

Consultation Analysis

**PROPOSAL TO OPEN A SPECIALIST CENTRE AT THE ORCHARD
SCHOOL**



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

Consultation Analysis - Proposal to Open a Specialist Centre at The Orchard School

Introduction

Surrey County Council published an informal consultation from the 2nd November 2020 to the 14th December 2020. After reviewing initial responses Statutory notices were published from 11th January 2021 to the 8th February 2021

Part 1 of this paper is an analysis of the responses received during the informal consultation notice period and Part 2 is an analysis of the responses during the Statutory Notices. The summary and key points give a summary of the findings from both consultations. This paper will be submitted to the Lead Cabinet Member for All Age Learning as part of the Lead Cabinet Member report, for consideration in the decision to determine the statutory notices on 9th March 2021.

Consultation Summary

The informal consultation was open from 2nd November 2020 to the 14th December 2020. The associated documentation was published on the Surrey County Council 'Surrey Says' website and circulated to local stakeholders. Interested parties were invited to return responses to the consultation via an online form or alternatively email or post responses.

A public meeting was held on the 18th November 2020

The Statutory Notices were published from the 11th January 2021 to the 8th February 2021. The associated documentation was published on the Surrey County Council 'Surrey Says' website and circulated to local stakeholders. The notices were also published in the local paper (Surrey Comet) on the 14th January 2021. Interested parties were invited to return responses to the consultation via an online form or alternatively email or post responses.

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been completed throughout the informal consultation period and statutory notices and responses to the both consultations have contributed to that assessment.

Key points from the consultation responses:

1. 100% of respondents agree with the proposal
2. Parents were very supportive of implementing a specialist centre in a mainstream school
3. Parents were encouraged by the inclusive culture and ethos at The Orchard School.
4. The Orchard school would be well placed to provide specialist provision, with dedicated and experienced headteacher and staff
5. Parents thought it was important that these very young pupils were educated in the local area, rather than having to travel long distances.
6. Parents commented on the lack of specialised places across the local area.

Quantitative Analysis

Informal Consultation

There were 10 responses to the consultation. 100% of respondents agreed with the proposal. There were no disagreements with the proposal and 0% of respondents said they didn't know.

Statutory Notices

There was 1 response to the consultation. 100% of respondents agreed with the proposal.

Qualitative Analysis across the Informal Consultation and Statutory Notices

Due to the low numbers of responses across the informal consultation and statutory notices, this section includes a summary of the qualitative responses across both consultations.

Respondents had the opportunity to add comments at the end of the survey. In the informal consultation 8 out of 10 respondents left comments. During the statutory notices 1 person responded and left a comment. Across the two consultation periods there were 9 comments.

Key themes

There were 3 key themes that emerged from the consultation responses

Need for SEND provision in the local area

Some respondents mentioned lack of provision in area and pupils with SEND in need of this type of support

"There appears to be a growing number of children that local schools say, 'they cannot support'. This is stressful for the children and parents. Diagnosis can take a long time; specialised schools do not have enough places and children do like to go to their local school."

"Surrey is desperately short of all types of specialist provision"

Importance of inclusion in mainstream

Some respondents mentioned the importance of inclusion in mainstream schools for pupils with SEN, and that the specialist centre would continue to support inclusivity across the whole school.

"The Orchard is an inclusive school, and provides good support for children with special needs."

"There appears to be a growing amount of children that local schools say 'they cannot support'. This is stressful for the children and parents"

"The specialist skills will benefit not only the children in the Centre, but the whole school."

Praise for The Orchard and the current temporary provision

Some respondents mentioned the dedication of the headteacher and staff currently at The Orchard.

"The Orchard is a fantastic school and welcomes children with SEN. This is a recognition for their hard work and continued contribution to the local community."

Questions and answers

Two respondents had questions about the proposal:

Which school will become the feeder school for pupils moving into year 3?

All responses have informed the Equality Impact Assessment and supported transition is an agreed action. Pupils will be supported to transition to the appropriate placement identified through their EHCP, this may be the local mainstream Junior school, another specialist centre in a mainstream school or a special school. A specialist centre in an infant school will benefit pupils in need of further assessment and support before identifying the best placement in year 3.

Will pupils with High COIN needs attend the centre or will there be a clear criteria for admission in line with the other SLCN (Low COIN) centres in Surrey?

Placements will be made at the specialist centre if the specialist centre at The Orchard School is identified as the appropriate placement through the EHCP process. As stated in the [school admissions guidance](#) places will be allocated in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, which requires the Local Authority to take into account the child's special educational needs, parental request for schools, and the formal view of the schools requested before making a decision.

Places will be allocated based on parental requests wherever possible, unless:

- the school is unsuitable for the child's age, ability, aptitude or SEN
- the placement would be incompatible with the efficient education of the other children with whom your child would be educated, and
- the placement would be incompatible with the efficient use of resources.

Public Meetings

An online public meeting was held on the 18th November using MS Teams. There was a short presentation followed by 45 minutes for attendees to ask questions.

12 people attended on the 18th November:

6 parent/carers/family member of pupils at The Orchard school
 5 staff at The Orchard school
 1 Governors and/or other affiliation with The Orchard school

No questions were asked at the public meeting but parents made comments about their views and feelings on the proposal. The comments were positive and themes arising from the public meeting reflect the themes from the responses to the consultation.

1. Parents were relieved to have local, specialist provision set within a mainstream setting.
2. Parents were very happy with the inclusive ethos within the school and the support from the teaching staff and SENCO in particular.