

APPENDIX B

MATTERS TO BE SPECIFIED IN SECTION 15 PROPOSALS TO DISCONTINUE A SCHOOL

Extract of Schedule 4 to The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended):

Contact details

1. The name of the LA or governing body publishing the proposals, and a contact address, and the name of the school it is proposed that should be discontinued.

Central Bedfordshire Council, Principal Assistant (School Places), Room 118, High Street North, Dunstable, Beds, LU6 1LF.

Hitchmead Foundation Special School, Hitchmead Road, Biggleswade, Beds, SG18 0NL.

Implementation

2. The date when it is planned that the proposals will be implemented, or, where the proposals are to be implemented in stages, information about each stage and the date on which each stage is planned to be implemented.

The proposed changes will be implemented in a single stage on 31st August 2010.

Consultation

3. A statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to the proposals were complied with.

As required by the regulations, all relevant parties were consulted on matters relating to the proposal and given the opportunity to respond to the proposals in the recommended timeframe. A copy of the consultation documents is attached at Appendix 1.

4. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including:
 - a) a list of persons and/or parties who were consulted;
 - b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
 - c) the views of the persons consulted;and
 - d) copies of all consultation documents and a statement of how these were made available.

The consultation was carried out between 14 September and 23 October 2009. The process included broad circulation of the consultation documents and the online consultation, two public meetings, meetings with staff and professional associations and a specially designed consultation with the pupils of both schools. A copy of the full consultation paper is enclosed with this information. Minutes of the public meetings cannot be provided as individuals can be identified from their comments. A summary of these responses can be found below.

128 responses to the consultation were received and a total of 81 people attended the public meetings, including the two Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors at each meeting. The Head Teachers and both governing bodies expressed support for the proposed merger. The following information shows the orientation of the 128 respondents:

Option A (merge the two schools) – 93 (73%)

Option B (closure of Hitchmead and relocation of pupils) – 1 (1%)

Option C (both schools remain as they are) – 17 (13%)

Option D (closure of both schools and the creation of a single school) – 6 (5%)

Option E (any other proposal that comes forward during period of consultation) – 11 (9%)

Respondents reasons for choosing specified options:

Option A

It was generally felt that this was the best solution for pupils at both schools and would provide the least disruption and better continuity for all pupils, including provision to 19 for Hitchmead pupils if they needed it. Access to more space/resources, including specialist staff and access to satellite provision in mainstream schools was identified as a benefit for all pupils. A number of people both at the meetings and in their responses urged the Council to ensure that the two schools be brought together on one site as soon as possible and that prompt action was taken to identify possible ways of achieving this. It was suggested that a virtual special school was created across the area with discrete units attached to mainstream schools overseen by one head teacher. The pupils who responded liked the idea of accessing resources at the other school.

Option B

1 respondent felt it would be difficult to combine pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) and Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) pupils, and a concern was raised that SLD pupils may lose their places in inclusion classes to MLD students. 1 pupil said that he didn't mind going to another school, but 3 expressed concern about what would happen if their school closed.

Option C

3 respondents felt that children with SLD need a substantially different education to those with MLD. Concerns were raised as to the process of getting a statement of Special educational Needs (SEN), although we have higher numbers than other Authorities, and some respondents felt that the Council should increase the admissions to Hitchmead or transfer some of the children from Sunnyside who are more able to Hitchmead. Some felt that the schools should remain as they are until a new school is built. A concern was raised as to how disruptive it is for children with SEN to go through any changes. It was suggested that the Council look at using resources from elsewhere in Central Bedfordshire to keep the schools as they are.

Option D

Of the 6 respondents who identified this as preferred option, 2 felt that the Council should create a new purpose built Area Special School with the right resources and environment.

Option E

The alternative options proposed include swapping sites, merging but onto one site in a new school which has access to medical professionals, increasing admissions to Hitchmead and extending their age range to 19, and sending children on the borderline of MLD/SLD at Sunnyside to Hitchmead. It should be noted that both sites have insufficient accommodation for Sunnyside pupils, and so this would not resolve their accommodation needs. Federation was also proposed, although prior to the consultation both schools identified that they did not want to pursue this option. Of the 6 pupils that responded to this option, a partial merger was suggested involving building an extension at Hitchmead to accommodate more Sunnyside students. It was also suggested that some of the Sunnyside students went to other special schools to ease their overcrowding problems.

