

EXECUTIVE DECISION

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

To: **Shellina Prendergast, Cabinet Member for Education and Skills**

Subject: **Proposal to make prescribed changes to St Nicholas (Community) Special School from September 2022**

- **Establish a satellite provision for 24 primary aged pupils at Parkside Primary School**
- **Increase the designated number from 285 to 310.**

Decision Number: **22/00044**

Key decision

- *It affects more than 2 Electoral Divisions*

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of report: Children's and Young People's Cabinet Committee - 10 May 2022

**Future Pathway of report: Cabinet Member Decision
Electoral Division:**

Canterbury City South – Mel Dawkins
Canterbury City North – Alister John Brady

Summary: This report sets out the proposal to establish a primary satellite provision of St Nicholas Special School at Parkside Primary school for 24 primary pupils for September 2022. St Nicholas (Community) Special School is unable to expand on its main school site and demand for PSCN Special school places in Canterbury district is increasing. The establishment of satellite provisions on mainstream education sites provides additional capacity whilst also enabling the school's expertise to be shared with the host school and provides St Nicholas students the opportunity to integrate, (where appropriate) with their mainstream peers.

Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills is asked to take the proposed decision to make prescribed changes to St Nicholas Special School and agree to:

Issue a public notice to:

- (i) Establish a satellite provision for 24 primary aged pupils at Parkside Primary School.
- (iii) Increase the designated number from 285 to 310

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

- (i) Establish a satellite provision for 24 primary aged pupils at Parkside Primary School.
- (iii) Increase the designated number from 285 to 310

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2022-2026 sets out KCC's commissioning intentions and identified the need for additional Special School capacity. The proposal to expand St Nicholas Special School by establishing a primary satellite provision at Parkside primary school will help to meet this need.
- 1.2 St Nicolas (Community) Special School is a day provision for boys and girls aged 4 to 19 with Profound, Severe and Complex Needs (PSCN). In addition to the main building at Holme Oak Close, the school also operates primary satellite provision at Chartham Primary School, Canterbury Primary School and St John's C.E. Primary School. St Nicholas School also has secondary satellite provisions at Spires Academy, Canterbury Academy, as well as with Canterbury College for post 16 students. These satellites provide students with opportunities for integration at a mainstream school or College. The new satellite will provide additional opportunities and choice for integration for St Nicholas pupils

2. The Proposal

- 2.1 This proposal 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 (2017 - 2022)'.
- 2.2 St Nicholas is unable to expand further on its current site and demand for PSCN Special School places in Canterbury District is increasing. The establishment of satellite provisions on mainstream education sites provides additional capacity whilst also enabling the school's expertise to be shared with the host school and provide St Nicholas students the opportunity to integrate (where appropriate) with mainstream peers. St Nicholas is proposing to establish a satellite provision for 24 primary aged pupils at Parkside Primary School.
- 2.3 As St Nicholas Special school cannot be expanded on their main school site, options to open a satellite on a primary school in Canterbury were investigated. A feasibility was commissioned to look at expanding the current satellite provision at St Johns CE Primary School, however the identified area was not appropriate or cost affective when compared to the feasibility for the provision on the Parkside Primary site. Parkside Primary School currently hosts the St Nicholas Nursery on site. The old swimming pool building area was identified as a location that could be redeveloped to create the new satellite provision. A new modular building will be provided on the site with facilities to include two classrooms, therapy room and additional small rooms. Pupils would have a class base where they will receive some individual and small group teaching, following the St Nicholas curriculum. The accommodation would also provide a base for Specialist Staff who will support the pupils when they are included in mainstream teaching groups with pupils and students of the same age. The

Headteachers at St Nicholas and Parkside will review who is most appropriate for admission to the satellite classes, subject to parental support.

