

# A Foundation

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On the evening of Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009 and the afternoon of Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> February Rochelle School opened its doors to the local community to explain better its mission and activities. Over 40 people attended over the two days, of whom 28 filled in a questionnaire. A summary of the responses is compiled below.

1. Have you been to any of the open events that have been organised by Rochelle school in the past?

58% had been to an open event before. These events included:

Bloomberg New Contemporaries  
House of Fairy Tales  
Le Gun  
Fun in the Sun Day  
Publish & Be Damned  
Art on the Underground/TFL Exhibition  
Community Barbeques

42% had never attended an event.

2. Have you visited Rochelle during an FOAC (Friends of Arnold Circus) event?

47% have attended the Rochelle school in conjunction with an FOAC event while 53% have not. A number of those asked seemed unaware of FOAC or its function.

3. Have you participated in any events at the Rochelle school?

37% have participated in previous Rochelle school events, while 63% have not. Of those that had participated before, most of the events they had attended were community events (BBQ's, picnics etc) and those held in conjunction with FOAC.

4. Do you feel that the buildings at the Rochelle school are being used in a positive way (rather than lying empty and being squatted for illegal purposes for example)?

90% said yes, the building was being used in a positive way. The main reasons given were it gave impetus to community regeneration, provided jobs and brought an eclectic mix of people and businesses into the area. One person felt that the school was positive but needed to become more inclusive of local residents. 10% thought that the Rochelle school was not being used in a positive way, no reasons were given as to why.

5. Would you have preferred that the council had sold the premises to a property developer?

94% said no they would have not preferred for the council to sell the premises. 6% answered yes, but gave no reason for the answer.

6. Do you think that Rochelle school has had some positive impact in the area?

84% said yes, 11% said no and 5% didn't know. Of those that said yes the Rochelle school had had a positive impact on the area, the main reasons given were:

It helped support local business and attract new companies into the area.

It has a positive impact on family life; children's projects such as the gardening at Virginia school were mentioned as were FOAC events and the Canteen.

It created a non-exclusive creative space through its art programs and local community events.

It restored an iconic building and kept it alive as a supportive community space.

The 11% who said no did not give reasons.

7. Do you feel the Rochelle has had any negative impact on the area?

26% answered yes and 74% answered no. Of those that said yes the Rochelle school had had a negative impact on the area the main reasons given were:

The unacceptable noise levels emanating from Rochelle school (though a number of respondents thought that this problem was infrequent and largely unobtrusive at most times).

Damage to conservation area.

A suggestion was made that the recycling collection in Montclare Street could be managed better. Also one respondent commented that the school gives the perception of being fenced off from the surrounding area and that while it was only a perception it was something that could possibly be addressed.

8. Have you ever visited the Canteen at Rochelle?

64% have visited the Canteen. 36% have not. Of the respondents who had visited the Canteen, 50% visited one or more time per week.

9. Do you experience increased traffic as a result of the Canteen at Rochelle school?

90% said no, they had not experienced increased traffic as a result of the Canteen, 10% said yes. Of those that responded yes the reasons given were that the increase was largely due to the Events hosted at the Rochelle School.

10. Do you experience increased noise as a result of the Canteen at Rochelle School?

16% responded yes, 84% responded no. Of those that responded yes the main cause was not listed as the Canteen as such but rather event openings, and the increased traffic associated with them. Refuse disposal was also cited as a reason.

11. Is there anything about the presence of the Canteen on site that affects your daily life on the Boundary Estate either positively or negatively?

53% said the Canteen had had a positive affect on daily life on the Boundary Estate, 5% said that it had had a negative affect and 38% said that it had not affected them one way or the other. Of those that responded in the affirmative to the positive affects, the main reasons given were:

Parents enjoyed the Canteen as a space where their children could play and have lunch.

The food was good value and the staff were helpful and friendly.

It provided a convenient meeting point within the Estate.

For those respondents who answered that it had had a negative affect on daily life, the main reasons given were:

It attracted non-residents.

There were unacceptable noise and activity levels.

It consisted of a large privatized space.

12. Does Rochelle School have an impact on your life on way or the other?

70% responded yes and 30% no that it had not had any impact on their life. Of those that thought that it had had an impact, 93% stated that it had had a positive one, the main reasons given were:

It helped secure local businesses.

It provided access to additional community resources for families and youths,

The Exhibition program was interesting.

The Canteen provide good value food and a community meeting place.

For the 7% of respondents who thought that the school had had a negative impact the main reasons given were;

Increased noise and traffic.

13. What if anything would be a better use of the premises in your mind?

84% said they could not think of anything they would rather use the premises for. A number of respondents thought the school should increase its profile in the local area.

16% thought that the premises would be better used as:

Housing Facilities

A community space for youth/local resident activities of their own choosing.

14. Is there anything else you would like to add?

'Hope you join up with Open Shoreditch, to add to our legitimacy in representing local residents and businesses.'

'It's great that the building is being used for cultural purposes and its been all good since they opened.'

'Just keep up what you are doing'

'I love the compost. It is wonderful that Rochelle Gardener works with FOAC gardener half a day a week.'

'Wouldn't like to see the Canteen become part of the local night time economy, bringing the attendant booze-related unpleasantness. Rochelle feels private; I'd welcome more ready use of facilities for residents on the estate, provided they want it.'

'I am looking forward to know you all better.'

'I would much prefer that the school premises remain in the use of young people who are residents.'

'No further developments/applications please.'

'Excellent!'

**A Foundation and Rochelle School would like to thank all of those who came to the meetings and welcome further discussion with our neighbours and stakeholders.**

**For more information on these or any other of our activities, please contact A Foundation on [info@afoundation.org.uk](mailto:info@afoundation.org.uk) or 0207 729 8275**