

Formal consultation on a proposal to develop a special educational needs unit within Highfield Community Primary School



June 2021

This is the statutory proposal to make a prescribed alteration to a school in accordance with the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

We are seeking your views about a proposal to create a special educational needs (SEN) unit at Highfield Community Primary School. We want to assure you that we will give careful consideration to all your comments and opinions.

We have used the feedback that was given during the informal consultation, carried out between March and April, to develop our plans about the unit at Highfield Community Primary School. This formal consultation is a legal requirement that we need to do in order to make a change like this to the school.

What are we planning to do?

The proposal is to create an SEN unit for between eight and sixteen children with social communication and interaction needs in Highfield Community Primary School.

All of these children will have education, health and care plans. Some of these children will transfer from another school to Highfield Community Primary School so that they can attend the SEN unit.

Children attending the SEN unit will be taught in the unit for some of the time and at other times they will be taught with other children in existing classes.

All children already on roll at Highfield Community Primary School will still be able to attend the school and this change should not affect current admission criteria.

Why we are doing this?

- Special schools in Lancashire are largely full. In 2019 over 350 pupils with special educational needs attended private or independent schools. These school places usually cost more than places in Lancashire schools.

- To make sure that children in Lancashire have the same chance to attend an SEN unit as they do in other parts of the country. There are 300 fewer SEN unit places in Lancashire compared with other local authorities in England if they were the same size.
- To give families more choice about the type of school they would like their child to attend.
- To make sure there is specialist support and enough special school places for all children with special educational needs.
- Because there is evidence to show the specialist knowledge of staff working with children in an SEN unit leads to better quality of teaching for all pupils throughout the school.
- Because there is a particular need for SEN units in the Preston/Leyland area

How will we do this?

- By making sure the needs of every child in the school are met, whether or not they have special educational needs.
- By providing funding for any adaptations to the school building through the basic needs grant provided by the local authority.
- The school will receive additional funding from the high needs block to provide support for all pupils attending the unit, in line with the funding for places at specialist schools. This means the school should not be financially disadvantaged by the creation of the unit.

What have we done so far?

An informal consultation took place between 19th March 2021 and the 30th April when we asked for the views of families of children attending the school, school staff and governors and other members of the local community.

The written responses to the informal consultation were considered by the Executive Director for Education and Children's Services after the 30th April at the end of the consultation period.

There were 16 respondents to the informal consultation – 87% agreed with the proposal and 6% disagreed.

Most respondents who agreed expressed the view that Highfield Community Primary School would be beneficial as there is a shortage of specialist SEN places available and it would give parents more choice.

A very limited number of concerns were raised and these related to whether introducing the unit would lead to disruption for existing mainstream children.

What will happen next?

Responses received by 13th July 2021 will be used to provide information to Lancashire County Council's Cabinet to help councillors make a decision about whether to agree to the opening of an SEN unit at Highfield Community Primary School. The date of the cabinet meeting for this decision is 2nd September 2021. If cabinet agreement is given any building work that is needed will take place before December 2021 and the SEN unit will open on 4th January 2022.

Have your say

We would like your views on this proposal to create an SEN unit at Highfield Community Primary School. An event will be held by the school so that you can get more information and ask any questions you may have. Details about this will be available on the school website shortly and through the usual channels of communication used by the school.

For your information and in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government regulations, all written responses may be disclosed to the public and could also be published on our website as background papers to any reports.

We are sorry that, due to the volume of responses we receive when consulting on proposals for schools, we will not be able to acknowledge written responses nor enter into correspondence with interested parties during or after the consultation period. It is important to attend the relevant consultation event if you require clarification or more information on the proposal.

If you have any queries or require further information please contact the Inclusion Service by phone: 01772 531597 or email Inclusion.South@Lancashire.gov.uk.

This information can be found on this website www.lancashire.gov.uk/consultations and you can also fill in the questionnaire here too.

QUESTIONNAIRE

We are proposing to create an SEN unit which will be part of Highfield Community Primary School to support eight to sixteen children with social communication and interaction needs

How strongly do you agree or disagree with this proposal?

(Please tick one option only)

Strongly agree

Tend to agree

Neither agree nor disagree

Tend to disagree

Strongly disagree

Why do you say this?

Please write in the box below

About you

This section is about you. It's a little more personal, but is really useful to us. By answering these questions you will help us to understand the views of different groups of people. If there are any questions that you'd rather not answer, please tick 'prefer not to say', or leave it blank and go on to the next question.

Are you responding to this proposal as...?

Please select one option only

- Parent/carer of a pupil currently at Highfield Community Primary School
- Parent/carer of a future pupil at Highfield Community Primary School
- Member of staff at Highfield Community Primary School
- School governor at Highfield Community Primary School
- Member of the local community
- Other

If other please write in the box below

Are you...?

Please select one option only

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

What was your age on your last birthday?

Please select one option only

- Under 16
- 16-19
- 20-34

- 35-49
- 50-64
- 65+
- Prefer not to say

Which of the following best describes your ethnic background?

Please select one option only

- White
- Black or black British
- Asian or Asian British
- Mixed ethnic background
- Any other ethnic background
- Prefer not to say

Are you a deaf person or do you have a disability?

The Equality Act 2010 defines a disabled person as someone who has a physical or mental impairment, which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on his or her ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Please select as many as apply

- Yes, learning disability

- Yes, physical disability
- Yes, sensory disability
- Yes, mental health disability
- Yes, other disability
- No
- Prefer not to say

Are there any children or young people in your household with special educational needs?

Please select as many as apply

- No
- Yes, aged under 5
- Yes, aged 5-11
- Yes, aged 12-15
- Yes, aged 16-17
- Prefer not to say

What is your home postcode?

Please send your completed questionnaire to:

Business Intelligence,
Lancashire County Council,
PO Box 100,
County Hall,
Preston PR1 0LD

Thank you for completing the questionnaire