



Consultation on Changes to SEN Resource Bases at Portsmouth Mainstream Schools

The Proposal

Portsmouth Local Authority (LA) is seeking to make the changes to specialist SEN resource bases that are operated by mainstream schools in Portsmouth from September 2015 to reflect changes in the demand for this provision.

The proposed changes are:-

- to close the Hearing Impaired resource unit at Penhale Infant school. The school would then be known as Penhale Infant school and Nursery
- to establish a Sensory Impairment Resource Base for pupils aged 4 to 7 at Northern Parade Infant School
- to change the resource base at Northern Parade Junior School to become a Sensory Impairment resource base for pupils aged 7 to 11

Current Provision

Portsmouth has a number of Resource Bases which are located within mainstream schools. These bases provide specialist teaching and support for pupils with specific special needs allowing them to be educated in a mainstream rather than a special school setting.

The Hearing Impaired Resource base at Penhale Infant School can provide support for up to four pupils aged between 4 and 7. Specialist teaching is provided in a resource base classroom and pupils admitted will demonstrate the potential to be included in the mainstream classroom supported by a teaching assistant, communicator or teacher advisor for at least part of the week and access the national curriculum with modification and/or differentiation as appropriate. So that pupils are totally integrated into every aspect of school life.

The resource base at Northern Parade Junior School presently accommodates a maximum of six pupils aged 7 to 11. It is operated on the same basis as the Penhale resource base with pupils spending at least part of the week in mainstream classes with appropriate support.

Description of alteration and evidence of demand

The demand for places at Hearing Impaired Resource Bases has reduced in recent years as mainstream schools have been able to adequately meet the needs of many pupils with hearing impairments. There is currently just one pupil attending the resource base at Penhale Infant School. The needs of this pupil can be adequately met in the mainstream school. It is therefore proposed that the Hearing Impaired Resource unit at Penhale Infant school will close.

In recent years there has been an increase in the number of children with a recognised visual impairment in Portsmouth. Whilst the needs of the majority of these pupils can be met in mainstream schools a number require more specialist provision. In order to meet the needs of primary aged sensory impaired pupils it is proposed to change the resource base at Northern Parade Junior School to cater for sensory impaired pupils aged between 7 and 11 and to establish an equivalent



resource base at Northern Parade Infant School for pupils aged between 4 and 7. The number of places in each unit will be determined on an annual basis taking account of need but the total number of places in the two units will not exceed 7.

Objectives

This proposal will ensure that the Council can meet the needs of all sensory impaired pupils in the City. The proposed changes reflect the changes in need that have been seen in Portsmouth in the last few years.

The changes will also help to ease the transition from infant to junior school for pupils accessing the resource base. Pupils who attend the resource base at Northern Parade Infant School will transfer to Northern Parade Junior School with the majority of their peers. The majority of pupils from Penhale Infant School transfer to their catchment junior school (Newbridge Junior) so in the past pupils transferring from infant to junior resource bases have not transferred to the same school to their peers.

Northern Parade Infant and Junior schools are federated sharing an Executive Headteacher and board of governors. The schools work closely together and share expertise. The resource bases could share a resource base classroom making better use of available building space.

The effect on other schools within the area

These proposals will not impact other Portsmouth schools

What happens next?

This statutory consultation will last for 4 weeks starting on 26th May 2015.

All responses to consultation will be reported to Portsmouth City Council's Cabinet Member for Children and Education, who will decide at a Council Committee meeting in July whether to proceed with the proposal.

If approved the changes will be implemented from 1st September 2015

Procedure for responses and comments

You can comment on these proposals

by email to: eandsc@portsmouthcc.gov.uk (please title your email Changes to Resource Bases)

in writing to: Janet Andrews
Education and Strategic Commissioning
Civic Offices
Guildhall Square
Portsmouth
PO1 2EA

All comments must be received by 12pm on 23rd June 2015