



Hales Valley Multi-Academy Trust

Consultation on the proposal to add a specialist SEN unit at Woodside Primary School, an academy primary school.

Public Consultation Document

Consultation on: Consultation on the proposal to add a SEND Unit to Woodside Primary School, an academy primary school.

Summary: Dudley Council has a statutory duty to provide each child in its area with an appropriate school place. There is an identified need within the Dudley area for places for children with Special Educational Needs with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

With the full support of Dudley Council, Hales Valley MAT is consulting on plans to provide an inclusive SEND Unit at Woodside Primary School, which will meet the needs of up to 12 young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Related Proposals: There is one more SEND Unit proposed across the borough.

Deadline: All responses must be received by Friday 5th April 2024

Public Access Consultations and plans will be published on the school website
Woodside Primary website: info@woodside.dudley.sch.uk

Response to: **info@woodside.dudley.sch.uk**
Your representations will be co-ordinated by the Trust and responses to those representations will be provided by the appropriate member of the Trust team.

Consultees: Includes, but are not limited to:

- Pupils, parents and staff of Woodside Primary School.
- Headteachers of Dudley Schools

All responses may be published.

Hardcopies of this consultation, along with large print versions and translations into other languages, are available on request to the above address (A maximum of 2 copies per request or individual).

You are invited to an open meeting on Tuesday 9th April 2024 3pm – Woodside Primary School, in the school hall, where school and Trust representatives will be present to answer any questions.

Sally Bloomer
Headteacher of Woodside Primary School

Proposal to add a SEND unit to Woodside Primary School, an academy primary school.

Introduction

In September 2024/January 2025, Hales Valley Multi-Academy Trust, with the full support of Dudley Council, will set up a SEND Unit at Woodside Primary School to meet the needs of pupils with complex communication and cognition barriers outlined in an Education, Health, and Care Plan. This is part of Hales Valley MAT's inclusive education offer and Dudley Council's SEND improvement journey and is also in response to an identified lack of such provision in this part of the borough.

Hales Valley Multi Academy Trust is consulting on proposals to make this SEND unit at Woodside Primary School. The unit will be a permanent addition to the school. Woodside Primary School is a Two form entry primary school located in the centre of Dudley and takes pupils aged from 3-11. The school currently has a pupil roll of 409. The proposed unit will increase the school's maximum number to 432 plus Nursery.

In 2019 the Council identified that it had a gap in provision to meet the needs of pupils who require high levels of support with an Education, Health and Care Plan. Two SEMH bases were created in the last three years to provide provision for primary age children with an EHCP with a primary need of SEMH. This has proven to be a successful model and has gone some way to addressing the identified gap, however there is still a shortfall of base provision within the borough. The council also opened 4 other SEND units last academic year.

Following a bidding process the Council has selected Woodside Primary School to develop an inclusive base where pupils will be able to be taught in a dedicated unit by specialist staff with opportunities to integrate into mainstream classes as and when appropriate.

It is anticipated that this will provide an appropriate education for up to 12 pupils and will provide an evidence-based solution for Hales Valley MAT and Dudley Council to support our SEND children within our community, providing the curriculum, environment, and staff they need without a move into a specialist setting.

Proposals

What changes are we proposing?

Hales Valley MAT is proposing to change the designation of this academy to include a SEND Unit. This will be to meet the needs of pupils with high support needs for communication and interaction and cognition and learning with an EHCP. Pupils will be taught in a dedicated classroom environment with support from highly trained staff. Pupils will have the opportunity to access a mainstream classroom as and when it is felt appropriate to do so.

Why do we want to do this?

Hales Valley MAT is committed to providing an education that enables all children to achieve the highest standard of educational outcomes regardless of circumstance or background. The MAT works closely with Dudley Council which has a statutory duty to provide each child in its area with an appropriate education or school place and to secure the provision specified in Section F of a child or young person's EHC Plan (section 42 of the Children and Families Act 2014). In recent years, Dudley has seen a sustained increase in the need for specialist educational provision for primary age pupils who require high levels of support, which has led the Council to conclude that an increase in the amount of base provision to accommodate these pupils would be an effective use of Council resources.

Why has this school been chosen?

An open process was conducted with bids invited from both maintained schools and academies. Through this rigorous and transparent process Woodside Primary School was identified as the preferred setting alongside one other primary school. Woodside Primary School is experienced in meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. The site is spacious enough to accommodate additional pupils with some internal and external alterations.

How will this affect pupils at the school?

The additional pupils at the school will be educated in a separate designated base provision with specialist staff supporting them. There will be opportunities where these pupils are supported to integrate into the mainstream classes when it is appropriate to do so. It is anticipated that the resources placed into this base will also benefit strategies already implemented in the school.

How will this affect staff?

There are no anticipated changes which will affect staff at the school, although there may be additional continuing professional development opportunities for staff who wish to be in a more specialised provision.

How will this affect the local community?

Whilst it is not anticipated that this will affect the local community adversely in the long term, there may be some short term disruption as works are carried out at the school in order to develop the physical aspect of this project. The local community will benefit from having more appropriate SEND provision in the heart of the community.

Will there be changes to the school buildings?

There will be some changes to the school buildings in order to accommodate these extra pupils. Changes are largely internal modifications in order to make this a self-contained unit with access to outdoor space. There are no proposed extensions to the buildings. There are some small changes proposed to external space.

Why are we consulting on these proposals?

There is a statutory process we must follow to make these sorts of changes to schools. At the moment we are entering the consultation stage during which we are inviting views on the proposal from pupils, parents, staff, and all Dudley schools.

What will happen if the proposals are rejected?

If a decision is taken that this specialist provision should not be added to Woodside Primary School then the Council's ability to effectively meet the needs of this vulnerable group of pupils will be diminished and the Council will need to reconsider how these additional places can be provided elsewhere, which is likely to mean that some children will have to travel further to attend school and that costs to meet these pupils educational needs may be more expensive

Consultation on the proposal to open a Special Educational Needs Unit at Woodside
Primary School, an academy within Hales Multi-academy Trust.

Consultation responses:
Woodside Primary School
Highgate Road
Woodside
Dudley
DY2 0NS

Name.....

Organisation.....

Do you agree with the proposal to add a Special Educational Needs Unit at
Woodside Primary School.

Yes ☐

No ☐

No Opinion ☐

Comments:

Additional Comments: