

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

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

Subject: Proposal to increase the designated number of The Beacon Folkestone to 380 places and to open a satellite classroom at Castle Hill Community Primary School

Decision Number: 19/00025

Classification: Unrestricted

Past Pathway of Paper: None

Future Pathway of Paper: Cabinet Member decision

Electoral Divisions: Folkestone East, Folkestone West

Summary: This report sets out the results of the public consultation on the proposal to increase the designated number of The Beacon Folkestone to 380 places to open a satellite classroom at Castle Hill Community Primary School from September 2019.

Recommendation(s): The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education is asked to authorise the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education to issue Public Notice to increase the designated number of The Beacon Folkestone from 336 to 380 places.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Kent County Council (KCC) as the Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision in the County is responsible for ensuring there are sufficient high-quality school places for all learners, including pupils with Special Educational Needs.
- 1.2 The Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent (KCP) 2019-23, noted that the demand for specialist places will continue to increase in line with population growth, and set out our intentions to commission a further 1,351 places across the next three academic years as follows:

Special School Commissioning Intentions (included planned SRPs, expansions to special schools, new special schools and satellites).

by 2019-20	by 2020-21	by 2021-22
347 places	466 places	538 places

- 1.3 New SEN places will be commissioned in a variety of settings, including new special schools, satellites of special schools and specialist resourced provisions (SRPs) within mainstream schools. Commissioning specialist places in this way increases choice for families and supports KCC in assuring there are sufficient places in the right place at the right time.

2. Proposal

- 2.1 We are proposing to increase the designated number of The Beacon Folkestone to 380 places and to open a satellite classroom at Castle Hill Community Primary School.
- 2.2 The Beacon Folkestone is an outstanding school designated for 336 pupils with Profound, Severe and Complex Needs (PSCN). It currently has 369 pupils on roll. It is proposed that capacity is increased through the creation of a 10-place primary satellite based in Castle Hill Community Primary School. As the satellite will further increase the School's roll, the Local Authority will need to undertake the statutory process of increasing the designated number to 380. The satellite is expected to be opened from 1 September 2019.
- 2.3 Castle Hill Community Primary School has some spare accommodation in its hearing-impaired unit, which can be refurbished to meet the needs of the satellite. The costs of this, estimated to be about £30k, will be met from the SEN revenue budget.
- 2.4 This report sets out the results of a public consultation which took place between 01 February and 08 March 2019. A public meeting was held on 13 February 2019.

3. Consultation outcomes

- 3.1 A total of 32 responses were received to the consultation. 24 respondents were in favour of the proposal, 4 undecided and 4 against. A summary of the comments received can be found in Appendix 1, as can the minutes of the public meeting.

4. Views

- 4.1 The view of the Local Member Cllr Dick Pascoe, Folkestone East:

I am fully supportive of the proposal but want it noted that my son is an employee of The Beacon Folkestone.

- 4.2 The view of the Governing Bodies:

Lorraine Balcombe, Chair of Governors Castle Hill Community Primary School

At Castle Hill Community School, we have always prided ourselves on our inclusivity. Having had a successful hearing-impaired unit on site for many years and seeing how those pupils flourished by being part of the mainstream environment, we were delighted to be approached by The Beacon with the proposal of having a satellite class on our site. This proposal has been fully supported by the Governors, staff and parents.

Strong relationships have been built between both schools and having a satellite at Castle Hill will enable us to continue to develop this relationship, working collaboratively and homing in on The Beacon's specialist teaching with their own staff, and their staff with ours to support all pupils. It would make an ideal partnership within our community.

Julie Nixon, Chair of Governors, The Beacon Folkestone

On behalf of the governing body at The Beacon Folkestone I would like to fully support the proposal of a satellite provision at Castle Hill School. We believe that

this is an exciting opportunity to provide a new provision for children with SEN to access education in a mainstream setting. Through our STLS we have developed strong links with Castle Hill and know that we will be welcomed on their site and our pupils will have the opportunity to integrate in their community. Our staff will be able to share their expertise with Castle Hill and continue with our outward looking approach.

