

**From:** Roger Gough, Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform  
Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director of Education and Young People's Services

**To:** Education and Young People's Cabinet Committee  
15 December 2015

**Subject:** Proposal to increase the Designated Number at Grange Park School, Wrotham

**Decision number** 15/00098

**Classification:** Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: Education Cabinet Committee – 4 December 2013;  
14 March 2014

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member decision

Electoral Division: Malling West: Valerie Dagger

**Summary:** This report informs the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee of the public consultation of Grange Park School.

**Recommendation(s):** The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the proposed decision to:

Issue a public notice to:

- (i) Increase the designated number of places at Grange Park School, Borough Green Road, Wrotham, Kent, TN15 7RD from 79 to 100 places from 1 April 2016.

And, subject to no new objections to the public notice:-

- (ii) Implement the proposal according to the date identified above

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Kent County Council's strategy for children and young people with special educational needs and who are disabled (SEND) identified the need to add capacity across the county. The SEND Strategy shows how we will be creating 209 extra places in special schools and 164 in mainstream schools.
- 1.2 As the strategic commissioner of school provision, the Local Authority has a duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places for the residents of Kent. This duty applies to special school provision, as well as mainstream settings. These proposals reflect KCC's aspirations to increase the number of SEN school places across the County, as set out in Kent's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2015-19.
- 1.3 Grange Park School is a specialist provision for children and young people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The school is based on three

sites: the main site at Wrotham for 11 to 19 year olds and two satellites for 16 to 19 year olds at Mid Kent College, Gillingham and Hadlow College.

- 1.4 The main site at Wrotham is housed in a brand new building which was purpose built to provide an autism friendly learning environment for our pupils. The satellite at Mid Kent College is within the mainstream setting but students are supported by Grange Park staff to enable them to access the full range of educational opportunities available to them.
- 1.5 Over time, in order to meet our responsibilities a number of our special schools have been asked to admit additional pupils. In some cases this has led the schools involved to exceed their designated numbers to the extent that we now need to undertake a consultation to permanently increase the designated number and regularise the situation. Therefore, KCC has commenced a statutory process to consultation on a proposal to permanently increase the designated number Grange Park School to 100.
- 1.6 KCC recognises the significant importance given to parent/carer views in the Students and Families Act reforms of SEN and Disabilities which came into force from September 2014 and has looked to ensure they are involved in shaping and influencing strategic decisions that affect their students and young people. Therefore, we undertook a consultation with parents Grange Park School and a full range of stakeholders on these proposals.
- 1.7 This report informs the Education and Young People's Cabinet Committee of the public consultation, which commenced on 2 November 2015. A verbal update on the outcome of the consultation will be provided by the Area Education Officer for West Kent.

## **2. Financial Implications**

- a. Capital –No capital implications.
- b. Revenue: The schools delegated budget will be allocated for an agreed number of commissioned places in accordance with the Place Plus High Needs funding methodology.

## **3. Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement (2015-2020) Policy Framework**

- 3.1 These proposals will help to secure our ambition “to ensure that Kent's young people have access to the education, work and skills opportunities necessary to support Kent business to grow and be increasingly competitive in the national and international economy” as set out in ‘Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement (2015-2020)’
- 3.2 These proposals reflect KCC's aspirations to increase the number of SEN school places across the County, as set out in Kent's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2015-19.

## **4. Consultation Outcomes**

- 4.1 Approximately 300 hard copies of the public consultation document were circulated, which included a form for written responses. The consultation document was distributed to parents/carers, staff and governors of both

schools, County Councillors, Member of Parliament, the Diocesan Authorities, local libraries, Parish Councils, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, and others. The consultation document was posted on the KCC website and the link to the website widely circulated. An opportunity to send in written responses using the response form, email and online was also provided.

- 4.2 A drop-in information session was organised for parents on 19 November between 10.00am and 11.00 am at Grange Park School.
- 4.3 The consultation process concludes on 30 November 2015. At the time of writing, two responses have been received. One negative response and one positive response from Ightham Parish Council: "The expansion of this ASC specialist facility is to be welcomed in times of tough financial constraints. No objection."
- 4.4 Following the closure of the consultation on 30 November 2015 the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform will be provided with a full set of consultation responses. A verbal update will be provided by the Area Education Officer for West Kent at the Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee Meeting on 15 December 2015.

