

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR SCHOOLS, SKILLS AND
EDUCATIONAL ACHIEVEMENT****DATE: 14 DECEMBER 2015****LEAD OFFICER: JULIE FISHER, DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE****SUBJECT: PROPOSED ALTERATION OF UPPER AGE LIMIT AT
CLANDON C OF E INFANT SCHOOL****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

The Governing Body of Clandon C of E Infant School (Voluntary Aided), in partnership with Surrey County Council (SCC) and the Diocese of Guildford, have consulted on a proposal to extend the age range of the school from 4-7 (infant) to 4 to 11 years old (primary) from September 2017 and to reduce the Published Admissions Number (PAN) from 25 to 15 from September 2017.

Following a public consultation, the Governing Body of the school voted unanimously on 17 November 2015 to proceed with the proposal.

As this is a prescribed alternation to the school, the final decision on whether to proceed with the extension of the age range rests with the Local Authority. Therefore, the Cabinet Member is asked to review the education rationale for the project and the summary of the consultation responses provided within this report, to determine whether to proceed with implementing the proposal.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that:

- Clandon C of E Infant School becomes a primary school from September 2016 and reduces its PAN from 25 to 15 in September 2017.
- Two modular classrooms are provided to facilitate the change.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

There is an increasing need to provide a secure route to junior phase education for families in Clandon. With junior places in North Guildford becoming increasingly in demand, provision of junior places for children leaving Clandon at the end of Year 2 is a key concern for parents and carers. As a primary, the school would better serve its local area providing all through education for ages 4 to 11.

DETAILS:**Background**

1. Clandon C of E Infant School is a small school that serves the communities of West and East Clandon to the east of Guildford. The school currently provides 25

places per year for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Children normally progress to junior provision in Guildford.

The proposal

2. On 5 October 2015, the Governing Body of Clandon C of E Infant School, in partnership with the Diocese of Guildford and SCC, published the following proposal:
 - Clandon C of E Infant School becomes an 'all through' primary school in September 2016 admitting pupils from 4 to 11 years of age. This will be done by extending the school's age range by one year from September 2016, then incrementally by one year each academic year thereafter until September 2019.
 - The school will reduce its PAN from 25 to 15 from September 2017. This will result in the total numbers of pupils on roll at the school increasing from 75 as an infant school to 105 as a primary school.
3. The proposal includes provision of some additional accommodation to enable the school to operate as a primary school on its present site. As the school does not have playing fields, sports facilities are provided locally through the school's existing relationships with local stakeholders enabling full access to the primary PE curriculum.
4. If the proposal goes ahead, all the current Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils will be entitled to stay at the school until the end of Year 6. Consequently, numbers in the higher years will be permitted to exceed the Reception PAN of 15. The school will ultimately provide 105 primary places (4 to 11 years). It currently provides 75 infant places (4 to 7 years).

Reasons for the proposal

5. **Secure provision of junior places:** Numbers of primary children in Guildford are increasing. There are fewer junior places available in Guildford for Year 2 children leaving Clandon C of E Infant School. Therefore, provision of junior places in the local area is necessary.
6. **Clear progression route for infant children at Clandon:** Although a good school, parents are increasingly concerned of uncertain progression for their children beyond Year 2, resulting in a drop in the numbers on roll. Changing the school from an infant to primary will increase parental certainty of progression for their children and provide effective long-term provision to meet the needs of local children.
7. Educational advantages of a primary school versus an infant school include the following:
 - Seamless transition from Key Stage 1 (infants) to Key Stage 2 (juniors).
 - Greater opportunities for curriculum development.
 - Greater opportunities for staff development.
 - Greater flexibility with a larger budget to deploy staff and curriculum resources effectively.
 - Greater opportunities for staff recruitment.

- Embedding of friendships within a local community for children and their family.
- Role models for younger children, social skills in care and respect of younger children by the older ones.
- More sibling visibility in the school.

8. **Securing the sustainability of the school:** Pupil forecast data indicates that pupil yield in Clandon going forward will be less than the school's current PAN of 25. Therefore, reducing the PAN to 15 and converting to primary secures the school's future whilst providing certainty of junior places for the local community. The intention is that the school will alter its admission number to 15 but increase its age range so that places are offered to all year groups from Reception through to Year 6. This will be a resultant increase in capacity of 30 places, from 75 places to 105 places. The table below shows the maximum number of pupils in each year at the school and how the numbers will change over time as the school converts to primary status:

Primary from September 2016, with PAN of 15 in September 2017

Maximum number of pupils in each year, assuming current Number on Roll (NOR) + full PAN intake of 25 in September 16

Year group	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
R	19	25	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
1	16	19	25	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
2	7	16	19	25	15	15	15	15	15	15
3		7	16	19	25	15	15	15	15	15
4			7	16	19	25	15	15	15	15
5				7	16	19	25	15	15	15
6					7	16	19	25	15	15
Total pupils	42	67	82	97	112	120	119	115	105	105

NB: Pupil intake in 2016 likely to be less than the 25 indicated above. Numbers above are maximum number of pupils.

