

School Organisation Consultation

Proposed Closure of the Centre for Hearing
Impaired Pupils at Bishop David Brown School

Introduction

1. This paper outlines the proposal to close the Centre for Pupils with Hearing Impairment at Bishop David Brown School with effect from 31 August 2015 due to a lack of demand for future places in the Centre.

Background

2. Bishop David Brown is a maintained 11-16 secondary School that hosts a Centre for pupils with Hearing Impairment offering up to 6 places for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs/Education Health and Care plans. The School receives enhanced funding to provide specialist resources and teaching expertise for pupils placed in the Centre, which enables them to access the mainstream curriculum.
3. The number of pupils placed at the unit has been declining over the past 3-4 years and there is now only one Year 11 pupil in the secondary unit. The Teacher in charge of the Unit left in July 2014 and temporary staffing arrangements have been put in place to meet the needs of the remaining pupil. An analysis of younger aged pupils with Hearing Impairment indicates no future demand for places at the Centre in the foreseeable future. Over recent years parental preference for school places for children with hearing impairment, has in this local area, been for local mainstream school with support from the peripatetic Teachers of the Deaf from Surrey's Physical and Sensory support team. Advances in technology such as digital hearing aids, cochlear implants and personal FM (radio aid) systems have all improved access for children with hearing impairment within the classroom.

Proposal

4. It is proposed that the Centre close from 31st August 2015. This means that there would be no further admissions to the Centre from this date and that the funding for the Centre would be withdrawn from the date of closure. The senior leadership team of the School are supportive of the proposals to close the Centre

Staffing implications

5. The Centre has a staffing establishment of one teacher and two teaching assistants. The teacher post is currently vacant and the School has confirmed that it proposes to absorb the teaching assistant posts elsewhere in the school from September 2015. There are no redundancy costs envisaged as a result of this proposal.

Pupil transition

6. If the proposals go ahead there will be no pupils remaining in the Centre at the time of its closure.

Finance and Resourcing

7. The Centre attracts place funding of £10,000 per place plus Band 5 top up funding for each pupil placed at the Centre under the Local Authority's SEN resource allocation model. Following closure the Local Authority will seek to redirect any net gain in

resources to support those areas of growth for specialist SEN provision, though this will be subject to DfE funding rules.

Consultation, approvals and overall timescales

8. The proposed change to the specialist centre at Bishop David Brown School is described as “prescribed alterations” and requires a period of consultation, the publication of statutory Notices and the agreement of Surrey County Council’s Cabinet Member if the proposal is to proceed.
9. An initial informal consultation has been carried out which concluded in December 2014. During this period the Local Authority shared its proposals, with the wider professional network (including headteachers and Chairs of Governors), with unions, Parent representatives, partners agencies and with the staff and parents of the school.
10. As a result of the informal consultation Surrey County Council is now carrying out a formal consultation commencing on 26th January for a 6 week period.
11. A consultation document is available and will be sent to all statutory consultees, who will also be invited to a public meeting at the school. This will be an opportunity for parents, pupils, staff and any other interested parties to comment on the proposals and raise any questions, concerns or expressions of support.

HAVE YOUR SAY

Surrey County Council and Bishop David Brown School would like to know what people in the area feel about the proposal. The consultation will open on **26th January 2015**.

You can respond by:

a) Accessing the consultation online on the 'Surrey Says' website:

www.surreysays.co.uk

and searching for the school's consultation (school name or post code), or by scrolling through the list of open consultations.

b) Completing the consultation response form that is available alongside this document. You can email the form or print it, complete it and send it back to the address below.

Julie Beckett (Bishop David Brown Hearing Impaired Centre)
Room 326
County Hall
Penrhyn Road
Kingston Upon Thames
KT1 2DJ

FAO Julie Beckett (Bishop David Brown Hearing Impaired Centre) to:
schoolorg@surreycc.gov.uk

All responses must be received by noon on 10th March 2015

What happens next?

We will hold a public meeting for parents and any other interested parties to discuss the proposals and to hear the views that people have. As a public meeting, anyone who wishes to may attend. This meeting will be on the **2nd February 2015 at 4pm** at Bishop David Brown School. Everyone is welcome to attend the meeting and there is no need to pre-register your attendance.

Please come and share your views. You do not have to have a child at the school to come to the meeting.

Following the meeting, we will be publishing a Statutory Notice at the school, in a local newspaper, at a local community facility and on the Surrey Says website stating our intention to close the centre. All representations received by the council during the formal consultation period to **10th March 2015** will be reviewed before a final decision is taken by the Cabinet Member for Children and Learning in April 2015.