Additional points raised

It was stressed that the children who attend both schools require consistency and that whatever decision is taken by the Council, any disruption to pupils, families and staff should be minimised, and action taken to ensure that any changes do not impact on the quality of education and provision.

The children's consultation was carried out by the Central Bedfordshire Children's Participation Development Officer and Bedford Creative Arts and involved 84 pupils across the two schools, 33 from Hitchmead and 51 from Sunnyside. The activities used enabled the pupils to take photos of each of the two schools so that they were later able to identify what facilities and resources they liked in the two schools, even if they did not know the buildings.

In total, 53 pupils were able to identify a preferred option from the options set out; 20 from Sunnyside and 33 from Hitchmead. Their responses were as follows:

Option A: 6

Option B: 1

Option C: 34

Option D: 6

Option E: 6

Objectives

5. The objectives of the proposal.

This proposal is consistent with one of the Council's key priorities for the period 2009-2011: Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people.

At its meeting on 23 June 2009, the Executive resolved to carry out a formal consultation on the options for the future of special schooling in the East of Central Bedfordshire. This is consistent with the proposed SEN/Inclusion Strategy which includes the development of area Special Schools across the Authority as an integral part of the vision for transforming learning. The objective of this proposal is to create a single school for this part of the Authority's area, through the linked proposals at Sunnyside Community Special School. The proposed merger would address the concern about the financial viability of Hitchmead and the availability of increased accommodation for Sunnyside pupils to enable their needs to be met locally as well as catering for further potential demand in the future. This proposal would secure efficient and effective delivery of special schooling in the East of Central Bedfordshire.

Standards and Diversity

6. A statement and supporting evidence indicating how the proposals will impact on the standards, diversity and quality of education in the area.

(8) A review of SEN was undertaken in 2008, which recommended a number

of actions that needed to be taken to improve provision for SEN across the county. The review endorsed the concept that an Area Special School could meet the needs of children requiring special schooling in the local area. The consultation undertaken as part of this proposal was initiated as a consequence of falling numbers at Hitchmead Special School for pupils aged 7-16 with MLD and growing numbers at Sunnyside Special School for pupils aged 3-19 with SLD and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). As indicated, numbers at Hitchmead make the school potentially unviable in terms of size and cost effectiveness. The small numbers make it very difficult to organise both the curriculum and appropriate learning opportunities for children in similar age groups. Sunnyside currently has more children on roll than the building is able to accommodate, with requests for placement increasing and this may result in children going out of county unnecessarily. The proposals will address both of these issues in order to help improve standards and to meet the changing needs across the area.

Provision for 16-19 year olds

7. Where the school proposed to be discontinued provides sixth form education, how the proposals will impact on:

- a) the educational or training achievements;
- b) participation in education or training; and
- c) the range of educational or training opportunities,

for 16-19 year olds in the area.

N/A

Need for places

8. A statement and supporting evidence about the need for places in the area including whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

There will be no displaced pupils as a result of the proposed merger between Hitchmead and Sunnyside as it will provide increased capacity for pupils of both schools across the two existing school sites.

9. Where the school has a religious character, a statement about the impact of the proposed closure on the balance of denominational provision in the area and the impact on parental choice.

N/A

Current School Information

10. Information as to the numbers, age range, sex and special educational needs of pupils (distinguishing between boarding and day pupils) for whom provision is made at the school.

The current number on roll at Hitchmead School (as at January 2010) is 42. The school provides SEN provision for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) aged 7-16 of both sexes. Boarding is not provided at the school.

Displaced Pupils

11. Details of the schools or FE colleges which pupils at the school for whom provision is to be discontinued will be offered places, including:
- a) any interim arrangements;
 - b) where the school included provision that is recognised by the LA as reserved for children with special educational needs, the alternative provision to be made for pupils in the school's reserved provision; and
 - c) in the case of special schools, alternative provision made by LAs other than the authority which maintains the school.

In practice and as previously mentioned, pupils will not be displaced as a result of the proposed merger with Sunnyside, since both existing school sites will continue to be used as a single "Area Special School", which will cater for pupils with both moderate and severe learning difficulties.

12. Details of any other measures proposed to be taken to increase the number of school or FE college places available in consequence of the proposed discontinuance.

The proposal is linked to the expansion of provision at Sunnyside Community Special School, which currently caters for pupils aged 3-19.

