

Cabinet Advisory Panel  
Cabinet

12 March 2012  
13 March 2012

**Name of Cabinet Member:**

Cabinet Member (Education) - Councillor Kelly

**Director Approving Submission of the report:**

Director of Children, Learning and Young People

**Ward(s) affected:**

All

**Title:**

Determination of the Statutory Notice for the Proposal to Change Corley Centre from Day/Residential Community Special School to Day Community Special School

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**Is this a key decision?**

Yes

The proposed change to Corley Centre from Day/Residential Community Special School to Day Community Special School affects more than 2 wards.

Cabinet Advisory Panel (School Organisation) is asked to consider the proposal and the representations received and make a recommendation to Cabinet on how the Statutory Notice should be determined.

Cabinet is asked to consider the proposal, the representations received and the recommendation from Cabinet Advisory Panel (School Organisation) and determine the Statutory Notice for the Proposal to Change Corley Centre from Day/Residential Community Special School to Day Community Special School

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**Executive Summary:**

Following the report to the Cabinet Members (Education) on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011, presenting the outcome of the public consultation on the proposal to change the designation of Corley Centre from Day/Residential Community Special School to Day Community Special School the Statutory Notice was published on 12<sup>th</sup> January 2012. During the 6 week representation period for the Statutory Notice 18 letters were received. Summaries of the objections and comments and responses to the issues raised in them can be found in section 3 of this report. The letters (anonymised) are shown in appendix 5. Cabinet Advisory Panel (School Organisation) is asked to consider the proposal and the representations received and make a recommendation to Cabinet on how the Statutory Notice should be determined. The recommendation from the Cabinet Advisory Panel (School Organisation) meeting is submitted to the Cabinet meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2012. Cabinet is asked to consider the proposal, the representations received and the recommendation from Cabinet Advisory Panel (School Organisation) and determine the Statutory Notice for the Proposal to Change Corley Centre from Day/Residential Community Special School to Day Community Special School

### **Recommendations:**

- (1) Cabinet Advisory Panel (School Organisation) is asked to consider the proposal to change the designation of Corley Centre from Day/Residential Community Special School to Day Community Special School and the representations received and make a recommendation to Cabinet on how the Statutory Notice should be determined.
- (2) Cabinet is asked to consider the proposal, the representations received and the recommendation from Cabinet Advisory Panel (School Organisation) and determine the Statutory Notice for the Proposal to Change Corley Centre from Day/Residential Community Special School to Day Community Special School

### **List of Appendices included:**

Appendix 1: Statutory Notice.

Appendix 2: Complete proposal

Appendix 3: Decision Makers Guidance

Appendix 4: SEN Improvement Test

Appendix 5: Letters of Representation

### **Other useful background papers:**

Making Changes to a Maintained Mainstream School  
A Guide for Local Authorities and Governing Bodies  
Revised 01/02/10

can be found at <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/schoolorg/index.cfm>

2007 No. 1289; The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 can be found at <http://www.legislation.gov.uk>

The Cabinet Member (Education) Report on the Outcome of the Consultation on the Proposal that Corley Centre Changes from Day and Residential Special School to Day Special School can be found at <http://cmis.coventry.gov.uk/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=20231>

The minutes for the Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on 20 December 2011 at <http://cmis.coventry.gov.uk/CMISWebPublic/Binary.ashx?Document=20705>

Equalities Impact Assessment

Available from Coventry City Council website in the Have Your Say section or follow the link [http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/200024/consultations/1124/consultation\\_on\\_the\\_proposed\\_change\\_of\\_corley\\_centre\\_from\\_dayresidential\\_special\\_school\\_to\\_day\\_special\\_school](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/200024/consultations/1124/consultation_on_the_proposed_change_of_corley_centre_from_dayresidential_special_school_to_day_special_school)

Ofsted report for Broad Park House, December 2011

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/inspection-reports/find-inspection-report/provider/CARE/SC033056>

### **Has it been or will it be considered by Scrutiny?**

No

**Has it been or will it be considered by any other Council Committee, Advisory Panel or other body?**

No, however the representations to the statutory notice will be considered by Cabinet Advisory Panel, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2012 and a recommendation made to Cabinet.

**Will this report go to Council?**

No



**Report title:****Determination of the Statutory Notice for the Proposal to Change Corley Centre from Day/Residential Community Special School to Day Community Special School****1. Context**

- 1.1 The Corley Centre is currently designated as a day and residential special school for secondary aged students with complex social and communication needs - principally for children and young people diagnosed as having Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).
- 1.2 The residential provision dates from the time when the school was an 'open air' school for children with respiratory health difficulties. The school then became a school for children with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and the size of the residential provision was reduced to its current 27 places. In September 2007 Corley Centre admitted its first intake of students with ASD. The development of Corley for students with ASD is part of the Local Authority's Inclusion and SEN Strategy to ensure a continuum of provision in the City and to reduce dependency on out of City places.
- 1.3 The number of students formally assessed as requiring residential provision has reduced because of the changed nature of the provision at the school and other developments of residential provision in the City. In 1999/2000 there were 12 residential students which reduced to zero by 2006/2007. This mirrors national trends. Under the UN Convention on the Rights of a Child, children have the right to live with their parents unless this is not in their best interest. The school has continued to receive the funding for 27 weekly boarding places. Some use of this funding has been made through some students staying overnight, usually one or two nights per week, to supplement their social and independence training.
- 1.4 A public consultation period ran for 7 weeks, from 3 October 2011 to 20 November 2011 inclusive, on a proposal to change the designation of the Corley Centre from a Day and Residential Secondary Special School to a Day Secondary Special School and the results reported to the Cabinet Member (Education). Following approval from the Cabinet Member (Education) the Statutory Notice for this proposal was published on the 12 January 2012.

**2. Options considered and recommended proposal**

- 2.1 Option 1 is to change the designation of Corley School from Day/Residential Special School to Day Special School. The reasons for option 1 are given below in 2.2 to 2.8.
- 2.2 None of the students at Corley Centre have a Statement of Special Educational Needs indicating a requirement for residential education. None are foreseen because the needs of the students attending the school have changed.
- 2.3 Short breaks are available through the Children's Disability Team (CDT) for children and young people with a disability and their families. The short breaks can include activity sessions of two or three hours and overnight stays where this is believed to be appropriate. Social and independence training is built into most of these activities. Students at Corley are potentially able to access residential provision through both CDT and residential provision at Corley. There is therefore an issue of equity and equality of opportunity because residential provision at Corley is not available to any other children and young people attending other special schools or with similar needs

across the City. Students at Corley don't have a higher level need for residential provision than other Coventry children and young people with SEN and disability.

- 2.4 Corley Centre already runs a programme of social and independence training as part of its core curriculum offer. If the proposal is approved then, as with all other Coventry special schools, Corley will continue to provide/enhance this curriculum area. Where the CDT was also involved in providing activities to further develop social and independence skills then these would complement that provision. The Local Authority also provides travel training support for all appropriate students attending the city's special schools.
- 2.5 The funding for Corley Centre's residential educational provision is based on 27 places and this amounted to approximately £384,000 in 2010/11. The actual use of the budget is no longer in line with its original purpose as it is now used to provide social and independence training through a combination of extended day provision as well as the overnight accommodation.
- 2.6 Changing the designation of the Corley Centre from day and residential to day secondary special school would release sufficient funding, to support the implementation of the SEN and Inclusion Strategy to the benefit of children and young people with special educational needs and Disability across the City.
- 2.7 Local authorities are required to ensure equity across their special educational provision. Guidance from Government notes "Within the context of any review or reorganisation of SEN provision LAs should be endeavouring to ensure equity and fairness across the authority. LAs and other decision makers need to appreciate that making changes to historic patterns of provision can be difficult to achieve as they may lead to a perceived reduction in the range of type of provision in one school or locality whilst ideally contributing to a greater and more appropriate range of provision across the authority or region. It should also be recognised that maintaining unnecessary provision may lead to unreasonable public expenditure which does not represent value for money. Reorganisation can, of course, release funding which can be used to invest in more effective provision." (Planning and Developing Special Educational Provision: A Guide for Local Authorities and Other Proposers, DCSF, 2007).
- 2.8 There are clear equality of education and opportunity reasons for doing this and a strong value for money argument to support the case. Option 1 is the preferred option.
- 2.9 Option 2, the option of reducing, rather than removing, the capacity of the residential provision has been considered. This option is not considered viable because of the fixed costs of the residential provision that would still need to continue, significantly reducing the financial benefits. It also does not address the fundamental issue that the residential provision is not formally required for the students.

### **3. Results of consultation undertaken**

- 3.1 A public consultation period ran for 7 weeks, from 3 October 2011 to 20 November 2011 inclusive on a proposal to change the designation of the Corley Centre from a Day and Residential Secondary Special School to a Day Secondary Special School before the publication of the Statutory Notice. The results from this public consultation were set out in the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011 report to the Cabinet Member (Education).

- 3.2 The Report to the Cabinet Member (Education) Report on the Outcome of the Consultation on the Proposal that Corley Centre changes from Day and Residential Special School to Day Special School was also considered by Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> December 2011. The Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee concurred with the Cabinet Member (Education)'s decision to publish the Statutory Notice for the proposal.
- 3.3 The Statutory Notice for this proposal was published on the 12 January 2012 and the representation period ran for 6 weeks from this date. The method of publication set out in The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 was followed. Appendices 1 and 2 of this report provide a copy of the Statutory Notice and the Complete Proposal for the Statutory Notice.
- 3.4 The Statutory Notice was published in the Coventry Telegraph, displayed on the gate to Corley Centre, displayed at most Coventry libraries, displayed at Corley Village Hall and published on the Coventry City Council website.
- 3.5 Copies of the Statutory Notice and Complete Proposal were sent to the Department of Education (for the Secretary of State), the Governing Body of Corley Centre, the Primary Care Trust, the University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS trust, neighbouring Local Authorities, parents or carers of Corley Centre students and the staff at Corley Centre. Trades Unions, the Church of England Diocese and the Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham were sent a copy of the complete proposals. Head teachers of other Coventry schools were sent copies of the Statutory Notice.
- 3.6 During the 6 week representation period letters with comments and objections were received from 18 parties. 7 of the letters took the form of a standard letter. The comments/objections were from Corley Centre staff, parents or carers of Corley Centre students, trades unions and students at Corley Centre. The points raised in the letters are summarised and answered in section 3.7. The letters (anonymised) are shown in appendix 5
- 3.7 The comments and objections are grouped under 19 headings, which are given in sections 3.7.1 to 3.7.19 below, along with the comments/objections and the responses from the Local Authority. The comments/objections are shown in italics.
- 3.7.1 Comments/objections relating to the use of inaccurate information

*"Actual figures are shown below. Guidance regarding numbers of staff on duty is taken from National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools as inspected by Ofsted.*

*Accommodation is available for 4 evenings per week, term time only. The usual length of stay is one or two evenings. In special circumstances this may be altered. Examples of how many students use this valued resource are;*

<i>Extended Day</i>				<i>Residence</i>			
<i>September 2010</i>	<i>January 2011</i>	<i>April 2011</i>	<i>September 2011</i>	<i>September 2010</i>	<i>January 2011</i>	<i>April 2011</i>	<i>September 2011</i>
<i>11</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>18</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>22</i>	<i>24</i>

*"Any information we have had has been incorrect and this is detrimental to us as the figures/ beds etc..have been recorded as far lower than every one has been lead to believe and the cost far greater."*

*" I do not see how you come to the conclusion that 17 support and 77 do not and this equates somehow to 80% support the proposal and 87% do not. "*

*"The Local Authority have said that no one at Corley has MLD"*

*"Coventry Local Authority has approached Solihull and Warwickshire regarding the possibility of their purchasing residential places at Corley Centre and those neighbouring local authorities have apparently stated that they do not wish to do so. However, it appears that no work was evidenced about this possibility until several months after the consultation period had ended and until after the Statutory Notice had been issued."*

*"The Local Authority has not demonstrated how the local proposal is "consistent with the LA's Children and Young People's Plan"."*

*" The guidance requests the local authority to:*

*"a identify the details of the specific educational benefits that will flow from the proposals in terms of:*

- i. Improved access to education and associated services...wider school activities...*
- ii. Improved access to specialist staff...*
- iii. Improved access to suitable accommodation*
- iv. Improved the supply of suitable places'*

*The Local Authority has been unable to demonstrate these benefits of Corley Centre students."*

Inaccurate information was mentioned in 13 of the 18 letters.

The objective of the proposal is to change the designation of the Corley Centre from a Day and Residential Community Secondary Special School to a Day Community Secondary Special School and end the residential provision, as there are no students at Corley Centre who have a statement of SEN indicating a requirement for residential education and none foreseen

The residential education facility at Corley Centre is now solely used to supplement the social and independence training of a small number of Corley Centre day students. If the proposal is approved then Corley Centre will continue to provide social and independence training as part of the core and extended curriculum offer, but it will not involve overnight stays at Corley. If a student with ASD is assessed as requiring residential education, through evidence-based assessment at Statutory Assessment of SEN, or Annual Review and a Statement of SEN is produced, indicating a requirement for residential education, then this will be provided outside Coventry.

The high costs of the residential facility result in a disproportionate level of funding being directed towards this provision at a time when there are significant pressures in other areas of funding for children and young people with SEN and disability. We need to look at the needs of all Coventry's children and young people with special educational needs and disability.

The Complete Proposal, sent to the Department of Education and available to all from the Coventry City Council website stated:



"There have been no students at Corley Centre formally assessed, via the statutory assessment process, as requiring residential education since 2006/2007. No students have a Statement of SEN indicating a requirement for residential education. Corley Centre has used the residential facility to supplement the social and independence training of some of the day students.

The numbers of students staying overnight in January of each of the previous 4 school years is given below. Most of these students who stayed overnight did so for one night per week.

2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
29	26	17	19

The maximum numbers of students staying overnight at Corley Centre on any one night are given below for the school years 2007/08 – 2010/11.

2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
9	9	10	8

The maximum number that could have stayed in any one night was 17."

The information above, in the complete proposal, does not disagree with that sent in the objection. The information was provided to the Local Authority by Corley Centre.

The consultation information in the 1<sup>st</sup> December Cabinet Member (Education) report said

" Of those respondents representing bodies 80% supported the proposal. Of those responding as individuals 83% did not support the proposal. All 13 responding Coventry head teachers supported the proposal.42 of the 45 responding parents, carers, grandparents did not support the proposal."

This does not contradict that there were 100 respondents to the consultation survey with 6 undecided or giving a comment only, 17 supporting the proposal and 77 not supporting.

The designation of the school changed from Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) to complex social and communication difficulties including ASD from September 2006. From September 2011 there were no students with MLD aged 11 – 16 years at Corley, but some students with MLD did stay on for a post-16 course. In February 2012 there remained five students with MLD in year 12 and six in year 13. The six year 13 students are due to leave Corley in July 2012.

The Local Authority had discussions with officers in neighbouring Local Authorities prior to publication of the statutory notice. They had no objections to the proposal to re-designate Corley as a day special school.

An extract from the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2011 Cabinet Member (Education) Report  
 " 6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives

This proposal is based on a commitment to ensure that the special school provision for children and young people with SEN is provided and is available equitably across the city. This, following the implementation of the SEN and Inclusion Strategy, would make a valuable contribution particularly to the aim of ensuring that children and young people are safe, achieve and make a positive contribution."

The SEN Improvement Test, in appendix 4, addresses the issues raised concerning the benefits to children and young people with SEN and disability if this proposal is accepted.

3.7.2 Comments/objections relating to the financial impact on Corley Centre of the proposed withdrawal of funding for residential provision

*"Breakdown of the actual cost of the residential unit has not been provided. A budget breakdown received from the Director of Corley Centre clearly shows that the closure of the residential provision will not result in a saving of £383k. It actually says that at least 50% of funding is used to enhance day time provision at the school."*

*"The figures quoted give an unfair portrayal of the costs of residence alone and surely there needs to be more research into the impact on the school and other services of withdrawing the residential funding from the total Corley Centre funding"*

A financial breakdown was mentioned in 13 of the 18 letters.

The use of the funding for the residential provision within Corley Centre is determined by Corley Centre. The day and residential budgets have been interlinked, particularly because both budgets support costs associated with running the building. The impact of the withdrawal of funding for the residential provision has been fully investigated and the governing body has established an appropriate budget plan should the proposal be approved. Corley Centre received an increased budget for the day provision from April 2011 as part of the Authority's review of special school funding formula (See also section 5 and 6.2 of the report for financial implications).

3.7.3 Comments/objections relating to the consideration of options other than closure of the residential provision

*"Why has the Council not explored the idea of developing the service so it is accessible to all students who attend Corley and those students across the city with an ASD diagnosis?"*

*"The Council could develop this resource by making it available to other children in mainstream and specialist schools with ASD in Coventry, or the neighbouring Authorities."*

*"Why not open it up to other specialist schools in the area..?"*

*"At no point has a request been made to offer the service to other special needs students who attend these schools."*

*"Indeed, income from one child's placement from without Coventry would more than pay for the costs of this unit."*

*"other options to closure have not been considered"*

*"A request from a Warwickshire parent last year for residence was refused by the city council – the reason given was that they wanted all the residential places to be for Coventry students"*

Consideration of other options was mentioned in 12 of the 18 letters

There are children and young people in Coventry with a residential requirement. Their needs are complex and they are placed outside Coventry.

There have been no requests from neighbouring Local Authorities for residential educational provision for students with ASD. Neighbouring Local Authorities have no objections to the proposal. They have also indicated that they would not wish to purchase residential placements at Corley.

The school's view is that the fixed costs of the provision in terms of salaries are so high that it would not be viable to run the provision on a reduced basis.

There have been no requests from neighbouring Authorities for residential education provision for students with ASD. The charges which it would be possible to levy for such a service would not be sufficient to recoup the costs of the current service.

The residential facility is funded by Coventry City Council. There have been no requests from the Warwickshire Authority for residential education provision for students with ASD.

3.7.4 Comments/objections relating to making the cost of caring for one child outside Coventry

*"In the proposal if a child from Coventry requires residential provision then this will be provided outside Coventry but at what cost? A ball park figure for this would be £300k per annum which is more than the cost of the current facility at Corley. "*

The cost of caring for a child outside Coventry was mentioned in 1 of the 18 letters.

The children and young people in Coventry with a residential requirement have complex needs which would not be met by the residential provision at Corley Centre. The most expensive termly placement made by the Local Authority currently costs £184k per year.

3.7.5 Comments/objections relating to the Children's Disability Team (CDT) Short Breaks Service

*"Alternative provision within the City-Short Breaks Service- is based on certain criteria which a lot of the current children would not be able to access"*

*"The money saved from closing residence would apparently be used for the other special schools in the City, this is discrimination against the special needs children at Corley who have complex communication difficulties that cannot be addressed effectively without the educational programmes that the residential facility provides."*

*"The Short Breaks Service cannot hope to provide the same degree of social training."*

*" the number of beds available would suggest that they will not be able to accommodate the number of students who require this extra level of support. "*

*" many of our students also have additional medical needs requiring prescribed medication(s), for example, epilepsy so staff have to be vigilant and aware of each student's individual requirements."*

*" Many of our students have never spent any time away from their families, but parents get to know and trust the school and staff and are comfortable to let their child sleep at school"*

*"there is no guarantee as to how long funding will continue to be available to provide the current support and activities"*

*"The staff at Broadpark House admitted that they had little knowledge of Autistic children and their needs."*

*"The Local Authority has confirmed that the residential provision provided is different to that offered through CDT"*

Criticisms of the Children's Disability Team (CDT) Short Breaks Service were made in 16 of the 18 letters.

