

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

Matt Dunkley, Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education

To: Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee – 7 May 2019

Subject: Proposed changes to Grange Park School, Borough Green Road, Wrotham, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 7RD.

Decision number: 19/00036

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: 28 January 2019 - the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision 2019-23 - Cabinet.

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member Decision

Electoral Division: Malling West - Harry Rayner

Summary:

This report sets out proposed changes to Grange Park School, Borough Green Road, Wrotham, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 7RD. The changes entail increasing the designated number of places, altering the lower age range and establishing a Grange Park satellite facility at the former Stansted CE Primary School site.

Recommendation(s):

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education on the decision to:

- (i) increase the designated number of places offered at Grange Park School from 100 to 150;
- (ii) alter the lower age range of Grange Park School from 11 to 8 (11-19 to 8-19 years);
- (iii) establish a 36 place Key Stage 2 satellite provision of Grange Park School at the former Stansted CE Primary School site at Malthouse Road, Stansted, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 7PH.

Changes to be implemented from 1st July.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 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. The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2019-23 is a five-year rolling plan which is updated annually. It sets out our future plans as Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision across all types and phases of education in Kent.

- 1.2 Within the Specialist Provision section of the Commissioning Plan, Kent details plans to provide increased Special Educational Needs (SEN) places to meet the demand for places and to reduce the proportion of pupils attending independent placements.
- 1.3 In recent years, Kent has experienced place pressure through all phases of education, including SEN, with the number of Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) continuing to increase. The number of pupils with EHCPs has increased significantly faster than the average pupil growth rate for Kent. From January 2017 to January 2018 the number of pupils with EHCPs increased by 13.9%, which is notably higher than the overall pupil growth rate of 1.3% for the same period. The increased place pressure has been evident for all the main SEN need types, with autistic spectrum Disorder (ASD) being the most prevalent and fastest growing need type..
- 1.4 Of the pupils with an EHCP in Kent, 40% have ASD, which is significantly higher than the national figure of 27%. Of the children with ASD, 32% are in Key Stage 2 (KS2). Currently there are insufficient Kent special school places to cater for this age range. This has led to an increasing number of KS2 children with ASD being placed in the independent sector at an average cost of £36,200; which costs around £17,000 more than a placement in a Kent special school.
- 1.5 The pressure for places at Grange Park has continued to rise commensurately with the increased county demand, with strong parental preference. Grange Park is a specialist provision for children and young people aged between 11 and 19 with an Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC). The school is based on four sites: the main site at Wrotham (11-19) as well as partnership sites for Key Stage 5 at Mid Kent College, Gillingham, Mid Kent College, Maidstone and Hadlow College.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 In order to meet the demand for local places, it is proposed that Grange Park School will increase its designated number of places offered from 100 to 150, alter the lower age range from 11 to 8 years and to establish a 36 place Key Stage 2 satellite facility at the former Stansted CE Primary School site from 1st July 2019. The 36 places in the Satellite provision would be included within the new designated number of 150.
- 2.2 The main Grange Park school site is currently full to its designated number of 100 places and there is limited capacity on the site for physical expansion of the school. The new satellite would take advantage of an existing building that was designed for education use. The former Stansted CE Primary School site is situated approximately 3 miles from the Grange Park site at Wrotham. This close proximity would enable Grange Park to viably extend its provision to a greater number of children within their local area.

- 2.3 Through the proposed increase in the designated number, the Wrotham site's designated capacity would increase to 114 places for pupils aged 11-19 and the Stanstead satellite provision would have a designated capacity of 36 KS2 places.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 **Capital** – There is no additional capital expenditure required for this proposal.
- 3.2 **Revenue** – Grange Park will receive additional revenue funding in accordance with the Pupil Growth Policy established by KCC and the Schools' Funding Forum.
- 3.3 **Human** - The schools will appoint additional staff as and when appropriate.

4. Raising Standards

- 4.1 Following an Ofsted inspection on the 11th October 2016, Grange Park was judged to be "good", with inspectors recognising that the school had made significant progress since the last inspection. Grange Park school has been awarded Autism Accreditation by The National Autistic Society.
- 4.2 The proposed satellite will provide additional places for KS2 children with EHCPs and a primary need of ASC. The Stansted accommodation will be designed to meet the needs of young people on the autistic spectrum which will be an excellent learning environment for pupils with specific needs.
- 4.3 The satellite would comprise of 3 classes of up to 12 pupils, one for each school year from 4 to 6. The satellite will be supported by specialist therapists and experienced autism practitioners. The aim is to support pupils which will allow them to develop their learning strategies and ability to manage and potentially return to mainstream or Specialist Resource Provisions settings.

