



## **Consultation about the Re-location and Expansion of Lisburne School**

### **The Proposal**

The Council is proposing to expand and re-locate Lisburne School in order to improve learning opportunities and the quality of the School's facilities as well as provide additional places for the growing number of children who need them. The specific proposal is to:

- Re-locate the School from Half Moon Lane to a larger, new building on the former Offerton School site from September 2021;
- Increase the number of places available at the School to 208 following the re-location.

The proposal is subject to consultation and final agreement following consideration of all responses.

If the proposal to re-locate the School is not approved, further expansion of the provision could not happen as there is not the physical space at the existing school site to accommodate additional numbers.

### **Background**

Local authorities are required to ensure sufficient school places are available, including specialist provision for those who need it. The Council are committed to providing the highest quality of education for Stockport's children in meeting this duty. We want to ensure that every child has the educational opportunity to reach their full potential in the best possible learning environments.

We also need to make sure we provide value for money by making best use of the funding available to us. To do this we need to assess demand and the long-term suitability of our school buildings and the way we spend money to meet more complex educational needs.

There are increasing numbers of children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) who require specialist places and Stockport has six special schools which cater for these needs. Increasing numbers of children with an Education, Health & Care Plan (EHCP) mean the majority of these schools are overfull and some places, including at Lisburne School, are provided in temporary buildings.

Due to the shortfall of places we currently spend a significant amount each year on placements outside the Council's own provision for pupils with higher levels of need. This is because we only have a certain number of school places which can cater for more complex needs. The number of pupils with these higher levels of need is also increasing.

In 2014 and 2015 additional modular classrooms were added to Lisburne School's site and in 2017 and 2018, additional places have been provided at sites some distance from the main school. This means that a number of children are unable to access the main facilities of the school they attend.

The current Lisburne School building in Offerton is too restricted for expansion and has a number of suitability issues for children with special needs. The Council has therefore considered options for the future of the school which will help more pupils benefit from the excellent education opportunities already available at Lisburne School.

## **Options Considered**

In April 2018 the Council's Cabinet agreed that a first phase of investment would focus on addressing capacity issues within the primary special sector in order to support children in their early phase of education. This is to be achieved by a proposal to build a larger replacement Lisburne School with space for 208 pupils.

### **Existing site:**

The option of the School remaining at its existing location is unviable for a number of reasons. The School does not have the space to accommodate the number of places currently required, or additional places in the future. This has been demonstrated by the satellite provision established at Hollywood Park Nursery School. In addition, the current building is currently not fully adapted for pupils with mobility difficulties.

Work to re-develop the building as fit for purpose could not be undertaken with the School in occupation. As well as being costly, alternative accommodation would have to be provided for pupils whilst the work was underway and this would be very disruptive to the School.

The site is not large enough to re-build the whole school as a larger building would need to be built whilst retaining the existing School during the construction period.

### **School re-location to other sites:**

The Council currently has no suitable alternative sites that could accommodate the school with all necessary facilities.

### **School re-location to the former Offerton site:**

The existing buildings on the former Offerton School site were considered for the previous move of Castle Hill High School. At the time it was recognised that the Vernon block was the most suitable building for re-use due to the significant condition issues with the other buildings on the site. Castle Hill High School now occupies the Vernon block and the other buildings have deteriorated further in that time.

## **Preferred Option**

After consideration, a new building on the site of the Woodbank building at the former Offerton School site is deemed to be the best proposal and this is now being explored with detailed feasibility work underway.

Any development of the site will be subject to planning permission being granted. Local residents will be further consulted by the Local Planning Authority as an additional process on the specific building and site proposals following submission of a planning application. The current consultation is about the overall proposed school location and expansion. Indicative drawings will be available to view at consultation drop-in sessions.

## Expansion

The current school building at Half Moon Lane was originally intended for approximately 60 pupils. Across the main school site and the satellite provision at Hollywood Park Nursery there are currently 108 pupils:

Year Group	6	5	4	3	2	1	R
Number of Pupils	12	14	12	23	16	14	17

Source: October 2018 School Census

The number across the school has grown significantly over the last few years and it is therefore proposed that the new building will accommodate 208 pupils. This will mean 4 classes in each of the 7 year groups.

## Benefits

### Improved Education Opportunities

Local authorities are encouraged to offer support that can respond to the special educational needs of individual pupils and parental preferences.

Lisburne School is an Outstanding community special school that provides successful education for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Multi-Sensory Impairment, Severe Learning Difficulty and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty. Demand for this type of school place has increased significantly therefore various arrangements have been needed to accommodate additional children in recent years. Expanding Lisburne School will give the opportunity for this Outstanding provision to a larger number of children in future.

There is no proposal to change the categories of registered provision at Lisburne School. The new facilities will be purpose-designed for the School.

Additional places at the school will mean that more pupils are able to benefit from these excellent educational opportunities. It is proposed to increase places at the school to 208, offering more opportunities to an increasing number of vulnerable pupils who need the specialist support which can be offered by the School. In addition, more places at the School will reduce the Council's reliance on placements out of Borough for pupils with special educational needs.

### Improved Accessibility

The School would be designed specifically to accommodate children with SEND rather than the existing building which has been adapted over time and is now stretched beyond its capacity with separate units across the site as well as additional units in other locations.

The proposed new building facilities would also be fully accessible for people with disabilities with spaces which are designed to allow mobility for pupils with physical difficulties.