The residential education facility at Corley Centre is now solely used to supplement the social and independence training of some of the Corley Centre day students. If the proposal is approved then Corley Centre will continue to provide social and independence training as part of the core and extended curriculum offer, but it will not involve overnight stays at Corley. These arrangements will be similar to those provided at all the authority's special schools.

If the proposal is approved the Local Authority will work closely with parents and carers, Corley Centre and the Children's Disability Team (CDT) to ensure that the transition to the new provision is effected with minimal disruption to the lives of the young people and their families. Where the CDT was also involved in providing activities to further develop social and independence skills then these would complement provision at Corley Centre.

The overnight stays at Corley and those at CDT differ in that the primary purpose of the former is educational and the primary purpose of the latter is to provide respite, but both enable social and independence skills to be further developed.

Each young person at Corley Centre will have a transition plan to support a phased change to the new arrangements for social and independence training. Each plan will set out clear targets, timescales and specific activities spanning all sources of support including parents and carers, Corley Centre and the Short Breaks Service where appropriate. Short breaks provide further opportunities for social and independence training. They occur on a regular and planned basis. The plan will be reviewed on a termly basis for at least the first year of the new arrangements.

Any family is able to discuss with Corley Centre what they feel their unmet need is and request support via a CAF. Any family wishing to access the CDT Short Breaks service can contact Michelle Roberts or CDT direct for information.

With any CDT Short Breaks Service residential short break (and sometimes community short break) there is always a period of introduction to families and children and young people. This may involve workers visiting the child / young person at home, tea, visits with parents and siblings to the establishment where short breaks will take place, the young person being involved in activities, being left for short periods before overnights take place. Introductions are always done at a young persons pace.

The CDT Short Breaks Service have young people with ASD in short break respite units and they evidence that young people can adapt with careful introductions ( as

above ) and receive support from other units. Young people that have ASD and don't attend Corley are able to adapt.

All staff in residential or fostering overnight accommodation are trained in the appropriate administration of medication to the same standards of staff in the residential at Corley. All children and young people attending the universal short break provision have a short break passport that parents complete that fully inform staff of children and young people's health and medical requirements.

In the most recent Ofsted report for Broad Park House, completed 7<sup>th</sup> December 2011, they were judged to be good in all categories. The Ofsted categories were: overall effectiveness; outcomes for children and young people; quality of care; keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe; leadership and management, equality and diversity practice.

Extracts from the 2011 Ofsted report said

"Young people blossom with this sensitive, friendly support. One young person described how he liked going to the home, 'they help me do different activities. They help me with dependency skills i.e. washing, dressing, cooking, and going out and about. They listen and care about me.' Several children have received awards from the local authority for becoming more independent with practical and social skills because staff have nominated them for recognition of these achievements. The staff want to develop further their focus around transition in partnership with parents and carers to maximise successful progression to independence and adult life."

and also

"Staff support children through close co-operation with schools and because they are skilled in delivering first aid, medication and treatment."

There is no suggestion that funding to CDT would be cut, but in the current economic climate we would not be able to guarantee that the same level of funding would always be available. CDT will continue to assess needs as they currently do and allocate resources with a view to meeting those individual needs.

CDT regularly review their service provision as needs change and CDT believe their service provision should reflect this.

The students at Corley do not have special educational needs at a level which warrants the provision of residential education.

### 3.7.6 Comments/objections relating to the quality of the Corley Centre residential service

*"Coventry will lose a unique resource which has been very consistent in good results from Ofsted and previously Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI ) inspections."*

*"At no point has any officer from the authority visited the residential unit, not only to see the quality of the service it provides, but also to see the capacity of students who can safely occupy it."*

*"The last Ofsted report was indeed glowing,"*

Extracts from Ofsted reports concerning the residential facility were included in some of the letters. Comments on the quality of the Corley Centre residential service were made in 12 of the 18 letters.

Council officers have attended many meetings at Corley Centre with governors, staff, unions, parents and carers and students and taken note of their views.

The Local Authority is not questioning the quality of the service, however the residential education facility at Corley Centre is now solely used to supplement the social and independence training of a small number of the Corley Centre day students. It is a good facility, but the high costs result in a disproportionate level of funding being directed towards this provision at a time when there are significant pressures in other areas of funding for children and young people with SEN and disability. We need to look at the needs of all Coventry's children and young people with special educational needs and disability.

### 3.7.7 Comments/objections relating to the consideration of opposing views

*"the results from the first consultation stage are definitely not equal with views from those opposing and those in favour of the changes, those in favour have several paragraphs of explanation, those against only appear to warrant a few bullet points."*

*"the number of views have not been considered and the number of people who have supported us have not had their views taken into consideration in this process."*

Comments on consideration of opposing views were made in 4 of the 18 letters.

37 pages of the 72 page Cabinet Member (Education) report were dedicated to the minutes of meetings and the views of those against the proposal. The meeting minutes are also on the City Council website for all to view. Copies of all letters sent to the City Council during the representation period for the Statutory Notice for this proposal are available to view in Appendix 5 of this document.

Cabinet Advisory Panel (School Organisation) is asked to consider the proposal and the representations received and make a recommendation to Cabinet on how the Statutory Notice should be determined. Cabinet takes the final decision on the proposal after consideration of the proposal, the recommendation from Cabinet Advisory Panel and the representations received.

### 3.7.8 Comments/objections relating to answers to questions by Councillors

*"Many questions that we have passed to Councillors have not been adequately answered."*

Comments on inadequate answers to questions by Councillors were made in 1 of the 18 letters.

This is a matter for respondents to take up with individual Councillors.

### 3.7.9 Comments/responses relating to a potential conflict of interest

*"Councillor Lynette Kelly is a governor of another Coventry special school, please can you point out to me where she has declared this because we have been told the other special schools will see an increase in their budgets if Corley residence closes - is this a conflict of interest?"*

Comments on conflict of interest were made in 3 of the 18 letters.

The Cabinet Member (Education) took the decision to publish the Statutory Notice. This was not a decision on the proposal. Cabinet Advisory Panel (School Organisation) is asked to consider the proposal and the representations received and make a recommendation to Cabinet. The decision on the proposal is taken by Cabinet.

Scrutiny Co-ordination Committee was aware that the Cabinet Member (Education) is a governor for another Coventry special school and concurred with her decision to publish the Statutory Notice.

- 3.7.10 Comments/objections relating to the timing of the decision on whether or not to re-designate the Centre as a day special school

*"Since December 2011 Corley Centre has had an updated website, nowhere does it mention that Corley has a residential and extended day provision, despite the consultation and proposal period not being finished, it looks like the service has already been deleted from the school."*

*"It has been the plan to close Corley residence regardless of the arguments against this."*

Comments on the decision being predetermined were made in 8 of the 18 letters.

The Cabinet Advisory Panel (School Organisation) is asked to consider the proposal and the representations received and make a recommendation to Cabinet. The decision on the proposal is taken by Cabinet. The Head teacher and the Governing Body determine the content of the Corley Centre web site, not the Local Authority.

- 3.7.11 Comments/objections relating to the staffing level at Corley Centre Residential Facility

*"There has been no increase in staffing in the residential unit despite the increasing needs of the students who use the service; many of them require individual support to reach their independence targets."*

Comments on the staffing in the residential unit were made in 7 of the 18 letters.

There are no students at the Centre, and none foreseen, who have a statement of SEN indicating a requirement for residential education. The residential education facility at Corley Centre is now solely used to supplement the social and independence training of some of the Corley Centre day students. The school curriculum, the use of the funding for residential provision and the staffing levels at Corley Centre are determined by the school.

- 3.7.12 Comments/objections relating to the inclusion of residential education on the Statement of SEN

*"Places are given through the annual review process following request from parents / carers or the student to work on specific social and independence targets. Residential places used to be included on the SEN, are EP's told not to include residence on the statement anymore? If a parent requests that a statement is amended to include residence would the authority agree to this change?"*

*"according to the pupils statements, there is no need for any of them to have the residential care, the professionals at the school, who work with them every day, all year, identify a the need for social skills and independence training to be provided to further enhance their education and quality of life."*

*"The whole purpose of the students being placed at the Corley Centre is that they have Complex Social and communication difficulties and this is deemed the educational environment which can meet the needs of the young person. It was clearly stated in the school prospectus as an additional resource to help and develop social and independence skills to further benefit the young people"*

Comments on the inclusion of residence on the statement of SEN were made in 13 of the 18 letters.

Each child is assessed by an educational psychologist and other professionals as part of the statutory assessment process. The reports from all the assessing professionals are appended to the Statement of SEN. They are free to write and recommend what they consider professionally appropriate. If the assessment found that residential education is required then this would be written into the proposed statement. None of the students here have a statement saying that they have a requirement for residential education.

Where there is evidence of a significant change in the special educational needs of a student, usually gained through assessment by an educational psychologist or others, then the local authority would certainly consider changing the statement to include reference to a requirement for residential education.

Coventry does have a number of students who have residential education written into their Statement of SEN.

### 3.7.13 Comments/objections relating to the need for residential education

*"The whole purpose of the students being placed at the Corley Centre is that they have Complex Social and communication difficulties and this is deemed the educational environment which can meet the needs of the young person. It was clearly stated in the school prospectus as an additional resource to help and develop social and independence skills to further benefit the young people"*

*"these young people will become adults with autism and they will not just disappear. You as a Local Authority have a commitment to ALL disabled children, residence is the key to developing skills that you cannot develop during the school day, or just within the home environment. "*

*Aids and adaption or medications are not necessarily appropriate to meet the overall needs of our young people, but day to day real life experiences out in the real world are,"*

Comments on the need for residential education were made in 10 of the 18 letters.

Each child is assessed by an educational psychologist and other professionals as part of the statutory assessment process. None of the students here have a statement saying that they have a requirement for residential education.



The Local Authority is not questioning the quality of the service, however the residential education facility at Corley Centre is now solely used to supplement the social and independence training of a small number of the Corley Centre day students. If the proposal is approved then Corley Centre will continue to provide social and independence training as part of the core and extended curriculum offer, but it will not involve overnight stays at Corley. These arrangements will be similar to those provided at all the authority's special schools

The residential provision at Corley Centre is a good facility, but the high costs result in a disproportionate level of funding being directed towards this provision at a time when there are significant pressures in other areas of funding for children and young people with SEN and disability. We need to look at the needs of all Coventry's children and young people with special educational needs and disability.

#### 3.7.14 Comments/objections relating to parental choice

*"Parental Choice will be removed as many parents choose Corley because of its extended facilities"*

*"That is the main reason I decided to send my child to Corley, because of the provision, otherwise I would have fought to get a placement at an out of city, specialist residential provision."*

Comments on parental choice were made in 10 of the 18 letters.

All students attending Corley Centre were placed there as day students only.

The residential education facility at Corley Centre is now solely used to supplement the social and independence training of a small number of the Corley Centre day students. Social and independence training would continue at Corley Centre, but be provided in other ways, for example the extended school day.

The value of the residential provision is not denied, but it is a question of equity. The high costs of the residential facility result in a disproportionate level of funding being directed towards this provision at a time when there are significant pressures in other areas of funding for children and young people with SEN and disability.

#### 3.7.15 Comments/objections relating to equality of provision

*"the Council's approach appears to be that services for one group need to be destroyed to enable another's to be enhanced."*

*"Why are we closing the only specialist residential provision for children with ASD resulting in lower levels of provision rather than maintaining this excellent resource?"*

*"If Corley loses its residential provision and the money saved is distributed to the other special schools, the amount per school will not make anything like the impact that it is able to do at Corley, it appears that Corley's residential provision is being sacrificed to make the figures balance in the, new formula, special schools budget."*

*"Some special schools have other facilities which the Corley Centre do not ie swimming pools, yet these facilities are not being called into question."*

Comments on equality of provision were made in 10 of the 18 letters.

All students currently attending Corley Centre were placed there as day students only.

The residential education facility at Corley Centre is now solely used to supplement the social and independence training of a small number of the Corley Centre day students. Social and independence training would continue at Corley Centre, but be provided in other ways, for example the extended school day.

The value of the residential provision is not denied, but it is a question of equity. The high costs of the residential facility result in a disproportionate level of funding being directed towards this provision at a time when there are significant pressures in other areas of funding for children and young people with SEN and disability. If Corley Centre is re-designated as a day special school then the Local Authority would wish to use the funding released to support more equitable funding for children with SEN in special schools across the City.

3.7.16 Comments/objections relating to the Building Schools for the Future (BSF) Programme

*"as part of the BSF programmes Corley was to have a new building on the Cardinal Newman site. At the time the school governors would not go ahead with the proposals for the re-build until the residential provision was included in the plans. If it was thought that there would still be a need for residence in 2015, why is that not still relevant today?"*

Comments on BSF were made in 7 of the 18 letters.

BSF funding did not originally include provision for residential places at Corley Centre. Following representations by the Governing Body however, in January 2009 Partnership for Schools (PfS) agreed to fund 27 residential places. Given that the Corley Centre was proposed for co-location with Cardinal Newman, two options for residential provision were being actively considered when BSF was cancelled in July 2010: remodelling of existing buildings on the current Corley Centre site (1.5 miles from Cardinal Newman) or the remodelling of buildings on the Cardinal Newman site.

An outline planning application was made in December 2008, before funding was allocated by PfS for residential provision. The subsequent planning approval therefore does not include the residential facility.

Post BSF, the needs of the students attending Corley Centre have changed. None of the students here have a statement saying that they have a requirement for residential education. All students attending Corley Centre were placed there as day students only.

The residential education facility at Corley Centre is now solely used to supplement the social and independence training of a small number of the Corley Centre day students. Social and independence training would continue at Corley Centre, but be provided in other ways, for example the extended school day.

3.7.17 Comments/objections relating to social and independence training during the school day

*" We have been assured that students will continue to be provided with independence and social skills training as part of the regular school curriculum, and,*

*that it is timetabled in other special schools. No evidence has been provided to show how this works in practice. No evidence has been made available to show how the provision of social and independence training during the school day works in practice."*

Comments on the provision of social and independence training during the school day were made in 9 of the 18 letters.

Corley Centre provides significant social and independence training as part of its normal curriculum. Students spend 32 hours and 20 minutes in school each week, exclusive of any hours in extended day and residence. This time is shared between two separate but interlinked curricular:

- **Well-being Curriculum:** approximately 17 hours
- **Academic Curriculum:** approximately 15 hours

### **Well-being Curriculum**

#### **Tutorial 1½ hours**

The whole school tutorial programme sets out a programme of activities for the school year. Over the past 12 month period, these have included charity fund-raising activities, developing a sense of community and promoting a healthy lifestyle. The programme is mapped against the Every Child Matters outcomes, the Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) and Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL). There is a strong emphasis on reviewing individual targets in relation to behaviour and to a weekly Personal Learning and Thinking Skills target. Data is used with each student to identify progress and areas for concern and further development. Personal and social development targets set at Annual Review are also monitored through Tutorial with recording and reporting of progress at the end of every half term.

In the final Tutorial session of each week, students review progress towards their weekly target and set their target for the following week. Throughout the week, students can earn SPLATS (School Personal Learning and Thinking Skill merit point) in recognition of progress towards their target both in lessons and unstructured times. Targets are available in students' individual planners for parents to view, alongside SPLATS received. SPLATS have a monetary equivalent value and students identify items on which to spend them. This teaches money management skills including banking, saving and budgeting.

Students are encouraged each day to utilize their planners in order to aid their organisation and independence.

#### **Form Time 2 hours 20 minutes**

Students spend two additional 15 minute sessions each day with their Form Tutor and TA. This allows for social interaction and time for issues and concerns to be addressed with individuals and the group. Time is spent on developing a group identity and on supporting students in practising social skills and developing relationships. A major focus of these sessions is often developing tolerance and management of change.

#### **Personal, Social, Health Education and Citizenship: 2¼ hours**

A comprehensive programme following the National Curriculum and incorporating Autism Awareness; students work towards accreditation at Entry Level in KS3 and Level 1 or 2 in KS4. Facilities to aid the delivery of these lessons include a fully equipped kitchen, garden and greenhouse which support the Life Skills element of the curriculum.

**Enrichment:** 1½ hours

A programme of termly activities aimed at enabling students to develop life skills, find new interests and talents, establish friendships and mix with a range of students from Year 7 to Post 16 which provides opportunities for developing leadership skills. A selection of these activities takes place off site and students work towards accreditation in Youth Achievement Award. Activities include gardening, horse riding, photography, natural history, swimming and being a play leader at a local primary school.

**PE:** 2¼ hours

In addition to acquisition of skills and a healthy lifestyle, the focus is on teamwork, cooperation and understanding and managing competitive situations.

**Lunch break:** 2½ hours

This is structured in such a way as to enable students to develop social skills within the social setting of a mealtime. Over a period of 30 minutes, they are all expected to be able to select from a menu, choose a place to sit and are encouraged to interact appropriately with others, including organizing the clearing away after the meal. Table manners and personal hygiene are reinforced.

**Unstructured breaks:** 3¾ hours

One 15 minute and one 30 minute session each day. Students can join in with an organized activity or can have free time outside. KS4 students have access to a common room. All activities are supervised. Staffs' role is to encourage the development of social skills and appropriate interaction.

**Assemblies:** 1 hour

Assemblies cover a variety of issues and address students' spiritual, moral and cultural development. Students are involved in delivering assemblies. This time is also utilized to introduce any changes that may impact on the students' day or week.

Ofsted reports for other special schools are available to all on the Ofsted website. Below is a comment from the October 2010 Ofsted report for Baginton Fields Secondary Special School

"Students make tremendous gains in self-confidence and independence as a result of the school's high quality support and guidance. They cope very well with life outside school as a result. This is evident in the way they confidently attend mainstream school and colleges or work experience. A unified and comprehensive approach has been achieved in meeting students' medical, social and emotional needs through very strong partnerships with agencies and students' families."

3.7.18 Comments/objections relating to the SEN Improvement Test

*"It has not been demonstrated that Alternative provision (which has not been specified) will meet the SEN Improvement Test."*

*"I cannot see any evidence of compliance within the SEN improvement test,"*

Comments on the SEN Improvement Test were made in 3 of the 18 letters.

Details of the SEN Improvement Test can be found in Appendix 3 in the Decision Makers guidance – paragraph 4.55 on page 50 of this report refers. In undertaking this work the Local Authority has addressed the four key factors and 4 additional areas as required by the test. It is the Local Authority's view that there has been compliance with this test. In particular the Local Authority's proposal supports equity and fairness across the authority. The Government's guidance recognises "that maintaining unnecessary provision may lead to unreasonable public expenditure which does not represent value for money". The updated SEN Improvement Test is provided in Appendix 4 of this report.

### 3.7.19 Comments/objections relating to minutes of meetings

*" these minutes have been heavily edited and do not reflect properly the content of the meetings and are therefore misleading and inadequate."*

*Comments on the minutes were made in 2 of the 18 letters.*

The minutes do not reproduce the meetings word for word. Where points are raised only the issue raised is noted and not each spoken word. There has been no attempt to record other than a truthful account of meetings. Where the same point has been raised more than once, including those points read out from letters, then it will not be repeated each time it was raised.

There have been comments made about Local Authority responses in the minutes, but these are issues already dealt within the issues raised in section 3.8.

