

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

**To:** Richard Long, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

**Subject:** Proposal to change the age range at Goldwyn School, Ashford from 11-16 years to 11-18 years in order to add sixth form provision, adding 45 post-16 places and increase the designated number at Key Stages 3/4 by 35 places

**Decision No:** 20/00002

**Classification:** Unrestricted

**Past Pathway of Paper:** N/A

**Future Pathway of Paper:** Cabinet Member Decision

**Electoral Division:** All

**Summary:**

This report sets out the results of a public consultation in respect of the proposal to change the age range at Goldwyn School in order to add sixth form provision and to increase the designated number to a total of 195 places (140 at Key Stages 3 and 4 and 45 post-16 places).

**Recommendation(s):**

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills is asked to:

- (i). Change the age range at Goldwyn School, Ashford from 11-16 years to 11-18 years in order to add sixth form provision, adding 45 post-16 places and increase the designated number at Key Stages 3/4 by 35 places (195 places in total); and
- (ii). Issue a public notice in regard of the proposal as set out in (i) above.

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) as the Local Authority has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places are available. The County Council's Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2020-24 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. A copy of the Plan can be viewed from this link:

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/education-skills-and-employment-policies/education-provision>

1.2 The Local Authority is responsible for maintaining Education Health Care Plans (EHCPs), not only for statutory school aged children but for children and young people between the ages of 0-25 years. As of January 2019, this

totalled 11,763 children and young people with an EHCP. This is an increase of 1,384 since January 2018, up 13.3% compared to 11% nationally.

1.3 Kent's SEND Strategy 2017 to 2019 is currently being refreshed. It will set out Kent's vision and intentions for the next few years and identify how they will be achieved. Kent's current strategy sets out its intention to provide additional places for pupils with needs in the following areas:

- Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
- Speech and language and communication needs (SLCN)
- Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)

## **2. Background**

2.1 Goldwyn School is a maintained special school designated to support pupils aged 11-16 years with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH). It is judged as Outstanding by OFSTED. Presently the School is designated to take 115 pupils aged 11-16 years of age.

2.2 Due to the increased need for specialist SEMH places the School has been commissioned to provide up to 150 places for the last few years. Increasing the designated number of Key Stages 3/4 places by 35 places will formalise this situation.

2.3 There is no post-16 maintained specialist education provision for pupils with SEMH in Kent. This is in contrast to schools supporting other need types in the County. At Goldwyn, 75% of students arrived after Year 7 and 29% of the 2018-19 cohort arrived in years 10 or 11. The vast majority of students have missed large chunks of their education either at primary or secondary, or in some cases both. This, in addition with students' other complex needs, can mean that their development is delayed, and some are simply not ready to transition to mainstream post-16 provisions.

2.4 Goldwyn School tracks the destination of leavers. The vast majority of pupils leaving the School at the end of year 11 transfer to mainstream college. There is little opportunity for them to transfer to secondary school sixth forms to continue their education, due to either their level of SEN need or the lack of Level 2 qualifications available to them.

Decisions around post-16 provision are made at the time of a pupil's Year 10 annual review. For a number of Goldwyn students, such as those who join the School in Year 10, it is too early to give post-16 providers the most accurate picture of a student's level of need as they still have 18 months of secondary education ahead of them. This can result in provision not being secured (due to the complex level of need) or the provision agreed at that point not being the most appropriate. This situation increases the likelihood of pupils becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

2.5 In order to fill the gap in post-16 provision for pupils with SEMH, and in particular for those pupils transitioning to post-16 provision from Goldwyn School, Goldwyn Sixth Form College was set up in 2016. The College is an Independent Specialist Provision (ISP). The College forms part of the wider

local inclusion offer for post-16 pupils. In its recent OFSTED inspection, the College received a 'Requires Improvement' rating. Goldwyn College does not have its own buildings or staff, the facilities are leased from Goldwyn School and the staff are employed by Goldwin School.

- 2.6 Goldwyn School Sixth Form would continue to provide the same vocational offer as Goldwyn College currently does. As a mainstream special school, Goldwyn School would be limited to providing three years of post-16 provision (pupils up to 19 years of age), whereas Goldwyn College has supported a small number of pupils over the age of 19 (11 pupils in total over the last 3 academic years of the 130 who have been on roll). Although not part of this proposal, the Trustees of Goldwyn College have indicated that, should the Goldwyn School increase its age range to include a sixth form, they may decide to close Goldwyn College. Should that be the case, pupils above 19 years of age, who may have previously wished to access a course at the College will be supported in finding alternative provision that is most suited to their needs and aspirations.
- 2.7 For those pupils currently on roll at the College, individual discussions will take place with each student, and with their families as part of the normal EHCP review process, to determine how each student will be supported moving forward. For many this may well be that they will complete their course at the new sixth form at Goldwyn School, while others will be supported to find different education or training opportunities as appropriate.

### **3. Financial Implications**

- 3.1 **Capital:** Capital funding will not be required as the School will have access to all existing premises owned and leased by Goldwyn School to provide for the sixth form.
- 3.2 **Revenue:** The sixth form will be funded in the same way and at the same rate as it is for the pre-16 students at the School. As of September 2019, this is at the rate of £19,326.36 per place.

### **4. Kent Policy Framework**

- 4.1 The 'Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision, 2020-24 identified the intention to commission additional SEMH places in Ashford from 2020-21.
- 4.2 The SEND Strategy 2017-19 (being refreshed presently) identified an intention to increase SEMH provision.
- 4.3 Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement (2015-2020) identifies the need to ensure: All children and young people are engaged, thrive and achieve their potential through academic and vocational education
- 4.4. The provision of sufficient school places is a statutory duty and contributes to the Strategic Business Plan Priorities to ensure that "Children and Young People in Kent get the best start in life".

