

From: Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director for Education,
Learning and Skills

To: Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health
Reform

Subject: Decision – 14/00005(b): Proposal to relocate and increase
the designated number of The Foreland (Community
Special) School

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: Education Cabinet Committee – 18 January 2013, 14
January 2014

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member decision

Electoral Divisions:

Broadstairs & Sir Moses Montefiore: Local Members: Alan Terry and Zita Wiltshire
Ramsgate: Local Members: Trevor Shonk and Martyn Heale

Summary: Following the recommendations from Education Cabinet Committee on 14 January 2014, the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform agreed to issue a public notice to increase the designated number of The Foreland School, by adding 40 additional places. During the Public Notice period no objections or comments were received and now the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform is requested to take the further decision outlined in the recommendations below.

Recommendation(s):

Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform is requested to agree to take a decision to:

- (i) Increase the designated number subject to planning for the new school buildings on the Pysons Road site
- (ii) Allocate £9,650,000 from the Education. Learning and Skills Capital Budget.
- (iii) AUTHORISE the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support in consultation with the Director of Law and Governance to enter into any necessary contracts/agreements on behalf of the County Council.
- (iv) AUTHORISE the Director of Property and Infrastructure Support to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

This decision is conditional upon the grant of planning permission under part 3 of the town and country planning act 1990 by 30 May 2014.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Foreland School was re-designated to become a provision for boys and girls aged 5 to 9 years with profound, severe and complex needs for the Thanet area in September 2005, with additional provision for pupils with communication and/or interaction needs. The school also has a specialist maintained nursery unit with 6 full time equivalent places, plus two fully staffed mainstream inclusion class bases within Garlinge Primary School and Hartsdown Technology College.

In May 2012, KCC Education Cabinet Committee agreed to the development of a Strategy for Special Educational Needs and Disability for the children and young people of Kent.

The overarching aim of the strategy is to support every child and young person in Kent to achieve their full life potential, whatever their background. An important aspect of this is to develop a well-planned continuum of provision that meets the needs of children and young people with the most complex Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). We will be reviewing and developing the capacity of special schools to serve their locality – defining their offer and building in capacity to respond to future need.

- 1.2 The school's current buildings have evolved over the last 40 years and are now outdated and largely unsuitable for meeting their current purpose. The size of the school has grown over recent years and it is essential that the school is now provided with buildings that will meet future need and provide accommodation that will greatly enhance the educational experience and improve outcomes for the students.
- 1.3 It is planned for The Foreland School to relocate to a site at Pysons Road, Ramsgate in new school buildings with a target date for occupation of September 2015. The new school buildings will accommodate up to 200 pupils including nursery. The site at Pysons Road is of a sufficient size to accommodate a modern new-build special school and The Ellington & Hereson School also occupies part of the site. It is envisaged that there will be opportunities for sharing facilities and for student integration, enabling the inclusion opportunities that will continue to be offered in Hartsdown Technology College and Garlinge Primary School to be developed with a Ramsgate-based school.

Plans were submitted on 16 December 2013? and it is hoped that work will begin on site in March 2014.

- 1.4 The distance between the current Foreland School site and the Pysons Road site is 1.8 miles 'as the crow flies'. This means that the planned relocation does not require a public notice under education law. However, the increase in the designated number of the school from 160 places to 200 places will require a public notice.
- 1.4 This report sets out the results of the public consultation, which took place between 18 November 2013 and 13 January 2014. A public meeting was not held, but a planning consultation drop-in was held at The Ellington and

Hereson School on 26 November. A staff meeting was held on 28 November to keep staff informed of the progress and indicative plans for the new buildings. A further drop-in session was also held on 28 November at The Foreland School for parents to view the plans.

- 1.5 On 14 January 2014, the Cabinet Committee considered the proposed decision and discussed the concerns raised. and resolved to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform he agree to decision 14/00005 as laid out in the recommendations of this report..

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The new buildings for The Foreland School will accommodate up to 200 pupils including a nursery. This provides an additional 40 places.

- a. Capital - A feasibility study has been completed. The total cost is estimated to be in the region of £9,650,000 of which £1,271,512 will be funded from the Targeted Basic Need allocation from the DfE made in August 2013 and the remainder from the £30m capital allocation approved by members at the meeting of the County Council on 9 February 2012 for the delivery of the final phase of the Special School Review which began in May 2005. The costs of the project are estimates and these may increase as the project is developed. If the cost of the project is greater than 10% the Cabinet Member will be required to take a further decision to allocate the additional funding.

- b. Special Schools are funded using the DfE Place Plus funding methodology for High Needs Pupils and the Local Authority has agreed to purchase 180 places for September 2015 and 193 for September 2016. For each additional classroom, resulting from the increase in the designated number, the sum of £6,000 will be allocated towards classroom set up costs.

- c. Human – The School will appoint additional teachers and support staff as required.

3. Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

- 3.1 These proposals will help to secure our ambition “to ensure every child will go to a good school where they make good progress and can have fair access to school places” as set out in ‘Bold Steps for Kent’.

- 3.2 As set out in our SEN and Disability Strategy this proposal supports our aim for every child and young person in Kent to achieve their full life potential, whatever their background.

- 3.2 The ‘Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, 2013-18’ referred to the need to review the future capacity of specialist SEN provision within special schools and within the mainstream sector.