## 4. **Timetable for implementing this decision**

4.1 If Cabinet approves the proposal then Corley Centre will change from Day and Residential Secondary Special School to a Day Secondary Special School from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2012.

4.2 Each young person at Corley Centre will have a transition plan to support a phased change to the new arrangements for social and independence training. Each plan will set out clear targets, timescales and specific activities spanning all sources of support including parents and carers, Corley Centre and the Short Breaks Service where appropriate. The plan will be reviewed on a termly basis for at least the first year of the new arrangements.

## 5. **Comments from Director of Finance and Legal Services**

### 5.1 **Financial implications**

5.2 Corley Centre receives £384k revenue funding (stated at 2010/11 levels) for residential education. The use of this funding does not fully reflect its original purpose, as it is now used to provide a combination of extended day provision as well as some overnight accommodation.

5.3 As there have been no Corley Centre students formally assessed as requiring residential provision since 2006/2007 and none are anticipated in the future the resource allocated for residential education at Corley could be used to support children and young people with SEN and disability across the city especially at a time when there are significant pressures in other areas

- 5.4 Finance Officers are currently working with the school to ascertain the financial impact should the residential provision cease. Further work will need to be done to understand, quantify and confirm any residual costs which may remain on a short/medium term and on a long-term basis. Typically the residual costs will be in relation to premises maintenance, utilities and the temporary safeguarding of staffing extraneous allowances. If the Cabinet makes a decision that the designation of Corley Centre should be changed from day and residential special school to day special school then the Local Authority will fund residual costs relating to redeployment, salary protection and/or redundancy costs and necessary premises related costs.
- 5.5 In 2011/12 the City Council has begun to implement a new funding formula for the special school sector, which reflects the SEN and Inclusion Strategy, and the move to broad spectrum special school provision. Delays in the building programme as a result of the cancellation of BSF has meant that the City Council will not be able to action the strategy as originally intended and as a result some schools will not be able to move onto the new formula in the timescales planned. The new funding formula was implemented for 3 schools in April 2011 and they are Castle Wood, Corley and Woodfield Special School. As the result of implementing the new formula, Corley received approximately £90K more funding for the day school provision compared with the previous formula.
- 5.6 The resources used to fund the residential provision at Corley are part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and therefore part of the ring-fenced education spend. It is intended to recommend to the Schools' Forum that the funding released by this change of designation is used to cover the temporary shortfall in the new formula until full implementation, and in the longer term to support mainstream schools where they include increased numbers of students with SEN. This enables us to implement the new strategy within the existing Special Sector resources as originally intended.
- 5.7 **Legal implications**
- 5.8 The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to a Maintained School) (England) Regulations 2007 prescribe that the local authority must consider and determine the proposal. In determining the proposal the local authority may: a) reject the proposal; b) approve the proposal without modifications; or c) approve the proposal with such modifications as the authority think desirable. If the local authority decide to determine the proposal with modifications, they would be required to consult the governing body before doing so (unless the modifications were proposed by the governing body). Any determination by the local authority must be made within 2 months from the end of the representation period. Where the local authority fail to make a determination within 2 months of the representation period the decision must be referred to the adjudicator. The local authority must notify their decision to prescribed persons including any objector to the proposal (where the objection is in the form of a petition the local authority must notify the person (if any) who appears to have arranged for the petition to be sent, or where there is no such person the person whose name appears first on the petition.
- 5.9 The Public sector equality duty under s149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires decision makers to have an ongoing due regard to avoid discrimination and advance opportunity for anyone with relevant protected characteristics (age, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation. "Due regard" requires more than just an awareness of the equality duty. It

requires a rigorous analysis by the public authority, and requires an active engagement and consideration of the equality impacts and how any proposal will serve to eliminate discrimination

**6. Other implications**

**6.1 How will this contribute to achievement of the Council's key objectives / corporate priorities (corporate plan/scorecard) / organisational blueprint / Local Area Agreement (or Coventry Sustainable Community Strategy)?**

This proposal is based on a commitment to ensure that the special school provision for children and young people with SEN is provided and is available equitably across the city. This, following the implementation of the SEN and Inclusion Strategy, would make a valuable contribution particularly to the aim of ensuring that children and young people are safe, achieve and make a positive contribution.

**6.2 How is risk being managed?**

Corley's budget would be reduced if the resource for residential provision was removed. The Centre occupies a large building and the residential budget currently contributes to the upkeep and running costs of the building. The special school funding review has included Corley in its proposals and has produced a funding formula to enable it to function effectively as a secondary day special school in the current building.

The loss of the residential budget would mean the loss of those posts directly linked to the residential provision, a loss of allowances for other posts which contribute to the extended provision and the reduction in hours for certain posts which work across the provision. This would require the close involvement and consultation with both Human Resources and the Trade Union officers.

**6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?**

The significant issues impacting on the City Council have been outlined in the previous section. Any human resources issues will be directly related to the school itself. Officers from the local authority will provide advice and support to the governors on staffing matters and assist with consultation with staff and trade unions.

**6.4 Equalities / EIA**

The equity and fairness of the proposed re-designation of Corley Centre has been carefully examined through both an SEN Improvement Test and an Equality Impact Assessment.

The Equality Impact Assessment is available on the City Council website. The SEN Improvement Test has been provided in appendix 4.

**6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment**

None

## 6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

Potentially there are implications for the short breaks service in that more of the students and families may wish to make use of this service.

### Report author(s):

**Name and job title:** Roger Lickfold, Strategic Leader (SEN, Inclusion & Participation)

**Directorate:** Children, Learning & Young People

**Tel and email contact:** 024 7683 1550, [roger.lickfold@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:roger.lickfold@coventry.gov.uk)

Enquiries should be directed to the above person.

Contributor/approver name	Title	Directorate or organisation	Date doc sent out	Date response received or approved
<b>Contributors:</b>				
David Haley	Assistant Director, Education & Learning		29/02/2012	29/02/2012
Marian Simpson	Senior Officer, SEN Management Services		28/02/2012	01/03/2012
Other members				
<b>Names of approvers for submission: (officers and members)</b>				
Finance: Teng Zhang	Senior Accountant for Schools	Finance & legal	29/02/2012	01/03/2012
Legal: Elaine Atkins	Solicitor	Finance & legal	29/02/2012	29/02/2012
Human Resources: Neelesh Sutaria	Human Resources Manager	Human Resources	29/02/2012	01/03/2012
Director: Colin Green	Director	CLYP	29/02/2012	29/02/2012
Members: Cllr Kelly	Cabinet Member (Education)		29/02/2012	29/02/2012

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[www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/councilmeetings)



## Appendices

### Appendix 1 Statutory Notice

#### **Proposal to Change the Designation of Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School from Residential and Day Special School to Day Special School**

Notice is given in accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 that Coventry City Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to Corley Centre Residential, Day Community Special School, Church Lane, Corley, Warwickshire, CV7 8AZ from 01 September 2012.

It is proposed that Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School (Corley Centre) changes from Day and Residential Community Secondary Special School to Day Community Secondary Special School and ends the residential provision. Corley Centre is co-educational and provides 72 planned places for Coventry students with complex social and communication needs, including those diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), in the 11 to 16 years age group. In addition to this there are 12 places for post-16 students. Corley Centre currently has 81 students in the 11 to 16 age range and 12 post-16 students. The number of places would remain unchanged by the proposal. No new or additional site will be required if the proposal is implemented.

The proposed number of boarders that the school will make provision for is none.

No students at Corley Centre have a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) indicating a requirement for residential education and none are foreseen, because the needs of the students attending the school have changed. Until the academic year 2009/10 Corley Centre provided for secondary-aged students with moderate learning difficulties, but now only accepts and has provision for secondary-aged students with complex social and communication needs, including those diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). If a student with ASD is assessed as requiring residential education, through evidence-based assessment at Statutory Assessment of SEN, or Annual Review, and a Statement of SEN is produced, indicating a requirement for residential education, then this will be provided outside Coventry. The residential education facility at Corley Centre is now solely used to supplement the social and independence training of some of the day students. It is only available to Corley Centre students. If the proposal is approved then Corley Centre will continue to provide social and independence training as part of the core and extended curriculum offer, but it will not involve overnight stays at Corley.

The needs of many disabled children and young people can be met by the Local Authority carrying out its duties to provide information advice and guidance to families and through referral to universal and targeted service provided by statutory, voluntary and private sectors.

If the proposal to re-designate Corley Centre is approved the Local Authority will work closely with parents and carers, Corley Centre and the Children's Disability Team to ensure that the transition to the new provision is effected with minimal disruption to the lives of the young people and their families. Each young person at Corley Centre will have a transition plan to support a phased change to the new arrangements for social and independence training. Each plan will set out clear targets, timescales and specific activities spanning all sources of support including parents and carers, Corley Centre and the Short Breaks Service where appropriate. The plan will be reviewed on a termly basis for at least the first year of the new arrangements.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained from: Ms Emiley Berry, Children, Learning and Young People, Civic Centre 1, Coventry City Council by telephoning 02476 833622 or on the website at [www.coventry.gov.uk/info/200024/consultations](http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/200024/consultations)

Within six weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Ms Michelle Salmon, Governance Services, Coventry City Council, Council House, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR. Email: [michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk).

Signed:

Colin Green, Director of Children Learning and Young People, Coventry City Council.

Publication Date: 12 January 2012

Explanatory Notes

The resources used to fund the residential provision are part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and therefore part of the ring-fenced education spend. If the proposal is approved it is intended that the funding released by this change of designation is used to support the implementation of the SEN and inclusion strategy.

## **Appendix 2 Complete Proposal**

### **PROPOSALS FOR PRESCRIBED ALTERATIONS OTHER THAN FOUNDATION PROPOSALS: Information to be included in a complete proposal**

#### **Extract of Part 1 of Schedule 3 and Part 1 of Schedule 5 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools)(England) Regulations 2007 (as amended):**

Proposal to Change the Designation of Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School from Residential and Day Special School to Day Special School

In respect of a Governing Body Proposal: School and governing body's details

- 1. The name, address and category of the school for which the governing body are publishing the proposals.**

Not applicable

**In respect of an LEA Proposal: School and local education authority details**

- 1. The name, address and category of the school.**

School: Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School (DfE 331 7022)

Church Lane, Corley, Warwickshire, CV7 8AZ

Category: Residential, Day Community Secondary Special School

Local Education Authority: Coventry City

Contact address: Strategic Leader (SEND, Inclusion and Participation) Coventry City Council, Earl St., Coventry, CV1 5RR

#### **Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation**

- 2. The date on which the proposals are planned to be implemented, and if they are to be implemented in stages, a description of what is planned for each stage, and the number of stages intended and the dates of each stage.**

1 September 2012

#### **Objections and comments**

- 3. A statement explaining the procedure for making representations, including**
  - (a) the date prescribed in accordance with paragraph 29 of Schedule 3 (GB proposals)/Schedule 5 (LA proposals) of The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), by which objections or comments should be sent to the local education authority; and**
  - (b) the address of the authority to which objections or comments should be sent.**

Representations, by any person, should be made in writing within six weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, 12 January 2012, to Ms Michelle Salmon, Governance Services, Coventry City Council, Council House, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR. Email: [michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk)

## Alteration description

### 4. A description of the proposed alteration and in the case of special school proposals, a description of the current special needs provision.

It is proposed that Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School (Corley Centre) changes from Day and Residential Community Secondary Special School to Day Community Secondary Special School and ends the residential provision. Corley Centre is co-educational and provides 72 planned places for Coventry students with complex social and communication needs, including those diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD), in the 11 to 16 years age group. In addition to this there are 12 places for post -16 students. The number of places would remain unchanged by the proposal.

### 5. School capacity

**(1) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within any of paragraphs 1 to 4, 8, 9 and 12-14 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/paragraphs 1-4, 7, 8, 18, 19 and 21 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), the proposals must also include —**

**(a) details of the current capacity of the school and, where the proposals will alter the capacity of the school, the proposed capacity of the school after the alteration;**

Corley Centre has an agreed number of 72 places funded by Coventry Local Authority for years 7 to 11, plus 12 places for post -16 students. The number of planned places is not changed by the proposal.

**(b) details of the current number of pupils admitted to the school in each relevant age group, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of pupils to be admitted in each relevant age group in the first school year in which the proposals will have been implemented;**

Corley Centre currently has 81 students in the 11 to 16 age range and 12 post -16 students.

The number of students admitted to the school in the first school year in which the proposal will have been implemented would not be changed by the proposal.

**(c) where it is intended that proposals should be implemented in stages, the number of pupils to be admitted to the school in the first school year in which each stage will have been implemented;**

Not applicable

**(d) where the number of pupils in any relevant age group is lower than the indicated admission number for that relevant age group a statement to this effect and details of the indicated admission number in question.**

Not applicable

- (2) Where the alteration is an alteration falling within any of paragraphs 1, 2, 9, 12 and 13 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals) /paragraphs 1, 2, 8, 18 and 19 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended), a statement of the number of pupils at the school at the time of the publication of the proposals.

Not applicable

### Implementation

6. Where the proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary controlled school a statement as to whether the proposals are to be implemented by the local education authority or by the governing body, and, if the proposals are to be implemented by both, a statement as to the extent to which they are to be implemented by each body.

Not applicable

### Additional Site

7. (1) A statement as to whether any new or additional site will be required if proposals are implemented and if so the location of the site if the school is to occupy a split site.

No new or additional site will be required if the proposal is implemented

- (2) Where proposals relate to a foundation or voluntary school a statement as to who will provide any additional site required, together with details of the tenure (freehold or leasehold) on which the site of the school will be held, and if the site is to be held on a lease, details of the proposed lease.

Not applicable.

### Changes in boarding arrangements

8. (1) Where the proposals are for the introduction or removal of boarding provision, or the alteration of existing boarding provision such as is mentioned in paragraph 8 or 21 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/7 or 14 of Schedule 4 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended)

- (a) the number of pupils for whom it is intended that boarding provision will be made if the proposals are approved;

None

- (b) the arrangements for safeguarding the welfare of children at the school;

No students at Corley Centre have a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) indicating a requirement for residential education and none are foreseen, because the needs of the students attending the school have changed. Until the academic year 2009/10 Corley Centre provided for secondary-aged students with moderate learning difficulties, but now only accepts and has provision for secondary-aged students with complex social and communication needs, including those diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). If a student

with ASD is assessed as requiring residential education, through evidence-based assessment at Statutory Assessment of SEN, or Annual Review and a Statement of SEN is produced, indicating a requirement for residential education, then this will be provided outside Coventry.

The residential education facility at Corley Centre is now solely used to supplement the social and independence training of some of the day students. It is only available to Corley Centre students. If the proposal is approved then Corley Centre will continue to provide social and independence training as part of the core and extended curriculum offer, but it will not involve overnight stays at Corley.

The needs of many disabled children and young people can be met by the Local Authority carrying out its duties to provide information advice and guidance to families and through referral to universal and targeted service provided by statutory, voluntary and private sectors. This can be done by the use of universal services or via a Common Assessment, using the Common Assessment Framework. If needs cannot be met within levels 1 and 2 of the Common Assessment Framework then the Children's Disability Team (CDT) will carry out an initial assessment of need. We would expect all young people's needs to be met within the common assessment framework guidance. The CDT aims to make sure that everyone is treated fairly.

The Local Authority Short Breaks Services Statement sets out details of a range of services designed to meet the needs of carers and disabled young persons.

The short breaks services can include the provision of day, evening, overnight, weekend and holiday activities and can take place in the home of the young person, the home of an approved carer, in a residential setting or in a community setting. These short breaks provide further opportunities for social and independence training. They occur on a regular and planned basis.

If the proposal to re-designate Corley Centre is approved the Local Authority will work closely with parents and carers, Corley Centre and the Children's Disability Team to ensure that the transition to the new provision is effected with minimal disruption to the lives of the young people and their families. Each young person at Corley Centre will have a transition plan to support a phased change to the new arrangements for social and independence training. Each plan will set out clear targets, timescales and specific activities spanning all sources of support including parents and carers, Corley Centre and the Short Breaks Service where appropriate. The plan will be reviewed on a termly basis for at least the first year of the new arrangements.

The day school arrangements currently in place for safeguarding the welfare of students at Corley Centre will not change as a result of the proposed change in designation of the school.

**(c) the current number of pupils for whom boarding provision can be made and a description of the boarding provision; and**

The residential education provision at Corley Centre was established for 27 weekly boarding places (i.e. 4 nights per week) during term time.

None of the students at Corley Centre have a Statement of SEN indicating a requirement for residential education , but Corley Centre has allowed some of the day students to have overnight stays to supplement their social and independence training. In July 2011 there were 19 students having overnight stays (15 having 1 night per week; 4 having 2 nights per week). In January 2012 there were 20 students having overnight stays (17 having 1 night per week). No more than 8 students can stay on any one night. If the proposal is approved and Corley Centre changes from day and residential secondary special school to day secondary special school the social and independence training will continue as part of the core curriculum and extended school offer, but it won't include overnight stays at Corley Centre.

The residential provision at Corley Centre is only available to Corley Centre students.

The residential facilities are located in an upstairs wing of the main school building.

**(d) except where the proposals are to introduce boarding provision, a description of the existing boarding provision.**

The residential education provision at Corley Centre is now offered by Corley Centre to some of the day students to supplement their social and independence training, although none of the students have a statement of SEN indicating a requirement for residential education. In July 2011 there were 19 students having overnight stays (15 having 1 night per week; 4 having 2 nights per week). In January 2012 there were 20 students having overnight stays (17 having 1 night per week). No more than 8 students can stay on any one night.

The residential provision at Corley Centre is only available to Corley Centre students.

The residential provision is located in an upstairs wing of the main school building.

**(2) Where the proposals are for the removal of boarding provisions or an alteration to reduce boarding provision such as is mentioned in paragraph 8 or 21 of Schedule 2 (GB proposals)/7 or 14 of Schedule 4 (LA proposals) to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended)**

**(a) the number of pupils for whom boarding provision will be removed if the proposals are approved; and**

If the proposal is approved the residential capacity for 27 weekly residential places (4 nights per week) during term time will be removed and available to no students.

**(b) a statement as to the use to which the former boarding accommodation will be put if the proposals are approved.**

The residential accommodation is part of the school building. If the proposal is approved the former boarding accommodation would remain for school usage. The exact arrangements would be determined by Corley Centre Governing

Body in discussion with the Local Authority following, the outcome of this statutory proposal.

### **Transfer to new site**

#### **9. Where the proposals are to transfer a school to a new site the following information**

- (a) the location of the proposed site (including details of whether the school is to occupy a single or split site), and including where appropriate the postal address;**

Not applicable.

- (b) the distance between the proposed and current site;**

Not applicable.

- (c) the reason for the choice of proposed site;**

Not applicable.

- (d) the accessibility of the proposed site or sites;**

Not applicable

- (e) the proposed arrangements for transport of pupils to the school on its new site; and**

Not applicable

- (f) a statement about other sustainable transport alternatives where pupils are not using transport provided, and how car use in the school area will be discouraged.**

Not applicable

### **Objectives**

#### **10. The objectives of the proposals.**

The objective of the proposal is to change the designation of the Corley Centre from a Day and Residential Community Secondary Special School to a Day Community Secondary Special School and end the residential provision as there are no students at the Centre (and none foreseen) who have a statement of SEN indicating a requirement for residential education. All of the students have had multi-agency, evidence based assessment via statutory assessment and none have been found to require residential education.

