

Portfolio Holder Decision

Friday 1 March 2024

Minutes

Attendance

Committee Members

Councillor Kam Kaur

1. Consultation on the Establishment of Resourced Provision at Maintained Primary Schools

Resolved

That the Portfolio Holder for Education agrees to the undertaking of a statutory process as part of the establishment of Specialist Resourced Provision to cater for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) at Briar Hill Infant School (Leamington Spa), St Paul's CofE Primary School (Nuneaton) and Park Hill Junior School (Kenilworth).

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Portfolio Holder Decision Consultation on the Establishment of Resourced Provision at Maintained Primary Schools

Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Education
Date of decision	1 March 2024
	Signed 

1. Decision taken

That the Portfolio Holder for Education agrees to the undertaking of a statutory process as part of the establishment of Specialist Resourced Provision to cater for pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) at Briar Hill Infant School (Leamington Spa), St Paul's CofE Primary School (Nuneaton) and Park Hill Junior School (Kenilworth).

1. Reasons for decisions

- 2.1 In line with the statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education, 'Making Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools', any proposals to establish, remove or alter SEN provision (including Resourced Provision) at a mainstream school requires the local authority to undertake a statutory process including a consultation period of at least 4 weeks.
- 2.2 The Local Authority are looking to establish specialist provision at the following Primary Schools:
- Briar Hill Infant School, Leamington Spa: for up to 8 primary aged pupils with an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) whose primary needs are communication and interaction.
- St Paul's CofE Primary School, Nuneaton: for up to 8 primary aged pupils with an EHCP whose primary needs are communication and interaction.
- Park Hill Junior School, Kenilworth: for up to 8 primary aged pupils with an EHCP whose primary needs are communication and interaction.
- 2.3 The proposed specialist resourced provisions will meet the needs of pupils with an EHCP, who are cognitively able to access the curriculum and will benefit from being

located alongside a mainstream school environment where their additional needs can be met through a flexible approach, tailored and adapted to their needs.

- 2.4 This is part of wider county wide strategic ambition to develop different types of resourced provisions across all areas of the county and follows the recent approval for Shipston Primary and the opening of new provision in St Andrews Benn, St Matthews Bloxham (Rugby) Abbey Infants (Nuneaton) and Goodyer's End (Bedworth). WCC aim to ensure that there is sufficient representation of specialist resourced provision across all local area schools consortium networks providing more opportunities for children to access quality education within their communities.
- 2.5 Admissions to the specialist resourced provision would follow a different process from that operating for the rest of the school. Admissions into the specialist resourced provision will be through the WCC panel process for specialist admissions. This will not impact on pupils who are in the mainstream setting at the school.
- 2.6 If the proposal is approved, a consultation needs to take place between March and April 2024 to ensure the proposal can be presented to Cabinet in May 2024. The consultation would take place during some of the pre-election period for the Nuneaton & Bedworth area. General legislative guidance highlights consultations during a pre-election period should be avoided, unless a delay to a consultation would cause exceptional issues, such as meeting a statutory duty; in this case, the provision of school places in time for the start of the school year.

2. Background information

- 3.1 In order to meet forecast demand and build on the local offer of specialist provision the local authority is continuing the development of specialist resourced provision across the county whereby pupils, who are cognitively able to access the curriculum, can have their needs met and benefit from being located on site alongside a mainstream school environment.
- 3.2 Warwickshire now has 16 specialist resourced provisions connected to mainstream primary schools, with two in North Warwickshire, five in Nuneaton and Bedworth, five in Rugby, one in the Warwick/Leamington area, and three in the Stratford on Avon area.
- 3.3 It is anticipated that the specialist resourced provisions would open in September 2024.
- 3.4 In line with the timing of provision it is anticipated that the consultations to establish the specialist resourced provision at Briar Hill Infant School, St Paul's CofE Primary School and Park Hill Junior School would need to take place between March and April 2024 with a decision by Cabinet in May 2024. Parents at the schools will be consulted using the school's established form of communication and further information will be placed on WCC consultation platform 'Ask Warwickshire'.

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 There are no additional costs for the LA from undertaking this consultation.
- 4.2 However, if after the consultation, there is a decision to go ahead with the specified specialist resourced provision there will be capital costs to the County Council in order for additional teaching and ancillary space to be provided to accommodate the learners attending the specialist resourced provision. Education capital funding would be used to fund the required capital works and would be subject to a separate decision.
- 4.3 At all three schools, the required accommodation can be achieved by remodelling and refurbishing existing space.
- 4.4 Pupil places in the specialist resourced provisions are funded at a higher rate so that pupils additional learning needs can be met. The level of funding will be broadly in line with how pupils are funded in the County's special schools. A service level agreement between WCC and the school will confirm the exact arrangements and expectations.
- 4.5 The establishment of resourced provision is part of the strategy to limit the overspend on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allowing learners to be placed in more cost-effective provision, reducing the pressure on in county specialist provision and reducing the need to place learners in more expensive independent specialist provision. The establishment of specialist resourced provision across the county increases the range of SEND provision available to meet the needs of children, particularly those children with significant additional needs but able to access a mainstream curriculum.

5. Environmental Implications

- 5.1 Anticipated to be minimal with the additional accommodation requirements involving small scale internal alterations.
- 5.2 There is also the positive impact with the increasing development of specialist resourced provision aiming to provide more 'local' education provision and reduce journey times for the learner.

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Executive Director	Nigel Minns - Executive Director for Children and Young People
Portfolio Holder	Cllr Kam Kaur - Portfolio Holder for Education

Urgent matter?	No
Confidential or exempt?	No
Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework?	No

List of background papers

None

Members and officers consulted and informed

Portfolio Holder – Councillor Kam Kaur

Corporate Board – Nigel Minns

Legal – Guy Darvill

Finance – Brian Smith

Equality – Delroy Madden

Democratic Services – Amy Bridgewater-Carnell

Councillors – Chair & Spokes of CYP OSC

Local Member(s): Cllr Judy Falp, Cllr Tracey Drew, Cllr Mandy Tromans