

Proposal for the Relocation of Woodfield Primary and Secondary Schools – Information for Schools and Parents/Carers

Background

Under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996, Coventry City Council has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places and fair, appropriate access to education for all. It is the Council's role to plan, commission and organise school places in a way that raises standards, manages supply and demand and creates a diverse infrastructure.

It is the local authority's statutory duty to secure a sufficiency of appropriate education places for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The Local Authority has a statutory duty to consult under the Governments guidelines for changes to maintained schools. This leaflet gives you the information you need to have your say on the proposals.

Coventry has a good range of specialist school provision and so very few Coventry children have to attend schools outside of the city, a position that needs to be maintained. However, recent evidenced growth in need has placed a level of demand on the special school system that exceeds current supply.

Whilst the recent expansion and relocation of Tiverton Special School created much needed capacity in the primary sector for children with generic learning difficulties, there is no physical capacity in the system to support: Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) growth across all age ranges; increased demand for secondary/post-16 special school places for generic learning difficulties; and Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) growth across all age ranges.

LA proposal

Refurbishing the existing Woodlands site to provide a new home for the existing Woodfield Primary and Secondary schools and expanding the number of specialist places in both primary and secondary phases to meet the known demand.

A survey and feasibility report has been undertaken by architects acting on behalf of the Council and it has been confirmed that it is possible to integrate a primary and secondary special school onto the Woodlands site.

It is not feasible to invest in the current Woodfield sites due to the ongoing pressure caused by a split site school and site restrictions which would make it difficult to expand to meet additional capacity needs.

The integration onto one site would allow both primary and secondary phases to benefit from shared working practices, more efficient and improved facilities and a purpose redesigned building. In addition, the refurbishment of the Woodlands site would also potentially allow a continuation and expansion of the community sporting provision that has been successfully in place on the site for many year. Part of the site is currently used by the community for sport, including Powerleague and clubs for specialist gymnastics, wheelchair basketball and cheerleading. The vision would be to encourage further use linked to Woodfield School by creating a sports and activity hub in order to produce the best community use offer and creating an education sport offer during curriculum time.

Rationale

This project provides an opportunity to utilise a vacant education site, which contains listed buildings, to co-locate Woodfield School in its entirety.

Woodfield School is currently split across two sites: primary and secondary. The proposed utilisation of the Woodlands site would relocate both primary and

secondary onto one site with separate access, buildings and play space, which would provide age appropriate curriculum/resources and support the transition from primary to secondary key stages. Shared facilities would also reduce revenue costs and support sustainability.



This project would provide a future-proofed fit for purpose educational environment and wealth of different sports facilities for both existing and future Coventry pupils and the wider public, with the capacity for the provision to grow.

Meeting project costs

Significant investment is required to allow the existing Woodlands site, with 1950's vintage and Grade II listed buildings, to be used as a modern SEND school.

The educational capital budget alone cannot support the costs. It is intended that residential planning consent is sought on both existing Woodfield School sites; if successful, the proceeds from the sale of the sites will be ring-fenced and used to fund the refurbishment of the Woodlands site. It is further proposed to investigate a limited amount of residential development on the Woodlands site to support the costs. Income generated from community use facilities on the new school site would also support revenue budgets.

Useful links

Please have your say by completing the online survey at www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/WoodfieldConsultation, where you have the option to provide your comments.

If you have any other questions or concerns, please contact education.consultations@coventry.gov.uk.