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STATUTORY PROPOSAL FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATION TO A MAINSTREAM SCHOOL

Schools: **South Ascot Village Primary School**
All Soul's Road, Ascot, SL5 9EA

Local Authority: **The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead**

Proposal: **To open an SEN Unit for children with Education, Health and Care Plans from 1st January 2023.** This provision will be reserved for children with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder and associated needs.

Date of publication: 28th January 2022

1. Purpose of document

- 1.1 Where a local authority is proposing to make a change to a local school, it must publish a 'statutory proposal' outlining details of the planned change. This is in accordance with The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.
- 1.2 This document must include enough information to allow interested parties to make a decision on whether to support the proposed change, including a description of the alteration, evidence of demand, objectives, project costs and implementation dates.

2. School and Local Authority Details

The schools

- 2.1 [South Ascot Village Primary School](#) is a community school, located at All Soul's Road, Ascot, SL5 9EA. It currently serves children aged 3 to 11 years old (Nursery to Year 6). The school does not have a religious character.

The local authority

- 2.2 The local authority is The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, whose address is Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF.

3. Description of the proposal and evidence of demand

Description of the proposal

- 3.1 The proposal is that the school will have a new SEN Unit for children with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). This provision will be reserved for children with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and associated needs.
- 3.2 Children attending this SEN Unit will be able to spend more than 50% of their time in the unit at the school, but will also receive teaching in mainstream classes at the school. This is different to Resourced Provision, where pupils would expect to spend less of their time in the provision, and more in mainstream classes.

- 3.3 It is proposed that the SEN Unit will open on 1st January 2023. It will ultimately have ten places, but will initially open with a maximum of six. This will potentially increase to eight over the course of the academic year, and rise to ten in September 2024.
- 3.4 The SEN Unit will have its own accommodation at the school, most likely in the current nursery building. There is a separate proposal to close the nursery – if that proposal does not go ahead then new accommodation for the SEN Unit will need to be provided elsewhere on site. This could lead to a later opening date.

Evidence of demand

- 3.5 Although most children and young people with an EHCP can be taught in mainstream schools, some do require more specialist help. The Royal Borough already has a range of facilities for children with EHCPs, including two special schools and six schools with Resourced Provision, as set out in Table 1 below.

Table 2: Existing SEN provision in the Royal Borough

Provision	Type	SEN need	Ages	Places 2021/22	Places 2022/23
Charters School	Resourced Provision	Physical Disability	11-19	6	6
Dedworth Green First School and Dedworth Middle School	Resourced Provision	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	3-13	8	10
Forest Bridge School	School	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	4-16	96	96
Furze Platt Primary Federation	Resourced Provision	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	4-11	8	10
Furze Platt Senior School	Resourced Provision	Autistic Spectrum Disorder	11-19	17	17
Manor Green School	School	Multiple needs	2-19	300	300
Riverside Primary School	Resourced Provision	Speech/Language	3-11	13	13
Wessex Primary School	Resourced Provision	Hearing Impaired	3-11	13	9

- 3.6 The number of places shown in the last two columns of Table 1 show the numbers commissioned by the Royal Borough in the 2021/22 and 2022/23 academic years, and may change in subsequent years.
- 3.7 The range in types and severity of special educational needs means that the local authority needs to rely on educational provision in and out of borough, in the state sector and in independent providers. One specific gap previously identified by the borough, however, is provision for children of primary school age with Autistic Spectrum Disorder who could nevertheless, with support, attend a mainstream school.
- 3.8 This gap will be partially addressed by opening new Resourced Provision/SEN Units at schools in the borough, for children with EHCPs for ASD. The new provision will help:
- meet the needs of a growing population.
 - provide more provision for those children with an EHCP for ASD who would benefit from attending a mainstream school at a location closer to their home address, and:

- reduce the number of ASD children at Manor Green, freeing up places for the school's primary purpose, which is educating children and young people with more complex, profound multiple learning difficulties.