## **5. Consultation**

5.1 A public consultation was held between 6 January 2020 and 14 February 2020, with a drop-in event for stakeholders to raise issues and concerns on 20 January 2020. There were 42 responses to the consultation of which 40 were in favour of the proposals. A summary of the responses is attached as appendix 1. There were no attendees at the drop-in event.

The consultation included a wide variety of stakeholders including:

- All parents/carers
- All schools in the Ashford Borough and Folkestone and Hythe District
- Elected Members
- Parish and Town Councils as applicable
- Local MPs
- Dioceses of Canterbury and Southwark
- The Clinical Commissioning Group

5.2 The responses to the public consultation were overwhelmingly in favour of the proposal. A summary of the responses received are contained in Appendix 1.

## **6. Views of the Local Members**

Goldwyn School has access to several sites across Ashford and to one site in Folkestone. Presently, these sites are used to accommodate pupils on roll at Goldwyn School, Goldwyn Plus or Goldwyn College. Therefore, the proposal impacts on the four divisions of Ashford Rural West, Ashford South, Ashford Central and Folkestone East. Each of the four Members have been informed of the proposal. Where comments have been received from Members they are included below.

*Ashford Rural West, Charlie Simkins: I am in support of the proposals.*

*Ashford Central, Paul Bartlett: I am happy to support this proposal to accommodate greater SEMH demand.*

## **7. View of the Area Education Officer, David Adams**

There are two parts to this consultation which need to be viewed in isolation: the increase in the designated number at Key Stages 3/4 by 35 places and the change in age to add sixth form provision.

For a number of years, due to the increasing need for secondary SEMH places, Goldwyn School have taken in excess of their designated number. The position needs to be regularised to comply with Regulations.

The addition of a sixth form is a positive move forward as it will increase the opportunity for pupils with SEMH to attend an outstanding school.

## **8. The views of the Headteacher and Governing Body**

**Headteacher, Charlotte Lewis:**

The additional places required at Key Stage 3 and 4 reflects the demand for places that has resulted in the school operating over its designated numbers for the last 4 years. As the current staffing and physical infrastructure has accommodated these numbers, across its 3 sites for the last few years, there are no financial implications for the school or the Local Authority.

Currently Goldwyn school leavers transition to mainstream colleges, schools and training providers, with a very small minority applying to study motor vehicle mechanics or construction at Goldwyn Sixth Form College. A new sixth form will ensure that students with complex SEMH needs, which might include ASD, will receive a curriculum offer that includes programmes to support social and emotional development, promote learning independence and prepare them for inclusion within the wider world of mainstream college and employment.

We envisage that the sixth form will provide 3 options:

- A 1 year 'preparation for college' placement based within Goldwyn facilities, with the intention that students will transfer to a mainstream college to study level 2/3 qualification,
- A 2 year Level 2 /3 qualification or vocational course based within Goldwyn facilities, for pupils for whom transfer to a mainstream setting may not yet be appropriate due to their extreme vulnerabilities or level of SEMH need, or
- A 1 year 'supported pathway' for pupils who can access mainstream school or college provision with the SEMH specialist support that can be provided by Goldwyn staff.

Goldwyn has an excellent reputation for working with students with complex SEMH needs and recognises the increasing demand for post -16 provision within the County. By adopting this supportive transition pathway approach, we feel we can work successfully with students who need additional time beyond the age of 16; this will help them to develop the social and emotional skills they need and the level of qualifications they are capable of in order to 'catch up' with their mainstream peers and integrate more successfully.

### **Kate Wilson, Chair of Governors**

The Governing Body are fully supportive of both proposals. As an outstanding school we should be looking at how we can further support the needs of some of the most vulnerable pupils in society. Securing the additional places at Key Stages 3 and 4 and the addition of post-16 provision will enable us to do just that.

## **9. Equalities Impact Assessment**

An Equalities Impact Assessment was completed as part of the consultation process and found that the proposal will have an overall positive impact as it will increase the number of outstanding post-16 places available for pupils with an EHCP for SEMH needs. Pupils currently on roll at the School, will have the option of continuing their education in a familiar setting with the specialist support that they require. It will give external students with needs

similar to those on roll at Goldwyn a further option for post-16 education which may better suit their needs and improve their educational outcomes.

However, analysis shows that girls will be less likely to benefit from this proposal than boys. As of September 2019, there were 1,240 boys aged 11-19 with an EHCP for SEMH and 311 girls.

Although the future of Goldwyn College is not part of this proposal, concerns have been raised around how this proposal could impact on that provision. As a maintained sixth form Goldwyn School will only be able to support pupils up to 19 years of age (Year 14) whereas Goldwyn College could support up to 25 years of age. Should the proposal move forward and a decision is made by Trustees not to maintain Goldwyn College as a separate entity there could be a small negative impact on young people post 19 years of age which would need to be mitigated. It must be noted that in the past three years only 11 of the 130 pupils who have been on roll at Goldwyn College (8.5%) have been in Year 15 or above.

A copy of the complete assessment can be accessed here:

<https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/Goldwynschool/consultationHome>

## 10. Recommendation(s)

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## 11. Background Documents (plus links to document)

11.1 Increasing Opportunities, Improving Outcomes: Kent County Council's Strategic Statement 2015-2020

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-thecouncil/strategies-and-policies/corporate-policies/increasing-opportunitiesimproving-outcomes>

11.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision

[www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision](http://www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision)

## 12. Contact details

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