### Improved Buildings

The Lisburne building will require additional condition work in future but any investment in

this will not make the building fit for purpose for the specialist provision which is offered, including accessibility for people with disabilities.

Under the proposals, Lisburne pupils would attend an enhanced provision. Pupils and staff will benefit from significantly improved buildings and better facilities that are fit for purpose to deliver the best education possible.

The School would have a modernised building with lower running costs, meaning funding can be more appropriately directed towards teaching and learning.

## **Funding**

The Local Authority currently spends significant amounts of money placing and transporting pupils with complex needs to settings which are not maintained by the local authority. These placements are much more expensive than local authority provision as well as being further afield for the children who live in Stockport but may have to travel significant distances to available placements outside the Borough.

For some children the local authority simply cannot meet their needs and more complex settings are required, however there is a large number of children coming forward who need places of the type provided by our existing schools.

In carrying out the proposed improvement works, significant savings can be made against external placements and the associated travel costs. These savings can be used to pay for the new building.

It is proposed to use Prudential Borrowing, which is basically a loan, to pay for the initial works. Repayments for the loan will then be made over a number of years using the funding saved by not placing pupils in expensive external placements and also from reduced transport costs.

## **Phrases Used in this Document**

Cabinet	The main decision making body of the Council
Local Authority	The Council
Prudential Borrowing	A preferential loan scheme
Statutory	A legal requirement

## **The Formal Process (Four Stages)**

The expansion of a Local Authority maintained special school is subject to a statutory process, prescribed by the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations October 2018. The process consists of four stages which are summarised below.

Full guidance information is available by visiting the Department for Education website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>

Prior to the formal stages, the Council will undertake informal consultation from 11<sup>th</sup> March 2019 to 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2019. Consultation will take place with a wide range of people and all interested parties will be given the chance to express a view about the proposals.

A consultation leaflet and response form will be sent to affected parents/carers, school staff, governors, local residents, councillors, local MPs and other interested parties. The documents along with further background information are available on the Council's website along with contact details for sending in responses: [www.stockport.gov.uk/haveyoursay](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/haveyoursay)

Drop-in sessions will be hosted at Lisburne School and at Castle Hill High School for parents/carers and local residents to express their views face-to-face and discuss the proposals further. Dates of the sessions are listed later in this document.

Individual meetings for parents/carers of affected pupils with special educational needs can also be arranged as required.

Meetings will be held with school staff and governors as well as with pupils so that we can hear the views of the people who are most affected by the proposals.

### **Stage 1 - Publication**

After the informal consultation, the views expressed will be taken into account before a decision is made about whether to publish a legal notice for the proposal.

The responses received will be reviewed to form the basis of a report to the Council's Cabinet. The report will also include any requirements for transition arrangements which take account of the needs and concerns of parents/carers, school staff and pupils.

If the Cabinet agrees, we will publish a statutory notice and full statutory proposal for the change. These documents are a legal requirement to make the formal proposals.

Details about the role of the Cabinet can be obtained by visiting the Council's website: [www.stockport.gov.uk/democracy](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/democracy).

### **Stage 2 – Representation**

If the statutory notice is published, a four-week period will follow during which people can make comments or objections to the Council about the proposal.

### Stage 3 – Decision

After the representation period, all responses received will be reviewed so that a final decision can be made on whether or not to implement the proposals.

### Stage 4 – Implementation

If a decision is taken to implement the proposal, the Council will work with the School leaders and staff, parents and carers and pupils to ensure a smooth transition.

### How to Have Your Say

We are keen to hear your views about the proposals outlined. To make sure your comments are taken into account, you can:

- Complete and return a consultation response form
- Attend a drop-in session
- Email to: [schools.organisation@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:schools.organisation@stockport.gov.uk)
- Fill in an online form: visit [www.stockport.gov.uk/haveyoursay](http://www.stockport.gov.uk/haveyoursay)

**Please ensure you respond by Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2019**

### Consultation Drop-In Sessions

Date	Time	Venue
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	1.00pm to 2.30pm	Lisburne School, Offerton
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> March 2019	3.30pm to 7.00pm	Lisburne School, Offerton
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	3.30pm to 7.00pm	Castle Hill High School
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	3.30pm to 7.00pm	Castle Hill High School
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2019	9.30am to 11.00am	Lisburne School, Offerton

Additional sessions can be arranged if needed.

### Who Will Be Consulted

- Schools
- Pupils
- Staff
- Parents/Carers/Families
- Governors
- Families of Future Pupils
- Local Schools
- Stockport Residents
- Local Members of Parliament
- Local Councillors
- Contractors employed by the Schools
- Users of the School Premises
- Diocesan Authorities
- Others wishing to express a view
- Trade Unions

## Timeline Overview

Date	Key Process Actions
11 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	Informal Consultation Starts
3 <sup>rd</sup> May 2019	Consultation Ends
18 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	Consideration by Council's Cabinet Decision whether or not to publish statutory notices
3 <sup>rd</sup> July 2019	Stage 1: Publication (If approved)
30 <sup>th</sup> July 2019	Stage 2: Representation Period
September 2019	Stage 3: Final Decision
September 2021	Stage 4: Implementation (if approved)

If you would like this information in an alternative format, eg, large print, on audio tape, in Braille or on disk, please contact 0161 218 1074 or email [schools.organisation@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:schools.organisation@stockport.gov.uk) for a copy

An interpreting service is available, if you need help with this information.

Please telephone Stockport Interpreting Unit on 0161 477 9000. Email: [eds.admin@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:eds.admin@stockport.gov.uk)

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