3.9 It is not proposed that any children with EHCPs will be removed from their existing provision, unless it is agreed at an Annual Review that a place in the new facility will better meet their needs.

4. Objectives of the proposal

4.1 The objective of the proposal is to provide more local provision for children with special educational needs, reducing the numbers who have to travel further afield for suitable provision.

4.2 The Royal Borough has already opened two new primary Resourced Provisions in the 2021/22 academic year (at the Dedworth Campus and at the Furze Platt Primary Federation) for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders.

4.3 The proposed new SEN Unit at South Ascot Village Primary School will further improve the offer, by widening geographical access, and providing a higher level of support than available at the Resourced Provisions.

4.4 One further facility could open in September 2023 at Wraysbury Primary School (in Wraysbury). If this also goes ahead, then there will be primary resource bases for these children across the whole borough.

4.5 The opening of the new SEN Unit should help raise standards for this cohort of children, as there will be suitable, local, facilities available to them. South Ascot Village Primary School has a 'Good' Ofsted grade. The new provision will help ensure that the pupils make expected progress based on their starting point, so that any gaps in attainment on entry to the school are narrowed by:

- educational support from appropriately qualified specialist staff.
- specialist assessments that identify the pupil's needs and any potential barriers to progress, allowing effective intervention strategies to be developed.
- ensuring that mainstream staff at the school receive the training and support required to enable them to meet the needs of pupils who have an ASD diagnosis.
- making all reasonable adjustments so that pupils are not put at a substantial disadvantage when accessing teaching, learning and wider school activities.
- involving families and carers in the decision making and education of their children.

4.6 Children will also benefit by not having to spend so long travelling to suitable provision in other local authority areas. The creation of these new facilities, together with their proposed geographical spread across the borough, will help improve parental choice.

4.7 Secondary school age children in the borough with these needs can attend the equivalent Resourced Provision at Furze Platt Senior School.

5. Effect on other educational institutions in the area

5.1 There are not expected to be any negative implications for other schools in the local authority area. The size of the new provision means that there will not be any significant movement out of any other institution.

- 5.2 Over time, it is expected that the wider school community will benefit as the SEN Unit develops an outreach programme, supporting other schools with pupils who have developing needs of a similar nature.

6. Project costs and long-term value for money

Capital costs

- 6.1 The proposed accommodation changes at the South Ascot Village Primary school will be funded using the government's £1.227m Special Provision Capital Fund. This capital has already funded the bases at Dedworth Campus and Furze Platt Primary Federation.

Impact on revenue funding for South Ascot Village Primary School

- 6.2 Schools with SEN Units receive additional revenue funding to reflect the higher costs of educating children and young people with EHCPs. The funding for each pupil (in a financial year) is comprised of:
- **Element 1.** This is the AWPU (Age Weighted Pupil Unit). All schools get funding for each pupil at the school as a part of the school's delegated funding. This is will be £3,401 for a primary school (including both infant and junior schools) in the 2022/23 financial year. Schools also receive other pupil led elements in the formula (e.g. funding for pupils with free school meals, deprivation, English as an additional language).
 - **Element 2.** £6,000 for each pupil in the Resourced Provision.
 - **Element 3.** Top-up funding for each individual pupil in the provision, which will vary, between £2k and £25k, based on their specific needs. The top-up funding is reviewed annually as part of the child's annual EHCP review.
- 6.3 If a SEN Unit has any unfilled places, then it receives £10,000 per unfilled place, instead of elements 1, 2 and 3. This helps ensure that the provision can continue running, even if it is not full.

Impact on the local authority's revenue funding

- 6.4 The additional revenue funding that South Ascot Village Primary School will get under elements 2 and 3 (set out above) will come from the local authority, via its High Needs Block funding.
- 6.5 Most, if not all, of the children attending the proposed SEN Unit will already be funded by, or be a future cost to, the High Needs Block. It is hoped that the Resourced Provision will help control costs by reducing the number of pupils who would otherwise attend more expensive placements (at Manor Green, Forest Bridge or at independent/out-borough schools). Providing places more locally may also help reduce home to school transport costs. There is then expected to be a small domino effect, as more places could then be available for local children at Manor Green in particular. Finally, there is also expected to be a small financial gain from reduced tribunal costs, as appropriate places in local mainstream schools are likely to be more in line with parental preference.