4. The Public Notice Outcomes

4.1 The Public Notice was issued on 16 February 2014 and ran for 4 weeks.

4.2 No objections or comments were received during this period.

5. Views

5.1 The view of the Local Members: The Local Members have been consulted Mr Martyn Heale, Member for Ramsgate Division commented as follows:

‘While I completely agree on the need for a new school as we need to increase places, and while I like the proposal for the Pysons Road development, my minor reservation concerns traffic. With Charles Dickens, Dane Court, Bromstone and Ellington & Hereson schools in the vicinity, I just worry about volume of traffic during rush hour with yet even more vehicle journeys to service the new school. Already the Pysons Road/Margate Road junctions are severely tested every day, and a rat-run is being made of Hopes Lane, via Northwood Road to the Newington Road. Consideration should be given to traffic signals at Pysons Road/Margate Road to assist with traffic movement.’

5.2. The view of the Headteacher:
The proposals will enable the school to better meet the needs of its pupils by:-

Providing accommodation that is up to date and fit for purpose –

- The current accommodation is in poor condition, with many small classrooms, unreliable heating and plumbing and a hydrotherapy pool that has been condemned and has not worked for many years.

Providing accommodation for greater numbers of pupils in purpose-built accommodation –

- Our pupil numbers have risen sharply in recent years, and as our main buildings have become full, specialist rooms have had to be converted to classrooms and increasing amounts of costly temporary accommodation installed, which although of reasonable quality, has added to the disjointed and incoherent layout of the school.

Providing a more coherent layout of rooms, facilities and departments –

- The current accommodation has developed on an ad-hoc basis and adjacencies are poor, with certain facilities in different building to the pupils who need to use them and consecutive key stages in completely different parts of the school site.

Providing opportunities for inclusion at Ellington Hereson School, both in terms of access to lessons and courses, but also sharing of expertise and facilities in both directions –

- The new site is in the heart of a community of schools but also closer to the heart of the community, allowing greater opportunities for community-based learning.

Provided the school is indeed given the 2 acres of the Eastern Field that it has asked for, there will be greater opportunities for the development of outdoor learning and sports facilities, which as well as enhancing the learning of our pupils, will be able to be shared with other schools.

Provided the SMILE Centre (Outreach Centre) is made available and built, this will allow an expanded and consolidated Outreach Service, drawing together our existing service and the Specialist Teaching & Learning Service (S.T.L.S.) to provide training and support to pupils with Special Educational Needs (S.E.N.) in mainstream provision, helping realise the local authority's vision of more pupils with S.E.N. being enabled to remain in Mainstream Provision.

The view of the students:

At a recent Pupil Council Meeting, pupils were asked to suggest features that they would wish to see included in the rebuild of The Foreland School.

Suggestions included:-

- Rainbow Room (a Soft Play Room)
- A Staff Room
- A Cookery Room
- A Sensory Room
- A Bike Track
- A Running Track
- A Cinema
- A Swimming Pool
- X-boxes
- Playground
- Swings in the playground
- Climbing Frame
- A pig!

In previous surveys, pupils have asked for better playground equipment, including bigger playgrounds, football pitches, climbing frames, tables and benches, quiet areas and bikes.

Some pupils said they would be sad to leave the current building but most recognised that it was old and had poor facilities.

5.3. The view of the Area Education Officer:

The Area Education Officer fully supports the proposal to increase the capacity of the Foreland School alongside its move into a new purpose built building on the Pysons Road site. The school has already increased its pupil numbers over recent years and has had additional temporary accommodation installed on its current site to meet this demand. This is in keeping with what is set out within Kent's Special Educational Need and Disability Strategy and will also enable close working with Ellington/Hereson School – providing further inclusion opportunities for children in a Ramsgate-based Secondary school to complement that already provided in the Margate area through inclusion classes at Garlinge Primary School and Hartsdown Academy.

6. Proposal

- 6.1 The proposed rebuilding of The Foreland School will increase the value of KCC's property portfolio.
- 6.2 The proposed increase in the designated number is subject to KCC statutory decision making process and planning.
- 6.3 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed as part of the consultation. To date no comments have been received and no changes are required to the Equality Impact Assessment.

7. Delegation to Officers

- 7.1 The Officer Scheme of Delegation; under Appendix 2 part 4 of the Council's Constitution, provides a clear and appropriate link between this decision and the actions needed to implement it. For information it is envisaged, if the proposal goes ahead, that the Director of Property & Infrastructure Support will sign contracts on behalf of the County Council.

8. Conclusions

- 8.1 This proposal will provide an additional 40 places for children for whom an appropriate placement is at a special school designated to take pupils with PMLD (profound and multiple learning difficulties), ASD (autistic spectrum disorders) and SLD (sever learning difficulties). The rebuilding of the school will provide accommodation and facilities, including a hydro-therapy pool, to ensure that the pupils will have a school designed to provide for their needs and will greatly enhance their educational experience and improve outcomes for them all.

9. Recommendation

Recommendation: Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform is requested to agree to take a decision to:

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10. Background Documents

10.1 Bold Steps for Kent and Policy Framework

http://www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/priorities,_policies_and_plans/priorities_and_plans/bold_steps_for_kent.aspx

10.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2013-2018

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s43253/ItemD3KentEducationCommissioningPlan20132018final.pdf>

10.3 Education Cabinet Committee report– 27 September 2013

<http://kent590w3:9070/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=746&MId=5033&Ver=4>

10.4 Consultation Document and Equalities Impact Assessment

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti/ForelandSchool/consultationHome>

10.5 Education Cabinet Committee report– 14 January 2014

<https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=746&MId=5470&Ver=4>

11. Contact details

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