



School Organisation Consultation

**Proposal to amalgamate Manor
Mead and Walton Leigh Schools**

May 2018



SURREY

Introduction

1. This paper outlines a proposal for the development of specialist schools for pupils with an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) and who have Severe Learning Development and Disabilities (SLDD) needs in the north east of Surrey. The process and timescales are outlined below for the amalgamation of Manor Mead and Walton Leigh schools.

Background

2. Surrey's special school provision for SLDD typically offer arrangements to pupils with a variety of needs, predominately with Severe Learning difficulties (SLD) and Profound Multiple Learning difficulties (PMLD) and some with Autism (ASD). These schools support pupils with a high complexity of development difficulties, both physical and cognitive.
3. Surrey County Council maintains a number of SLDD schools and placements across the county. These are:
 - The Ridgeway School (Academy) in Farnham – all age ranges
 - Portesbery School in Deepcut, Camberley – all age ranges
 - Pond Meadow School (Academy) in Guildford – all age ranges
 - Woodlands School in Leatherhead – all age ranges
 - Brooklands School in Reigate – nursery and primary
 - Clifton Hill School in Caterham – secondary and post 16
 - Manor Mead School in Shepperton – nursery and primary
 - Walton Leigh School in Walton on Thames – secondary and post 16
4. Manor Mead currently has 83 planned places and Walton Leigh has 69 planned places (152 in total). The occupancy rates over the past 3 years at both schools is high with total occupancy of 104% at Manor Mead and 97% at Walton Leigh. The schools often have many more applications than places available.
5. The last OSFTED inspection at Manor Mead took place in February 2015 and the outcome was 'Outstanding' in all areas. The last OFSTED inspection at Walton Leigh took place in February 2014 and the outcome was 'Outstanding' in all areas.
6. Manor Mead and Walton Leigh schools are joined together as a 'hard federation'. This means that they are under the leadership of one Executive Headteacher and one Governing Body but that each school is an individual organisation with a different Department for Education (DfE) registration and school budget. Generally pupils attending Manor Mead School transfer and attend Walton Leigh for their secondary and post 16 education.

Proposal

7. The school and Surrey County Council is proposing to amalgamate Manor Mead and Walton Leigh schools to become one school from January 2019, based over the two current sites.

8. It is proposed that there is an increase in the planned place number of 8 places. The current planned place number is 152 across both schools. The increase would provide planned place numbers of 160 at the amalgamated school. It is proposed that these places are available to appropriate pupils across all year groups, as applicants arise.

Rationale

9. Currently the two schools are located close to each other in the north east quadrant of Surrey and offer the same provision for pupils but at different age ranges. Generally most pupils move from Manor Mead to Walton Leigh at secondary phase transfer. A formal amalgamation would create one school which would mean that pupils do not have to go through a formal transfer process to move from one to the other, although parents could apply for an alternative secondary school provision if they wish. This would bring arrangements in line with most other SLDD schools in Surrey.
10. The schools are already linked by a hard federation with one Executive Headteacher and Governing body. Under the same leadership the schools are already closely aligned and formal amalgamation would continue to develop the arrangements with SLDD provision to continue to provide outstanding provision for pupils.
11. Currently Walton Leigh is the smallest SLDD school in Surrey. Creating one school with greater pupil numbers would develop a larger organisation, which is more financially sustainable in the longer term.

Pupil Placement

12. There will be no change to pupil placements. Appropriate pupils for the amalgamated school would be identified and placed using the Education Health Care Plan and subsequent review pathways. The document 'SEND admissions processes for referrals for specialist placement for school age children' describes how this process works and is available on the Surrey Local Offer website.
13. There is a significant benefit for pupils at the point of secondary age transfer. There will remain the requirement for ongoing discussion at each pupil's annual review meeting as to the continued suitability of the placement to meet the pupil's Special Educational Needs. However, these pupils will be able to move from year 6 to 7 without going through the formal transfer process, if the provision remains appropriate to meet their needs.

Staffing and HR

14. It is not proposed that there will be any changes to staffing as both sites will be in operation as they are at the current time. However, there may be opportunities for staff to work at the 'other' site should a vacancy arise and they wish to do so.
15. From January 2019 the role title will be Headteacher rather than Executive Headteacher although the role itself will remain unchanged.