## **5. Views**

- 5.1 The Local Member for Malling West has been consulted about this proposal.

### The View of the KCC Head of SEN Assessment and Placement

- 5.2 The SEND strategies set out the need to increase the number of places in the specialist provision for children with Autism. This increase reflects the level of places at Grange Park within the school's current physical accommodation.

### The View of the Area Education Officer:

- 5.3 The Area Education Officer for West Kent is in support of this proposal which would bring the school's designated number in line with the number of students currently on roll.

## **6. Proposal**

- 6.1 These proposals are set out in accordance with Section 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Kent County Council intends to make prescribed alterations to:
  - Increase the designated number of places at Grange Park School, Borough Green Road, Wrotham, Kent, TN15 7RD from 79 to 100 places from 1 April 2016.
- 6.2 The proposed alterations to Grange Park School are 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.
- 6.4 There will be no impact on the value of KCC's property portfolio.

## 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.

## 8. Conclusions

- 8.1 This proposal will formalise the provision of 21 places at Grange Park School for students in line with Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement 2015-2020 Policy Framework' and the 'Commissioning Plan for Education – Kent' (2015 – 2019).

## 9. Recommendation(s)

**The Education and Young People's Services Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on the proposed decision to:**

Issue a public notice to:

- (i) Increase the designated number of places at Grange Park School, Borough Green Road, Wrotham, Kent, TN15 7RD from 79 to 100 places from 1 April 2016.

And, subject to no objections, not already considered, to the public notice:-

- (iii) Implement the proposals according to the date identified above

## 10. Background Documents

- 10.1 Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement 2015-2020 <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/corporate-policies/increasing-opportunities-improving-outcomes>
- 10.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2015-19 [http://www.kent.gov.uk/\\_\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0018/16236/Commissioningplan-for-education-provision-in-Kent-2015-2019.pdf](http://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0018/16236/Commissioningplan-for-education-provision-in-Kent-2015-2019.pdf)
- 10.3 Consultation Document and Equalities Impact Assessment [www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)
- 10.4 Strategy for Children & Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/childrensocial-care-and-families-policies>

## 11. Report Author

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## **12 Relevant Director**

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# KENT COUNTY COUNCIL – PROPOSED RECORD OF DECISION

DECISION TO BE TAKEN BY:

Roger Gough,

Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform

DECISION NO:

**15/00098**

For publication

**Subject: Proposal to increase the Designated Number at Grange Park School,  
Borough Green Road, Wrotham, Kent TN15 7RD**

Decision:

**As Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform I propose to agree to:**

Issue a public notice to:

- (i) Increase the Designated Number at Grange Park School, Borough Green Road, Wrotham, Kent TN15 7RD

And, subject to no objections, not already considered, to the public notice:-

- (ii) Implement the proposal according to the date identified above

Reason(s) for decision:

In reaching this decision I will take into account:

- the views expressed by those put in writing in response to the consultation;
- the views of the District and Parish Councils, the local County Councillor; Governing Bodies of the schools, the Staff and Pupils;
- the Equalities Impact Assessment and comments received regarding this; and
- the views of the Education Cabinet and Young People's Services Committee which are set out below

Cabinet Committee recommendations and other consultation:

**15 December 2015**

**14 October 2014**

The Committee endorsed the Kent Commissioning Plan, which identified a need for additional places

**14 March 2014**

Decision no14/0098 was taken by the Cabinet Member for Education and Health Reform on 2 September 2014 to allocate £3.5 million from the Targeted Basic Need budget and £11.1 million from the Basic Need Budget.

**4 December 2013**

Education Cabinet Committee were asked to endorse the actions to implement key proposals set out in the SEND Strategy.

Any alternatives considered:

The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2015-19 explored all options and the expansion of this school was deemed the suitable option.

Any interest declared when the decision was taken and any dispensation granted by the Proper Officer:

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**Signed**

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**Date**