The resources used to fund the residential provision are part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and therefore part of the ring-fenced education spend. If the proposal is approved it is intended that the funding released by this change of designation is re-profiled in line with the Local Authority's Special School Funding Formula across all Coventry Special Schools, including Corley.

## Consultation

11. Evidence of the consultation before the proposals were published including
- (a) a list of persons who were consulted;
  - (b) minutes of all public consultation meetings;
  - (c) the views of the persons consulted;
  - (d) a statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with; and
  - (e) copies of all consultation documents and a statement on how these documents were made available.

(a) **A list of the persons who were consulted**

The following persons were consulted prior to publishing the proposals:

- The Governing Body of Corley Centre;
- Parents/carers, and families, of students attending the school
- Students attending the school
- Staff at the school;
- Neighbouring local authorities;
- The Governing bodies, teachers and other staff of other schools that may be affected;
- Families of any students at any other school who may be affected by the proposal, including families of students at feeder primary schools;
- Trade unions that represent staff at the school;
- Diocesan authorities;
- Coventry and Corley MPs and Councillors
- Corley Parish Council
- NHS Arden (Primary Care Trust for Coventry and Warwickshire)
- University Hospitals Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust.

(b) **The minutes of all public consultation meetings**

These are available to view on the Current Consultations page of the Coventry City Council at <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/200024/consultations>. They are also available in the appendix of the report to the Cabinet Member (Education) on 1st December 2011.

(c) **The views of the persons consulted**

There were 100 respondents to the consultation survey with 6 undecided or giving a comment only, 17 supporting the proposal and 77 not supporting. Of those respondents representing organisations 80% supported the proposal. Of those responding as individuals 83% did not support the proposal. All 13 responding Coventry head teachers supported the proposal. 42 of the 45 responding parents, carers, grandparents did not support the proposal.

The respondents supporting the proposal indicated that the re-designation would benefit students with SEN and Disability in all Coventry's special schools. Some expressed their concern that care should be taken with the Corley Centre students during the transition from the current arrangements. Two responses supporting the proposal are given immediately below.

"The suggested change for re-designation of Corley to a secondary day special school would release funding to provide fairer access for special needs students across the city to residential provision where it is appropriate. In particular using the



overnight short breaks where individual assessments of students and their families would indicate a particular need for this provision. I would wish to see the youngsters from Corley who currently access residential provision well supported during a transition period. Families of these students would also need maximal support to access alternative arrangements for overnight provision if appropriate"

"I think that it is appropriate to have strategic review of Special Needs education across the city from time to time. As we develop the broad spectrum provision, this strategic review should be ongoing, to ensure that resources are targeted based on children's educational needs. Due attention needs to be made on how continued support can be provided to the children and families that are currently supported by the Corley residential service. As overnight provision moves to Short Breaks, it is important that no-one falls into any gaps between the services, and the needs of the families and children are met, and they are supported through the proposed changes."

The respondents who were undecided on the proposal:

- Were concerned that Corley Centre should be included in any redistribution of the residential funding should the proposal be approved (Corley Centre will be included if the proposal is approved).
- Thought that other provision, such as that offered by the Children's Disability Team (CDT) was not appropriate.
- Thought that the possibility of offering a reduced residential service or making it available to other schools in and around Coventry should be considered.
- Asked that a specialised, family centred ASD support group be created, particularly as numbers of children and young people with a diagnosis of ASD were rising.

Respondents who were against the proposal:

- Said that the residency is a unique, invaluable benefit to students and their families and that other provision, such as that offered by the Children's Disability Team (CDT) is not appropriate.
- Said that Corley Centre students would not be eligible for CDT services (some already are).
- Expressed the view that Corley Centre students need routine and familiarity. This will not be given elsewhere.
- Additional costs will be incurred by social services as students will not achieve independence.
- Some parents expressed the view that the statutory statements of SEN are illegal as the requirement for residency, as assessed by staff at Corley Centre has been omitted. In a written response the local authority made it clear that the statements of SEN do comply fully with statutory requirements.

In addition, a petition against the proposal was received in response to this consultation, containing 1,629 signatures. Five hundred of the signatories did not give a Coventry address, around 100 of these had unclear addresses and around 400 people lived outside of the City, including places such as Corley, Fillongley, Nuneaton, and Banbury. Under Coventry City Council's Petition Scheme, people who sign petitions should live, work or study in the City. In the timescales, it has not been possible to validate whether signatories who do not live in Coventry fulfil the criteria of working or studying in Coventry. However, the service, which is the subject of this consultation and this petition, is located just outside the City boundary and it is possible some people using this service may not fit into the Petition Scheme criteria of living, working or studying in Coventry.

The Member of Parliament for the Corley area believed it was appropriate to give a comment only as his constituency lies outside the Coventry City Council boundary. The Member of Parliament suggested that Coventry City Council should assure stakeholders that funding that would be released if the proposal were to be approved would be ring fenced for use within children's disability services across the city. He also believed that parents needed to be reassured that the transition, from the Corley Centre to the Children's Disability Team, must take into consideration the needs of the individual students.

**(d) a statement to the effect that all applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with**

The statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with.

**(e) copies of all consultation documents and a statement on how these documents were made available**

The consultation document is available to view on the Current Consultations page of the Coventry City Council at <http://www.coventry.gov.uk/info/200024/consultations>  
Paper copies were available on request from Coventry City Council, tel 02476 833622 and Coventry schools and libraries.

### **Project costs**

**12. A statement of the estimated total capital cost of the proposals and the breakdown of the costs that are to be met by the governing body, the local education authority, and any other party.**

There are no capital costs associated with this proposal.

**13. A copy of confirmation from the Secretary of State, local education authority and the Learning and Skills Council for England (as the case may be) that funds will be made available (including costs to cover any necessary site purchase).**

Not applicable.

### **Age range**

**14. Where the proposals relate to a change in age range, the current age range for the school.**

Not applicable.

### **Early years provision**

**15. Where the proposals are to alter the lower age limit of a mainstream school so that it provides for pupils aged between 2 and 5**

**(a) details of the early years provision, including the number of full-time and part-time pupils, the number and length of sessions in each week, and the services for disabled children that will be offered;**

Not applicable.

- (b) how the school will integrate the early years provision with childcare services and how the proposals are consistent with the integration of early years provision for childcare;**

Not applicable.

- (c) evidence of parental demand for additional provision of early years provision;**

Not applicable.

- (d) assessment of capacity, quality and sustainability of provision in schools and in establishments other than schools who deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage within 3 miles of the school; and**

Not applicable.

- (e) reasons why such schools and establishments who have spare capacity cannot make provision for any forecast increase in the number of such provision.**

Not applicable.

#### **Changes to sixth form provision**

- 16. (a) Where the proposals are to alter the upper age limit of the school so that the school provides sixth form education or additional sixth form education, a statement of how the proposals will**

- (i) improve the educational or training achievements;**
- (ii) increase participation in education or training; and**
- (iii) expand the range of educational or training opportunities for 16-19 year olds in the area;**

Not applicable.

- (b) A statement as to how the new places will fit within the 16-19 organisation in an area;**

Not applicable.

- (c) Evidence**

- (i) of the local collaboration in drawing up the proposals; and**
- (ii) that the proposals are likely to lead to higher standards and better progression at the school;**

Not applicable.

- (d) The proposed number of sixth form places to be provided.**

Not applicable.

17. **Where the proposals are to alter the upper age limit of the school so that the school ceases to provide sixth form education, a statement of the effect on the supply of 16-19 places in the area.**

Not applicable.

**Special educational needs**

18. **Where the proposals are to establish or change provision for special educational needs**

- (a) **a description of the proposed types of learning difficulties in respect of which education will be provided and, where provision for special educational needs already exists, the current type of provision;**

Corley Centre provides for students with complex social and communication needs, including those diagnosed with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

If the proposal is approved Corley Centre will continue to support this group of students and will continue to provide social and independence training as part of the core and extended curriculum offer.

- (b) **any additional specialist features will be provided;**

Not applicable.

- (c) **the proposed numbers of pupils for which the provision is to be made;**

Not applicable.

- (d) **details of how the provision will be funded;**

Not applicable.

- (e) **a statement as to whether the education will be provided for children with special educational needs who are not registered pupils at the school to which the proposals relate;**

Not applicable.

- (f) **a statement as to whether the expenses of the provision will be met from the school's delegated budget;**

Not applicable

- (g) **the location of the provision if it is not to be established on the existing site of the school;**

Not applicable

- (h) **where the provision will replace existing educational provision for children with special educational needs, a statement as to how the local education authority believes that the new provision is likely to lead to improvement in the standard, quality and range of the educational provision for such children; and**

Not applicable

- (i) **the number of places reserved for children with special educational needs, and where this number is to change, the proposed number of such places.**

Not applicable

**19. Where the proposals are to discontinue provision for special educational needs—**

- (a) **details of alternative provision for pupils for whom the provision is currently made;**

The residential education provision at Corley Centre is now offered by Corley Centre to some of the day students to supplement their social and independence training, although none of the students have a statement of SEN indicating a requirement for residential education. If the proposal is approved Corley Centre will continue to support this group of students and will continue to provide social and independence training as part of the core curriculum offer.

In addition if needed, support would be available through the Short Breaks Service provided by the Children's Disability Team. This support can include short breaks in the form of care of the children or young person. The short breaks can include the provision of day, evening, overnight, weekend and holiday activities and can take place in the home of the child or young person, the home of an approved carer, in a residential setting or in a community setting. These short breaks provide further opportunities for social and independence training. They occur on a regular and planned basis. This service is available to all Coventry families with a child or young person with a disability.

If the proposal to re-designate Corley Centre is approved the Local Authority will work closely with parents and carers, Corley Centre and the Children's Disability Team, if appropriate, to ensure that the transition to the new provision is effected with minimal disruption to the lives of the young people and their families. Each young person at Corley Centre will have a transition plan to support a phased change to the new arrangements for social and independence training. Each plan will set out clear targets, timescales and specific activities spanning all sources of support including parents and carers, Corley Centre and the Short Breaks Service where appropriate. The plan will be reviewed on a termly basis for at least the first year of the new arrangements.

- (b) **details of the number of pupils for whom provision is made that is recognised by the local education authority as reserved for children with special educational needs during each of the 4 school years preceding the current school year;**

There have been no students at Corley Centre formally assessed, via the statutory assessment process, as requiring residential education since 2006/2007. No students have a Statement of SEN indicating a requirement for residential education. Corley Centre has used the residential facility to supplement the social and independence training of some of the day students.

The numbers of students staying overnight in January of each of the previous 4 school years is given below. Most of these students who stayed overnight did so for one night per week.

2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
29	26	17	19

The maximum numbers of students staying overnight at Corley Centre on any one night are given below for the school years 2007/08 – 2010/11.

2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
9	9	10	8

The maximum number that could have stayed in any one night was 17.

- (c) **details of provision made outside the area of the local education authority for pupils whose needs will not be able to be met in the area of the authority as a result of the discontinuance of the provision; and**

If the proposal is approved the social and independence training needs of Corley Centre students will continue to be met by the school, alongside support from parents and carers, and where appropriate the Short Breaks Service.

- (d) **a statement as to how the proposer believes that the proposals are likely to lead to improvement in the standard, quality and range of the educational provision for such children.**

There is inequity in the current situation in that funding is provided to Corley Centre for 27 weekly boarding places, but none are required. None of the students at Corley Centre have been assessed as requiring residential education and none are foreseen. The places are available only to Corley Centre students and the residential provision used to supplement the social and independence training for some students.

If the proposal to re-designate Corley Centre as a day secondary special school is approved then the Local Authority wishes to distribute the released funding equitably for the support of the SEN and inclusion strategy by means of the introduction of the new funding formula for Coventry special schools so improving the standard, quality and range of their educational provision.

20. **Where the proposals will lead to alternative provision for children with special educational needs, as a result of the establishment, alteration or discontinuance of existing provision, the specific educational benefits that will flow from the proposals in terms of—**

- (a) **improved access to education and associated services including the curriculum, wider school activities, facilities and equipment with reference to the local education authority's Accessibility Strategy;**  
 (b) **improved access to specialist staff, both educational and other professionals, including any external support and outreach services;**  
 (c) **improved access to suitable accommodation; and**  
 (d) **improved supply of suitable places.**

- (a) If the proposal is approved then, as with all other Coventry special schools, there would be an expectation that Corley Centre will continue to run a programme of social and independence training as part of its core curriculum offer. This would ensure that all students attending the school had social and independence training integrated into their curriculum. Where the Children's Disability Team was also

involved in providing activities to further develop social and independence skills then these would complement that provision.

Social and independence training is provided in all special schools in the City. If this re-designation were to go ahead then social and independence training would need to remain a feature of education for the students of Corley Centre, but it would not be provided through overnight stays at the Centre. Where overnight stays are required then these would be provided through the Short Breaks Service, subject to the eligibility criteria being met.

Short breaks are available for all children and young people with disability and their carers through the Children's Disability Team (CDT). The short breaks include activity sessions of two or three hours and overnight stays (subject to assessment of need). Social and independence training is built into most of these activities. Currently students at Corley Centre are potentially able to access residential provision through both CDT and residential provision at Corley Centre. There is therefore an issue of equity and equality of opportunity because residential provision at Corley Centre is not available to any other children and young people attending other special schools or with similar needs across the City. Students at Corley Centre do not necessarily have a higher level need for residential provision than other Coventry children and young people with SEN and disability.

The resources used to fund the residential provision are part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and therefore part of the ring-fenced education spend. If the proposal is approved it is intended that the funding released by this change of designation is used to support the further implementation of the SEN and inclusion strategy.

The implementation of the SEN and inclusion strategy will support improvements to the curriculum, wider schools activities, facilities and equipment.

The Coventry Autism Support Service is working to improve access to extended day activities for all students with ASD via training and development (Coventry LA Accessibility Strategy – Action 2.31).

- (b) Implementation of the new broad spectrum school's formula will support improved access to specialist staff as it was based on an improved staffing model. The new funding formula for special schools delivers an appropriate level of funding to allow outreach and training functions to be developed and maintained. The funding provides an outreach service (1 teacher and 1 teaching assistant) to be provided from each of the broad spectrum schools and Woodfield School, to improve links with mainstream schools and support students with SEN who are educated within these schools. As part of Corley Centre, funding is already provided for the Coventry Autism Support Service which supports children and young people in Coventry who have an ASD diagnosis.

The proposed arrangements provide for young people with disability to have access to a range of short breaks and thus access to other specialist staff and professionals. It supports closer collaboration between education and other staff in Children, Learning and Young People's Directorate. "Education staff should work with social care colleagues and consider (residential) placement policies that are consistent across the authority." (The SEN Improvement Test – Paragraph 43).

- (c) The revised distribution of financial resources for the City's special schools through the new funding formula and implementation of the SEN and inclusion strategy will

support future improvements in accommodation for special needs students across the City.

In addition to this, for young people with disability the Children's Disability Team (CDT) offers a range of short breaks through which social and independence skills can be further developed. Broad Park House, one of the CDT venues, was redeveloped in 2011. It combines a purpose-built residential short breaks unit for children aged 5-17 years with SEND with on-site activity rooms for community-based activities. A recent Ofsted inspection praised the involvement of children and young people with disabilities in the decision making and design process of the redevelopment. The new centre includes four purpose built bedrooms, two activity rooms for group events, young people's meetings and consultations. It also has a professional kitchen for independence and cooking skill activities. A range of social events also take place throughout the year and activities to support transitions and early intervention work. Specialist activities for children with higher level needs are also included.

- (d) The new funding formula was developed to ensure that the LA had an appropriate level of special school places funded at a level appropriate to cater for the needs of the pupil population.

Residential educational placements are still available where needed for students with an assessed need via the Statutory Assessment Process.

Through its Strategy for Inclusion and SEN (2005), Coventry LA has developed a continuum of provision within the city for children with a wide range of SEND. For students with ASD Corley Centre was developed with a changed designation for children with complex social and communication needs and two enhanced resource bases in mainstream schools (one primary and one secondary) have been developed to date with a third planned for 2013.

Whilst the proposal removes 27 residential places at Corley Centre it should be noted that there have been no Corley Centre students formally assessed as requiring residential education since 2006/2007 and none are anticipated in the future. The funding for Corley Centre's residential provision based on 27 places amounts to approximately £384,000 in 2010/11 (£344,000 if allowance is made for catering costs). The actual use of the budget is no longer in line with its intended purpose. The financial resource allocated for Corley Centre's residential educational provision could be used to support children and young people with SEN and disability across the City more equitably. There are clear equality of education and opportunity reasons for implementing the proposal and a strong value for money argument to support the case.

Residential provision is now available through short breaks provided by the Children's Disability Team (CDT). Students with disability not attending Corley Centre are potentially able to access residential provision through the central Short Breaks programme provided by the CDT. Students at Corley Centre are potentially able to access residential provision through both CDT and residential provision at Corley Centre. This gives an issue of equity and equality of opportunity because residential provision at Corley Centre is not available to any other children and young people attending other special schools or with similar needs across the City. Students at Corley Centre don't necessarily have a higher level need for residential provision than other Coventry children and young people with SEN and disability.

#



## Sex of pupils

**21. Where the proposals are to make an alteration to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of one sex only becomes an establishment which admits pupils of both sexes—**

**(a) details of the likely effect which the alteration will have on the balance of the provision of single sex-education in the area;**

Not applicable.

**(b) evidence of local demand for single-sex education; and**

Not applicable.

**(c) details of any transitional period which the body making the proposals wishes specified in a transitional exemption order (within the meaning of section 27 of the Sex Discrimination Act 1975).**

Not applicable.

**22. Where the proposals are to make an alteration to a school to provide that a school which was an establishment which admitted pupils of both sexes becomes an establishment which admits pupils of one sex only—**

**(a) details of the likely effect which the alteration will have on the balance of the provision of single-sex education in the area; and**

Not applicable.

**(b) evidence of local demand for single-sex education.**

Not applicable.

## Extended services

**23. If the proposed alterations affect the provision of the school's extended services, details of the current extended services the school is offering and details of any proposed change as a result of the alterations.**

Corley Centre will continue to provide a range of extended services

## Need or demand for additional places

**24. If the proposals involve adding places—**

**(a) a statement and supporting evidence of the need or demand for the particular places in the area;**

Not applicable.

- (b) where the school has a religious character, a statement and supporting evidence of the demand in the area for education in accordance with the tenets of the religion or religious denomination;**

Not applicable.

- (c) where the school adheres to a particular philosophy, evidence of the demand for education in accordance with the philosophy in question and any associated change to the admission arrangements for the school.**

Not applicable.

**25. If the proposals involve removing places—**

- (a) a statement and supporting evidence of the reasons for the removal, including an assessment of the impact on parental choice; and**

Not applicable.

- (b) a statement on the local capacity to accommodate displaced pupils.**

Not applicable.

**Expansion of successful and popular schools**

**25A. (1) Proposals must include a statement of whether the proposer considers that the presumption for the expansion of successful and popular schools should apply, and where the governing body consider the presumption applies, evidence to support this.**

- (2) Sub-paragraph (1) applies to expansion proposals in respect of primary and secondary schools, (except for grammar schools), i.e. falling within:**

- (a) (for proposals published by the governing body) paragraph 1 of Part 1 to Schedule 2 or paragraph 12 of Part 2 to Schedule 2;**

- (b) (for proposals published by the LA) paragraph 1 of Part 1 to Schedule 4 or 18 of Part 4 to Schedule 4 of the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended).**

Not applicable.

