December

6.30 pm Christmas Carol Service  
followed by mulled wine and mince pies

### Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> December

**Christmas Eve**  
3.00 pm Children's Christmas Service  
with Carols  
11.30 pm Sung Midnight Mass  
with Blessing of the Crib  
followed by wine and mince pies

### Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> December

**Christmas Day**  
8.00 am Mass of the Dawn  
10.00 am Sung Mass of the Day

Vicar: Fr Christopher Hardy SSC  
020 8883 9315

**SAT 7 DEC**  
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EVENT  
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MULLED WINE  
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**King Street Mews / East Finchley N2 8DY**  
**[aroominmyhouse.co.uk](http://aroominmyhouse.co.uk)**

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MEWS

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