

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET		
SUBJECT:	EXPANSION OF GREAT OAKS SCHOOL		
DATE OF DECISION:	17 JUNE 2014		
REPORT OF:	CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION AND CHANGE		
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
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STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY
None

BRIEF SUMMARY

The demand for places at Great Oaks Special School is greater than the number of places the school can offer in 2014/15. Following consultation by the school and the Local Authority, this paper is seeking approval to expand the school.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- (i) to note the outcome of statutory consultation as set out in this report;
- (ii) to authorise the increase in pupil numbers at Great Oaks School (Foundation Special School) from the 1 September 2014 by the addition of 17 places from 1 September 2014 and an additional 8 places from 1 September 2015; and
- (iii) to delegate authority to the People Director, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Education and Change, to do anything necessary to give effect to the recommendations in this report.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The number of students that require a place at Great Oaks is greater than the number of places that will be available in 2014/15. Great Oaks is the only school that can suitably support the needs of these students. The additional 17 places in 2014/15 and a further 8 in 2015/16 would allow the Local Authority to meet its statutory duty of providing a school place to all young people that require one.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

2. The Council could decide not to increase pupil numbers at the school but this would mean it wouldn't be able to offer a school place to all those who require one. The Local Authority would not meet the requirements of the Special Education Needs test or the duty to provide sufficient places suitable for the needs of children with identified Special Educational Needs (SEN) requirements.

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)

3. Four weeks of consultation on the proposal to expand the school ran from 1 May 2014 until 30 May 2014 following the publication of a statutory notice in the Daily Echo on 1 May 2014 and at the school's main entrances. Key stakeholders (headteachers, SCC education staff, local councillors, local MP's, trade union representatives and the Roman Catholic and Church of England Dioceses) were notified of the proposals via email. A webpage with full details of the proposal, including a copy of the formal statutory notice, was published on the SCC website on 1 May 2014. No responses to the consultation have been received.

4. SEN Improvement Test

When proposing any reorganisation of SEN provision, the Local Authority must demonstrate how the proposals are likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for children with special educational needs. To this end, the LA provide the following information to highlight details of the specific educational benefits that will flow from the proposals. These are in line with the eight criteria set out in the document, *Planning and Developing Special Educational Provision. A Guide for Local Authorities and Other Proposers*.

- a. The additional places will provide a greater number of children with access to the specialist education available at the school.
- b. The additional places will provide a greater number of children with access to the specialist staff, both education and other professionals, that work at the school.
- c. Additional accommodation at the Compass School Site (Green Lane, Millbrook) will be made available for Great Oaks for use by their post-16 students. This will free up space on the existing site.
- d. This proposal would result in additional places being available in the City, thus meeting the demands of those children with Special Educational Needs.

Local Authorities are also required to provide the following:

- i. All headteachers in the City were notified of the consultation via email.
- ii. The LA is committed to delivering a proposal to increase appropriate SEN provision in order to accommodate those children that require SEN support. These children have been assessed and it is clear that their needs can best be served at Great Oaks. The headteacher at Great Oaks has been heavily involved in the formation of this proposal and put forward the suggestion to use vacant space at the Compass School.
- iii. The current transport and admission arrangements for the children will continue to apply. Additional transport may be required for post-16 students to travel from the existing site in Vermont Close to the proposed site on Green Lane
- iv. The proposal will drive up education standards and attainment for children with SEN by enabling a greater number of students to access the educational support that they need. It will also allow a greater number of those students that have a preference to attend Great Oaks to do so.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

5. The proposed increase in place numbers at Great Oaks School has been assumed when setting the 2014/15 special schools budget, funded by the Dedicated Schools Grant.
6. The capital costs of accommodating the increase in pupil numbers at the school are estimated to be £120,000. This funding was added by Full Council to the Education Capital Programme on 4 June 2014.

Property/Other

7. The additional accommodation will be created by using vacant space at the Compass School site on Green Lane, Millbrook.
8. As a foundation (trust) school, the land/buildings are held on trust by the Upper Shirley Learning Community Trust. The proposals are being implemented in consultation and with the consent of the Trust in order to accommodate the pupil increase. Such co-operation and consent is required when increasing pupil numbers at a Foundation school.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

9. Local Authorities have a statutory duty under s.14 of the Education Act 1996 to secure sufficient high quality places for children and young people with SEN. Local Authorities must also ensure that there are sufficient schools in their area and promote diversity and parental preference.
10. Alterations, changes, creation or removal of SEN provision across the City is subject to the statutory processes contained in the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 as amended by the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Proposals for change are required to follow the processes set out in the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. Statutory Guidance on bringing forward proposals entitled "School Organisation-Maintained School. Guidance for Proposers and decision makers" applies, which requires publication of statutory notices followed by a prescribed representation period which must take part predominantly within school term time to meet the requirements of full, open, fair and accessible consultation with those most likely to be affected (pupils, parents and staff often being on vacation or otherwise unavailable during school holiday periods). Any representations made during this period must be considered by Cabinet who are responsible for determining whether or not to approve the proposals as advertised. Minor modifications and / or statutory conditions can be applied to proposals in limited prescribed circumstances but are not proposed in this case.

Other Legal Implications:

11. In bringing forward School Organisation proposals the Council must have regard to the need to consult the community and users, the statutory duty to improve standards and access to educational opportunities, the statutory special educational needs improvement test, observe the rules of natural justice, the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998, article 2 of the First

Protocol (right to education) and the Equalities Act 2010. The Council is satisfied the proposals in this report fully conform to the legislative framework and are necessary to meet a pressing social need in the local authority area.

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

12. This proposal is in line with Southampton’s School Organisation Plan and SEN Strategy.

KEY DECISION? Yes

WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	City wide (SEN pupils attend the school from across the City).
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices

1.	Copy of the statutory notice
2.	Equality Impact Assessment

Documents In Members’ Rooms

1.	None
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Equality Impact Assessment

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) to be carried out.	Yes – see Appendix 2
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Other Background Documents

Equality Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1. None	