## Appendix 3

### Extract from Making Changes to a Maintained Mainstream School (Other than Expansion, Foundation, Discontinuance & Establishment Proposals) A Guide for Local Authorities and Governing Bodies

#### Decision Makers Guidance

##### Statutory Guidance – Factors to be Considered by Decision Makers (Paragraphs 4.15-4.16)

4.15 Regulation 8 of The Regulations provides that both the LA and schools adjudicator **must** have regard to guidance issued by the Secretary of State when they take a decision on proposals. Paragraphs 4.16 to 4.60 below contain the statutory guidance.

4.16 The following factors **should not** be taken to be exhaustive. Their importance will vary, depending on the type and circumstances of the proposals. All proposals **should** be considered on their individual merits.

#### EFFECT ON STANDARDS AND SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

##### A System Shaped by Parents (Paragraphs 4.17-4.18)

4.17 The Government's aim, as set out in the Five Year Strategy for Education and Learners and the Schools White Paper Higher Standards, Better Schools For All, is to create a schools system shaped by parents which delivers excellence and equity. In particular, the Government wishes to see a dynamic system in which:

- weak schools that need to be closed are closed quickly and replaced by new ones where necessary; and
- the best schools are able to expand and spread their ethos and success.

4.18 The EIA 2006 amends the Education Act 1996 to place duties on LAs to secure diversity in the provision of schools and to increase opportunities for parental choice when planning the provision of schools in their areas. In addition, LAs are under a specific duty to respond to representations from parents about the provision of schools, including requests to establish new schools or make changes to existing schools. The Government's aim is to secure a more diverse and dynamic schools system which is shaped by parents. The Decision Maker **should** take into account the extent to which the proposals are consistent with the new duties on LAs.

##### Standards (Paragraphs 4.19-4.20)

4.19 The Government wishes to encourage changes to local school provision which will boost standards and opportunities for young people, whilst matching school place supply as closely as possible to pupils' and parents' needs and wishes.

4.20 Decision Makers **should** be satisfied that proposals for prescribed alterations will contribute to raising local standards of provision, and will lead to improved attainment for children and young people. They **should** pay particular attention to the effects on groups that tend to under-perform including children from certain ethnic groups, children from deprived backgrounds and children in care, with the aim of narrowing attainment gaps.

### **Diversity (Paragraphs 4.21-4.23)**

4.21 Decision Makers **should** be satisfied that when proposals lead to children (who attend provision recognised by the LA as being reserved for pupils with special educational needs) being displaced, any alternative provision will meet the statutory SEN improvement test (see paragraphs 4.55 - 4.59).

4.22 The Government's aim is to transform our school system so that every child receives an excellent education – whatever their background and wherever they live. A vital part of the Government's vision is to create a more diverse school system offering excellence and choice, where each school has a strong ethos and sense of mission and acts as a centre of excellence or specialist provision.

4.23 Decision Makers **should** consider how proposals will contribute to local diversity. They **should** consider the range of schools in the relevant area of the LA and whether the alteration to the school will meet the aspirations of parents, help raise local standards and narrow attainment gaps.

### **Every Child Matters (Paragraph 4.24-4.25)**

4.24 The Decision Maker **should** consider how proposals will help every child and young person achieve their potential in accordance with "Every Child Matters" principles which are: to be healthy; stay safe; enjoy and achieve; make a positive contribution to the community and society; and achieve economic well-being.

4.25 This **should** include considering how the school will provide a wide range of extended services, opportunities for personal development, access to academic and applied learning training, measures to address barriers to participation and support for children and young people with particular needs, e.g. looked after children or children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

## **SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS**

### **Boarding Provision (Paragraphs 4.26-4.29)**

4.26 In making a decision on proposals that make changes to boarding provision, the Decision Maker **should** consider whether or not there would be a detrimental effect on the sustainability of boarding at another state maintained boarding school within one hour's travelling distance of the proposed school.

4.27 In making a decision on proposals to introduce new boarding places the Decision Maker **should** consider:-

- a. the extent to which boarding places are over subscribed at any state maintained boarding school within an hour's travelling distance of the school;
- b. the extent to which the accommodation at the school can provide the new boarding places;
- c. the extent to which the expansion of boarding places will help placements of pupils with an identified boarding need; and
- d. the impact of the expansion on a state maintained boarding school within one hour's travelling distance from the school which may be undersubscribed.

4.28 In making a decision on proposals to remove boarding provision, the Decision Maker **should** consider whether there is a state maintained boarding school within one hour's travelling distance from the school. The Decision Maker **should** consider whether there are satisfactory alternative boarding arrangements for those currently in the school and those who may need boarding places in the foreseeable future, including the children of service families.

4.29 In making a decision on proposals for expansion of boarding places the Decision Maker **should** consider:-

- a. the extent to which boarding places are over subscribed at the school and any state maintained boarding school within an hour's travelling distance of the school at which the expansion is proposed;
- b. the extent to which the accommodation at the school can provide additional boarding places;
- c. any recommendations made in the previous CSCI/Ofsted reports which would suggest that existing boarding provision in the school failed significantly to meet the National Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools;
- d. the extent to which the school has made appropriate provision to admit other categories of pupils other than those for which it currently caters (e.g. taking pupils of the opposite sex or sixth formers) if they form part of the expansion;
- e. any impact of the expansion on the continuity of education of boarders currently in the school;
- f. the extent to which the expansion of boarding places will help placements of pupils with an identified boarding need; and
- g. the impact of the expansion on a state maintained boarding school within one hour's travelling distance from the school which may be undersubscribed.

### **Equal Opportunity Issues (Paragraph 4.30)**

4.30 The Decision Maker **should** consider whether there are any sex, race or disability discrimination issues that arise from the changes being proposed, for example that where there is a proposed change to single sex provision in an area, there is equal access to single sex provision for the other sex to meet parental demand. Similarly there needs to be a commitment to provide access to a range of opportunities which reflect the ethnic and cultural mix of the area, while ensuring that such opportunities are open to all.

### **NEED FOR PLACES**

#### **Provision for Displaced Pupils (Paragraph 4.31)**

4.31 Where proposals will remove provision, the Decision Maker **should** be satisfied that there is sufficient capacity to accommodate displaced pupils in the area, taking into account the overall supply and likely future demand for places. The Decision Maker **should** consider the quality and popularity with parents of the schools in which spare capacity exists and evidence of parents' aspirations for those schools.

#### **Creating Additional Places (Paragraphs 4.32-4.34)**

4.32 Where proposals will increase provision, the Decision Maker **should** consider whether there is a need for the expansion and **should** consider the evidence presented for the expansion such as planned housing development or demand for provision. The Decision Maker **should** take into account not only the existence of spare capacity in neighbouring schools, but also the quality and popularity with parents of the schools in which spare capacity exists and evidence of parents' aspirations for places in the school proposed for expansion. The existence of surplus capacity in neighbouring less popular or successful schools **should not** in itself prevent the addition of new places.

4.33 Where the school has a religious character, or follows a particular philosophy, the Decision Maker **should** be satisfied that there is satisfactory evidence of sufficient demand for places for the expanded school to be sustainable.

4.34 Where proposals will add to surplus capacity but there is a strong case for approval on parental preference and standards grounds, the presumption **should** be for approval. The LA in these cases will need to consider parallel action to remove the surplus capacity thereby created.

#### **Travel and Accessibility for All (Paragraphs 4.35-4.36)**

4.35 In considering proposals for the reorganisation of schools, Decision Makers **should** satisfy themselves that accessibility planning has been properly taken into account. Facilities are to be accessible by those concerned, by being located close to those who will use them, and the proposed changes **should not** adversely impact on disadvantaged groups.

4.36 In deciding statutory proposals, the Decision Maker **should** bear in mind that proposals **should not** have the effect of unreasonably extending journey times or increasing transport costs, or result in too many children being prevented from travelling sustainably due to unsuitable routes e.g. for walking, cycling etc. The EIA 2006 provides extended free transport rights for low income groups – see Home to School Travel and Transport Guidance re 00373 – 2007BKT-EN at [www.education.gov.uk/publications](http://www.education.gov.uk/publications). Proposals **should** also be considered on the basis of how they will support and contribute to the LA's duty to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport to school.

#### **16-19 Provision (Paragraphs 4.37-4.39)**

4.37 The pattern of 16-19 provision differs across the country. Many different configurations of school and college provision deliver effective 14-19 education and training. An effective 14-19 organisation has a number of key features:

- standards and quality: the provision available **should** be of a high standard – as demonstrated by high levels of achievement and good completion rates;
- progression: there **should** be good progression routes for all learners in the area, so that every young person has a choice of the full range of options within the 14-19 entitlement, with institutions collaborating as necessary to make this offer. All routes **should** make provision for the pastoral,

management and learning needs of the 14-19 age group;

- participation: there are high levels of participation in the local area; and,
- learner satisfaction: young people consider that there is provision for their varied needs, aspirations and aptitudes in a range of settings across the area.

4.38 Where standards and participation rates are variable, or where there is little choice, meaning that opportunity at 16 relies on where a young person went to school, the case for reorganisation, or allowing high quality providers to expand, is strong.

4.39 Where standards and participation rates are consistently high, collaboration is strong and learners express satisfaction that they have sufficient choice, the case for a different pattern of provision is less strong. The Decision Maker therefore will need to take account of the pattern of 16-19 provision in the area and the implications of approving new provision.

#### **Conflicting Sixth Form Reorganisation Proposals (Paragraph 4.40)**

4.40 Where the implementation of reorganisation proposals by the LSC<sup>1</sup> conflict with other published proposals put to the Decision Maker for decision, the Decision Maker is prevented (by the School Organisation Proposals by the LSC for England Regulations 2003) from making a decision on the “related” proposals until the Secretary of State has decided the LSC proposals (see paragraphs 4.13 to 4.14 above).

#### **LSC<sup>4</sup> Proposals to Remove Inadequate School Sixth Forms (Paragraph 4.41)**

4.41 The Learning and Skills Act 2000 (as amended by the Education Act 2005) gives the LSC powers to propose the closure of a school sixth form which has been judged to require Significant Improvement in two consecutive Ofsted inspections. Where a school sixth form is proposed for closure in such circumstances there **should** be a presumption to approve the proposals, subject to evidence being provided that the development will have a positive impact on standards.

### **SCHOOL CATEGORY CHANGES**

#### **Change school category to VA (Paragraph 4.42)**

4.42 If a school proposes to change category to voluntary aided, the Decision Maker **must** be satisfied that the governing body are able and willing to meet their financial responsibilities for building work. The Decision Maker may wish to consider whether the governing body has access to sufficient funds to enable it to meet 10% of its overall liabilities for at least 5 years from the date of implementation, taking into account anticipated building projects.

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<sup>1</sup> References throughout this document to the LSC only apply up to April 2010. The ASCL Act 2009 will transfer the responsibilities of the LSC in respect of 16-19 education and training to LAs, supported by the Young People's Learning Agency. This guidance will be revised by April 2010 to take account of these changes.

## FUNDING AND LAND

### Capital (Paragraphs 4.43-4.45)

4.43 The Decision Maker **should** be satisfied that any land, premises or capital required to implement the proposals will be available. Normally, this will be some form of written confirmation from the source of funding on which the promoters rely (e.g. the LA, DfE, or LSC). In the case of an LA, this **should** be from an authorised person within the LA, and provide detailed information on the funding, provision of land and premises etc.

4.44 Where proposers are relying on DCSF as a source of capital funding, there can be no assumption that the approval of proposals will trigger the release of capital funds from the Department, unless the Department has previously confirmed in writing that such resources will be available; nor can any allocation 'in principle' be increased. In such circumstances the proposals **should** be rejected, or consideration of them deferred until it is clear that the capital necessary to implement the proposals will be provided.

4.45 Proposals **should not** be approved conditionally upon funding being made available, subject to the following specific exceptions: For proposals being funded under the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) or through the BSF programme, the Decision Maker **should** be satisfied that funding has been agreed 'in principle', but the proposals **should** be approved conditionally on the entering into of the necessary agreements and the release of funding. A conditional approval will protect proposers so that they are not under a statutory duty to implement the proposals until the relevant contracts have been signed and/or funding is finally released.

### Capital Receipts (Paragraphs 4.46-4.48)

4.46 Where the implementation of proposals may depend on capital receipts from the disposal of land used for the purposes of a school (i.e. including one proposed for closure in "related" proposals) the Decision Maker **should** confirm whether consent to the disposal of land is required, or an agreement is needed, for disposal of the land. Current requirements are:

- a. Community Schools – the Secretary of State's consent is required under paragraph 2 of Schedule 35A to the Education Act 1996 and, in the case of playing field land, under section 77 of the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998 (SSFA 1998). (Details are given in Departmental Guidance 1017-2004 "The Protection of School Playing Fields and Land for Academies" published in November 2004) - <https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/standard/publicationDetail/Page1/DCSF-10002-2007>
- b. Foundation (including Trust) and Voluntary Schools:
  - i. playing field land – the governing body, foundation body or trustees will require the Secretary of State's consent, under section 77 of the SSFA 1998, to dispose, or change the use of any playing field land that has been acquired and/or enhanced at public expense.
  - ii. non-playing field land or school buildings – the governing body, foundation body or trustees no longer require the Secretary of State's consent to dispose of surplus non-playing field land or school buildings which have been acquired or enhanced in value by public funding. They will be required to notify the LA and seek local agreement of their proposals. Where there is



no local agreement, the matter **should** be referred to the School Adjudicator to determine. (Details of the new arrangements can be found in the Department's guidance "The Transfer and Disposal of School Land in England: A General Guide for Schools, Local Authorities and the Adjudicator" -

<http://www.education.gov.uk/334991/decisions/b0075884/decisions-made-by-the-schools-adjudicator/land-issues>

4.47 Where prescribed alteration proposals are dependent upon capital receipts of a discontinuing foundation or voluntary school the governing body is required to apply to the Secretary of State to exercise his various powers in respect of land held by them for the purposes of the school. Normally he would direct that the land be returned to the LA but he could direct that the land be transferred to the governing body of another maintained school (or the temporary governing body of a new school). Where the governing body fails to make such an application to the Secretary of State, and the school subsequently closes, all land held by them for the purposes of the discontinued school will, on dissolution of the governing body, transfer to the LA unless the Secretary of State has directed otherwise before the date of dissolution.

4.48 Where consent to the disposal of land is required, but has not been obtained, the Decision Maker **should** consider issuing a conditional approval for the statutory proposals so that the proposals gain full approval automatically when consent to the disposal is obtained (see paragraph 4.63).

#### **New Site or Playing Fields (Paragraph 4.49)**

4.49 Proposals dependent on the acquisition of an additional site or playing field may not receive full approval but **should** be approved conditionally upon the acquisition of a site or playing field.

#### **Land Tenure Arrangements (Paragraph 4.50)**

4.50 For the expansion of voluntary or foundation schools it is desirable that a trust, or the governing body if there is no foundation, holds the freehold interest in any additional site that is required for the expansion. Where the trustees of the voluntary or foundation school hold, or will hold, a leasehold interest in the additional site, the Decision Maker will need to be assured that the arrangements provide sufficient security for the school. In particular the leasehold interest **should** be for a substantial period – normally at least 50 years – and avoid clauses which would allow the leaseholder to evict the school before the termination of the lease. The Decision Maker **should** also be satisfied that a lease does not contain provisions which would obstruct the governing body or the Headteacher in the exercise of their functions under the Education Acts, or place indirect pressures upon the funding bodies.

#### **School Playing Fields (Paragraphs 4.51-4.52)**

4.51 The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 set out the standards for school premises, including minimum areas of team game playing fields to which schools **should** have access. The Decision Maker will need to be satisfied that either:

- a. the premises will meet minimum requirements of The Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999; or

- b. if the premises do not meet those requirements, the proposers have secured the Secretary of State's agreement in principle to grant a relaxation.

4.52 Where the Secretary of State has given 'in principle' agreement as at paragraph 4.46(b) above, the Decision Maker **should** consider issuing conditional approval so that when the Secretary of State gives his agreement, the proposals will automatically gain full approval.

## **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) PROVISION**

### **Initial Considerations (Paragraphs 4.53-4.54)**

4.53 SEN provision, in the context of School Organisation legislation and this guidance, is provision recognised by the LA as specifically reserved for pupils with special educational needs. When reviewing SEN provision, planning or commissioning alternative types of SEN provision or considering proposals for change, LAs **should** aim for a flexible range of provision and support that can respond to the special educational needs of individual pupils and parental preferences, rather than necessarily establishing broad categories of provision according to special educational need or disability. There are a number of initial considerations for LAs to take account of in relation to proposals for change. They **should** ensure that local proposals:

- a. take account of parental preferences for particular styles of provision or education settings;
- b. offer a range of provision to respond to the needs of individual children and young people, taking account of collaborative arrangements (including between special and mainstream), extended school and Children's Centre provision; regional centres (of expertise ) and regional and sub-regional provision; out of LA day and residential special provision;
- c. are consistent with the LA's Children and Young People's Plan;
- d. take full account of educational considerations, in particular the need to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum, including the National Curriculum, within a learning environment in which children can be healthy and stay safe;
- e. support the LA's strategy for making schools and settings more accessible to disabled children and young people and their scheme for promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people;
- f. provide access to appropriately trained staff and access to specialist support and advice, so that individual pupils can have the fullest possible opportunities to make progress in their learning and participate in their school and community;
- g. ensure appropriate provision for 14-19 year-olds, taking account of the role of local LSC funded institutions and their admissions policies; and
- h. ensure that appropriate full-time education will be available to all displaced pupils. Their statements of special educational needs will require amendment and all parental rights **must** be ensured. Other interested partners, such as the Health Authority **should** be involved.

4.54 Taking account of the considerations, as set out above, will provide assurance to local communities, children and parents that any reorganisation of SEN provision in their area is designed to improve on existing arrangements and enable all children to achieve the five Every Child Matters outcomes.

### The Special Educational Needs Improvement Test (Paragraph 4.55)

4.55 When considering any reorganisation of provision that would be recognised by the LA as reserved for pupils with special educational needs, including that which might lead to some children being displaced through closures or alterations, LAs, and all other proposers for new schools or new provision, will need to demonstrate to parents, the local community and Decision Makers how the proposed alternative arrangements are likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for children with special educational needs. All consultation documents and reorganisation plans that LAs publish and all relevant documentation LAs and other proposers submit to Decision Makers **should** show how the key factors set out in paragraphs 4.59 to 4.62 below have been taken into account by applying the SEN improvement test. Proposals which do not credibly meet these requirements **should not** be approved and Decision Makers **should** take proper account of parental or independent representations which question the LA's own assessment in this regard.

### Key Factors (Paragraphs 4.56-4.59)

4.56 When LAs are planning changes to their existing SEN provision, and in order to meet the requirement to demonstrate likely improvements in provision, they **should**:

- a. identify the details of the specific educational benefits that will flow from the proposals in terms of:
  - i. improved access to education and associated services including the curriculum, wider school activities, facilities and equipment, with reference to the LA's Accessibility Strategy;
  - ii. improved access to specialist staff, both education and other professionals, including any external support and/or outreach services;
  - iii. improved access to suitable accommodation; and
  - iv. improved supply of suitable places.
- b. LAs **should** also:
  - i. obtain a written statement that offers the opportunity for all providers of existing and proposed provision to set out their views on the changing pattern of provision seeking agreement where possible;
  - ii. clearly state arrangements for alternative provision. A 'hope' or 'intention' to find places elsewhere is not acceptable. Wherever possible, the host or alternative schools **should** confirm in writing that they are willing to receive pupils, and have or will have all the facilities necessary to provide an appropriate curriculum;
  - iii. specify the transport arrangements that will support appropriate access to the premises by reference to the LA's transport policy for SEN and disabled children; and
  - iv. specify how the proposals will be funded and the planned staffing arrangements that will be put in place.

