

Consultation Document

*Proposal to provide a Special Educational Needs
Resource Base at a Maintained Mainstream School*



Allens Croft Primary

Introduction

Birmingham City Council, as the local authority for Birmingham, is consulting on a proposal to provide a Special Educational Needs Resource Base at Allens Croft Primary School.

These changes are explained in the sections below.

School Information

Allens Croft Primary School is a community school located in the Brandwood ward. The school caters for pupils aged 5 to 11. The school was approved to expand from a one form entry (one class per year) school to a two form entry (two classes per year) with effect from 1st September 2013. The school has been expanding year on year since 2013 and will eventually accommodate up to 420 pupils when the expanded classes have moved through the school. In May 2015 there were 247 pupils on roll.

What changes are proposed?

In line with our Basic Need strategy, the school submitted an Expression of Interest (Eoi) to provide a resource base for up to 12 key stage 1 and key stage 2 pupils. The Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review (SENAR) team and Education and Skills Infrastructure (EdSI) team reviewed this Eoi and it was found to meet the required criteria. Approval was given for the provision of a Resource Base to admit up to 12 pupils with a statement of need for Cognition and Learning (C&L).

The school has identified additional space within the school that would enable them to provide a resource base facility for up to 6 key stage 1 and 6 key stage 2 pupils with a statement of need or Education and Health Care Plan for Cognition and Learning (C&L). Remodelling work will be required on this accommodation.

Why do we want to do this?

Birmingham City Council as the local authority for Birmingham has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. The city of Birmingham has a growing population with one of the youngest populations in Europe and the number of births in the city has risen rapidly over the last few years. To compound this Birmingham is also experiencing high levels of in year growth due to net migration into the city.

Pressure for places is at its most severe over some of our special schools; reactive measures have been implemented over a number of years to accommodate growth in demand for special school and resource base places and a planned programme of additional special places is being implemented as a priority. Birmingham City Council is proposing the above prescribed changes, in line with our Special School Additional Places (SAPP) Programme.

Resource Bases is designated provision and is focussed on meeting the needs of young people with specific statements of needs within a mainstream setting. The proposal is for Allens Croft School to provide Resource Base provision for up to 12 pupils with a statement of need for Cognition and Learning (C&L).

Why has this school been chosen?

Following the publication of our Education Sufficiency Requirements in February 2015, all schools were invited to submit a proposal if they were interested in expansion or creating new resource base provision. The Governing Body of Allens Croft School submitted an expression of interest for the provision of a resource base for pupils with Cognition & Learning (C&L).

The EOIs were evaluated against the Basic Need criteria as follows:

- i) Location in relation to need.
- ii) Standards in the school: it is expected that schools that expand will be Outstanding or Good
- iii) The capacity of the school to provide suitable accommodation on the site, within existing space and within planning / buildability constraints.
- iv) Has been approved by Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review team to meet the needs of pupils.

Allens Croft Primary School has received a judgement of “good” in their last Ofsted inspection, has enough space to accommodate the resource base, is in a good location and has been approved to meet the needs of pupils with Cognition and Learning Special Educational Needs Assessment and Review team.

How will this affect pupils at the school?

Pupils will notice some changes but those are likely to be limited.

The SEN designation for the resource base will be for children with C&L. The resource base places will be commissioned by SENAR in line with SEN code of practice and referrals will be made through the placement panel. All necessary adaptations and internal refurbishment works will be in time for the first additional intake into the resource base. It is anticipated that pupils will be placed from September 2015.

Please be reassured that the high standard of education and care for your child will remain. The alterations will enable existing and future pupils to access high quality learning spaces and facilities.

How will this affect staff?

Staff will generally be unaffected; however, a school with special provision might offer more opportunities for professional development.

Will there be changes to the school building?

Remodelling work of existing accommodation will be required for the provision of the resource base.

Will this definitely happen?

There is a statutory process we must follow to make these sorts of changes to schools. Although the provision of the resource base is due to start in September 2015, we are sending this document to all parents, pupils, staff and Governors to advise you of the changes and will publish full proposals on 17th September 2015. There will be four weeks for people to formally comment on the full proposal - this is referred to as the 'representation period'. Within two months of the end of the representation period the Council's Cabinet Committee will make a final decision. It is only at that point that we will be able to say with certainty that the resource base will be provided on a permanent basis.

What will happen if this proposal is rejected?

If a decision is taken that Allens Croft Primary School should not have a resource base, the school will continue to operate as it is now. Special educational places for children with Cognition and Learning will need to be provided elsewhere which could result in pupil displacement for those already accessing the facility and is likely to mean that some parents will have to travel much further to take their child to school; possible resulting in an increase in appeals or larger class sizes.

How can I make my views known?

We will be issuing formal proposals on 17th September 2015. The consultation period will be for four weeks. During this consultation period, you have the opportunity to let us know what you think about the proposed provision of the resource base at Allens Croft Primary School. You can make your views known by visiting www.birmingham.gov.uk/schools/allenscroft (live on 17th September 2015) or by writing to:

School Organisation Team
Education and Skills Infrastructure
PO Box 15843
1 Lancaster Circus
Birmingham
B2 2RT

Email: lucy.dumbleton@birmingham.gov.uk or mary.lowe@birmingham.gov.uk
Tel: 0121 303 8847

Please note the closing date for comments is **Thursday 15th October 2015**. All comments/objections raised during the representation period will be forwarded to Birmingham City Council Cabinet Committee in November for a decision.

What happens next?

The following timescale for the proposal to be implemented is for guidance only. At any point during the process, the proposal might be withdrawn or rejected by the City Council. The dates set out below meet the government requirements for us to consult fully with the people affected by the proposal and every effort will be made to keep to them.

Possible Timeline for Expansion

Action	Date
Consultation begins	Week commencing 7 th September 2015
Statutory notice published	17 th September 2015
Beginning of 4 week representation period	17 th September 2015
End of 4 week representation period	15 th October 2015
Final decision made	7 th December 2015
Resource base officially established	December 2015 – January 2016