Impact on the Community

13. A statement and supporting evidence about the impact on the community and any measures proposed to mitigate any adverse impact.

None expected. Both schools are located in Biggleswade.

14. Details of extended services the school offered and what it is proposed for these services once the school has discontinued.

Any extended services would be continued by Sunnyside Community Special School.

Travel

15. Details of the length and journeys to alternative provision.

N/A. Both schools are located in Biggleswade.

16. The proposed arrangements for travel of displaced pupils to other schools including how they will help to work against increased car use.

N/A

Related Proposals

17. A statement as to whether in the opinion of the LA or governing body, the proposals are related to any other proposals which may have been, are, or are about to be published.

This proposal is linked to the proposal to make a prescribed alteration to Sunnyside Community Special School (expanding by enlargement).

Rural Primary Schools

18. Where proposals relate to a rural primary school designated as such by an order made for the purposes of section 15, a statement that the LA or the governing body (as the case may be) considered:

- a) the likely effect of discontinuance of the school on the local community;
- b) the availability, and likely cost to the LA, of transport to other schools;
- c) any increase in the use of motor vehicles which is likely to result from the discontinuance of the school, and the likely effects of any such increase; and
- d) any alternatives to the discontinuance of the school,

as required by section 15(4)

N/A

Maintained nursery schools

19. Where proposals relate to the discontinuance of a maintained nursery school, a statement setting out:

- a) the consideration that has been given to developing the school into a children's centre and the grounds for not doing so;
- b) the LA's assessment of the quality and quantity of alternative provision compared to the school proposed to be discontinued and the proposed arrangements to ensure the expertise and specialism continues to be available; and
- c) the accessibility and convenience of replacement provision for local parents.

N/A

Special educational provision

20. Where existing provision that is recognised by the LA as reserved for pupils with special educational needs is being discontinued, a statement as to how the LA or the governing body believes the proposal is likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of the educational provision for these children.

(10) It is proposed that merging Hitchmead with Sunnyside will provide improved continuity and stability for all pupils, including provision up to age 19 for Hitchmead pupils which the school does not cater for at present (at the time of consultation, Sunnyside had 27 post 16 pupils). Access to more space and resources, including specialist staff and access to satellite provision in mainstream schools have also been identified as additional benefits for all pupils.

At a time when it is difficult to recruit specialist staff to special schools, it would ensure that the expertise and experience of the current staff were retained to meet the needs of the provision. Staff have already been working together and have identified that many of their pupils have very similar needs.

APPENDIX B CONT.

PROPOSALS FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS OTHER THAN FOUNDATION PROPOSALS: Information to be included in a complete proposal

Extract of Part 1 of Schedule 3 and Part 1 of Schedule 5 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended):

In respect of a Governing Body Proposal: School and governing body's details

1. The name, address and category of the school for which the governing body are publishing the proposals.

N/A

In respect of an LEA Proposal: School and local education authority details

1. The name, address and category of the school .

School: Sunnyside Community Special School, The Baulk, Biggleswade, Beds, SG18 0PT.

LEA: Central Bedfordshire Council, Principal Assistant (School Places), Room 118, High Street North, Dunstable, Beds, LU6 1LF.

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

2. The date on which the proposals are planned to be implemented, and if they are to be implemented in stages, a description of what is planned for each stage, and the number of stages intended and the dates of each stage.

The proposed changes will be implemented in a single stage on 1st September 2010.

Objections and comments

3. A statement explaining the procedure for making representations, including —

- (a) the date prescribed in accordance with paragraph 29 of Schedule 3 (GB proposals)/Schedule 5 (LA proposals) of The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), by which objections or comments should be sent to the local education authority; and

- (b) the address of the authority to which objections or comments should be sent.

Within six weeks from the date of publication of this proposal (i.e. by 26th February 2010), any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Edwina Grant, Director of Children, Families & Learning, Central Bedfordshire Council, Room 118, High Street North, Dunstable, Beds, LU6 1LF.

Alteration description

4. A description of the proposed alteration and in the case of special school proposals, a description of the current special needs provision.

It is proposed that Sunnyside Community Special School will merge with Hitchmead Foundation Special School to create a single area Special School for pupils with complex educational needs aged 3-19 across the existing Sunnyside and Hitchmead school sites. Sunnyside currently caters for 100 pupils (as at January 2010) aged 3-19 with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties (SLD/PMLD). The merged school will therefore cater for pupils with moderate, severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties (MLD/SLD/PMLD).

