

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION

Tuesday, 25 June 2024

Decision No: (CAB 24/25 43606)

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| DECISION-MAKER: | CABINET |
| PORTFOLIO AREA: | Cabinet Member for Children and Learning |
| SUBJECT: | St Mary's and Woodlands SEND resourced provision |
| AUTHOR: | Kirsty Relton |

THE DECISION

- (i) To approve the spend of £250,000 within the Children's & Learning capital programme to facilitate the opening of a SEND unit for children and Young people with SEMH needs on the site of Woodlands Community College. This unit will accommodate 8 spaces initially.
- (ii) To approve the opening of a SEND unit for children and young people with moderate learning difficulties and associated speech, language and communication needs. on the site of St Mary's Primary School. This provision is initially to support 8 KS 1 pupils.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The current position is that Southampton does not have a specialist school for girls with social, emotional & mental health (SEMH) needs in Southampton. These pupils are either currently attending mainstream secondary settings with bespoke support, accessing the Compass pupil referral unit or attending out of city placements at a high cost to the Local Authority. Southampton currently has a provision for boys with the same needs and this provision cannot be expanded to accommodate girls in its existing condition. It is considered that a fully contained unit on the site of a mainstream secondary school can provide an option for a cohort of girls to ensure they have the same opportunities as boys with similar needs.

For girls with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) and SEMH needs the pathway for specialist provision has been in placements outside the city and these come at a cost of a minimum £70,000 per year. The proposed provision is for 8 pupils to be filled over a two year period. Year 1 - 4 pupils and year 2 - 8 pupils. There is the potential for further growth to 12 pupils in the future.

Placements at Woodlands School will support a bridge for pupils to return to mainstream school if appropriate and will also allow girls the benefit of being educated in their local area. These placements will also lead to a reduction in permanent exclusions across the city.

There has been an increase in recent years of pupils with complex needs entering reception at primary school and as a result an increase in the pressure on special school placements. Over the last two years places at Springwell School have been increased to support this. Pupils with complex needs have been increasingly placed in our mainstream schools and schools have made accommodations to support this additional level of need. The SEND team have supported this via funded outreach packages. There are, however, some pupils that require something more bespoke and therefore the unit at St Mary's will allow for 8 pupils to be supported in a specialist way. This replicates the model at Mason Moor which opened in September 2023 to support 10 pupils with the same need. There are no set up costs for the unit as this can be offered from the schools existing building due to empty classrooms.

The lack of growth in these placements has led to increases in tribunals for Springwell over the last three years. It has also led to an increase in tribunals for settings in other LA's and therefore children being transported out of the city.

DETAILS OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

Do nothing. In relation to Woodlands, this will result in the LA continuing to incur high costs in relation to out of city placements and girls will not be able to access an appropriate suitable setting in the city. In relation to St Mary's, this will result in a continued failure to meet the needs of a set of pupils that currently cannot be placed due to special school capacities

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION

None

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE RECORD

We certify that the decision this document records was made in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 and is a true and accurate record of that decision.

Date: 25 June 2024

Decision Maker:
The Cabinet

Proper Officer:
Claire Heather

SCRUTINY

Note: This decision will come in to force at the expiry of 5 working days from the date of publication subject to any review under the Council's Scrutiny "Call-In" provisions.

Call-In Period expires on

Date of Call-in *(if applicable) (this suspends implementation)*

Call-in Procedure completed *(if applicable)*

Call-in heard by *(if applicable)*

Results of Call-in *(if applicable)*