Finance and Resourcing

16. Walton Leigh School is the smallest SLDD special school in Surrey. The proposed amalgamation with Manor Mead, together with an increase of 8 places, will create a larger organisation and would make a more sustainable special school.
17. Each additional place would be made up of £10,000 planned place funding and an additional sum of 'top up' funding for each pupil that is on the school roll. Therefore the additional places proposed will generate an extra £80,000 in planned place funding.
18. The amalgamated schools will operate on a 'split site school' basis and will mean that each site will continue to function largely as they have done to date.
19. Demand for specialist provision in the north east area for pupils with SLDD needs is high and other provision across the county is operating at high levels of occupancy. The provision of additional places in a specialist school will help support local families who otherwise have to travel further afield. This will enable a decrease in home to school travel times and cost. Where places are currently unavailable at Manor Mead and Walton Leigh, there is demand for placements in the NMI sector at high annual costs. Once a pupil has been placed in non-maintained and Independent (NMI) provision it is more likely they will remain there for at least the remainder of the key stage and on occasions until the end of their formal education.

Buildings, capital project and planning

20. There is a current 'bulge' of pupils attending Manor Mead School who are appropriate to move into Walton Leigh School. Consideration is being given to the accommodation and teaching spaces at Walton Leigh school to meet the needs of these pupils. The local authority and the school are working together to consider options available on the site to develop additional teaching spaces through a building programme (known as a capital project).
21. Any capital project is a major undertaking and would be led by a Project Manager who will establish design consultation opportunities, so as to ensure that the design meets the aspirations of the school community. If such a project proceeds it will be subject to planning and approval processes.

Consultations, approvals and overall timescales

22. It is proposed that the schools are amalgamated from 1 January 2019. The proposed changes are described as "prescribed alterations" and require a period of consultation, the publication of statutory Notices and the agreement of the Leader of Surrey County Council if the proposal is to proceed.
23. The first stage of consultation will be informal and is proposed to run until 12 noon on Wednesday 27 June 2018. During this period Surrey County Council will share its proposals with the wider professional network, schools including headteachers and chairs of governors, with unions, parent representatives, partner agencies and with the staff and parents of the schools subject to "prescribed alterations".

24. Following the informal consultation period and pending approval of the Cabinet Member for Educational Decisions, it is proposed to publish a Statutory Notice for a 4 week period. The publication of Notices is when the local authority formally states that it intends to implement the proposed changes. This will be the final opportunity for consultees to make their views known before a final decision is taken. Following the consultation periods officers will summarise the feedback and will report to The Leader of the Council in the Autumn Term 2018.

Have your say

Surrey County Council, Manor Mead and Walton Leigh Schools would like to know what people in the area feel about the proposal. The consultation will open on Wednesday 23 May 2018.

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 (Amalgamation of Manor Mead and Walton Leigh Schools)
Room 326
County Hall
Penrhyn Road
Kingston upon Thames, KT1 2DJ

FAO Julie Beckett (Amalgamation of Manor Mead and Walton Leigh Schools) to:
schoolorg@surreycc.gov.uk

All responses must be received by noon on Wednesday 27 June

What happens next?

We will hold public meetings for parents and any other interested parties at each school site to discuss the proposals and to hear the views that people have. As a public meeting, anyone who wishes to may attend. These meetings will be at:

1.30 pm on Thursday 14 June at Walton Leigh School

7.00 pm on Thursday 14 June at Manor Mead School

You are welcome to attend a meeting at either site, even if your child does not attend that school. Everyone is welcome to come to 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.

At the end of the consultation period, we will review all of the responses received, share these with the school community and publish them on the schools and Surrey Says websites.

Subject to the outcome of the consultation we plan to publish a Statutory Notice in the Autumn Term at the school, in a local newspaper and on the Surrey Says website stating our intention to amalgamate the schools. There will be a 4 week statutory consultation period for further representations to be received by the council.

All representations will be reviewed before a final decision is taken by The Leader of the Council in the Autumn Term 2018.