School capacity

5.—(1) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within any of paragraphs 1 to 4, 8, 9 and 12-14 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/paragraphs 1-4, 7, 8, 18, 19 and 21 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), the proposals must also include —

- (a) details of the current capacity of the school and, where the proposals will alter the capacity of the school, the proposed capacity of the school after the alteration;

The current capacity of Sunnyside is 98 places. The combined capacity of the enlarged Sunnyside School will be 149 across the existing Sunnyside and Hitchmead sites.

- (b) details of the current number of pupils admitted to the school in each relevant age group, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of pupils to be admitted in each relevant age group in the first school year in which the proposals will have been implemented;

Admissions to both schools is via the SEN panel for both Sunnyside and Hitchmead. This will continue for the enlarged school.

- (c) where it is intended that proposals should be implemented in stages, the number of pupils to be admitted to the school in the first school year in which each stage will have been implemented;

N/A

- (d) where the number of pupils in any relevant age group is lower than the indicated admission number for that relevant age group a statement to this effect and details of the indicated admission number in question.

N/A

(2) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within any of paragraphs 1, 2, 9, 12 and 13 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals) /paragraphs 1, 2, 8, 18 and 19 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), a statement of the number of pupils at the school at the time of the publication of the proposals.

The current number on roll (as at January 2010) at Sunnyside is 100 pupils

Implementation

6. Where the proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary controlled school a statement as to whether the proposals are to be implemented by the local education authority or by the governing body, and, if the proposals are to be implemented by both, a statement as to the extent to which they are to be implemented by each body.

N/A

Additional Site

7.—(1) A statement as to whether any new or additional site will be required if proposals are implemented and if so the location of the site if the school is to occupy a split site.

It is intended that the merged school will continue to occupy both the existing Sunnyside and Hitchmead school buildings as a split site school.

(2) Where proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary school a statement as to who will provide any additional site required, together with details of the tenure (freehold or leasehold) on which the site of the school will be held, and if the site is to be held on a lease, details of the proposed lease.

N/A

Changes in boarding arrangements

8.—(1) Where the proposals are for the introduction or removal of boarding provision, or the alteration of existing boarding provision such as is mentioned in paragraph 8 or 21 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/7 or 14 of Schedule 4 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) —

- (a) the number of pupils for whom it is intended that boarding provision will be made if the proposals are approved;

N/A

- (b) the arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of children at the school;

N/A

- (c) the current number of pupils for whom boarding provision can be made and a description of the boarding provision; and

N/A

- (d) except where the proposals are to introduce boarding provision, a description of the existing boarding provision.

N/A

(2) Where the proposals are for the removal of boarding provisions or an alteration to reduce boarding provision such as is mentioned in paragraph 8 or 21 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/7 or 14 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended) —

- (a) the number of pupils for whom boarding provision will be removed if the proposals are approved; and

N/A

- (b) a statement as to the use to which the former boarding accommodation will be put if the proposals are approved.

N/A

Transfer to new site

9. Where the proposals are to transfer a school to a new site the following information—

- (a) the location of the proposed site (including details of whether the school is to occupy a single or split site), and including where appropriate the postal address;

Sunnyside will continue to occupy its current site but also the existing site of Hitchmead School, both of which are in Biggleswade.

- (b) the distance between the proposed and current site;

The existing Sunnyside site is approximately 0.5 miles from the current Hitchmead site.

- (c) the reason for the choice of proposed site;

N/A

- (d) the accessibility of the proposed site or sites;

It is recognised that there will be a need for some improvements to Hitchmead site to ensure that the school buildings are fully accessible and secure.

- (e) the proposed arrangements for transport of pupils to the school on its new site; and

Existing transport arrangements will continue.

- (f) a statement about other sustainable transport alternatives where pupils are not using transport provided, and how car use in the school area will be discouraged.

N/A

Objectives

10. The objectives of the proposals.

This proposal is consistent with one of the Council's key priorities for the period 2009-2011: Educating, protecting and providing opportunities for children and young people.

