

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL**CABINET MEMBER FOR ALL AGE LEARNING****DATE: 17 JULY 2018****LEAD OFFICER: DAVE HILL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND LEARNING****SUBJECT: CHANGING THE AGE RANGE AND INCREASING PUPIL NUMBERS AT THE SPECIALIST CENTRE AT WILLIAM COBBETT PRIMARY SCHOOL****SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

During the summer of 2015 Surrey County Council undertook a consultation to consider changes to primary schools in the Waverley area of Surrey. It was proposed that William Cobbett Junior School would amalgamate with Weybourne Infant become a primary school from 1 September 2015. The proposal was approved by the Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement in July 2015 and the first cohort of Year R pupils entered at the school from September 2015

Officers are proposing to extend the age range of the specialist centre for pupils with Communication and Interaction Needs (COIN) in order to align the SEND offer with the school age range. This means that the school would be able to accommodate pupils from Reception year who could stay through until year 6, if their needs are still able to be met by the school. It is proposed that numbers in the centre increase from 20 to 30.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet member for All Age Learning approves the change in age range and increase in pupil numbers at William Cobbett Primary School's specialist COIN centre, taking into account the outcome of the informal and statutory consultation period.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Increasing the age range at the specialist centre would aim to enable it to have an age range aligned with the rest of William Cobbett Primary School. This will enable greater integration, a smoother transition between key stages, increased efficiency and improved sustainability of the provision.

Demand for specialist centre provision in the south west area for pupils with COIN needs is high and other provision in the local area is operating at high levels of occupancy. The provision of additional key stage 1 places in a specialist COIN centre will help support local families who otherwise have to travel further afield. This will enable a decrease in home to school travel times and costs.

DETAILS:

Proposal

1. Surrey County Council is proposing to extend the age range of the specialist centre for pupils with COIN in order to align the SEND offer with the school age range. This means that the school would be able to accommodate pupils from Reception year who could stay through until year 6, if their needs are still able to be met by the school.
2. It is proposed that the number of places changes from the current total of 20 planned places (notionally 5 per year group in key stage 2 only) to 30 (notionally 2 per year group for key stage 1 and 6 per year group at key stage 2 to incorporate pupils from Badshot Lea specialist centre). This will enable the provision to remain sustainable and for it to match the age range of the rest of the school.

Rationale

3. Surrey County Council is proposing to extend the age range of the specialist centre for pupils with COIN in conjunction with the school's transition from a junior to primary age range. Increasing the age range at the centre would aim to enable the specialist centre to have an aligned age range with the rest of William Cobbett School. This arrangement would allow pupils to integrate when possible with their mainstream peers but also enabling the school to provide adequate resources to provide the additional specialist support. The school seeks to ensure these pupils receive a fully inclusive education within the COIN centre of excellence which allows them to thrive and progress through the school in a supportive environment and be fully prepared for a smooth, confident transition to their next phase of education.
4. Demand for specialist centre provision in the south west area for pupils with COIN needs is high and other provision in the local area is operating at high levels of occupancy. The provision of additional key stage 1 places in a specialist COIN centre will help support local families who otherwise have to travel further afield. This will enable a decrease in home to school travel times and costs.
5. It has been of primary importance to ensure that the flow of pupils between Badshot Lea specialist centre and William Cobbett specialist centre continues, when appropriate, to avoid disadvantaging the Badshot Lea pupils. For this reason, the infant pupil number at William Cobbett COIN centre is lower and the junior pupil number is higher. This is in order to incorporate appropriate pupils transitioning from Badshot Lea COIN centre into the junior provision at William Cobbett.

Pupil Placement

6. There will be no impact on any of the current William Cobbett COIN centre pupils who will continue their education in the school until they are ready for secondary transition. New pupils into year R will be allocated places in the COIN centre through the EHCP and admissions processes.
7. Appropriate pupils for this provision would be identified and placed at William Cobbett's Primary COIN centre using the Education Health Care Plan and

subsequent review pathways. The document 'SEND admissions processes for referrals for specialist placement for school age children' describes how this process works and is available on the Surrey Local Offer website.

Benefits of the proposal

8. Aligning the age range of the SEND provision to the mainstream school will improve the offer for SEND families, providing more consistency and ensuring the provision is more sustainable. Enabling SEND pupils to integrate when possible with their mainstream peers will also be a benefit for these young people.
9. There are also likely to be cost savings as more pupils can be educated closer to home in maintained provision rather than being placed in costly NMI settings.
10. Meeting local demand and therefore enabling more pupils to be educated closer to home will provide an improved resident experience.