- 2.4 The pupils attending the satellites would continue to have access to all the support they require and would be on the roll of St Nicholas Special School. Their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) would name St Nicholas as their school. Significant benefits have been identified as the proposal will develop and strengthen partnership between the provisions and enable staff skills and expertise to be developed through joint training, curriculum development and the sharing of good practice. Pupils will benefit from an inclusive school environment.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 The Education consultation was held by KCC, St Nicholas and Parkside Primary School from 29 February 2022 to 28 March 2022. The consultation documents were distributed to parents/carers, school staff and governors, County Councillors, Members of Parliament, the Diocesan Authorities, the relevant Clinical Commissioning Group, local libraries, Canterbury District Council, and others. The consultation documents were also available on the KCC consultation website where an on-line response form could be completed. The consultation documents were also available on the website of both schools. An opportunity was also provided to send in written responses via a response form to the school consultations email address.

The consultations closed on 28 March 2022 and a total 6 responses were received. All were supportive of the proposal. A summary of written responses is available at Appendix 1.

- 3.2 The Headteacher and Governing body of St Nicholas School and the Headteacher and Governing Body of Parkside Primary School are all in support of the proposals.
- 3.3 The Area Education Officer for East Kent fully supports the expansion of St Nicholas Special School through the establishment of this proposed satellite provision.
- 3.4 The Members for Canterbury City have been consulted on the proposal during the consultation period. The Member for Canterbury City South, Mel Dawkins completed the consultation response form and is fully supportive of the proposal commenting: "I have worked in SEN for many years and understand the importance of having a dedicated provision with staff who are skilled and experienced in providing specialist education and care. I recognise how constructive it is for some young people with SEN to be able to be part of the mainstream environment but also have the support in place nearby so that they thrive. It is also good for the whole school as everyone learns from each other and shares good practice."

4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 Parkside Primary School has identified the old swimming pool building area as a location that can be redeveloped to create the new satellite provision. A

feasibility was commissioned, and a new modular building will be provided on the site with facilities to include two classrooms, therapy room and additional small rooms. The capital cost for the project is £270,000 and will be funded through the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation 2021/2022.

- 4.2 Revenue funding will also be allocated to enable the school to resource each new learning space. At present this is at a value of £6,000 per classroom.

5. Legal implications

- 5.1 A service level agreement specifying the responsibilities of each party and any revenue costs to be covered will be put into place between St Nicholas Special School and Parkside Primary School.
- 5.2 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

6. Equalities implications

- 6.1 An Equality Impact Assessment has been produced and the assessment identified the following positive impacts:
- Ensure there are sufficient special school place available for children in Canterbury district.
 - Ensure that there is sufficient local provision through satellites at mainstream school sites.
 - Children with Complex needs and ASD will be able to attend satellite provision in mainstream primary and secondary schools.

No adverse impacts were identified during the assessment.

7. Other corporate implications

- 7.1 None identified.

8. Governance

- 8.1 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. The proposed decision will authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services in consultation with the General Counsel and Director of Education to enter into any necessary contracts/ agreements on behalf of the County Council. It will also authorise the Director of Infrastructure, Strategic and Corporate Services to be the nominated Authority Representative within the relevant agreements and to enter into variations as envisaged under the contracts.

9. Conclusions

- 9.1 The increasing demand for special school places in Canterbury district, particularly for pupils with complex learning difficulties including ASD, has led to St Nicholas taking additional children. St Nicholas is unable to expand on its

main school site in Canterbury. To meet the increasing demand the establishment of satellite provisions on mainstream school sites creates the additional required capacity, enables the school's expertise to be shared with the host provisions and also provides St Nicholas students with the opportunity to integrate, where appropriate, with their mainstream peers.

9. Recommendation(s):

The Cabinet Member for Education and Skills is asked to take the proposed decision to make prescribed changes to St Nicholas Special School and agree to:

Issue a public notice to:

- (i) Establish a satellite provision for 24 primary aged pupils at Parkside Primary School.
- (iii) Increase the designated number from 285 to 310

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10. Background Documents

10.1 Consultation documents

www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations

10.2 Kent Commissioning Plan for Education Provision

www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision

10.3 Setting the Course - Our Interim Strategic Plan

[Setting the Course - Our Interim Strategic Plan - Kent County Council](#)

11. Contact details

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