

INVICTUS

Education Trust

RUFFORD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Consultation on the proposal
to add a specialist base at
Rufford Primary School, an
academy primary school.

Children's Directorate

Consultation Document

Consultation on: Consultation on the proposal to add a SEND Unit to Rufford 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)

The Council is consulting on plans to provide an inclusive SEND Unit at Rufford Primary School, which will meet the needs of up to 12 young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan.

Related Proposals: There are three more SEND Units proposed across the borough as well as one secondary resource provision at The Crestwood School.

Deadline: All responses must be received by 18th July 2023

Public Access: Consultations, plans and policies will be published as follows:

Rufford Primary School's website:

<https://www.rufford.dudley.sch.uk/special-education-needs>

Response to:

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

SEND Unit Consultation Response

Invictus Education Trust

Enville Road

Kinver

DY7 6AA

Or by email:

sendconsultation@ruffordprimary.co.uk

Your representations will be co-ordinated by this team and responses to those representations will be provided by the appropriate responsible officer for this consultation

Consultees:

Include, but are not limited to:

- Pupils, parents and staff of Rufford Primary School
- Centre for Equality & Diversity
- Chairs of Governors of Dudley Schools
- Dudley Councillors
- Dudley Association of Governing Bodies
- Dudley Safeguarding Children Partnership Group (a sub-group of Dudley Safeguarding People Partnership Board)
- Headteachers of Dudley Schools
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- Roman Catholic Diocesan Schools Commission
- Worcester Diocesan Board of Education

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).

Erica Tilley
Headteacher, Rufford Primary School

Proposal to add a specialist inclusion base at Rufford Primary School, an academy primary school.

Introduction

In September 2023, Dudley Council (the Council) will set up a SEND Unit at Rufford Primary School to meet the needs of pupils with complex communication and cognition and with an Education, Health and Care Plan. This is part of the Council's SEND improvement journey, and in response to an identified lack of such provision.

The Council is consulting on proposals to make this specialist inclusion base at Rufford Primary School, a permanent addition to the school. Rufford Primary School is a one form entry primary school located in the west of Dudley and takes pupils aged from 2-11.

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.

Following a bidding process, the Council has selected Rufford 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 a tried and tested solution for the Council to support our SEND children within their community, providing the curriculum, environment and staff they need without a move into a specialist setting.

Proposals

What changes are we proposing?

The Council is proposing to change the designation of this mainstream school 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?

The Council 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 Rufford Primary School was identified as the preferred setting alongside three other primary school and one secondary school. Rufford 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 some changes proposed to external space and this will be completed through a phased approach.

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, all schools, local community, neighbouring authorities, local councillors, members of parliament and professional associations.

What will happen if the proposals are rejected?

If a decision is taken that this specialist provision should not be added to Rufford 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.

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CONSULTATION RESPONSES

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Invictus Education Trust
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Kinver
DY7 6AA

Or by email:
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Name: Organisation:

Do you agree with the proposal to add a specialist inclusion base to Rufford Primary School?

Yes	
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No	
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No opinion	
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Comments

Additional Comments: