

**SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL****CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND FAMILIES****DATE:** 14 APRIL 2020**LEAD OFFICER:** DAVE HILL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN, FAMILIES, LIFELONG LEARNING AND CULTURE**SUBJECT:** PROPOSAL TO EXPAND BROOKLANDS SCHOOL TO BECOME A SPLIT-SITE PRIMARY SPECIAL SCHOOL**SUMMARY OF ISSUE:**

Reports on the capital strategy for specialist placements were made to Cabinet on 24 September 2019. A decision was made by Cabinet at that meeting to release the Capital for the expansion of Brooklands School and for appropriate consultations to take place. The statutory notices were published from 28 February 2020 until 27 March 2020 and the outcomes are outlined in this report.

Consideration of the responses to the consultation and decision on the permanent expansion of Brooklands School to provide an additional 70 places with effect from September 2020 is needed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

It is recommended that the Cabinet Member for All Age Learning determines the statutory notice thereby bringing into effect the formal commencement of the expansion of Brooklands School to become a split-site primary special school, providing an additional 70 places from September 2020.

REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The expansion of Brooklands School is to meet the increased demand for specialist placements, in particular for children with a primary need of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Surrey's maintained ASD provision is currently operating at capacity and the demand is particularly acute for primary-aged children. The expansion will enable Surrey County Council to offer more primary children and their families local, high quality ASD provision in a strong and established special school.

For these reasons it is recommended that the Lead Cabinet Member for All Age Learning determines the Statutory Notice for this project, to bring the permanent expansion into effect.

DETAILS:

1. The expansion is to meet the increased demand for specialist placements, and in particular, for children with a primary need of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). In Surrey, numbers of primary aged children with ASD named on their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) increased by 98% between January 2016 and December 2019 (from 701 to 1391). The forecasts suggest that numbers will continue to grow over the next four years. Currently, just over half (745) of the primary aged children with an EHCP naming ASD are in specialist provision.
2. Surrey County Council's (SCC) maintained school ASD provision is currently operating at capacity and children are increasingly often placed in specialist independent provision, because Surrey case officers are unable to find a suitable placement in Surrey. This demand is particularly acute for primary aged children. On average, specialist independent schools are more expensive than state funded schools and often not local to the child's home.
3. Brooklands School in Reigate is a specialist primary school with 83 pupil places. The school provides for children with Severe Learning and Development Difficulties (SLDD). Children attending the school have a range of SEND needs, the most common being Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The school has a 'Good' Ofsted rating (last inspection June 2018). Brooklands School has a strong and established special school offer, experience of supporting children with ASD needs and a desire to meet a growing demand from local parents for primary ASD provision.
4. It is proposed that Brooklands School is expanded to provide an additional 70 places for children who have a primary need of ASD and who require a specialist placement. The expansion will provide a total of 153 permanent places. This will be achieved by the school becoming a split-site primary school over two sites, as there is not space to expand on the existing site at Wray Park Road, Reigate. The proposal is that the school expands by using the existing school building on Alexander Road in Reigate, which will be adapted to be fit for purpose and suitable to the needs of the additional Brooklands pupils. The expansion will enable SCC to offer more primary children and their families local, high quality ASD provision.
5. The expansion at the new site will be for up to 70 children with a broad range of ASD needs, from Reception up to Year 6. The main intake point will be Reception and Year 3 although, where there are spaces and demand, new children may be accepted into the school in other year groups. Class sizes

will be typically 8-10 pupils, which will be grouped according to individual needs and learning styles.

6. The school will grow incrementally year on year, over a period of 3 to 4 years, starting from September 2020. While the expanded school is filling up, there will be an intake point in Year 3 as well as in Reception. Class sizes will start at 8 pupils and build up to 10.
7. To meet demand and to enable children to be placed locally, Surrey County Council have placed a bulge class of 8 Reception-aged children with EHCPs at Brooklands School on the new Alexander Road site from January 2020. This bulge class was listed as a separate project in the Capital Strategy for Specialist Placements, and is independent of the overall decision to expand the school.
8. The school will continue to function as it currently does across the two sites; sharing leadership and resources, and increasing teaching, support and specialist staff capacity to facilitate this. The school, in conjunction with parents, will determine which pupils are educated on which site depending on their requirements, needs and the curriculum offered.
9. The school's admissions arrangements will not change. As is currently the case for Brooklands School, appropriate pupils for the provision would be identified using the SEND admissions process.