5. Equalities implications

- 5.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been completed for the education consultation in accordance with the Council's equality duty, having due regard to equality considerations when commissioning additional school capacity.

6. Policy Framework

- 5.1 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)'

- 5.2 These proposals reflect KCC's aspirations to provide sufficient school places across the County, as set out in the Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2019-23.

7. Consultation

- 6.1 The consultation document was distributed via the school to parents/carers, members of staff and governors. The consultation was available on the school and KCC websites and was emailed to all key stakeholders. An opportunity to send in written responses using the response form in paper format and online was provided. A 'drop-in' information session was held at Grange Park School, Borough Green Road, Wrotham, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 7RD on 18 March 2019, 4.30pm to 6.30pm
- 6.2 There were 13 responses to the consultation: three from parents/carers, two from Governors and eight from other interested parties. Of the 13 respondents, 11 agreed with the changes and 2 disagreed. A summary of the responses is available in Appendix A.

7. Views

7.1 The View of the Local Members

The KCC Member for Malling West, Harry Rayner, has been consulted on these proposals.

7.2 The View of the Headteacher and Governing Body

The Headteacher and Governing Body are fully supportive of these proposals and have been integrally involved in the formation of the proposal.

7.3 The View of the Area Education Officer

The Area Education Officer fully supports this proposal as it provides much needed ASD places and reduces the reliance on expensive independent sector places. The proposed changes will enable Grange Park to develop the provision they offer and mean more pupils will benefit from their ASC expertise.

7. Conclusions

- 9.1 This report sets the demand for SEN places for children with ASC and the need to reduce the number of Kent pupils being placed in the independent sector at significantly greater cost. The proposed changes to Grange Park School are intended to meet the growing demand for ASD places by increasing the school's designated number of places offered from 100 to 150; altering the lower age range from 11 to 8 years; and to establishing a 36 place Key Stage 2 satellite facility at the former Stansted CE Primary School site from 1st July 2019.

8. Recommendation(s)

The Children's, Young People and Education Cabinet Committee is asked to consider and endorse or make recommendations to the Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education on the decision to:

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Changes to be implemented from 1st July 2019.

9. 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 2019-2023
https://democracy.kent.gov.uk/documents/s88604/KCP%202019%20-%202023%20_Cabinet%20Committee%20-%20FINAL%20PW.pdf

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APPENDIX A

Summary of Public Consultation Responses

Kent County Council consulted on proposed changes to Grange Park School to:

- increase the designated number of places offered from 100 to 150;
- alter the lower age range from 11 to 8 (11-19 to 8-19 years);
- establish a 36 place Key Stage 2 satellite facility at the former Stansted CE Primary School site at Malthouse Road, Stansted, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 7PH.

This summary includes information from all the responses received during the consultation period that ran from 25 February 2019 to 07 April 2019 (midnight).

There were approximately 200 consultation documents (hard copies) distributed via the school to parents, members of staff and governors. The consultation was emailed to all key stakeholders and was available on the KCC and school websites. There were 13 responses received via emails, digital and paper response forms to the consultation that can be broken down as follows:

	Agree	Disagree	Undecided	Total
Parent/Carer	3	0	0	3
Member of Staff	0	0	0	0
Governor	2	0	0	2
Other Interested Party	6	2	0	8
Total	11	2	0	13

Note: The numbers in brackets shown below represent the occurrence of broadly aligned comments, not the number of respondents.

Summarised comments from respondents in support of the proposed changes:

- Fully support and agree with the increased places at school (5)
- Fully support the introduction of Grange Park primary places (3)
- Fully support as there is a significant need for ASD place (3), with children being unsuccessfully taught in the mainstream (2)
- Excellent that education facility is returning to Stansted (1)

Comments from respondents who disagreed with the proposed changes:

- Disagree due to traffic concerns on the A227 and around the main Grange Park site (2 respondents received a personal response highlighting that the vast majority of the additional pupils would be attending the Stansted satellite and therefore would not be using the A227 around the main Grange Park site).

Public Information Sessions

A 'drop-in' information session was held at Grange Park School, Borough Green Road, Wrotham, Sevenoaks, Kent, TN15 7RD on 18 March 2019, 4.30pm to 6.30pm. The session provided an opportunity for interested parties to ask questions and to seek clarity on any issue relating to the proposal. The session had no attendees.