At its meeting on 23 June 2009, the Executive resolved to carry out a formal consultation on the options for the future of special schooling in the East of Central Bedfordshire. This is consistent with the proposed SEN/Inclusion Strategy which includes the development of area Special Schools across the Authority as an integral part of the vision for transforming learning. The objective of this proposal is to create a single school for this part of the Authority's area, through the linked proposals at Hitchmead Foundation Special School. The proposed merger would address the concern about the financial viability of Hitchmead and the availability of increased accommodation for Sunnyside pupils to enable their needs to be met locally as well as catering for further potential demand in the future. This proposal would secure efficient and effective delivery of special schooling in the East of Central Bedfordshire.

Consultation

11. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including—

- (a) a list of persons who were consulted;
- (b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
- (c) the views of the persons consulted;
- (d) a statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with; and
- (e) copies of all consultation documents and a statement on how these documents were made available.

As required by the regulations, all relevant parties were consulted on matters relating to the proposal and given the opportunity to respond to the proposals in the recommended timeframe. A copy of the consultation documents is attached at Appendix 1.

The consultation was carried out between 14 September and 23 October 2009. The process included broad circulation of the consultation documents and the online consultation, two public meetings, meetings with staff and professional associations and a specially designed consultation with the pupils of both schools. A copy of the full consultation paper is enclosed with this information. Minutes of the public meetings cannot be provided as individuals can be identified from their comments. A summary of these responses can be found below.

128 responses to the consultation were received and a total of 81 people attended the public meetings, including the two Head Teachers and Chairs of Governors at each meeting. The Head Teachers and both governing bodies expressed support for the proposed merger. The following information shows the orientation of the 128 respondents:

Option A (merge the two schools) – 93 (73%)

Option B (closure of Hitchmead and relocation of pupils) – 1 (1%)

Option C (both schools remain as they are) – 17 (13%)

Option D (closure of both schools and the creation of a single school) – 6 (5%)

Option E (any other proposal that comes forward during period of consultation) – 11 (9%)

(4) Respondents reasons for choosing specified options:

Option A

It was generally felt that this was the best solution for pupils at both schools and would provide the least disruption and better continuity for all pupils, including provision to 19 for Hitchmead pupils if they needed it. Access to more space/resources, including specialist staff and access to satellite provision in mainstream schools was identified as a benefit for all pupils. A number of people both at the meetings and in their responses urged the Council to ensure that the two schools be brought together on one site as soon as possible and that prompt action was taken to identify possible ways of achieving this. It was suggested that a virtual special school was created across the area with discrete units attached to mainstream schools overseen by one head teacher. The pupils who responded liked the idea of accessing resources at the other school.

Option B

1 respondent felt it would be difficult to combine pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) and Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) pupils, and a concern was raised that SLD pupils may lose their places in inclusion classes to MLD students. 1 pupil said that he didn't mind going to another school, but 3 expressed concern about what would happen if their school closed.

Option C

3 respondents felt that children with SLD need a substantially different education to those with MLD. Concerns were raised as to the process of getting a statement of Special educational Needs (SEN), although we have higher numbers than other Authorities, and some respondents felt that the Council should increase the admissions to Hitchmead or transfer some of the children from Sunnyside who are more able to Hitchmead. Some felt that the schools should remain as they are until a new school is built. A concern was raised as to how disruptive it is for children with SEN to go through any changes. It was suggested that the Council look at using resources from elsewhere in Central Bedfordshire to keep the schools as they are.

Option D

Of the 6 respondents who identified this as preferred option, 2 felt that the Council should create a new purpose built Area Special School with the right resources and environment.

Option E

The alternative options proposed include swapping sites, merging but onto one site in a new school which has access to medical professionals, increasing admissions to Hitchmead and extending their age range to 19, and sending children on the borderline of MLD/SLD at Sunnyside to Hitchmead. It should be noted that both sites have insufficient accommodation for Sunnyside pupils, and so this would not resolve their accommodation needs. Federation was also proposed, although prior to the consultation both schools identified that they did not want to pursue this option. Of the 6 pupils that responded to this option, a partial merger was suggested involving building an extension at Hitchmead to accommodate more Sunnyside students. It was also suggested that some of the Sunnyside students went to other special schools to ease their overcrowding problems.

Additional points raised

It was stressed that the children who attend both schools require consistency and that whatever decision is taken by the Council, any disruption to pupils, families and staff should be minimised, and action taken to ensure that any changes do not impact on the quality of education and provision.

The children's consultation was carried out by the Central Bedfordshire Children's Participation Development Officer and Bedford Creative Arts and involved 84 pupils across the two schools, 33 from Hitchmead and 51 from Sunnyside. The activities used enabled the pupils to take photos of each of the two schools so that they were later able to identify what facilities and resources they liked in the two schools, even if they did not know the buildings.