CONSULTATION:

10. An informal consultation ran from 13 January 2020 to 14 February 2020 and the consultation document is available at www.surreysays.co.uk. A public meeting was held on 5 February 2020 and 13 people attended. There were 181 responses to the consultation which closed on 14 February 2020, 175 responses agreed with the proposal, 4 responses disagreed and 2 'did not know'. The 4 who disagreed shared concerns about staffing arrangements, potential increase in traffic during drop off and pick up times and parking arrangements for additional staff. The 2 'did not know' had concerns about parking arrangements and the size of the expansion. Questions raised at the meeting and concerns raised through the consultation were formally responded to in a Question and Answer document published on Surrey Says as part of the consultation analysis.
11. As a result of the consultation, a decision was made to proceed with statutory notices which were published from 28th February 2020 to 27th March 2020. The full documents are available from www.surreysays.co.uk and the long version of the statutory notice is appended to this report as Annex A.
12. There were 15 responses following the publication of the Statutory Notices, 13 responses agreed with the proposal to expand Brooklands School and 2

responses disagreed. The respondents who agreed with the proposal acknowledged the benefit of expanding Brooklands School on the site at Alexander Road. The respondents opposing the proposal raised concerns around parking during drop off and collection periods, and parking arrangements for the additional staff.

RISK MANAGEMENT AND IMPLICATIONS:

13. The existing school buildings on the Alexander Road site allows for 60 pupils and some work has already taken place which has allowed us to place a bulge class of 8 Reception children on the site from January 2020. This work was to ensure that there are appropriate teaching spaces, associated facilities and that the site was safe and secure for the pupils and staff. The next stage is to expand by one class (8 - 10 pupils) to increase capacity to 70 pupils. This would be subject to planning and the viability of the scheme. Surrey County Council's project management team will work closely with designers and local planners to support a positive resolution. Surrey County Council have ensured that the expansion model is financially sustainable at 60 places.

In light of the fast-moving events with Covid -19, Surrey County Council's education place planning team will regularly assess potential risks to the project which may affect the expansion timeline. As a special school, Brooklands School has remained open to date with pupils still attending and this situation will be monitored with the school leadership team ahead of new pupils planned for September, in conjunction with government guidance for all schools.

Financial and value for money implications:

14. The project will be subject to robust cost challenge and scrutiny to drive optimum value as it progresses.
15. A decision to release the capital costs of £1.75 m for the proposed expansion of Brooklands School was made by Cabinet as part of the Capital Strategy for Specialist School Placements on 24 September 2019. This is included within the SEND Capital budget for 20/21.
16. The expansion is to meet the increased demand for special placements, in particular from children with a primary need of ASD. Surrey County Council's current maintained ASD provision is operating at capacity and children are increasingly often placed in specialist independent provision, as Surrey case officers are unable to find a suitable placement in Surrey. On average, specialist, independent schools are more expensive than state funded schools and often not local to the child's home, which also increases transport costs.
17. The proposed additional places will be funded through the Local Authority allocation of High Needs Block (HNB) Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Current rates are £10,000 per place plus an additional sum of around £10,000 per pupil for occupied places depending on pupil needs. Transitional funding

will be required to cover any deficit whilst the new places are occupied, causing a short-term pressure on DSG. Current assumptions are that this will take between 2-3 years to achieve break even.

18. In the medium term, the 70 additional places will assist with managing the pressures on the SCC HNB by reducing the requirement for higher cost non-maintained independent placements.
19. In comparison with non-maintained independent special schools, these places could be around £20-£30k less expensive for SCC depending on the level of individual pupil support budget (IPSB) allocated.

Section 151 Officer commentary:

20. Although significant progress has been made over the last twelve months to improve the Council's financial position, the medium term financial outlook is uncertain as it is heavily dependent on decisions made by Central Government. With no clarity on these beyond 2020/21, our working assumption is that financial resources will continue to be constrained, as they have been for the majority of the past decade. This places an onus on the Council to continue to consider issues of financial sustainability as a priority in order to ensure stable provision of services in the medium term. As such, the Section 151 Officer supports the proposals within this paper and notes the potential non DSG costs which will need to be delivered within existing revenue budgets factored into the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.