4.57 It is to be noted that any pupils displaced as a result of the closure of a BESD school (difficulties with behavioural, emotional and social development) **should not** be placed long-term or permanently in a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) if a special school place is what they need. PRUs are intended primarily for pupils who have been excluded, although LAs can and do use PRU provision for pupils out of school for other reasons such as illness and teenage pregnancies. There may of course be pupils who have statements identifying that they have BESD who have been placed appropriately in a PRU because they have been excluded; in such cases the statement **must** be amended to name the PRU, but PRUs **should not** be seen as an alternative long-term provision to special schools.

4.58 The requirement to demonstrate improvements and identify the specific educational benefits that flow from proposals for new or altered provision as set out in the key factors are for all those who bring forward proposals for new special schools or for special provision in mainstream schools including governors of foundation schools and foundation special schools. The proposer needs to consider all the factors listed above.

4.59 Decision Makers will need to be satisfied that the evidence with which they are provided shows that LAs and/or other proposers have taken account of the initial considerations and all the key factors in their planning and commissioning in order to meet the requirement to demonstrate that the reorganisation or new provision is likely to result in improvements to SEN provision.

## **OTHER ISSUES**

### **Views of Interested Parties (Paragraph 4.60)**

4.60 The Decision Maker **should** consider the views of all those affected by the proposals or who have an interest in them including: pupils; families of pupils; staff; other schools and colleges; local residents; diocesan bodies and other providers; LAs; the LSC (where proposals affect 14-19 provision) and the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership if one exists, or any local partnership or group that exists in place of an EYDCP (where proposals affect early years and/or childcare provision). This includes statutory objections and comments submitted during the representation period. The Decision Maker **should not** simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view when considering representations made on proposals. Instead the Decision Maker **should** give the greatest weight to representations from those stakeholders likely to be most directly affected by the proposals.

## Appendix 4

### Application of the SEN Improvement Test to the Proposed Re-designation of Corley Centre

#### 1 Background

- 1.1 This In the DCSF document "Planning and Developing Special Educational Provision: A Guide for Local Authorities and Other Proposers" (DCSF, 2007) the Government set out guidance for Local Authorities and Other Proposers on planning and developing special educational provision. This guidance requires that when proposals are developed for reorganising or altering SEN provision LAs and/or other proposers will need to demonstrate to parents, the local community and decision makers how the proposed alternative arrangements are likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for children with special educational needs across the authority. The SEN Improvement Test sets out a number of factors that LAs and other decision makers should consider when determining statutory proposals to reorganise SEN provision.
- 1.2 This appendix applies the SEN Improvement Test to Coventry LA's proposal that Corley Centre changes from a Day/Residential Special School to a Day Special School and that in line with the 2010 review of special school funding this provides a more equitable distribution of financial resource across all the special schools in the City.
- 1.3 Local authorities are required to ensure equity across their special educational provision
- 1.4 "Within the context of any review or reorganisation of SEN provision LAs should be endeavouring to ensure equity and fairness across the authority. LAs and other decision makers need to appreciate that making changes to historic patterns of provision can be difficult to achieve as they may lead to a perceived reduction in the range of type of provision in one school or locality whilst ideally contributing to a greater and more appropriate range of provision across the authority or region. It should also be recognised that maintaining unnecessary provision may lead to unreasonable public expenditure which does not represent value for money. Reorganisation can, of course, release funding which can be used to invest in more effective provision." (Planning and Developing Special Educational Provision: A Guide for Local Authorities and Other Proposers, DCSF, 2007)

#### 2 Key Factors

As required through the SEN Improvement Test, details set out below show how the "Key Factors" have been taken into account in these proposals:

- 2.1 **Key factor 1: Improved access to education and associated services including the curriculum, wider school activities, facilities and equipment, with reference to the LA's Accessibility Strategy**
- 2.2 If the proposal is approved then, as with all other Coventry special schools, there would be an expectation that Corley will continue to run a programme of social and independence training as part of its core curriculum offer. This would ensure that all students attending the school had social and independence training integrated into their curriculum. Where the Children's Disability Team was also involved in providing

activities to further develop social and independence skills then these would complement that provision

- 2.3 Social and independence training is provided in all special schools in the City. If this re-designation were to go ahead then social and independence training would need to remain a feature of education for the students of Corley Centre, but it would not be provided through overnight stays at the Centre. Where overnight stays are required then these would be provided through the Short Breaks Service
- 2.4 For all students with special educational needs and disability and their families short breaks are available through the Children's Disability Team (CDT). The short breaks include activity sessions of two or three hours and overnight stays where this is appropriate. Social and independence training is built into most of these activities. Currently students at Corley are potentially able to access residential provision through both CDT and residential provision at Corley. There is therefore an issue of equity and equality of opportunity because residential provision at Corley is not available to any other children and young people attending other special schools or with similar needs across the City. Students at Corley do not necessarily have a higher level need for residential provision than other Coventry children and young people with SEN and disability.
- 2.5 The resources used to fund the residential provision are part of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) and therefore part of the ring-fenced education spend. If the proposal is approved it is intended that the funding released by this change of designation is used to support the further implementation of the SEN and inclusion strategy.
- 2.6 The implementation of the SEN and inclusion strategy will support improvements to the curriculum, wider schools activities, facilities and equipment
- 2.7 The Coventry Autism Support Service is working to improve access to extended day activities for all students with ASD via training and development (Coventry LA Accessibility Strategy – Action 2.31)
- 2.8 Key Factor 2: improved access to specialist staff, both education and other professionals, including any external support and/or outreach services.**
- 2.9 Implementation of the new broad spectrum school's formula will support improved access to specialist staff as it was based on an improved staffing model
- 2.10 The new funding formula for special schools delivers an appropriate level of funding to allow outreach and training functions to be developed and maintained. The funding provides an outreach service (1 teacher and 1 teaching assistant) to be provided from each of the broad spectrum schools and Woodfield School, to improve links with mainstream schools and support students with SEN who are educated within these schools. As part of Corley Centre, funding is already provided for the Coventry Autism Support Service which supports children and young people in Coventry who have an ASD diagnosis.
- 2.11 The proposed arrangements provide for children and young people with disability and their parents or carers to have access to a range of short breaks and thus access to other specialist staff and professionals. It supports closer collaboration between education and other staff in Children, Learning and Young People's Directorate. "Education staff should work with social care colleagues and consider (residential) placement policies that are consistent across the authority." (The SEN Improvement Test – Paragraph 43)

**2.12 Key factor 3: Improved access to suitable accommodation**

- 2.13 The revised distribution of financial resources for the City's special schools through the new funding formula and implementation of the SEN and inclusion strategy will support the future improvements to the accommodation for special needs students across the City
- 2.14 For children and young people with a disability and their parents or carers the Children's Disability Team (CDT) offers a range of short breaks through which social and independence skills can be further developed
- 2.15 Broad Park House, one of the CDT venues, was redeveloped in 2011. It combines a purpose-built residential short breaks unit for children aged 5-17 years with SEND with on-site activity rooms for community-based activities. A recent Ofsted inspection praised the involvement of children and young people with disabilities in the decision making and design process of the redevelopment. The new centre includes four purpose built bedrooms, two activity rooms for group events, young people's meetings and consultations. It also has a professional kitchen for independence and cooking skill activities. A range of social events also take place throughout the year and activities to support transitions and early intervention work. Specialist activities for children with higher level needs are also included

**2.16 Key factor 4: Improved supply of suitable places**

- 2.17 The new funding formula was developed to ensure that the LA had an appropriate level of special school places funded at a level appropriate to cater for the needs of the pupil population
- 2.18 Residential educational placements are still available where needed for students with an assessed need via the Statutory Assessment Process
- 2.19 Through its Strategy for Inclusion and SEN (2005), Coventry LA has developed a continuum of provision within the city for children with a wide range of SEND. For students with ASD Corley Centre was developed with a changed designation for children with complex social and communication needs and two enhanced resource bases in mainstream schools (one primary and one secondary) have been developed to date with a third planned for 2013
- 2.20 Whilst the proposal removes 27 residential places at Corley Centre it should be noted that there have been no Corley Centre students formally assessed as requiring residential education since 2006/2007 and none are anticipated in the future. The funding for Corley Centre's residential provision based on 27 places amounts to approximately £384,000 in 2010/11 (£344,000 if allowance is made for catering costs). The actual use of the budget is no longer in line with its intended purpose. The financial resource allocated for Corley's residential educational provision could be used to support children and young people with SEN and disability across the city especially at a time when there are significant pressures in other areas. There are clear equality of education and opportunity reasons for implementing the proposal and a strong value for money argument to support the case
- 2.21 Residential provision is available through short breaks provided by the Children's Disability Team (CDT) if required. Students with disability not attending Corley and their parents or carers are able to access residential provision through the central

Short Breaks programme provided by the CDT, if required. Students at Corley are potentially able to access residential provision through both CDT and residential provision at Corley. This gives an issue of equity and equality of opportunity because residential provision at Corley is not available to any other children and young people attending other special schools or with similar needs across the City. Students at Corley don't necessarily have a higher level need for residential provision than other Coventry children and young people with SEN and disability.

### **3 Additional requirements**

Additional requirements placed on the LA or Other Proposer are listed below

3.1 **Additional requirement (i):** Obtain a written statement that offers the opportunity for all providers of existing and proposed provision to set out their views on the changing pattern of provision seeking agreement where possible

3.2 The special school funding formula review consultation was undertaken at the end of 2010

3.3 Following Cabinet Member agreement on 21 September 2011 a public consultation on the proposal to change the designation of Corley School from Day/Residential Special School to Day Special School ran for 7 weeks, from 3 October 2011 to 20 November 2011 inclusive. This included meetings with:

- Parents and carers
- Students
- Teaching and support staff
- Governors of Corley Centre
- Heads and governors from other special schools.

A meeting had been arranged for head teachers, governors, staff, parents and students at mainstream schools, but there were no attendees

3.4 A copy of the consultation document was sent out to:

- Governors and staff at Corley Centre
- Parents and carers of students at Corley Centre
- Trade Unions
- Local Members of Parliament
- Ward Councillors
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Coventry Church of England Diocesan Education Authority
- All other Coventry schools - primary, secondary and special
- Corley Parish Council
- Libraries

A copy of the consultation document and on line response form was placed on the Coventry City Council web site.

3.5 Replies to the consultation could be sent in writing, by email or via the online survey on the Council web site.

3.6 **Additional requirement (ii):** Clearly state arrangements for alternative provision.

3.7 If the proposal is approved the City Council will be offering to meet with the affected parents of students at Corley collectively and individually to ensure that adequate arrangements continue to be made for their child's social and independence training.



- 3.8 For children and young people with disability and their parents or carers the Children's Disability Team (CDT) offers a range of short breaks through which social and independence skills can be further developed. If the proposal is approved then, as with all other Coventry special schools, there would be an expectation that Corley Centre will continue to run a programme of social and independence training as part of its core curriculum offer. This would ensure that all students attending the school had social and independence training integrated into their curriculum. Where the Children's Disability Team was also involved in providing activities to further develop social and independence skills then these would complement that provision. Social and independence training is provided in all special schools in the City. If this re-designation were to go ahead then social and independence training would need to remain a feature of education for the students of Corley Centre, but it would not be provided through overnight stays at the Centre.
- 3.9 **Additional requirement (iii):** Specify the transport arrangements that will support appropriate access to the premises by reference to the LA's transport policy for SEN and disabled children.
- 3.10 Home to school travel assistance will continue to be provided to students attending Corley Centre and other special schools in the city in line with the LA's transport policy. The Local Authority has also increased the size of its independent travel training team to support travel training, as part of the social and independence training, for Corley Centre and all the other special schools.
- 3.11 **Additional requirement (iv):** Specify how the proposals will be funded and the planned staffing arrangements that will be put in place.
- 3.12 The revised special school funding formula was implemented for Corley Centre, Woodfield and Castle Wood Special Schools from 1 April 2011. As a result Corley Centre received an additional £89,726 for 2011/12 for the day school provision.
- 3.13 If the proposal to change the designation of Corley Centre from Day/Residential Community Special School to Day Community Special School is approved by Cabinet, the school's governing body will initiate formal consultation with staff and the trade unions. The Council's Security of Employment Agreement, the Teachers Redeployment Scheme and Teachers National Pay and Conditions will be observed.

## Appendix 5

### Statutory Notice letters of representation

The following letter was enclosed with letters 1,3, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 18

#### STANDARD LETTER

1. The residential and extended day provision at Corley Centre is accessible to all students who attend Corley, except for those placed by Solihull and Warwickshire. If these students had access to the service then it would generate more income. Why has the council not explored the idea of developing the service so it is accessible to all students who attend Corley and those students across the city with an ASD diagnosis?
2. The consultation paper states that Corley is funded for 27 residential places. Since 2002 all of the residential provision has been based in one unit which only has capacity for 17 beds, unfortunately it does not have staffing levels to enable these 17 beds to be occupied each evening. At no point has any officer from the authority visited the residential unit, not only to see the quality of service it provides, but, also to see the capacity of students who can safely occupy it. There has been no increase in staffing in the residential unit despite the increasing needs of the students who use the service; many of them require individual support to reach their Independence targets.
3. A request from a Warwickshire parent last year for residence was refused by the city council - the reason given was that they wanted all the residential places to be for Coventry students.
4. Places are given through the annual review process following request from parents / carers or the student to work on specific social and independence targets. Residential places used to be included on the SEN, are EP's told not to include residence on the statement anymore? If a parent requests that a statement is amended to include residence would the authority agree to this change?
5. Residential provision may not be part of the statementing process but this does not mean that it is not a requirement for many students, as the continued requests from Annual Review prove. Parental Choice will be removed as many parents choose Corley because of its extended facilities.
6. The current unit is staffed as follows;  
1 full time Care Manager  
3 full time Residential Care Staff  
2 waking night staff (2 nights each)  
Staff from the catering team (5) and the cleaning team (4) also provides services to residence.
7. When a student is offered a place in residence or an extended day, parents and the student sign a contract to support the placement and ensure the student attends every week, unless they are ill or have a special family event. Places are reviewed termly (3 times per year) by the Care Staff team, with students contributing to the review.

8. Throughout the consultation process the information presented by the council in the official documents and in the press is incorrect. Actual figures are shown below. Guidance regarding numbers of staff on duty is taken from National Minimum Standards for Residential Special Schools as inspected by OFSTED.

Accommodation is available for 4 evenings per week, term time only. The usual length of stay is one or two evenings, in special circumstances this may be altered. Examples of how many students use this valued resource are;

Extended Day				Residence			
September 2011	January 2011	April 2011	September 2011	September 2011	January 2011	April 2011	September 2011
11	12	8	4	18	19	22	24

9. Generally students transfer to residence after they have experienced the provision through an extended day. More confident students may go straight into residence. Some students may never feel comfortable enough to make the transfer but still gain valuable skills through the extended day programme. The special needs of the students mean they struggle with change and the residential environment enables a consistency of provision that would not be available in other services. It is such a valued service that parents are still asking for their child to access the provision even though it is under review and therefore potentially very short term.

10. These numbers equate to approximately one third of the students who attend Corley, there are more beds available but the special needs of the students and the small staff team mean that we cannot increase the availability, however regular review means that we are able to work through the waiting list as more requests come in following Annual Review.

11. As well as their complex communication difficulty, many of our students also have additional medical needs requiring prescribed medication(s), for example, epilepsy so staff have to be vigilant and aware of each student's individual requirements.

12. Many of our students have never spent any time away from their families, but parents get to know and trust the school and staff and are comfortable to let their child sleep at school and to work on achieving greater independence and social skills with the residential team.

13. Previously, as part of the BSF programmes Corley was to have a new building on the Cardinal Newman site. At the time the school governors would not go ahead with the proposals for the re-build until the residential provision was included in the plans. If it was thought that there would still be a need for residence in 2015, why is that not still relevant today?

14. Corley Centre residence and extended day provides a nurturing environment in which students can rediscover their ability to learn and to enjoy and achieve. No other Coventry school is able to offer this service and any other support for families, provided by the CDT, such as the short breaks service, is very limited. Clifton House only accommodates 3 children at a time with 2 or 3 staff, the other option being Broad Park House, which claims to work with 60 families and have 4 bedrooms, according to their website. Bradbury House is funded by the Health service and offers short breaks to students with a physical disability. However we have been told that none of the money saved at Corley will go into short breaks and so there will be even less provision for special needs students and their families. Families of students who attend Corley have been told about the short breaks service but are finding it difficult to identify the criteria their child needs to meet in order to access the service, especially the residential part. We do not believe the short breaks service will be able to match the residential experience offered at Corley, and the number of beds available would suggest that they will not be able to accommodate the number of students who require this extra level of support

15. The consultation states that the present set up at Corley places students who attend other schools in Coventry as having a less than equal opportunity to attend the residential provision. At no point has a request been made to offer the service to other special needs students who attend these schools. The staffing levels could be increased to broaden rather than close the provision. There is likely to be extra resources placed on other services

16. We strongly challenge the interpretation of other children having 'less equal opportunity' to attend Corley. The decision not to open this facility to other students is a council decision that could easily be changed. One individual's disability is not worth less than another's and the Council's approach appears to be that services for one group need to be destroyed to enable another's to be enhanced. Does this breach equalities legislation? Why are we closing the only specialist residential provision for children with ASD resulting in lower levels of provision rather than maintaining this excellent resource?

17. A budget breakdown received from the Director of the Centre clearly shows that the closure of the residential provision will not result in a saving of £384k. It actually shows that at least 50% of funding is used to enhance day time provision at the school. Therefore the closure of residential provision will not only affect 'out of hours' provision but also after school clubs and core daytime activities. Despite numerous requests we have not seen a 'true' breakdown of how much it actually costs to run residence at Corley.

18. Since December 2011 Corley Centre has had an updated website, nowhere does it mention that Corley has a residential and extended day provision, despite the consultation and proposal period not being finished, it looks like the service has already been deleted from the school.

19. We have been assured that students will continue to be provided with independence and social skills training as part of the regular school curriculum, and, that it is timetabled in other special schools. No evidence has been provided to show how this works in practice.

20. Throughout the proposal documentation there is a lot of talk about equity of provision and yet the results from the first consultation stage are definitely not equal with views from those opposing and those in favour of the changes, those in favour have several paragraphs of explanation, those against only appear to warrant a few bullet points.

21. If Corley loses its residential provision and the money saved is distributed to the other special schools, the amount per school will not make anything like the impact that it is able to do at Corley, it appears that Corley's residential provision is being sacrificed to make the figures balance in the, new formula, special schools budget.

Ofsted inspects the residential provision at Corley annually. All reports are accessible via the Ofsted website. Since the inspections began we have been judged as good with some outstanding areas.

Below is a section from the last inspection report;

Corley is a good school that cares for students well and provides them with a wide range of positive experiences and opportunities. The extended day and residential provision make a good contribution to the provision for those students who choose to take part. Parents and carers welcome the way in which the school enables their children to settle, feel safe and succeed. Students are enthusiastic about their education. The school is well led and has a good capacity to improve further.