In total, 53 pupils were able to identify a preferred option from the options set out; 20 from Sunnyside and 33 from Hitchmead. Their responses were as follows:

Option A: 6

Option B: 1

Option C: 34

Option D: 6

Option E: 6

Project costs

12. A statement of the estimated total capital cost of the proposals and the breakdown of the costs that are to be met by the governing body, the local education authority, and any other party.

No major capital costs will be incurred.

13. A copy of confirmation from the Secretary of State, local education authority and the Learning and Skills Council for England (as the case may be) that funds will be made available (including costs to cover any necessary site purchase).

N/A

Age range

14. Where the proposals relate to a change in age range, the current age range for the school.

N/A

Early years provision

15. Where the proposals are to alter the lower age limit of a mainstream school so that it provides for pupils aged between 2 and 5—

- (a) details of the early years provision, including the number of full-time and part-time pupils, the number and length of sessions in each week, and the services for disabled children that will be offered;

N/A

- (b) how the school will integrate the early years provision with childcare services and how the proposals are consistent with the integration of early years provision for childcare;

N/A

- (c) evidence of parental demand for additional provision of early years provision;

N/A

(d) assessment of capacity, quality and sustainability of provision in schools and in establishments other than schools who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage within 3 miles of the school; and

N/A

(e) reasons why such schools and establishments who have spare capacity cannot make provision for any forecast increase in the number of such provision.

N/A

Changes to sixth form provision

16. (a) Where the proposals are to alter the upper age limit of the school so that the school provides sixth form education or additional sixth form education, a statement of how the proposals will—

- (i) improve the educational or training achievements;
- (ii) increase participation in education or training; and
- (iii) expand the range of educational or training opportunities for 16-19 year olds in the area;

N/A

(b) A statement as to how the new places will fit within the 16-19 organisation in an area;

N/A

(c) Evidence —

- (i) of the local collaboration in drawing up the proposals; and
- (ii) that the proposals are likely to lead to higher standards and better progression at the school;

N/A

(d) The proposed number of sixth form places to be provided.

N/A

17. Where the proposals are to alter the upper age limit of the school so that the school ceases to provide sixth form education, a statement of the effect on the supply of 16-19 places in the area.

N/A

Special educational needs

18. Where the proposals are to establish or change provision for special educational needs—

- (a) a description of the proposed types of learning difficulties in respect of which education will be provided and, where provision for special educational needs already exists, the current type of provision;

It is proposed that Sunnyside Community Special School will merge with Hitchmead Foundation Special School to create a single area Special School for pupils with complex educational needs aged 3-19 across the existing Sunnyside and Hitchmead school sites. Sunnyside currently caters for 100 pupils (as at January 2010) aged 3-19 with severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties (SLD/PMLD). The merged school will therefore cater for pupils with moderate, severe and profound and multiple learning difficulties (MLD/SLD/PMLD).

- (b) any additional specialist features will be provided;

N/A

- (c) the proposed numbers of pupils for which the provision is to be made;

The current capacity of Sunnyside is 98 places. The combined capacity of the enlarged Sunnyside School will be 149 across the existing Sunnyside and Hitchmead sites.

- (d) details of how the provision will be funded;

Provision will be funded through the Authority's normal formula funding arrangements.

- (e) a statement as to whether the education will be provided for children with special educational needs who are not registered pupils at the school to which the proposals relate;

The enlarged school will continue to provide outreach as is currently provided

by both schools.

- (f) a statement as to whether the expenses of the provision will be met from the school's delegated budget;

The expenses of the provision will be met from the school's delegated budget.

- (g) the location of the provision if it is not to be established on the existing site of the school;

It is intended that the merged school will continue to occupy both the existing Sunnyside and Hitchmead school buildings.

- (h) where the provision will replace existing educational provision for children with special educational needs, a statement as to how the local education authority believes that the new provision is likely to lead to improvement in the standard, quality and range of the educational provision for such children; and

It is proposed that merging Hitchmead with Sunnyside will provide improved continuity and stability for all pupils, including provision up to age 19 for Hitchmead pupils which the school does not cater for at present (at the time of consultation, Sunnyside had 27 post 16 pupils). Access to more space and resources, including specialist staff and access to satellite provision in mainstream schools have also been identified as additional benefits for all pupils.

