

From: Matt Dunkley CBE, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

To: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education

Subject: Proposed changes to St Nicholas (Community) Special School

Classification: Unrestricted

Decision No: 18/00028

Past Pathway of Paper: None

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member decision

Electoral Division: Canterbury City South - Ida Linfield
Herne Village & Sturry – Alan Marsh
Canterbury City North – Graham Gibbens
Canterbury South – Michael Northey

Summary:

This report sets out the results of the education consultation on the proposed changes to St Nicholas (Community) Special School to be implemented from September 2019.

- i. Increase the designated number from 200 to 285
- ii. Create Secondary satellite provision at Spires Academy
- iii. Create Primary satellite provision at Canterbury Primary School

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education is asked to:

- i. Increase the designated number from 200 to 285
- ii. Create Secondary satellite provision at Spires Academy
- iii. Create Primary satellite provision at Canterbury Primary School

And, subject to no objections being received to the public notice:

- i. Implement the proposed changes

Should any objections, not already considered by the Cabinet Member when taking this decision, be received during the notice period, a separate decision will be required to continue the proposals and allow for proper consideration of the points raised.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 St Nicholas (Community Special) School is a day provision, providing for boys and girls aged 4 to 19 with Profound, Severe and Complex Needs (PSCN). The school has a designated number of 200. In addition to the main school building at Holme

Oak Close, the school also operates a primary satellite provision at Chartham Primary School. St Nicholas School also has links with several secondary schools, as well as with Canterbury College for post 16 students. St Nicholas School was judged “Good” by Ofsted in March 2014.

- 1.2 Over time, to meet our responsibilities to ensure that there are sufficient places available for children and young people with particular needs, a number of our special schools have been asked to exceed their designated number. This has been the case at St Nicholas School where the designated number has been exceeded to the extent that it now needs to be permanently increased to regularise the situation. Currently there are 253 children on roll at the school. There is one class group for each year group in the primary department with the addition of two satellite Key Stage 2 classes based at Chartham Primary School. In the secondary department there are two classes for each year group; one is school based and the other is a satellite/inclusion class at a linked Secondary school.
- 1.3 A public consultation on the proposals to increase the designated number and create satellite provisions at The Canterbury Primary School and Spires Academy was held between 14 May and 15 June 2018.
- 1.4 The proposed changes at St Nicholas School are part of a wider strategy to address sufficiency of ASD specialist places across the Canterbury district. In parallel with the proposed establishment of satellites for St Nicholas School, at the request of the Local Authority, St Anselm’s Catholic School has undertaken a public consultation on a proposal to establish a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) for up to 15 Secondary aged pupils with ASD. This is to meet identified need reflected in the Local Authority’s SEND strategy and the Kent Commissioning Plan. Details of the consultation can be found at;

<https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/StAnselmsCatholicSchool/consultationHome>
 (The consultation document is available in Appendix 3).

Proposed Timetable:

Four-week consultation period (completed)	24 May to 26 June 2018
Governing Body and Trustees Decision to proceed	End of June 2018
Business Case submitted to the ESFA for Secretary of State approval	July 2018
Implementation if approved	From September 2019

- 1.5 Primary SRPs for children with ASD are already established at Joy Lane Primary School and The Canterbury Primary School with a secondary boy’s grammar provision also established at Simon Langton Grammar School for Boys. The SRP at St Anselm’s Catholic School will enhance the range of provision for ASD in Canterbury.

2. Proposal to make changes to St Nicholas School

- 2.1 It is proposed to permanently increase the designated number for the school from 200 to 285. Creating Satellite provisions at The Canterbury Primary School and Spires Academy will help facilitate this increase. It is anticipated that the satellite provisions will support pupils with complex learning difficulties including Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) rather than the full range of PSCN (profound, severe and

complex special educational need). Spires Academy is one of the schools currently providing opportunities for integration for St Nicholas' pupils.

- 2.2 Both, The Canterbury Primary School and Spires Academy would host a specialist satellite provision for up to 16 children (two classes of 8). They would have their own accommodation within the schools, which would be staffed by St Nicholas School. Pupils attending the satellites would continue to have access to the support they need and would be on the roll of St Nicholas School. Their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) would name St Nicholas School as their school.
- 2.3 The satellite classes would also provide a base for Specialist Staff who will support the children when they are included in mainstream teaching groups with children of the same age. This proposal provides pupils with opportunities for integration to experience good models of learning and socialising.