Legal implications – Monitoring Officer:

21. There is a statutory requirement for consultation in this context as set out in the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. Such consultation will need to involve those directly affected by such changes together with relevant representative groups.
22. In considering this Report, Cabinet must give due regard to the results of the consultation as set out in the report attached and the response of the Service to the consultation comments and conscientiously take these matters into account when making its final decision.
23. 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 (including special educational needs) of the population in its area. 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 increasing demand for ASD specialist places.

Equalities and diversity:

24. An Equality and Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and is attached as Appendix B. This EIA has not identified any potential for discrimination or negative impact, and all opportunities to promote equality have been undertaken.

Other implications:

25. 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	Set out below.
Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults	Set out below.
Environmental sustainability	Set out below.
Public Health	No significant issues arising from this report.

Corporate Parenting/Looked After Children implications:

26. This proposal would provide increased provision for primary places for children with a primary need of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), which would be of benefit to the community served by the school. This means that it would therefore be of benefit to any Looked After Children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan identifying their ASD needs.

Safeguarding responsibilities for vulnerable children and adults implications:

27. Safeguarding vulnerable children is a high priority in all Surrey schools. Schools have considerable expertise in safeguarding vulnerable children and adhere to robust procedures. Brooklands School will continue to apply good practice in the area of safeguarding across the expanded school. In addition, safeguarding is a key area for monitoring when Ofsted carries out inspections.

Environmental sustainability implications:

28. Surrey County Council's design philosophy is to create buildings that will support low energy consumption, reduce solar gain and promote natural ventilation. Any new infrastructure on the site will take account of the local planning authority's adopted core planning strategy.

The SEND Transformation Plan includes a principle that supports the expansion of Brooklands School, that pupils with SEND should be able to

attend their local school in most instances. The desired outcome is that the progress, attainment and life-chances of children with SEND increases, through good quality schooling that is local for most and with short journey times. The additional places provided at Brooklands also reduces the number of pupils attending an appropriate specialist setting that requires a longer travelling distance, and the creation of additional carbon emissions and pollution. The additional places contribute to a better and greener environment.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT:

29. Following a Cabinet Leader decision, Brooklands School will be able to offer places in Reception and Year 3 from September 2020. Children may be accepted into other year groups subject to demand. Some further works may be required to the building and the site to make it suitable for up to 70 pupils. A feasibility study will be carried out upon confirmation of the permanent expansion.

Contact Officer:

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Consulted:

Teresa Prior, Headteacher, Brooklands School
Parents of children attending Brooklands School
Staff members and Governors at Brooklands School
Governing Body at Brooklands School
Residents
Tim Oliver SCC Leader
Crispin Blunt (MP for Reigate)
John O'Reilly (Local County Councillor)
Rosemary Absalom (Deputy Mayor - Reigate)
Michael Blacker (Reigate)
James King (South Park & Woodhatch)
Victor Lewanski (South Park & Woodhatch)
Simon Rickham (South Park & Woodhatch)
Hal Brown (Earlswood & Whitebushes)
Susan Fenton (Earlswood & Whitebushes)
Ruth Ritter (Earlswood & Whitebushes)
Stephen Kulka (Meadvale & St John's)
Jane Philpott (Meadvale & St John's)
David Ross (Meadvale & St John's)
Diocese of Arundel and Brighton – Marie Ryan
Diocese of Guildford – Alex Tear
Diocese of Westminster – J P Morrison
Diocese of London - Inigo Woolf
Diocese of Portsmouth – Catherine Hobbs
Diocese of Southwark – Colin Powell
Family Voice
SEND Operations
Speech and Language Therapy Lead
Reigate Residents Association
School's forum representatives: Surrey Special Schools, Surrey Primary Schools & Surrey Secondary Schools

June Crame – Governors, Surrey Primary schools

Annexes:

Annex 1 Brooklands School Statutory Notice (Full)

Annex 2 Equality Impact Assessment