9. **Significant reduction in travel, including car journeys:** The proposal reduces the need for additional school journeys. Parents of junior aged children in West and East Clandon currently have to travel to Guildford. Provision of junior places at the school would shorten the travel time and distance for local parents. The proposal also reduces travel for parents with older siblings who currently transport children to the school and also transport older siblings to junior schools in Guildford. This proposal would enable more children to walk to school resulting in a reduction of school traffic in the area.

The school has an informal arrangement with the National Trust whereby parents are able to use the car park at Clandon Park for drop-off and pick-up which eliminates any congestion that might build up on the A247 at these times. This arrangement will continue under this proposal.

10. **Expanding good schools:** It is the ambition of SCC that all Surrey schools will be judged to be at least 'Good' by 2017. At its last OFSTED inspection in 2013 Clandon C of E Infant School received a Good (Grade 2) judgement. This proposal meets the Government's guidance to local authorities that successful

and popular schools are expanded where there is a need for more places through providing better continued primary educational provision for the local area.

Planning and capital considerations

11. The school has capacity to extend its age range in its existing location. Capital works will be required to provide two additional classrooms. This is likely to be a double modular building relocated from another school site where they are no longer required. This will be sited where the existing outdoor swimming pool currently resides, which although a resource for the school, is expensive to maintain, can only be used for a small part of the year and is limited in size for key stage 2 curriculum requirements. Detailed work is being undertaken by the Governing Body and the Diocese of Guildford with support from SCC's Property Service to develop a scheme of works to provide the additional accommodation needed in an appropriate manner and a separate planning application will be submitted pursuant to this.
12. The planning application will deal with the implications for school buildings and the management of traffic that result from this proposed expansion. This is anticipated to be minimal due to the increase in capacity of 30 pupils and the parking arrangements at Clandon Park. In addition, the proposal hopes to reduce the number of lengthier car journeys families currently make to junior provision further afield.

<u>CONSULTATION:</u>

13. A consultation was undertaken by Surrey County Council between 5 October and 6 November 2015. A consultation document was produced and circulated to all parents, carers, local residents, local borough and county councillors, other stakeholders and interested parties. In addition, two public meetings were held at the school on 12 October 2015, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Statutory Notices were issued in line with the consultation.

Consultation responses

14. The public meetings were attended by 32 parents, residents and other interested parties. A total of 57 formal written responses were received during the consultation via the Surrey Says website, post and email. The responses included 27 from local residents and 19 from parents. This is very high considering the size of the school (currently 42 pupils are on roll).
15. There was consensus through the consultation responses that the village would benefit from having an all through primary school. Respondents felt that the uncertainty for parents having to find a new school for their children at Year 3 would be removed and local families would be more likely to name the school as their first choice when applying for Reception places, thereby securing the school's long term future. Responses indicated that children would benefit both socially and educationally by remaining in the same primary school from Reception to Year 6: four responses cited the opportunities for social friendships and five considered that children would benefit from being able to attend the same school as siblings. Two responses thought the proposal would make everyone's life better and six believed that parents would need to make fewer car journeys as a result of the change.

16. There was overwhelmingly strong support for the proposal with 56 of the responses agreeing (approximately 98%). There was also a strong assent that the Head Teacher and staff provide a caring environment (11 responses) and that pupils enjoy school and make good progress (6 responses). There was agreement that the proposal would be a positive step for the school to take (11 responses) and that the school would thrive as a result (10 responses). Eighteen responses endorsed the school as a 'great' school, and eight responses thought that the proposal was a 'good idea'.
17. The consultation also asked whether respondents agreed with the proposal to reduce the published admissions number (PAN) from 25 to 15 in 2017, which would enable the school to accommodate children in Key Stage 2. Again, there was overwhelming support for the proposal with 50 responses agreeing with the proposal (approximately 88%), two disagreeing and five not answering.
18. The one person that disagreed with the proposal to change to an all through primary school also disagreed with the proposal to reduce the PAN. Their reasons included the possible negative impact on other schools in the area that are not oversubscribed; a disinclination to believe that data evidenced a need for additional capacity and a concern that the proposal would increase traffic congestion.
19. Although there was an overwhelming agreement with the proposal, some concerns were raised, including general lack of space and facilities (in particular to deliver the Key Stage 2 curriculum, sport and extra curricular activities); and concern as to how there would be space for young and older children to play safely together in a small playground. There was also some reluctance to lose the school swimming pool which is a popular asset; although this view was not shared by all.
20. Unusually, there was minimal concern raised regarding traffic and parking. The responses indicate that parents driving to school tend to park in the Clandon Park visitors' car park, although one respondent indicated that they would like this arrangement formalised. The proposal was popular with residents, and many responses expressed that the proposal would be good for the village and would encourage more families to move there which would strengthen the local community.
21. Although in agreement with the proposal, some responses raised other areas for consideration. These are summarised below:
 - **Implementation of project and transition arrangements:** One response raised concern about mixed year classes; another response feared that the quality of education and ethos of the school might be compromised if transition wasn't well managed. Another response considered whether there was a management team in place to deliver the project (it was unclear what aspect was being considered, ie the management team within the school, the project management team to deliver the infrastructure or the governing body, Diocese and Surrey County Council team to ensure stakeholder management and effective implementation).
 - **Size of school:** One concern was raised as to how children would make the transition to large secondary school having attended such a small primary school.