The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and the impact of the improvements that the director and the leadership team have made over time. The chair is dedicated and well informed. He frequently visits the school and listens to students' views. The governing body also monitors effectively the welfare of the students who attend the boarding provision.

The quality of boarding is good and meets all key national minimum standards. The recommendations from the last inspection have all been addressed.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good.

Policy, procedure and good practice help students to know that their individual and diverse needs will be met. The provision for being healthy is good. Students enjoy good physical, emotional and mental health. They lead healthy lifestyles and are encouraged to make healthy choices. All students have a simple and straightforward health plan that provides clear information about how their health needs are assessed and met by staff. There are good safe procedures for storage and administration of medication. Students enjoy healthy, nutritious meals that take account of their health and dietary requirements.

The provision for staying safe is also good. Security in the boarding provision is good and the atmosphere is calm and safe. Students' safety and well-being are monitored and promoted and staff provide good supervision both on and off the premises. This is additionally bolstered by good individualised risk assessments which are reviewed as circumstances change. Students' behaviour is good. Staff set safe, consistent and understandable boundaries which students understand.

Communication between adults and students is good.

Helping students to enjoy their boarding experience and achieve their potential is outstanding. Students benefit from attending residential or extended days because they follow individual programmes leading to an appropriate level of independence. These programmes cover self-care and include personal hygiene, laundry and cooking skills, budgeting of pocket money and saving. Training on how to travel safely is also included especially for older students. Part of the overall programme is to promote students' social interaction on and off the school site, with age-appropriate activities. One of the key strengths is the wide range of evening activities including swimming, bowling, cycling and football. One student commented, 'I like doing all sorts of things and meeting different people and having a good time.' Staff capitalise effectively on this level of enthusiasm from students.

The provision for helping students to make a positive contribution to their life in school is good. Students have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school. The 24-hour curriculum concentrates on teaching self-help skills, leisure activities in both the residential and the wider community, and promoting independence. This helps students to make good progress in school.

Parents and carers are well informed about their child's progress and experiences during their time in residential boarding. Students have unrestricted access to telephone contact with their parents and carers. Lengths of stays are short to ensure that students do not spend long periods of time away from home.

The provision for economic well-being is good. Students enjoy a good standard of residential provision. Students have a choice of single bedrooms or shared rooms with partitions so that their space can be private. Students can personalise their rooms and this is actively encouraged. Students can bathe and take care of their personal needs with privacy and dignity. They have access to a good range of recreational resources such as console games and board games.

The provision for organisation is good. Parents, carers, significant stakeholders and students are given a good level of information about the boarding provision and the school. Students benefit from good communication between boarding staff and educational staff and this means that staff are well informed about daily events and students' progress. Students are looked after by staff that understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently.

Staff are qualified, they attend regular professional training, receive supervision and an annual appraisal. This is underpinned by the care manager who provides excellent day-to-day managerial oversight.

Students and staff enjoy the stability of an efficiently run school.

LETTER 2

30.1.12.

To whom it may concern  
I am writing to raise an objection to the proposal of Corley Residential unit  
I have worked as a member of staff for 8 years.

I feel the consultation process has been unfair as other options to the closure have not been investigated and we have not been supported appropriately, often hearing what is happening through local news. I feel many of the questions raised on our behalf have not been recognized or answered and that the process is "for" the closure. Any information we have had is incorrect and this is detrimental to us as the figures / beds etc have been recorded as far lower than everyone has been lead to believe and the cost far greater.

I feel the young people will be affected as any information asked for about the staff benefits has not been answered and feel they will not be offered the service in independent social training and travel training.


The children who attend Corley Residential provision have complex communication difficulties that need a specific educational programme that we provide in a familiar setting offering them continuity.

Yours Sincerely



Letters 1 and 18 were submitted by GMB and Unite respectively

LETTER 3  
LETTERS 1 & 18  
SAME CONTENT

  
West Midlands  
Coventry District Branch  
Room 11  
The Koco Building  
The Arches  
Spon End  
COVENTRY  
CV1 3JQ

10 February 2012

**"For Public Services NOT Private Profit"**

Ms Michelle Salmon  
Governance Services  
Coventry City Council  
Council House  
Earl Street  
Coventry  
CV1 5RR

Dear Michelle

**Proposal to Change the Designation of Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School from Residential and Day Special School to Day Special School**

We object to the proposal to change the designation of Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School Residential and Day Special School to Day Special School on the following grounds;

1. The consultation process has not made it explicit that a large amount of the funding will be removed from Day School provision and not just Residential provision. Due to the fact that some of the funding for residential provision has been used to fund mainstream school provision, there will inevitably be a detriment to the mainstream school provision if the proposed change of designation takes place. Therefore the proposal does not and subsequent documents do not truly reflect the full impact on the school.

**"For Public Services, not Private Profit"**

Telephone:- 024 7667 9475 E-Mail: [office@unisoncoventry.co.uk](mailto:office@unisoncoventry.co.uk)

Fax: 024 7667 4623

2. While we acknowledge that the consultation is on the change of designation of the Special School, the proposed change will impact on the mainstream school due to the funding arrangement noted above. Therefore, the full impact of the proposal has not been shared with all interested parties i.e., parents, staff, community etc, raising questions about peoples understanding of the change and whether they have been misled.

3 How robust is a consultation process that only consults about half the information and impact.

4 The information provided (see appendices) was not included in the consultation leading to a flawed process.

Yours sincerely

Richard Harty  
Corporate Representative

## LETTER 4

**Salmon, Michelle**

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**From:**  
**Sent:** 13 February 2012 11:16  
**To:** Salmon, Michelle  
**Subject:** re: Corley Centre proposal

I object to the proposal to change the designation of Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School Residential and Day Special School to Day Special School.

The consultation process has failed to acknowledge the numerous ways students at Corley Centre benefit from the residential service. Why can't students from other schools access what is already in place at Corley Centre? Why can't Warwick and Solihull authorities be invited to buy places in residence as they already do in the school? Of course students from other special schools should be able to access such a service, but why should this be at the expense of Corley Centre? The last Ofsted report was indeed glowing, surely therefore what is currently provided at Corley Centre should instead be opened up for other students to benefit from?

The greater emphasis on students at Corley Centre working towards passing GCSEs means that the school itself simply won't be able to take on the social and independence training currently done by the residential facility. In addition, the consultation process hasn't made a distinction between a residential service and a respite service- a 'short breaks service' cannot replace the input students who benefit from residence at Corley currently receive. The authority says that no student at Corley Centre currently has a requirement on their statement for residential education- are the staff at Corley Centre not in the best position to judge whether students they work require a residential education? Is this not what annual reviews are for?

The consultation process has also completely failed to take account of the impact the removal of the residential budget would have on the school itself. Even students who do not directly access the residential facility benefit from the after school clubs which are paid for out of this budget. Then there is the issue of staff wages and who in the school has part of their salary paid from the residential budget- again the information has not been forthcoming.

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LETTER 5

26-01-12 .

To whom it may concern .

As someone with a personal issue in this matter, I feel I must write to give you my views .

Why not open it up to other special schools in the area - expand this good unique service rather than close it .

Also is it fair that Councillor Kelly, as a special school Governor, leads this process, bearing in mind that this and other special schools would benefit if Residence at Corley closes .

I feel the consultation process has been unfair, it seems that rather than looking at different options, it has been the plan to close Corley Residence regardless of the arguments against this .

I hope you will again look at this matter and agree that we cannot allow the closure of Corley Residence .

Yours Faithfully

## LETTER 6

January 30<sup>th</sup> 2012.

To whom it may concern.

I work at Corley Centre in the residential unit so have a personal interest in seeing it remain open.

I do not believe that the short breaks service will provide Corley students, should they meet the criteria, with the same level of independence and social skills training that the school is able to offer.

The budget breakdown shows that not all of the £384k is spent on the residential service; however it has proven impossible to get an actual figure for the running costs and salaries associated with residence.

The attached documents show how the residential staff team feel about the proposal; the impact of its closure may affect the staffing structure across the whole centre.

Councillor Lynette Kelly is a governor of another Coventry Special School, please can you point out to me where she has declared this because we have been told that the other special schools will see an increase in their budgets if Corley residence closes - is this a conflict of interest?

Both staff and students are very unsettled throughout this difficult time and we would all wish for a resolution that safeguards all involved.

Yours sincerely,

LETTER 7

27.1.12.

To whom it may concern,

I feel that I must raise an objection to the proposed closure of the residential provision at Corley School. I have worked as a member of the residential care staff for twenty six years.

Although I realise that according to the pupils' statements, there is no need for any of them to have residential care, the professionals at school who work with them every day, all year, identify the need for social skills and independence training to be provided to further enhance their education and quality of life.

The money saved from closing residence would apparently be used for the other special schools in the city, this is discrimination against the special needs children at Corley who have complex communication difficulties that cannot be addressed effectively without the specific individual educational programmes that the residential facility provides.

The short break service cannot hope to provide the same degree of social training.

Students from other schools could access the residential unit at Corley to make this valuable and unique service more equitable.

I feel the whole consultation process has been unfair as other options to closure

have not been considered and the number of people who have supported us have not had their views taken into consideration in this process.

Many questions that we have posed to councillors have not been adequately answered.

yours faithfully,

## LETTER 8

To whom it may concern,

As an employee who has worked for the authority for 31 years, I would like to submit a written objection to the proposed closure of the residential unit at Corley Centre.

The consultation process has been based on inaccurate information and despite numerous requests for an actual breakdown of the cost of the residential unit, this has still not been given by the council.

The residential unit gives good value for money. I feel this is a unique resource and that the council could develop this resource by making it available to other children in mainstream or special schools with ASD in Coventry, or the neighbouring authorities. Indeed, income from one child's placement from without Coventry would more than pay for the costs of this unit.

In the proposal of a child from Coventry 'requires residential education this will be provided outside Coventry' but at what cost? A ball park figure for this would be about £300K per annum which is more than the cost of the current facility at Corley which provides care and social interaction skills for on average over '20' children per week.

Alternative provision within the city - Short Breaks Service - is based on certain criteria which a lot of the current children would not be able to access.

Another objection is the unfair representation of respondents in the consultation process, where whole paragraphs have been cited for those in agreement with the proposal to close the facility, but only 'bullet points' for those undecided or against the proposal! Is this a fair representation of views from respondents?? It doesn't appear so!!



Overall, I know I have a personal vested interest regarding the closure but I feel Coventry will lose a unique resource which has been very consistent in good results from Ofsted and previously CSCI inspections. The figures quoted give an unfair portrayal of the costs of residence alone and surely there needs to be more research into the Impact on the school and other services throughout Coventry. Rather than close the facility the Council could become proactive in promoting the facility and utilising it cost effectively.

Yours sincerely,

21-2-12

LETTERS 9.2.10

## **Response to Proposal to change the designation of Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School from Residential and Day Special School to Day Special School**

We believe that the proposal is flawed and the following reasons for our objection must be properly and fully addressed and responded to by Coventry Local Authority. The Decision Makers Guidance state that Proposals can be withdrawn at any point before a decision is taken. This particular Proposal appears to flout these guidelines and accordingly we request that the Proposal is withdrawn immediately. Our reasons are contained in the pages which follow:

### Alteration description (page 4)

This does not fully describe the range of difficulties and diagnoses of students at Corley Centre. There is a clear implication that, as having a diagnosis of ASD, the students no longer warrant residential education. This is misleading as in fact many of the students also have learning difficulties to various degrees and often other medical conditions. This makes it even more important that they are provided with all appropriate provision to develop their social and independence skills. Even a diagnosis of ASD on its own will mean that the students have considerable needs arising from their social and communication difficulties and residential education may be the most appropriate and effective way to help them to work towards semi-independence.

### Changing in boarding arrangements (page 5)

This part of the document states that 'no students at Corley Centre have a Statement of Special Educational Needs indicating a requirement for residential education and none are foreseen...'

This is incorrect as the students have been assessed by the school as needing residential education to improve their social, independence and self care skills. Coventry Local Authority has a deliberate policy not to specify residence in the students' statements and this is contrary to the Code of Practice guidelines, which states that a statement must specify 'where residential accommodation is appropriate, that fact'. We are unable to understand how Coventry Local Authority can presume that residential education will not be required in future, unless they are intending that the 'need' for residence is to be managed by continued omissions from Statements of Special Educational Need.

In addition, the information provided on page 6 of the document seems to infer that the Children's Disability Team (CDT) will be able to meet the future needs. However, the consultation failed to provide details of how CDT would be able to provide adequate capacity when demands on the service are already high. CDT does not provide autistic specific educational provision, which would be a suitable substitution for residence. It has not been explained how the children's Statements of Special Educational Needs would be amended to reflect any change in provision arrangements. In

addition, Coventry Local Authority has informally consulted with children, staff and stakeholders but we have still no evidence that there has been a full audit or analysis of the needs of the families and children affected and the potential effects on them if the proposal goes ahead.

The document mentions transition plans setting 'clear targets, timescales and specific activities spanning all sources of support including parents and carers, Corley Centre and the Short Breaks Service...reviewed on a termly basis for at least the first year of the new arrangements', but it does not state how such a plan would be included within the Statement of Special Educational Needs or whether it would continue after the first year. Coventry Local Authority has confirmed that Corley Centre residence and CDT Short Breaks are not comparable services and so residence cannot be replaced by Short Breaks.

On page 7 it states that 'the residential provision at Corley Centre is only available to Corley centre students.' We are not aware of a proper and full evaluation of alternatives and a genuine consultation would have sought views on the range of possibilities. We now understand that Coventry Local Authority has approached Solihull and Warwickshire regarding the possibility of their purchasing residential places at Corley Centre and those neighbouring local authorities have apparently stated that they do not wish to do so. However, it appears that no work was evidenced about this possibility until several months after the consultation period had ended and until after the Statutory Notice had been issued.

#### Consultation

Page 8 refers to '11 (d) a statement that all applicable statutory requirements in relation to the proposals to consult were complied with.'

We have been advised by Marian Simpson, Senior Officer SEN Management Services, on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2012 that the documents used were Decision Makers' Guidance for making changes to a maintained Mainstream School. However, we find it alarming that this guidance has not been followed in the following areas:

4.20 It has not been shown that the proposal will lead to the raising of local standards of provision, i.e. at Corley Centre. The Local Authority must also 'pay particular attention to the effects on children that tend to underperform.'

4.21 It has not been demonstrated that Alternative provision (which has not been specified) will meet the SEN Improvement Test.

4.24 The Decision Maker should consider how proposals will help every child...achieve their potential in accordance with 'Every Child Matters' principles... This has not been demonstrated.

4.28 No information has been provided concerning alternative current and future boarding arrangements.

4.53a Contrary to guidance, parental preferences have been largely ignored.

4.53 b. The Local Authority should ensure that local proposals 'offer a range of provision to respond to the needs of individual children and young people...taking account of residential special provision.'

4.53 c. The Local Authority has not demonstrated how the local proposal is 'consistent with the L A's Children and Young People's Plan.'

4.53 h. When reviewing SEN provision, the Local Authority should ensure that 'their Statements of SEN will require amendment and all parental rights must be ensured.' It has not been discussed how Statements will be amended.

4.54 'Any reorganisation of SEN Provision...is designed to improve on existing arrangements...' This has not been demonstrated.

4.56 The terms of this guidance has been breached as follows:

The guidance requests the local authority to:

'a Identify the details of the specific educational benefits that will flow from the proposals in terms of:

- i. Improved access to education and associated services...wider school activities...
- ii. Improved access to specialist staff...
- iii. Improved access to suitable accommodation
- iv. Improved the supply of suitable places'

The Local Authority has been unable to demonstrate these benefits to Corley Centre students.

b ii. The local Authority has breached guidance as it has not clearly stated arrangements for alternative provision.

4.58 'The requirement to demonstrate improvements and identify the specific educational benefits that flow from new or altered provision' has not been met in respect of Corley Centre students.

4.59 'Decision Makers will need to be satisfied that the evidence with which they are provided shows that LAs and/or other proposers have taken account of the initial considerations and all the key factors in their planning and commissioning in order to meet the requirement to demonstrate that the reorganisation or new provision is likely to result in improvements to SEN provision.' This has not been demonstrated in respect of Corley Centre students.

4.60 Greatest weight has not been given to those stakeholders most directly affected.

Page 9 (b) the minutes of all public consultation meetings are referred to for reference. However, these minutes have been heavily edited and do not reflect properly the content of the meetings and are therefore misleading and inadequate.

Page 9 (c) the views of the persons consulted.

77% of the respondents did not support the proposal. This has not been taken into consideration when the decision was made by the Cabinet Member for Education on 20 December 2011 to approve the proposal. The views of the children and families/stakeholders likely to be most affected

were largely ignored. The 13 Coventry head teachers who supported the proposal were aware that their schools were in line to benefit directly from the proposal which would release funding to their schools at Corley Centre's expense. Since the proposal cannot prove how the change in provision will maintain or improve the 'standard, quality or range of provision' it clearly fails the SEN Improvement Test.

We do not feel that it is allowable for other mainstream or special schools to benefit at Corley Centre's expense. The closure of residence is also likely to impact negatively on the provision of extended day, after-school and catering arrangements and no details or assurances have been provided to us in these areas.

Page 13 states that it is requested that: (h) where the provision will replace existing educational provision for children with special educational needs, a statement as to how the local education authority believes that the new provision is likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and range of the educational provision for such children.' The answer given by the Coventry Local Authority is 'not applicable'. This again refers to the SEN Improvement Test which also states that "Proposals which do not credibly meet these requirements should not be approved and decision makers should take proper account of parental or independent representations which question the local authority's own assessment in this regard."

**Therefore in our view the Proposal should not proceed.**

Page 18 of the proposal document refers to:-

Extended services

23. It is confirmed that 'Corley Centre will provide a range of extended services'. However, no details have been given and no assurances provided as to whether the 'range' will be comparable or greatly reduced. We have already asked for information as to how the closing of residence will affect extended day, after-school clubs and catering arrangements, but we have been unable to obtain detailed answers or assurances and are lead to believe that they may be threatened.

#### Appendix 2-Minutes of Consultation Meeting 5 October 2011

It is clear from the minutes that confusion was apparent over the sudden stance of Coventry Local Authority that the residential provision at the school was not needed and that residence was omitted from Statements of Special Educational Need. There was also concern expressed over the impact of closure of residence on the children and families likely to be affected and no details were provided to assure these stakeholders. It is unclear how the funding has been allowed to continue for residential provision where apparently 'there is no longer a requirement.'

It is also mentioned in the minutes that with regard to 'some children' 'As the school have assessed them as needing the residential facility it should be written into their statements' and yet the Local Authority representative has answered by implying that there is not a need, which contradicts the school's opinion. Where local authority and school are in conflict it creates considerable confusion.

Minutes of Consultation Meeting 12 October 2011, 2:30pm

We would refer to the costs quoted of £384,000 as the 'total amount' that the school receives in its annual budget for the residential provision. This figure has since been shown to be inflated and detailed figures have still not been made available to us.

The minutes refer to assessments by educational psychologists and infer that these form the basis of assessment for residential education. However, not all children at Corley Centre who access residence have had a recent educational psychological review and in at least one case, the child has not seen an educational psychologist for 10 years but has recently been assessed by the school as needing residence. The true situation is far removed from the picture painted of residence being subject to educational psychologist approval/assessment. In reality the students are actually identified at annual review by the school as suitable for residential education to meet their social and independence targets. The Local Authority is implying that the school is incapable of making evidence-based assessments. This is dishonest and confusing.

