

Consultation Document

*Proposal to Make a Prescribed Alteration to
A Community Special School*

Uffculme School

Introduction

Birmingham City Council, as the local authority for Birmingham, is consulting on a proposal to make changes to Uffculme School.

These changes are explained in the sections below.

We are sending this information document out to let you know what we are proposing to change at Uffculme School by September 2016. We are proposing to issue a public notice on 17th September 2015 to consult on these changes and following that there will be a representation period of four weeks in which you can make any comments to us in writing. We will consider any comments you make and will pass these to Cabinet members who will make a decision on the proposal in December.

We are proposing for these changes to come into effect from 1st September 2016.

School Information

- Uffculme School is a special school for 155 pupils from 2 – 19 years
- Pupils at Uffculme School have a statement of need for Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC).
- The school is located at Queensbridge Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 8QB

What changes are proposed?

We are proposing to carry out the following changes to Uffculme Special School:

- Increase the number of pupils from 155 -204.
- Expand the school by the addition of two sites;
Site One – Chamberlain House, Yew Tree Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 8QG
Site Two – 40 Russell Road, Moseley, Birmingham B13 8RE

Why do we want to do this?

Birmingham City Council is proposing the above prescribed changes, in line with the Special Schools Additional Places Programme.

In 2009 Uffculme School changed the age range to become an all through school, providing both primary and secondary places for pupils with a statement of need for Autistic Spectrum Condition. The school began to take year 7 children from 2009

onwards. The Uffculme site on Queensbridge Road is not suitable for a building expansion. It has been necessary to accommodate pupils in temporary accommodation whilst we have tried to identify a suitable alternative site. Chamberlain House, Yew Tree Road and 40 Russell Road Moseley have now been identified as two sites to enable us to expand Uffculme School permanently. These changes are considered appropriate for the current pupils at the school in order to provide an improved accommodation solution and better meet the needs of its pupils, and is part of a programme to enhance the overall school accommodation solution for its current and future pupils.

Uffculme School has an excellent teaching record, with an OFSTED ranking of Outstanding, including the following;

- Achievement and progress for its students,
- Quality of teaching,
- Behaviour and safety of pupils and
- Leadership and Management.

The expansion will offer professional development and improve retention and recruitment of the school's high quality teaching and non-teaching staff.

The decision to add capacity at Uffculme School at the new sites will allow the expansion of all through special school for pupils from the age of 2 – 19 years with Autistic Spectrum Conditions (ASC). This will address the shortage of both primary and secondary places for children with statements of ASC. The site at Russell Road will accommodate up to 30 students with high and complex Autistic Spectrum Condition needs aged 16 -19 years.

How will this affect pupils at the school?

Chamberlain House is part of the Highbury Trust and was identified as suitable alternative accommodation (subject to refurbishment) which would allow Uffculme School to transfer some of its pupils currently accommodated in Portacabins on the Uffculme School site.

It is proposed that there will be 109 pupils accommodated at the Queensbridge site, 65 pupils will be accommodated at the Chamberlain site, and 30 at the Russell Road site

Chamberlain House is 0.5km from the existing school and so children and young people will have the opportunity to continue with their education in a school as close to home as possible, minimising the disruption of moving to a new school for some of the most vulnerable young people. The layout of the new accommodation will allow the creation of appropriate spaces which will enhance the learning of these pupils.

The school will increase the number of primary places they offer to 204 after September 2016.

With the alterations in accommodation the school might decide to organise the school differently to ensure educational continuity but as always that will be the school's decision.

How will this affect staff at the school?

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

Will there be changes to the school building?

There are no proposed changes to Uffculme School Building, other than the removal of the temporary portacabins that have accommodated pupil in the interim. Both Chamberlain House and Russell Road buildings will be refurbished and upgraded. The Headteacher and governors have participated in the design process, as strategic partners of BCC and as representatives of the end users. We expect all the remodelling work to be complete for 1st September 2016 to accommodate all current pupils and all new and future primary and secondary pupils.

The City Council's Education and Skills Infrastructure team will ensure that the new classrooms are built in line with government standards and that pupils' learning will not be unduly disrupted.

Will this definitely happen?

There is a statutory process we must follow to make these sorts of changes to schools. We are sending this document to all parents, pupils, staff and Governors to advise you of these proposals and will publish full proposals on 17th September 2015 and allow four weeks for people to formally comment on them. 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 school will expand by the addition of the two sites.

What will happen if this proposal is rejected?

If the proposed changes are rejected, the school will continue to operate at the existing sites as it does currently but it would mean that, a long term solution would need to be found with the possibility of pupils being displaced and need to access to alternative school provision whilst the current accommodation issues are resolved.

How can I make my views known?

During the representation period, you have the opportunity to let us know what you think about the proposed changes to Uffculme School.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of the full proposals, any person may object to or make comments by visiting www.birmingham.gov.uk/schools/uffculme-school or by writing to School Organisation Team, Education and Skills Infrastructure, PO Box 15843, Birmingham B2 2RT. The last date for comments would be 15th October 2015.

In the meantime please address any queries to:
 School Organisation Team
 Education and Skills Infrastructure
 PO Box 15843
 Birmingham
 B2 2RT

Email: lucy.dumbleton@birmingham.gov.uk
mary.lowe@birmingham.gov.uk

Tel: 0121 464 3423 / 0121 303 2463

What happens next?

The following timescale for the proposal to be implemented is for guidance only. At any point during the process, the proposals 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 for Consultation on Proposed Changes

Action	Date
School internal stakeholders informed about proposed changes	w/c 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
School is permanently expanded	As detailed above