- **General:** Reference was made to the lack of male staff, and the lack of a nursery school in the village.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

22. The education consultation has been completed in compliance with the relevant legislation governing such decisions. Therefore there is no outstanding risk associated with this.
23. A project to deliver two new classrooms by September 2017 is required and as such there are risks associated with this proposal. There is a risk that the project will not be completed within the timescales outlined above and there may be site abnormalities not identified as part of the initial feasibility exercise. A risk register will be maintained and updated on a regular basis by the school's and Diocese of Guildford's consultants.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

24. The scheme is included in the 2015-20 Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). The scheme will be implemented by the Governing Body of the school and the Diocese of Guildford in partnership with SCC. All schemes are expected to remain within the funding which has been allocated to them in the MTFP.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

25. The Section 151 Officer confirms that the basic need expansion scheme for this school is included in the 2015-20 MTFP.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on the Council to secure that efficient primary and secondary education is available to meet the needs of the population in its area. In doing so, the Council is required to contribute to the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community. Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a duty on the Council to secure that sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary education are available in its area. There is a legal duty on the Council, therefore, to secure the availability of efficient education in its area and sufficient schools to enable this.

This report sets out how the Authority will meet its duties in response to the demand for school places in this area.

The alteration has been proposed in accordance with the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 because there will be a change to the age range of more than two years.

There is a statutory requirement for consultation in this context as set out in the above Regulations. Such consultation will need to involve those directly affected by such changes together with relevant representative groups. It will be important that the material presented to consultees provides sufficient information to allow for intelligent consideration and response in relation to the proposals. This information will need to be presented in a way that consultees will understand. The responses to the consultation will need to be conscientiously taken into account when the Cabinet makes any decision.

The consultation for this proposal has been completed, a summary of which is included in paragraphs 13 to 24 of this paper.

Equalities and Diversity

26. The proposal would enhance educational provision and be open to all children in the community served by the school. No group with any protected characteristics under equalities legislation will be affected by this proposal as primary provision for all children is proposed to be made. As a result no Equalities Impact Assessment has been produced. However, with the security in all through primary provision being open to all applicants with the highest priority given to Looked After Children and pupils on the Special Educational Need (SEN) register and/or who would benefit from a statement of educational need, this proposal will support our most vulnerable children.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications

27. This proposal would provide all through primary provision in the local area which would be of benefit to the community served by the school. Therefore, this would also be of benefit to any Looked After Children who the opportunity of attending this school. Look After Children are the highest priority criterion within the school's admission arrangements.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

28. Safeguarding vulnerable children is a high priority in Surrey schools. Schools have considerable expertise in safeguarding vulnerable children and adhere to robust procedures. The school would continue to apply good practice in the area of safeguarding. Safeguarding is monitored when Ofsted carries out inspections of schools.
29. Site access and security, both during the proposed building programme and afterwards, will be considered and addressed in the planning and design of this building project.

Climate change/carbon emissions implications

30. It is likely that this proposal will have a positive impact on reducing car journey times and therefore carbon emissions.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

31. Subject to Cabinet Member approval of this proposal, the next steps are:
- To put forward a business case for the associated capital works to SCC's Cabinet. If approval is granted and subject to planning permission, the project will move to implementation, with the aim of the two additional classrooms being in place by September 2017 to accommodate the expanded age range.
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Contact Officer: Melanie Harding, School Commissioning Officer (South West),
07966 636 780

Consulted:

Clandon Cof E Infant School Governing Body
Parents of pupils attending the school
Local residents
Diocese of Guildford
Diocese of Arundel & Brighton
Local Head Teachers
Keith Taylor, Local County Councillor
Borough Councillors
Anne Milton, MP
Julie Fisher, Deputy Chief Executive
Peter-John Wilkinson, Assistant Director for Schools and Learning
Unions

Sources/background papers:

- The Education Act 1996; the Education Act 2002; the Education Act 2005; the Education and Inspections Act 2006.
 - Consultation document regarding the proposal to change Clandon CofE Infant School to a primary school.
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