7. Implementation plan

- 7.1 Government statutory guidance¹ on making prescribed changes to mainstream schools such as the one proposed here sets out four stages for implementation:

- **Stage 1.** Publication of the proposal.

¹ Page 26, [Making significant changes \('prescribed alterations'\) to maintained schools](#). DfE, October 2018.

- **Stage 2.** 4 week representation period, also known as ‘formal consultation’ period.
- **Stage 3.** Decision (to be within four weeks of the end of Stage 2).
- **Stage 4.** Implementation.

- 7.2 The guidance also strongly recommends that there is public consultation prior to Stage 1 (often called ‘informal’ consultation).
- 7.3 Informal consultation on the proposals for new Resourced Provision and SEN Units in the borough was carried out by the local authority in 2020, starting on Thursday 4th June 2020 and finishing on Friday 17th June 2020.
- 7.4 400 responses were received, most via an online survey form. 94% were in favour of opening new resource bases. Excluding ‘Don’t know’, ‘No view’ and those not completing the question, 89% of respondents were in favour of opening a SEN Unit at the South Ascot Village Primary School.
- 7.5 Following the end of the consultation in July, the Royal Borough’s Cabinet met on 27th August 2020 to consider the proposals. Approval was given to proceed with either Resourced Provision or an SEN Unit at South Ascot Village Primary School. The Cabinet report, appendices and minutes can be found on the borough’s website [here](#).
- 7.6 The school and local authority are now working on a Service Level Agreement for the new unit, setting out the responsibilities of the schools and the local authority with regard to the new base. South Ascot Village Primary School and the local authority are also working on the details of the accommodation for the unit, which will be set out in due course in an agreed Memorandum of Understanding to be signed by all parties.
- 7.7 It is not expected that planning permission will be needed for the new accommodation. The remodelling of the accommodation is expected to start in Summer 2022, in time for the SEN Unit to open on 1st January 2023.

8. Procedure for responses

- 8.1 Responses to this consultation must be made within four weeks of the publication date of this proposal on Friday 28th January 2022. This means that all responses must arrive by **25th February 2022**.
- 8.2 You can respond by:
- Using the online response form [here](#).
 - Emailing us at schoolplaces@achievingforchildren.org.uk
 - Writing to us at **South Ascot Village Primary Consultation, School Places and Capital Team, Zone D, Town Hall, St Ives Road, Maidenhead, SL6 1RF.**
- 8.3 After the end of the representation period on 25th February 2022, the local authority will have up to two months to make a decision. If no decision is taken in that period, the proposal will need to be referred to the Schools Adjudicator.
- 8.4 The Royal Borough will, however, aim to make the decision by mid-March 2022. In considering the proposal, the borough will be able to:
- Reject the proposal.
 - Approve the proposal without modification.
 - Approve the proposal, but with modifications, having consulted with the governing body.

- Approve the proposal (with or without modification) subject to certain conditions being met.
- 8.5 As the new accommodation will almost certainly require planning permission any approval of the proposal will need to be made subject to planning permission being granted. This means that if planning permission is not obtained, the proposal will not be implemented.
- 8.6 Government guidance, which you can find online [here](#) (see pages 29 to 32), sets out the factors that the Royal Borough will need to take into account when considering the proposal.
- 8.7 Within a week of the decision being made, the Royal Borough will publish the decision and reasons for the decision on our website [here](#).
- 8.8 Following that, there is then a four week period in which the following parties can appeal against the decision:
- The Oxford (Church of England) Diocese.
 - The Portsmouth (Catholic) Diocese.
- 8.9 If an appeal is received then it must be referred to the Schools Adjudicator for consideration. There is no right of appeal against the School Adjudicator decision.