

Portfolio Holder Decision

Approval to Consult - Evergreen School

increase of pupil numbers

Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Education
Date of decision	13 January 2023
	Signed 

1. Decision taken

That the Portfolio Holder for Education agrees to the undertaking of a public consultation on increasing the number of pupils at Evergreen School.

2. Reasons for decision

Evergreen School formed on 1st September 2020 after the amalgamation of Ridgeway School and Round Oak School. It is a community special school for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (aged 4-19), located in Warwick.

There is a need for additional special school places in Warwick District and expansion of Evergreen School will contribute to meeting this need. Increasing the number of special school places will allow more Warwick District children to attend school local to them, avoiding the need for long journeys to school and the impact of higher-cost out of county placements.

The proposed expansion constitutes a 'prescribed alteration' to a maintained school for which a statutory public consultation is required by the DfE. Portfolio Holder approval is required prior to undertaking a public consultation.

3. Background information

1. The expansion of Evergreen School is the subject of a separate project requiring capital expenditure that will undergo its own governance process. This request for approval relates only to the statutory requirement to consult on the change to the pupil numbers at the school.
2. The governing body and school leaders are in support of the proposal to expand the school, which is likely to include a new classroom block being constructed on

existing school grounds.

3. The proposed change to the number of pupils at the school is from the current capacity of 275 to 315 pupils, an increase of 40 pupils. The consultation document that will be published for consultation is attached as Appendix 1, for reference.
4. Any proposed changes to the numbers of pupils of a community special school must be carried out in accordance with the Statutory Guidance issued by the Department for Education 'Making Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools.' The guidance requires the local authority to undertake a statutory consultation for a period of at least 4 weeks, with the proposals published both online and in a local newspaper, as well as to the governing body, the parents of registered pupils at the school, and anyone else considered appropriate. The local authority should make its decision within 2 months of the end of the consultation period.
5. In addition to the consultation process, an Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken and is attached as Appendix 2. The EIA will be reviewed before any final decision is made to go ahead with a change.
6. In order to align with the approval process for the school expansion capital project, consultation needs to take place during January and February 2023.
7. The results of the consultation will be included in the Cabinet report for approval of the school expansion project, expected to be in March 2023. Funding required for construction will be outlined in that report, to be part of the High Needs Capital Allocation.
8. Should the proposals for expansion be approved, the current target date for delivery of the new school places in September 2024.

1. Financial implications

Funding required for the construction project will be outlined in a separate report, to be part of the SEND Special Provision Fund element of the High Needs Capital Allocation. There are no financial implications of this decision to consult.

2. Environmental implications

The environmental implications of the construction project will be outlined in a separate report. There are no environmental implications of this decision to consult.

Report Author

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

Appendices	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposed Consultation document – proposal to increase the number of pupils at Evergreen School 2. Equality Impact Assessment 	

Members and officers consulted and informed	
Portfolio Holder – Councillor Kam Kaur	
Corporate Board – Nigel Minns	
Legal – Nic Vine	
Finance – Andrew Felton	
Equality – Joanna Kemp	
Democratic Services – Andy Carswell	
Councillors –	
Local Member(s): Parminder Birdi	