4.3 The views of the Headteachers

Mr Peter Talbot, Headteacher Castle Hill Community Primary School:

Castle Hill Community Primary School and The Beacon have worked closely together for many years. We are delighted that the proposed satellite will be at our school as it will continue to develop the strong bond between us. Inclusive education is at the heart of everything we do, and this is an excellent opportunity for both schools. Having members of the Beacon staff on site will give our staff access to high quality development and training, it will also provide many opportunities for children who attend the Beacon School to integrate in a mainstream environment where appropriate. This proposal is wholeheartedly supported by the staff and the governing body.

Mr Ady Young, Headteacher The Beacon Folkestone:

The proposed increase in designated numbers which include the satellite provision collaboration with Castle Hill is a superb opportunity for pupils in the Folkestone and Hythe district. The shared vision and values of Castle Hill and The Beacon mean that we have a strength across both schools to extend the inclusive offer for children with SEN and in particular those with EHC plans. Castle Hill has an incredibly supportive ethos and a history of ensuring pupils maximise their learning opportunities, hence we feel confident that this satellite will provide a platform of meaningful learning experiences that enhances pupils' skills and progress. The full range of shared resources and genuine desire to fully collaborate across both schools is an exciting prospect. The Governors and leadership of The Beacon fully support this proposal and the potential opportunities that it would bring to both communities.

4.4 The view of the Area Education Officer- David Adams

Since the opening of the new facilities at The Beacon Folkestone the number of pupils has grown from the designated number of 336 to the current position. The increase of the designated number to 380 will simply regularise the current position.

The addition of the satellite provision at Castle Hill Community Primary School is an excellent opportunity for two strong schools to formalise their relationship for the benefit of pupils in Folkestone.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 a. Capital – No additional Capital funding is required as there is sufficient capacity with the Beacon Folkestone to accommodate an increase in the designated number and Castle Hill Community Primary School has capacity to accommodate the satellite.

- b. Revenue – Special school places will be funded in line with the funding allocated to special schools through KCC’s funding formula.

£30,000 from the SEN revenue budget towards the refurbishment of rooms at Castle Hill in preparation for The Beacon Folkestone satellite.

- c. Human – Schools will appoint additional staff as required, as the school size increases and the need arises.

6. Vision and Priorities for Improvement

- 6.1 The proposals will help to secure our ambition that “Every child and young person should be able to go to a good or outstanding Early Years setting and school, have access to the best teaching, and benefit from schools and other providers working in partnership with each other to share the best practice as they continue to improve” as set out in Vision and Priorities for Improvement 2018-2021.

7. SEND Strategy 2017-19

- 7.1 This proposal supports three overarching aims of the SEND Strategy 2017-19:

- Improve the educational, health and emotional wellbeing outcomes for Kent’s children and young people with SEN and disabilities.
- Ensure Kent delivers the statutory changes (required by the Children and Families Act 2014).
- Address the gaps in provision for children and young people with SEN and disabilities, improve the quality of provision, develop the broadest range of providers, and encourage a mixed economy of provision.

8. Delegation to Officers

- 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.

9. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 9.1 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.

10. Recommendation(s)

The Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Education is asked to authorise the Corporate Director of Children, Young People and Education to issue Public Notice to increase the designated number of The Beacon Folkestone from 336 to 380 places.
--

11. Background Documents

- 11.1 Vision and Priorities for Improvement

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

11.2 'Working Together, Improving Outcomes' Kent's Strategy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities 2017-2019

https://www.kent.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0012/13323/Strategy-for-children-with-special-educational-needs-and-disabilities.pdf

11.3 Commissioning Plan for Education Provision in Kent 2019-23

<http://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/education-provision/education-provision-plan>

12. Contact details

Report Author:

David Adams

Area Education Officer – South Kent

03000 414989

david.adams@kent.gov.uk

Relevant Director:

Keith Abbott

Director of Education Planning and Access

03000 417008

keith.abbott@kent.gov.uk