3. Financial Implications

Capital

- 3.1 The increase in the designated number does not require any alterations to St Nicholas School. Modular accommodation for the satellite provision at Spires Academy has been included in the school's expansion programme. SEN funding has been provided to cover the refurbishment cost for the satellite provision at The Canterbury Primary School.

Revenue

- 3.2 The school will receive increased funding through the Delegated Budget. Special schools are funded using the DfE Place Plus funding methodology for High Needs Pupils. Revenue funding will also be allocated to enable the school to resource the new satellite classrooms at The Canterbury Primary School and Spires Academy. At present, this is funded at a rate of £6,000 per classroom.

Human

- 3.3 The school will appoint members of staff as appropriate for the satellite provisions.

4. Vision and Priorities for Improvement

- 4.1 Kent's Strategy for Children and Young People with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) aims to address, amongst other things, gaps in provision. It has a priority to create at least 275 additional places for ASD and BESN.
- 4.2 These proposals reflect KCC's aspirations to provide sufficient school places across the County, as set out in Kent's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2018-22.

5. Consultation Outcomes

- 5.1 An education consultation was completed prior to the Cabinet Committee. The consultation document was distributed to parents/carers, school staff and governors, County Councillors, Member of Parliament, the Diocesan Authorities, Canterbury & Coastal Clinical Commissioning Group, local libraries, Canterbury City Council and others. The consultation documents were posted on the KCC website and the link to

the website widely circulated. The consultation documents were posted on the schools' websites. An opportunity was also provided to send in written responses via a response form and email. A summary of written responses is available in Appendix 1.

5.2 A public drop-in event was held on 6 June 2018, 4.30 – 7.00pm at St Nicholas School. It had been advertised on the KCC and school website and in the consultation document. A summary of the questions and comments is available in Appendix 2.

6. Views

6.1 The view of the Local Members:

- Canterbury City South - Ida Linfield
- Herne Village & Sturry – Alan Marsh
- Canterbury City North – Graham Gibbens
- Canterbury South – Michael Northey

The Local Members have been informed of the proposed changes.

6.2 The view of the Headteacher and Governing Body:

The Headteacher and Governing Body of St Nicholas School fully support the proposals. These exciting proposals will bring significant benefits. Working closely in partnership with The Canterbury Primary School and Spires Academy will enable staff skills and expertise to be developed by sharing good practice, joint training and observation and will build on the strong relationships and practice already established. The pupils attending the satellites will benefit from the opportunity to experience inclusive learning with children of their own age in a mainstream setting.

6.3 The view of the KCC Acting Head of SEN Assessment and Placement:

The Acting Head of SEN Assessment and Placement has worked closely with the schools in bringing forward these proposals and fully supports the plans.

6.4 The view of the KCC Area Education Officer:

The Area Education Officer fully supports the proposals to increase the designated number of the school and to create satellite provision at The Canterbury Primary School and Spires Academy. The permanent increase will enable the local authority to continue to meet its responsibility to provide sufficient places for pupils for whom an appropriate placement is at a Special school or a Special school satellite.

7. Conclusions

7.1 The increasing demand to provide special school places in Canterbury district, especially for pupils with complex learning difficulties including ASD has led to St Nicholas School taking additional children. Increasing the school's designated number and adding satellite provision for the school is in line with our vision to ensure that children and young people in Kent get the best start in life as set out in KCC's Strategic Statement 2015-20 'Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes' and the 'Commissioning Plan for Education – Kent 2018-2022'.

8. Recommendations:

8.1 Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education is asked to:

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9. Background Documents

10.1 Vision and Priorities for Improvement:

http://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/68498/Children-Young-People-and-Education-Vision-and-Priorities-for-Improvement-2018-2021.pdf

10.2 Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2018-22:

www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision

10.3 SEND Strategy:

www.kent.gov.uk/sendstrategy

10.4 Consultation Document and Equalities Impact Assessment:

https://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/st_nicholas/consultationHome

10. Contact details

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