

School Organisation Consultation

**Proposal to amalgamate
The Willows with Wey Valley College**

**Jan
2016**



SURREY

Introduction

1. This paper outlines a proposal for the future of the Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) in the south west quadrant of Surrey. This report outlines the process and timescales for the amalgamation.

Background

2. The Willows is a PRU located in Guildford for pupils aged 5-11. The Willows was rated as Good by Ofsted during its last inspection in June 2015. The school is funded for 11 full time primary aged places. The Willows offers statutory provision for pupils who have been or are at risk of being permanently excluded from a school and who live in the South West area of Surrey.
3. Wey Valley College is a PRU located in Guildford for pupils aged 11-16. The last inspection visit by Ofsted in January 2015 rated the school as Good, with leadership and management rated as Outstanding. Wey Valley College offers statutory provision for secondary aged pupils who had been or are at risk of being permanently excluded from a school and who live in the south west area of Surrey.
4. The age range of The Willows was recently changed so that the provision now only caters for primary aged pupils with a statutory entitlement. During the consultation process in May 2015 it was stated that there would be a review of the organisational arrangements and the accommodation currently being used for the primary pupils to ensure the best use of space and resources in the south west quadrant for PRU provision.
5. The local authority has a duty to review the Short Stay provision it supports and to ensure the provision meets the statutory requirements relating to pupils that have been excluded from schools.

Proposal

6. The Local Authority is proposing to amalgamate The Willows Primary with Wey Valley College to become one PRU. The single establishment will be based across two sites: the primary provision at the Pewley Hill site and the secondary provision at the Southway site.

Rationale

7. Following the change to statutory provision, The Willows PRU provides places for 11 pupils. By amalgamating with a larger organisation, which also provides statutory provision, economies of scale can be gained.
8. The amalgamation of The Willows with Wey Valley College will form an all through 5 – 16 statutory PRU which replicates arrangements that exist in the

south east of the county. This will provide the schools in the south west area with a similar model of provision to support vulnerable pupils across all key stages who are at risk of permanent exclusion under the same leadership team.

9. Following the change of age range to The Willows, and in partnership with both The Willows and Wey Valley College's Management Committees, Wey Valley College is providing interim leadership to The Willows with an Executive Headteacher overseeing both schools. The opportunity for close working arrangements between the schools started during the autumn term 2015 and will be further developed during the interim leadership period. The interim arrangements have led to the consideration of a formal amalgamation between the schools.
10. The end of the financial year would provide a natural point for an amalgamation to occur.

Staffing and HR

11. No changes to staffing are anticipated. There are permanent staff who will continue to work with either the primary or secondary pupils, as they do currently. With the amalgamation there will be opportunities for staff to gain experience, where appropriate, at a different phase of education enhancing the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) offer at Wey Valley College.
12. All staff will have access to a wider range of CPD through internal whole school inset days, as well as shared expertise across PRUs in Surrey as Wey Valley College is in a federation with the PRU in the south east of the county.
13. With a larger school there are more opportunities for internal progression as a middle leadership level will be created to support the senior team.

Pupil admissions and transition

14. There will be no change to pupil admissions or transition arrangements. Pupils will continue to access the provision according to the processes that are currently in place. Wey Valley College and The Willows staff will continue to support the re-integration of pupils into mainstream schools at the appropriate time dependent on the individual pupil needs.

Finance and Resourcing

15. There will be economies of scale obtained with an amalgamation of the two schools as there will be greater flexibility with a larger budget to deploy staff and curriculum resources effectively. There will also be opportunities to refine costs in relation to teaching and support staff by, for example, one whole school business manager and developing a leadership team that can work across all key stages.

Consultations, approvals and overall timescales

16. It is proposed that the two PRUs are amalgamated from 1 April 2016. The proposed changes are described as “prescribed alterations” and require a period of consultation, the publication of Statutory Notices and the agreement of Surrey County Council’s Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement if the proposal is to proceed.
17. The first stage of consultation will be informal and is proposed to run until 12 noon on Tuesday 19 January 2016. During this period the Local Authority 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 school.
18. Following the informal consultation period it is proposed to publish a Statutory Notice for a four 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 Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement in March 2016.

Have your say

Surrey County Council, The Willows Primary and Wey Valley College would like to know what people in the area feel about the proposal. The consultation will open on Tuesday 5 January 2016.

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.

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FAO Julie Beckett (The Willows & Wey Valley College Amalgamation) to:
schoolorg@surreycc.gov.uk

All responses must be received by 12 noon on Tuesday 19 January 2016

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 **Wednesday 13 January at 4pm** at **Wey Valley College, Southway, Guildford**. 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.

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

On Tuesday 19 January 2016, we intend to publish a Statutory Notice at the school, in a local newspaper and on the Surrey Says website stating our intention to change the age range of the school. There will be a four week statutory consultation period for further representations to be received by the council. The formal consultation period is due to end on Wednesday 17 February 2016.

All representations will be reviewed before a final decision is taken by the Cabinet Member for Schools, Skills and Educational Achievement in March 2016.