



Statutory proposal for the closure of Willows Centre for Children

Notice is given in accordance with The School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 that Portsmouth City Council intends to discontinue Willows Centre for Children (a community maintained special school for pupils aged 2 to 7 years) with effect from 01 September 2019.

This proposal is linked to a proposal published by Solent Academy Trust to make significant changes to Cliffdale Primary Academy namely

- to change the age range of Cliffdale Primary Academy to 2 to 11 years from September 2019
- to increase the total pupil numbers at Cliffdale Primary Academy to pupils from September 2019 by physical expansion on to the Willows Centre for Children site

The closure of Willows Centre for Children cannot be implemented if the changes to Cliffdale Primary Academy are not approved.

1. Contact details

Name and address of local authority publishing the proposal:

Portsmouth City Council, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth, PO1 2EA.

Name, address and category of school proposed to be discontinued:

Willows Centre for Children, Battenburg Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 0SN a community special school.

2. Implementation

Date on which it is proposed to close the school: midnight on 31st August 2019.

3. Reason for closure:

Portsmouth City Council, in partnership with the governing body of the School, is proposing that Willows Centre for Children closes with effect from 1st September 2019. This would allow Solent Academies Trust to expand Cliffdale Primary Academy onto the Willows site and use the existing accommodation to provide an extended provision equivalent to that provided by Willows.

This would protect the future provision of specialist early years education for pupils with SEN as a larger special school will be more resilient benefitting from economies of scale.

4. Pupil numbers and admissions

Willows Centre for Children currently has 42 planned places for Early Years and Key Stage 1 children with Special Educational Needs (aged 2 to 7 years of age).

5. Displaced pupils

This proposal is linked to a proposal to make changes to Cliffdale Primary Academy whereby Cliffdale would open a provision equivalent to the provision that is closing. Under these proposals the pupils of Willows Centre for Children would transfer to the expanded Cliffdale Primary Academy from 1st September 2019 and no pupils would be displaced.

6. Impact on the community

As the linked proposal would see a provision similar to that provided by the Willows Centre for Children continuing to operate from the school site there will be no impact on the community or the provision for the education of children with Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Portsmouth.

Many of the children that attend the Willows continue their education at Cliffdale when they leave the Willows. These pupils would benefit from not having to transition between schools.

7. Balance of denominational provision

Not applicable as the school does not have a religious character.

8. Rural primary schools

Not applicable as the school is not a rural primary school.

9. Maintained nursery schools

Not applicable as the school is a community special school.

10. Provision for 16-19 year olds

Not applicable as Willows Centre for Children is a school for primary aged pupils.

11. Special educational needs provision

Willows Centre for Children provides specialist education for early years and Key Stage 1 pupils aged 2 to 7 years and the neighbouring Cliffdale Primary Academy provides specialist education for (SEN) pupils aged 4 to 7 years. All pupils attending either Willows Centre for Children or Cliffdale Primary Academy have allocated a place by the Local Authority because of their Special Educational Needs (SEN).

The linked proposal would see the age range of Cliffdale Primary Academy change and the establishment of a 2 to 5 early year's provision. Additional Key Stage 1 places would also be provided to ensure that there is no reduction in the overall number of school places for pupils with SEN.

There are strong links between the two schools and a significant proportion of the children that have attended Willows Centre for Children in the past have continued their education at Cliffdale Primary Academy on leaving the school. These pupils would benefit from not having to transition between schools.

It is anticipated that the linked proposals would not adversely affect the provision for children with SEN in Portsmouth.

12. Travel

Cliffdale Primary Academy is located next door to Willows Centre for Children and under the linked proposals Cliffdale would expand on to the Willows site. There would therefore be no impact on the travel arrangements for pupils as they would continue to be education on the same site.

13. Representations

Anyone can make a representation in respect of the proposal to close Willows Centre for children until midnight on 15th February 2019 either

by post to : Janet Andrews, Education, Portsmouth City Council, Floor 2 Core 6, Civic Offices, Guildhall Square, Portsmouth, PO1 2EA

or

by email to: eandsc@portsmouthcc.gov.uk (please title your email Willows proposal)

This proposal is published on the Portsmouth City Council website

www.portsmouth.gov.uk (search School Information).