At a time when it is difficult to recruit specialist staff to special schools, it would ensure that the expertise and experience of the current staff were retained to meet the needs of the provision. Staff have already been working together and have identified that many of their pupils have very similar needs.

- (i) the number of places reserved for children with special educational needs, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of such places.

All places at both Sunnyside and Hitchmead schools are reserved for pupils with special educational needs.

19. Where the proposals are to discontinue provision for special educational needs—

- (a) details of alternative provision for pupils for whom the provision is currently made;

N/A

- (b) details of the number of pupils for whom provision is made that is recognised by the local education authority as reserved for children with special educational needs during each of the 4 school years preceding the current school year;

N/A

- (c) details of provision made outside the area of the local education authority for pupils whose needs will not be able to be met in the area of the authority as a result of the discontinuance of the provision; and

N/A

- (d) a statement as to how the proposer believes that the proposals are likely to lead to improvement in the standard, quality and range of the educational provision for such children.

N/A

20. Where the proposals will lead to alternative provision for children with special educational needs, as a result of the establishment, alteration or discontinuance of existing provision, the specific educational benefits that will flow from the proposals in terms of—

- (a) improved access to education and associated services including the curriculum, wider school activities, facilities and equipment with reference to the local education authority's Accessibility Strategy;
- (b) improved access to specialist staff, both educational and other professionals, including any external support and outreach services;
- (c) improved access to suitable accommodation; and
- (d) improved supply of suitable places.

It is proposed that merging Hitchmead with Sunnyside will provide improved continuity and stability for all pupils, including provision up to age 19 for Hitchmead pupils which the school does not cater for at present (at the time of consultation, Sunnyside had 27 post 16 pupils). Access to more space and resources, including specialist staff and access to satellite provision in mainstream schools have also been identified as additional benefits for all pupils.

At a time when it is difficult to recruit specialist staff to special schools, it would ensure that the expertise and experience of the current staff were retained to meet the needs of the provision. Staff have already been working together and have identified that many of their pupils have very similar needs.

Sex of pupils

21. Where the proposals are to make an alteration to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of one sex only becomes an establishment which admits pupils of both sexes—

- (a) details of the likely effect which the alteration will have on the balance of the provision of single sex-education in the area;

N/A

- (b) evidence of local demand for single-sex education; and

N/A

- (c) details of any transitional period which the body making the proposals wishes specified in a transitional exemption order (within the meaning of section 27 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975).

N/A

22. Where the proposals are to make an alteration to a school to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of both sexes becomes an establishment which admits pupils of one sex only—

- (a) details of the likely effect which the alteration will have on the balance of the provision of single-sex education in the area; and

N/A

- (b) evidence of local demand for single-sex education.

N/A

Extended services

23. If the proposed alterations affect the provision of the school's extended services, details of the current extended services the school is offering and details of any proposed change as a result of the alterations.

No changes are proposed.

Need or demand for additional places

24. If the proposals involve adding places—

- (a) a statement and supporting evidence of the need or demand for the particular places in the area;

The proposal is linked to the separate proposal for the closure of Hitchmead Foundation Special School. Sunnyside will therefore be expanded to cater for pupils who would otherwise have attended Hitchmead.

- (b) where the school has a religious character, a statement and supporting evidence of the demand in the area for education in accordance with the tenets of the religion or religious denomination;

N/A

- (c) where the school adheres to a particular philosophy, evidence of the demand for education in accordance with the philosophy in question and any associated change to the admission arrangements for the school.

N/A

25. If the proposals involve removing places—

- (a) a statement and supporting evidence of the reasons for the removal, including an assessment of the impact on parental choice; and

N/A

- (b) a statement on the local capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.

N/A

Expansion of successful and popular schools

25A. (1) Proposals must include a statement of whether the proposer considers that the presumption for the expansion of successful and popular schools should apply, and where the governing body consider the presumption applies, evidence to support this.

(2) Sub-paragraph (1) applies to expansion proposals in respect of primary and secondary schools, (except for grammar schools), i.e. falling within:

- (a) (for proposals published by the governing body) paragraph 1 of Part 1 to Schedule 2 or paragraph 12 of Part 2 to Schedule 2;

(b) (for proposals published by the LA) paragraph 1 of Part 1 to Schedule 4 or 18 of Part 4 to Schedule 4

of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended).

N/A
