



PROPOSAL TO CHANGE THE AGE RANGE AT GOLDWYN SCHOOL, ASHFORD IN ORDER TO ADD A SIXTH FORM AND TO INCREASE THE DESIGNATED NUMBER BY 80 PLACES (35 KEY STAGE 3/4 AND 45 POST-16).

Introduction

Kent County Council (KCC) is proposing to change the age range at Goldwyn School, Ashford from 11-16 years to 11-18 years in order to add sixth form provision and to increase the designated number from 115 places to 195 places (35 key stage 3/4 and 45 post-16).

Contact Details

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School and LA details and pupil numbers

Goldwyn School is a Kent County Council maintained special school designated to support pupils aged 11-16 years with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH). It is judged as Outstanding by OFSTED. Presently the School is designated to take 115 pupils aged between 11-16 years of age.

Description of the alteration and evidence of demand

Across Kent, the number of pupils with an Education, Health Care Plan (EHCP) has increased significantly. As of January 2015, there were 7,374 pupils aged between 0-25 years of age with an EHCP, by January 2019 the number had increased to 11,763 an increase of 60%. The number of ECHPs issued for children and young people with SEMH as their primary need type increased from 1,262 to 2,092 over the same period, an increase of 66%.

The increasing need for specialist SEMH places has led to Goldwyn School being commissioned to provide up to 150 places for the last few years. This proposal would formalise the current situation by increasing the designated number of key stage 3/4 places by 35, while at the same time increasing the age range to 18 adding 45 sixth form places.

At Goldwyn, 75% of students arrived after Year 7 and 29% of the 2018-19 cohort arrived in years 10 or 11. The vast majority of students have missed large chunks of their education either at primary or secondary, or in some cases both. This, in addition with students' other complex needs, can mean that their development is delayed, and some are simply not ready to transition to mainstream post-16 provisions.

In addition, decisions around post-16 provision are made at the time of a pupil's Year 10 annual review. For a number of Goldwyn students, such as those who join the School in Year 10, it is too early to give post-16 providers the most accurate picture of a student's level of need as they still have 18 months of secondary education ahead of them. This can result in provision not being secured (due to the complex

level of need) or the provision agreed at that point not being the most appropriate. Having to make a choice at this point reduces the options available to students and increases the likelihood of pupils becoming NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training).

Objectives (and how the wider proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice)

Presently there is no post-16 maintained specialist education provision for pupils with SEMH in Kent. This is in contrast to special schools supporting other need types in the County. We believe that the addition of sixth form provision at Goldwyn School will improve the offer for SEMH pupils.

Currently Goldwyn school leavers transition to mainstream colleges, schools and training providers, with a very small minority applying to study motor vehicle mechanics or construction at Goldwyn College. A new sixth form will offer students with complex SEMH needs, which might include ASD, the opportunity to receive a post-16 curriculum offer that includes programmes to support social and emotional development, promote learning independence and prepare them for inclusion within the wider world of mainstream college and employment.

The School envisages that the sixth form will provide 3 options:

- A 1 year 'preparation for college' placement based within Goldwyn facilities, with the intention that students will transfer to a mainstream college to study level 2/3 qualification,
- A 2 year Level 2/3 qualification or vocational course based within Goldwyn facilities, for pupils for whom transfer to a mainstream setting may not yet be appropriate due to their extreme vulnerabilities or level of SEMH need, or
- A 1 year 'supported pathway' for pupils who can access mainstream school or college provision with the SEMH specialist support that can be provided by Goldwyn staff.

Implementation

It is intended that the sixth form will be opened from September 2020. This is possible as the School will have access to all existing premises owned and leased by Goldwyn School to provide for the sixth form. The designated number will be changed accordingly to 190 places (150 at key stage 3/4 and 45 within the sixth form).

The effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area

Presently, on leaving Goldwyn School at the end of year 11, pupils transfer to mainstream settings, mostly further education colleges or Independent Specialist Provision (ISP) and it is still intended that this will continue for many students. We do not expect the opening of the sixth form to have a significant impact on further education colleges as they cater for a large and varied intake. However, the impact on ISPs may be greater as they tend to provide niche courses for a smaller number of pupils. One such ISP is Goldwyn College.

Goldwyn College was set up in 2016 in order to fill the gap in post-16 provision for pupils with SEMH. In its recent OFSTED inspection, the College received a Requires Improvement rating. The Goldwyn School governors, as members of Goldwyn College, have indicated that, should the age range at Goldwyn School be increased

to incorporate post-16 provision, they will wind down the College. Should this happen, pupils presently on roll will either transfer into the new sixth form at Goldwyn School to complete their current course or will be supported to find suitable alternative provision.

Impact on the community

We believe that the addition of a sixth form provision will have a positive impact on the community as this will improve the offer for SEMH pupils across the County.

Consultation

A public consultation was held between 06 January 2020 and 14 February 2020. Of the 42 responses received, 40 were in favour of the proposals.

Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved

Capital funding will not be required as the School will have access to all existing premises owned and leased by Goldwyn School to provide for the sixth form. The sixth form will be funded in the same way and at the same rate as it is for the pre-16 students at the School. As of September 2019, this is at the rate of £19,326.36 per place.

The procedure for responses: support; objections and comments

A public notice was published in a local newspaper in the week beginning 20 April 2020. The notice is displayed at all main entrances to the School and it is available on KCC's website: <https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-consultations>

Within four weeks from the date of publication, any person may send in a response supporting, objecting or commenting on the proposal to David Adams, Area Education Officer, Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, Kent TN24 8XU; or email school.consultations@kent.gov.uk. The final date for sending in written representations is midnight 18 May 2020.