

Summary of the Meeting

Laleham Gap Governing Body is proposing to make prescribed alterations to Laleham Gap (Foundation) Special School, Ozengell Place, Ramsgate, CT12 6FH, CT12 6FH:

- remove the boarding provision at the school no later than July 2020;
- change the age range from 4-16 to 4-17 years by introducing a one-year post 16 provision;
- change the designated number from 170-178

**Consultation drop-in session for parents/carers, governors, and members of staff
Thursday 8 March 2018**

The drop in Session was facilitated by Les Milton, Headteacher; Marisa White, KCC Area Education Officer, Lorraine Medwin, KCC Area Schools Organisation Officer and Julie Ely, KCC Head of SEN.

The session was attended by parents, governors and staff.

Comments and Questions	Responses
The proposal for a 1-year Post 16 provision – would this be for existing children, children already attending the school?	Headteacher: Yes, the provision is for existing Children attending Laleham Gap.
What would be the criteria for access to the Post 16 Provision, would it only offer 8 places?	Headteacher: Work has to be done on the criteria, but it would be those pupils that required more life skills and independence support to be successful at college
Would children be excluded for transfer to this provision on the basis of geography?	Headteacher: No
Has Kent got residential provision elsewhere in Kent? (Parent of a Year 5 child – currently attending Wyvern) looking for a residential place for his child due to distance she would have to travel.	Head of SEN: Yes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broomhill Bank – 2 sites, one for high functioning; • Stone Bay – more complex needs, • Valence – more physical disability
Feel that there is a gap for high functioning children with ASD – fall in between categories. There is definitely a gap in south Kent – Ashford area.	
Concern raised over the distance some children have to travel and that this cuts them off from the after school social interaction opportunities that the school offers and that they would benefit from. Residential helps in these circumstances.	
It isn't just about travel times; some children benefit from the whole residential experience – the care levels and expertise of staff in the unit has a massive positive impact on the children.	
(Staff member) Feels quite conflicted – can see the children that may benefit from residential but, if numbers are very low – cannot provide that same experience and social experience with very low numbers. Loss of 6 had a material impact (then went	

Comments and Questions	Responses
down to 3 residents). The addition of one student had a noticeable positive benefit.	
Are there criteria that have to be met to secure a residential placement?	Head of SEN: Each child's needs are assessed, and decisions are based on their individual needs.
(Parent of a Year 9 student). There is a lot of anxiety amongst parents whose children are approaching Year 11 and will need to move on to Post 16 elsewhere. Her daughter is currently benefitting from a Pre-16 programme being delivered by staff that supports the development of her daughter's social and life skills. She can see children who would benefit from the Post 16 provision being proposed.	Headteacher: (Les Milton). The decline in numbers within the residential is indisputable and the need for the Post 16 is also evidenced and would benefit a larger number of children.
(Parent) Closure of the recently built residential provision isn't a good use of public money that was invested.	Headteacher: That investment would not be lost as the building would be utilised for the Post 16 provision and the staff skills would also be used to support this provision.
Will the Post 16 only happen if and when the residential provision closes?	Headteacher: Yes
What guarantee is there that the residential would not close earlier, if children left earlier and the numbers dropped to one or two for instance?	Headteacher: We cannot give a guarantee under these circumstances, but it would only happen after the parents and the young person /persons were consulted and their views would carry a lot of weight. There would also be the issue of what the offer to that young person/persons would look like.
We would really like both – the residential to continue and the Post 16 provision to be established	
How many families apply for a boarding place for their child and are rejected for various reasons?	Headteacher: A small number – do not have the numbers to hand, but it is small.
(Staff member) A decision has to either be made to fund to a higher minimum level to be able to keep the residential, or if that is not possible, the residential cannot be promoted because of the risk that it may close and disrupt the young people.	Head of SEN: (Julie Ely) Funding is set nationally and the LA does not have the flexibility to decide to increase funding or change the way it is allocated.
(Parent) will the school be limited to the 8 Post 16 places?	Headteacher: The building would suit curriculum delivery for 8 as the school would also use the building to deliver life skills training to Pre-16 students. We will be working with FE colleges and other Post 16 specialist providers, so not all of the Post 16 experience will be on site.
(Parent) I feel that it is important for the residential option to be available for all children, for example where a family's life circumstances change, and they need a residential place to ensure continuity and stability.	