Once again, these minutes demonstrate that full financial costings have not been provided and gives no detail of how CDT will provide social and independence training, or how they will be able to meet demand.

Minutes of Consultation Meeting 12 October 2011, 3:30 pm

Again, the minutes show that the impact on the school if residence is closed is yet to be revealed. No detail is given of how social and independence training will be provided during the day and/or extended day. With regard to 'transport training' the Local Authority merely state that 'this will need to be looked into' and no details are provided.

It is also apparent that the residence issue is financially driven and follows the 'Special School Funding Review'. It does not seem correct that provision is taken away on financial grounds although the children's educational needs have not reduced.

Minutes of Consultation Meeting, 12 October 2011, 7pm

The minutes refer to 'a letter from an absent parent' but do not state the content of the letter. Given the significance of the points made in that letter this renders the minutes incomplete and inaccurate. Once again, it can be deduced from these minutes that:

1. The financial information is not adequate
2. The Local Authority states that the school 'only provides for students with a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder'
3. The Local Authority states that there have been 'no students with MLD at Corley'
4. No assurances are provided concerning the afterschool clubs and extended day provision
5. The Local Authority disagrees with the school over the need for residency
6. The Local Authority has confirmed that residency is different to respite through CDT

Minutes of Consultation Meeting, 19 October 2011, 6pm

Once again, inaccuracies are contained concerning the diagnoses of students at Corley Centre. An inflated figure of £384,000 is again used as 'the funding that Corley receives for the residential provision.' Roger Lickfold was asked whether the change for Corley students would be 'better for them. He was unable to confirm that this would be the case.

Minutes of Consultation Meeting, 10 November 2011, 2.15pm

Once again, Roger Lickfold stated that 'Corley now has only students with a diagnosis of ASD.' This is incorrect. He also states 'Also there are no students with moderate learning difficulties at Corley.' Again this is incorrect.

## LETTER 11

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**From:**  
**Sent:** 21 February 2012 14:59  
**To:**  
**Subject:** FW: Residential closure at Corley Centre

Governance Services Officer,  
Governance Services,  
Customer and Workforce Services Directorate, Coventry City Council,  
CH59, Council House, Earl Street,  
Coventry CV1 5RR  
Telephone: 024 7683 3076  
Fax: 024 7683 3266  
[www.coventry.gov.uk](http://www.coventry.gov.uk)  
Documents for Coventry City Council meetings can now be found at  
<http://cmis.coventry.gov.uk/CMISWebpublic/>

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**Sent:** 20 February 2012 14:52  
**To:** Salmon, Michelle  
**Subject:** Residential closure at Corley Centre

1

A/o Michelle Salmon,

I object to the proposal to change the designation of Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School Residential and Day Special School to Day Special School on the following grounds;

1. The consultation process has not made it explicit that a large amount of the funding will be removed from Day School provision and not just Residential provision. Due to the fact that some of the funding for residential provision has been used to fund mainstream school provision, there will inevitably be a detriment to the mainstream school provision if the proposed change of designation takes place. Therefore the proposal does not and subsequent documents do not truly reflect the full impact on the school.

2. While we acknowledge that the consultation is on the change of designation of the special school, the proposed change will impact on the mainstream school due to the funding arrangement noted above. Therefore, the full impact of the proposal has not been shared with all interested parties i.e., parents, staff, community etc, raising questions about peoples understanding of the change and whether they have been misled.

3 How robust is a consultation process that only consults about half the information and impact.

4 The information provided (see appendices) was not included in the consultation leading to a flawed process.



Ofsted inspects the residential provision at Corley annually. All reports are accessible via the Ofsted website. Since the inspections began we have been judged as good with some outstanding areas.

Below is a section from the last inspection report;

Corley is a good school that cares for students well and provides them with a wide range of positive experiences and opportunities. The extended day and residential provision make a good contribution to the provision for those students who choose to take part. Parents and carers welcome the way in which the school enables their children to settle, feel safe and succeed. Students are enthusiastic about their education. The school is well led and has a good capacity to improve further.

The governing body has a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, and the impact of the improvements that the director and the leadership team have made over time. The chair is dedicated and well informed. He frequently visits the school and listens to students' views. The governing body also monitors effectively the welfare of the students who attend the boarding provision.

The quality of boarding is good and meets all key national minimum standards. The recommendations from the last inspection have all been addressed.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good.

Policy, procedure and good practice help students to know that their individual and diverse needs will be met. The provision for being healthy is good. Students enjoy good physical, emotional and mental health. They lead healthy lifestyles and are encouraged to make healthy choices. All students have a simple and straightforward health plan that provides clear information about how their health needs are assessed and met by staff. There are good safe procedures for storage and administration of medication. Students enjoy healthy, nutritious meals that take account of their health and dietary requirements.

The provision for staying safe is also good. Security in the boarding provision is good and the atmosphere is calm and safe. Students' safety and well-being are monitored and promoted and staff provide good supervision both on and off the premises. This is additionally bolstered by good individualised risk assessments which are reviewed as circumstances change. Students' behaviour is good. Staff set safe, consistent and understandable boundaries which students understand.

Communication between adults and students is good.

Helping students to enjoy their boarding experience and achieve their potential is outstanding. Students benefit from attending residential or extended days because they follow individual programmes leading to an appropriate level of independence. These programmes cover self-care and include personal hygiene, laundry and cooking skills, budgeting of pocket money and saving. Training on how to travel safely is also included especially for older students. Part of the overall programme is to promote students' social interaction on and off the school site, with age-appropriate activities. One of the key strengths is the wide range of evening activities including swimming, bowling, cycling and football. One student commented, 'I like doing all sorts of things and meeting different people and having a good time.' Staff capitalise effectively on this level of enthusiasm from students.

The provision for helping students to make a positive contribution to their life in school is good. Students have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school. The 24-hour curriculum concentrates on teaching self-help skills, leisure activities in both the residential and the wider community, and promoting independence. This helps students to make good progress in school.

Parents and carers are well informed about their child's progress and experiences during their time in residential boarding. Students have unrestricted access to telephone contact with their parents and carers. Lengths of stays are short to ensure that students do not spend long periods of time away from home.

The provision for economic well-being is good. Students enjoy a good standard of residential provision. Students have a choice of single bedrooms or shared rooms with partitions so that their space can be private. Students can personalise their rooms and this is actively encouraged. Students can bathe and take care of their personal needs with privacy and dignity. They have access to a good range of recreational resources such as console games and board games.

The provision for organisation is good. Parents, carers, significant stakeholders and students are given a good level of information about the boarding provision and the school. Students benefit from good communication between boarding staff and educational staff and this means that staff are well informed about daily events and students' progress. Students are looked after by staff that understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently.

Staff are qualified, they attend regular professional training, receive supervision and an annual appraisal. This is underpinned by the care manager who provides excellent day-to-day managerial oversight.

Students and staff enjoy the stability of an efficiently run school.

Yours sincerely,

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This e-mail has been scanned for all viruses by Star Internet. The service is powered by MessageLabs.

## LETTER 12

To whom it may concern,

I write to make a formal closing proposal objection in relation to the Corley Residential Service. As a parent of a child who currently attends Corley and regularly uses the overnight stay service I was rather shocked and angry to hear about the proposed plans to close down a service valued so much.

Autistic children, as you may know, find it extremely hard to socialise with new people and in alien surroundings, they use this overnight service which is based at a school they attend and they feel comfortable. You propose to terminate this service and offer new ones, which I feel like you are not putting their needs first. These children have gotten into a routine, in which they are happy with, and for some children, it is the only time they are away from the home. Taking away this opportunity will therefore mean that these children will have no reason to go out and become independent young people.

These children are our priorities and their futures are in your hands, saving the Corley Residential Service means saving these children who are in need! Closing the Corley Residential Centre will compromise the quality of lives of these young people!

A day to remember, whether it be happy or sad, depending on whether you decide to keep it open or close it – It's your choice!

Yours Faithfully,

### Letter 13

21 February 2012

Dear Cllr Kelly

#### Objection to the Proposed closure of Corley Centre residence

I would like to make an objection to the proposal to the change of designation of Corley Centre from residential and day special school to day special school. I believe your proposal is flawed and feel despite all the consultations, parents, staff and children's views, concerns and questions have not been fully addressed and been responded to. I have been to several of the consultations and each time members of the local authority have been ill prepared and unable to fully answer questions.

My son attends Corley and has been assessed by school during his annual reviews as requiring a residential place to improve his social, independence and self-care skills. He was not assessed by an Educational Psychologist and has not had an assessment in the last 11 years. The need for residential provision has not been put into his Statement of Special Educational Need. Therefore from the authority's point of view, if it is not in the Statement then there is not a need for provision. This contradicts the school's view. There is an increasing need for this type of provision. That is the main reason I decided to send my son to Corley because of the provision, otherwise I would have fought to get him a placement at an out of city, specialist residential provision, which would be extremely costly to the authority. My son has a diagnosis of ASD, complex social and communication difficulties, additional learning difficulties and medical needs. The proposal that the council are putting forward suggests that these types of children no longer attend Corley!

I have still cannot understand why the specialist residential provision cannot be offered to other SEN children in the city. This question has been asked of the authority at the consultation meetings without a satisfactory response. I have a child with ASD in a mainstream secondary school who would greatly benefit from the opportunities that are offered at Corley. Neighbouring authorities also may be interested in the provision provided at Corley. Has the viability of these alternative options been thoroughly explored to help self-finance Corley residence? If the provision was available to the wider community it would offer equal opportunities to all disabled children.

I'm still unclear about what alternative provision will replace residence and how my son's needs will be met. His needs will not disappear even if the provision does. My son is unable to access provision provided by CDT because he suffers from severe levels of anxiety and needs to be a safe, familiar environment with staff that are specially trained to understand his needs and disability. This provision is not offer by the CDT. Corley provides this provision for my son and others like him.

I am objecting to the proposal because it has not been properly explained to parents and just doesn't make sense. It would be devastating for students, staff and parents if the local

authority closes this wonderful resource. The transition into adulthood is a difficult time; these vulnerable young people with complex social and communication need to be skilled and prepared for navigating an every changing and confusing world. Corley residence is invaluable in helping to prepare and guide them.

I hope that the local authority will see sense and reconsider the proposal because to lose a facility like this in the city would be extremely short sighted and shattering for Corley Centre and its community.

I look forward to hearing your response.

Yours sincerely

## Letter 14

To whom it may concern,

I would like to object to the proposed closure of Corley residence. This is because the Local Authority have said that no one at Corley has MLD when I know that I have because I have seen it in my statement. Also I know that other people also have MLD in this school. This is why it is still needed.

Yours sincerely

Student at Corley

**Letter 15**

21st February 2012

Coventry Local Authority,

Dear Cllr Kelly

Re. Proposal to change the designation of Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School

Dear Cllr Kelly,

As a parent of a child who attends Corley School, I am against this proposal. Whilst I am aware that there are cuts to funding across the public sector, removing the ability for the less fortunate in our region to be able to receive the appropriate support they need, and in this case Corley students opportunity in gaining the benefit of a residential place in their school, is a step too far.

The likelihood of my son being able to be a councillor as yourself is unlikely, and he, unknowingly sometimes, will rely on those who care about him most to fight on his behalf for the opportunities in life that the more fortunate of us take for granted. And that is why I write.

It is with thanks to all the staff at Corley, teachers and support staff alike, who make the school a vibrant and happy place for students to develop. The opportunity to extend that learning overnight in familiar surroundings can be a step on their journey into maturity.

Whilst I recognise that the local authority provides residency in other facilities, my understanding is that they are aimed more at providing respite for parents and guardians, not a learning experience that for some Corley students is a small but significant step towards some form of independent living.

However, it appears that the economics of supporting my son and others at Corley doesn't necessarily fall in line with the view of the local authority.

If your plans do go ahead, then I will have to try to satisfy myself with the feeling that my son's tomorrows have helped pay towards the authority's budget of today.

Yours faithfully

## LETTER 16

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**From:**  
**Sent:** 23 February 2012 11:45  
**To:**  
**Subject:** fw: CORLEY PROPOSAL OBJECTIONS

wrote:

**From:**  
**Subject:** Fw: CORLEY PROPOSAL OBJECTIONS  
**To:** michelle.salmon@coventry.gov.uk  
**Date:** Thursday, 23 February, 2012, 11:35

Good morning Ms Salmon,

Please find below my objections to the  
"Proposal to change the Designation of Corley Centre Community Secondary Special School from Residential and Day Special School to Day Special School".

I object to this proposal on many counts and do not believe we are looking at a long term solution for the young people that attend the Corley Centre. It very much looks like short term savings now, but at what cost to these young people and their overall development, who is going to pick up the pieces when the time comes for these young people to leave education and they have not acquired the relevant skills to be able to go onto further education or employment. The whole purpose of the students being placed at the corley centre is that they have Complex Social and communication difficulties and this is deemed the educational environment which can meet the needs of the young person. It was clearly stated in the school prospectus as an additional resource to help and develop social and independence skills to further benefit the young people. Yes academic achievement is important but for young people with Autism, real life day to day experiences in a secure and familiar environment are key to successful overall development. The residence gives the students a chance to work on their independence which is as important as academic achievement, to help develop their communication skills and build relationships with adults and peers.

\* It is stated that one of the reasons behind this process is inequality of opportunity for others as no other special school has a residential facility. Yes this is true but the type of the school and criteria are tools which are used by the local authority to place these young people in an adequate educational environment which will meet all of their needs. Some special schools have other facilities in which the corley centre do not ie swimming pools, yet these facilities are not being called into question, how is this a fair system? Students are placed in appropriate settings that meet their need. Parents will have requested Corley Centre after looking at the type of support available to their young people and residence was included in this.

\* It is also stated that Corley students are also at an advantage as they have access to the residence as well as the short breaks on offer by the Childrens Disability Team. If this is the case then there are students at other Coventry special schools that will be accessing either Respite, Direct Payments as well as the short breaks. I do not see how this is an appropriate reason for discontinuing the residence at corley as The childrens disability team provide respite and social activities which is within the social care arena not education. Corley centre provide residence to students to meet their educational needs and help them move forward.

\* In regards to the current short breaks and childrens disability offer which forms part of this proposal there is no guarantee as to how long funding will continue to be available to provide the current support and activities on offer to families.



How can this then be a viable option to meet the complex needs of the Corley students? There are lots of ifs and maybes around whether students will meet the relevant criteria for services, this is a barrier in itself let alone the longevity of the current services.

\* In respect of the data compiled around supporting the proposal and against I do not see how you come to the conclusion that 17 support and 77 do not and this equates somehow to 80% support the proposal and 87% do not?

Also in light of the benefit that other schools will receive if the proposal was to go ahead obviously Head teachers are in favour of this move as they will directly benefit from the residence closure.

\* I cannot see any evidence of compliance within the SEN improvement test, this is there to protect services for vulnerable groups and there is no evidence that this proposal will meet the need of the current provision or it is an improvement on the current system.

\* In terms of figures and costings there seems to be some confusion over how much the residence actually costs and when figures were requested this was given at the end of the previous consultation period which then led to the extension of the consultation period. A group of us met with Roger Lickfold to go through the figures but many questions still remain unanswered in regards to this data. How can this be so late along this journey. The local authority should by now be able to answer these questions at this stage clearly and concisely.

\* I completely object to other schools gaining an advantage and benefitting from the direct closure of the Corley centre residential facility. It states throughout the documentation the NO Corley students require residence and will not in the future as assessed by educational psychologists. Most students have not been assessed by an educational psychologist for a number of years so this is a rather extreme claim and as I stated previously students would have been placed at the Corley centre by the local authority as it would meet all of their needs, and this would have included residence as it was clearly stated in the prospectus that this was an additional resource the school had to further develop social, communication and independence skills. How can the local authority claim no students will need this facility in the future unless they can ensure this does not happen.

\* Finally it states within the documents that the school will be expected to deliver extended curriculum offer, but from information already exchanged it has become apparent that some of the money given to the school for residence was used in other ways to benefit the Corley students. So if this money is to be withdrawn from the school budget there are no guarantees of what the school can and will offer and this decision will be made by the governing body and not the local authority. So again this is a misleading assurance that forms part of this proposal.

\* I urge this to be looked at again taking into account the long term issues and not just looking at the short term financial gain. You cannot compare disabilities and pit them against one another, that is ethically inconsiderate and wrong. Autism is an extremely complex and debilitating condition that affects day to day life for our young people. They are in a specialist environment as their needs cannot be met elsewhere, these young people will become adults with Autism and they will not just disappear. You as a local authority have a commitment to ALL Disabled children, residence is key to developing skills that you cannot develop during the school day, or just within the home environment. Autism is not a 2nd rate disability, do Coventry local authority understand the difficulties and challenges our young people face each day. Aids and adaptation or medications are not necessarily appropriate to the overall needs of our young people but day to day real life experiences out in the real world are, and this will impact in their overall life skills and life chances.

Regards

**RESPONSE**

**Proposal to change the designation of  
Corley Centre Community Special Secondary school from  
Residential and Day Special School  
to Day Special School.**

**OBJECTIONS:**

It is my belief that this proposal should clearly not go ahead as the proposal has many flaws and the Local Authority have flouted their duty to follow guidelines accordingly.

**It should be withdrawn immediately**

For the following reasons.

1. Lynette Kelly the Councillor who put forward this proposal has a clear conflict of interest as she is a Governor of one of the schools that is going to benefit from this.
2. You mention in one of your reports that none of the students have it written into their Statements that they need residential care as recognised by an Educational Psychologist. This is a failure of both the school and the local Authority to update the children's Statements of Education and is contrary to the Code of Practice. It is not a fair statement as some of these children have not been seen by an Educational Psychologist since they either had diagnosis or indeed in the last few years for that to be a fair judgement of their needs. It is clear these children have a need for this facility to continue as not only do they have a diagnosis of ASD but social and communicational difficulties along with other medical conditions and learning difficulties which the Authority fail to notice or take into account as their statement said that none of these children had moderate learning difficulties and only have a diagnosis of ASD is incorrect.
3. The short breaks system offered through CDT (Children's Disability Team) is not an acceptable comparable to what these children have now and a full analysis of how this would impact on the families by taking the residence facility away has not been completed. Residence helps with the children independence and the need for this has been recognised in the children's annual reviews.
4. It has never been made clear how CDT will meet the future needs of these children or indeed if these children will qualify for it.

5. The staff at Broadpark House admitted that they had little knowledge of Autistic children and their needs.
6. The Local Authority has confirmed that the residential provision provided is different to that offered through CDT.
7. The financial information of £384,000 they propose to save just do not add up and even after asking the Local Authority on many occasions for a proper breakdown they have failed to do so by not providing the correct information.
8. No assurances on how the provision of after school clubs will be funded etc has been provided or how it will affect the extended day care as well as the catering facilities.
9. The Local Authority have failed to take notice of the objections of this proposal even though there was a petition which was handed into the council house by local Councillors following a protest march by parents from the school and the children effected along with the many articles in the local news papers and radio interviews and letters of support.
10. The Local Authority has failed to document minutes from the meetings correctly and they have been edited so comments and questions are missing so they do not reflect the true content of the meetings so are misleading.
11. When asked whether this change would be better for Corley students Roger Lickfold was unable to comment.
12. Closing this vital facility will have a devastating effect on these children.