CONSULTATION:

11. A 4 week informal consultation period has taken place, where parents at William Cobbett Primary School and other stakeholders were provided with a consultation report and the opportunity to attend a public meeting. Three parents attended the consultation meeting and there were 3 responses to the consultation. Two responses agreed with the proposals, one respondent disagreed. The respondent who disagreed with the proposal did so on the grounds it would constitute a reduction in pupil numbers in the area. However, the proposal would in fact increase the number of key stage 1 pupil places.
12. This informal consultation period was followed by a 4 week statutory consultation period. The Statutory Notice period ran from 4 June to noon on 3 July 2018 and generated no further responses to the proposal.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

13. One risk of expanding the provision at William Cobbett would be if there were insufficient pupils to fill the proposed new places. Given the significant demand for COIN places in the south west area and as additional capital resources are not required to create the additional places, this risk likelihood is considered low and the impact would also be low.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

14. Due to the increase of places there will be an additional annual cost for the number of planned places. Each planned place will be funded at a base level of £6000 in addition to the usual pupil funding, age weighted pupil unit (AWPU). For each pupil that attends the centre a top up sum is also applied. Should there be under occupancy in the centre the Local Authority incurs an additional cost of £4000 per vacant place.
15. Due to the increase in places there will be an additional annual cost to ensure that additional speech and language therapy is available to the extra

pupils accessing the centre. The additional therapy required equates to an annual cost around £16,000.

16. In order to support the creation of additional places for KS1 pupils capital resources are not required. The school site is able to accommodate a 30 place COIN centre across both KS1 and KS2.
17. By increasing provision in a Surrey maintained school more pupils with SEND will be able to be educated in maintained provision, thus saving on otherwise more costly placements in non-maintained independent settings (NMI). Transport costs are also likely to be lower with more pupils educated closer to home.

Section 151 Officer Commentary

18. The County Council is currently under significant financial pressure, so recommendations need to demonstrate value for money. The section 151 officer confirms there are additional revenue costs with this proposal, but it will enable SEND pupils to be educated in maintained provision, which is generally more cost effective than an external placement. A process for vacancy management will also need to be applied so that payments for vacant places are kept to an absolute minimum.
19. There is no requirement for capital expenditure in this proposal.

Legal Implications – Monitoring Officer

20. There is a requirement for consultation in this context as set out in The School Organisation Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools (England) Regulations 2013.
21. 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 Member makes the decision.
22. 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. This includes meeting the special educational needs of pupils where relevant. 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.

Equalities and Diversity

23. An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed, this has identified potential positive impacts and a negative impact on groups with the protected characteristics of age and disability.

24. In relation to a potential negative impact on pupils identified in the EIA for pupils with a disability that may experience difficulties with change it is proposed that the school outlines a plan to prepare pupils for changes that may happen in the future.
25. In relation to a potential negative impact on school staff with pregnancy and maternity rights identified in the EIA it is proposed that the school use 'keeping in touch' sessions to ensure staff are kept apprised of future changes.

Other Implications:

26. The potential implications for the following council priorities and policy areas have been considered. Where the impact is potentially significant a summary of the issues is set out in detail below.

Area assessed:	Direct Implications:
Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children	No significant implications arising from this report
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	Set out below
Environmental sustainability	Set out below
Public Health	No significant implications arising from this report

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications

27. For vulnerable pupils with SEND, the provision of additional places, closer to home, will be beneficial. This may reduce travel time for many families and will also limit the number of school transitions as pupils will be able to stay in a single school throughout the primary phase.

Environmental sustainability implications

28. The provision of additional COIN places closer to home for residents with SEND will enable shorter travel distances and therefore a positive impact on environmental sustainability.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

29. If approved, the change in age range and number of places will take place from September 2018. The centre will admit a higher number of pupils and those will start to admit pupils into key stage 1 where it is appropriate to individual pupil need. The usual SEND admissions process will be applied.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

Cabinet Member for All Age Learning
 Headteacher and Governing Body of William Cobbett Primary School
 Parents and carers at William Cobbett Primary School
 Surrey Primary Schools
 Liz Mills Assistant Director, Schools and Learning

Stephen Spence, Local County Councillor
Local Borough Councillors
Dioceses
Unions

Annexes:

Equality Impact Assessment

Sources/background papers:

School Organisation consultation paper

<https://www.surreysays.co.uk/csf/william-cobbett-centre/>