

Outcome of the consultation on a proposal to decommission the Resource Provision at Gledhow Primary School

Date: 16th March 2022

Report of: Director of Children and Families

Report to: Executive Board

Will the decision be open for call in? Yes No

Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? Yes No

What is this report about?

Including how it contributes to the city's and council's ambitions

- This report details the outcome of a consultation on a proposal to decommission the Speech and Language Resource Provision at Gledhow Primary School with effect from August 2022.
- Consultation was carried out in accordance with section 19(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and with the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. The 4 weeks informal consultation took place between 6 January 2022 to 3 February 2022.
- This report summarises the consultation responses and seeks approval from Executive Board on the recommendations below.

Recommendations

- a) Exec Board are asked to review the outcome of the informal consultation and approve the publication of a statutory notice on a proposal to decommission the Resourced Provision from August 2022.
- b) Note the responsible officer for implementation is the Head of Learning Inclusion.

Why is the proposal being put forward?

- 1 Over the last few years, the nature of SEND provision for speech and language communication difficulties within Leeds has evolved. Previously specialist Speech and Language provision was only available through the limited number of Resource Provisions within mainstream primary and secondary schools.

- 2 The NHS Speech and Language Therapy Service (SALT) offer now allows children to access direct support from a Speech and Language Therapist whilst being on roll at their local mainstream school. The children can remain within their local community rather than transporting them across the city to receive the support that they need.
- 3 This has led to speech and language specific Resourced Provisions in Leeds schools reducing in number, due to the lack of demand for these specialist school places. This demonstrates the effectiveness of the new offer and the confidence of parents and families in choosing their local mainstream school for the delivery of SALT provision.

What impact will this proposal have?

Wards Affected: Roundhay Ward

Have ward members been consulted? Yes No

- 4 At its height, the number of pupils on roll at the Gledhow Resource Provision was 12. This has reduced over time. Currently there is only one pupil attending who is due to transition into secondary school at the end of this academic year, ahead of the proposed decommission. Therefore, no pupils would be directly affected by this change.
- 5 In ceasing the provision at Gledhow Primary School there would be no impact on the types and amount of provision children with speech and language communication difficulties in the city would receive, due to the improved SALT offer within Leeds schools.
- 6 The Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening (EDCI) form is attached as an appendix to this report.

What consultation and engagement has taken place?

- 7 The process in respect of this proposal has been managed in accordance with the relevant legislation and with local good practice.
- 8 Ahead of the public consultation, the school governing body and headteacher confirmed their support for the proposal to decommission the resourced provision.
- 9 Stakeholders were consulted on the proposal through a variety of methods during a 4 week period from 6 January 2022 to 3 February 2022. These stakeholders included; all parent/carers at Gledhow Primary School, Staff and governors at Gledhow Primary School, parent support groups, local Leeds schools, all Leeds SILCs, local ward members, local MP, the Diocese and other relevant stakeholders.
- 10 A total of 18 consultation survey responses were received during the consultation period of which 55% either strongly or somewhat supported the proposal, 28% either strongly or somewhat opposed the proposal and a further 18% neither supported nor opposed it.
- 11 A summary of the views expressed by the 10 survey respondents to the informal consultation who strongly or somewhat supported the proposal is below (individual respondents may have made more than one of these comments):
 - It is better for children to get support locally
 - Children are more comfortable in mainstream school
 - Children's needs are being met elsewhere in the city
 - There is reduced demand for this type of provision

- The resource could be used to support other children with EHC plans or specific SEN needs.
- Keeping the provision open is not a good use of public money

12 A summary of the views expressed by the 5 survey respondents to the informal consultation who strongly or somewhat objected to the proposal along with a response is below (individual respondents may have made more than one of these comments):

- a) **Concerns that a Speech and Language Resource Provision can offer more support to meet the particular needs of the cohort than a local mainstream school can.** One respondent felt that their child had benefited more from having attended the provision at Gledhow Primary School than they would have received in a mainstream school. Other respondents felt that not every mainstream school in Leeds can be adequately resourced to provide the level of intensive intervention through SALT programmes that are needed to support this group of children.

Response: The model of delivery of support from the SALT service is the same model in mainstream schools and Resource Provisions; the school still need to trade the time from the Speech Therapy Service therefore meaning that the amount and type of provision should be the same regardless of where the child is placed. All schools in Leeds are now expected to be communication friendly meaning all children, but especially those with Speech and Language difficulties, should be taught in an environment where communication and language is the key to good learning opportunities. Children with identified SALT needs are funded equitably and those in a mainstream school will receive the same funding for provision as those in a Speech and Language Resource, therefore ensuring that the level of provision required is funded the same so that children can still receive the same amount of intensive support that they require regardless of placement.

- b) **Concern that the proposal to decommission the Resource Provision means that a valuable provision at Gledhow Primary School would be lost and that it reduces choice.**

Response: There have been no requests from parents for this type of provision at Gledhow Primary School for a number of years. In addition, there have been no recommendations from the SALT service for children to be placed in the provision. This is because the provision is now fully integrated into the mainstream experience for children. There is still an option for parents to request/SALT service to refer to the Resource Provision at Grimes Dyke Primary School so, in respect of the Local Offer, there still remains choice for parents.

- c) **Concerns that the decision to decommission has already been made and is being based on funding cuts.** One suggestion was made that instead of closing the provision, the local authority should instead be publicising that the resource exists.

Response: The Gledhow Resource Provision features as part of the Local Offer and is promoted in the same way as all specialist and resource provisions across the city. There are no funding implications in closing the resource. The LA will not save money and the school will not be financially disadvantaged. The children are funded

in exactly the same way regardless of where they are placed. The funds are redirected to the school where the children are on roll. There is no financial advantage or disadvantage to decommissioning the provision.

What are the resource implications?

- 13 There are no resource implications in the proposed decommissioning of the Resource Provision. The provision will naturally end when the last remaining pupil transitions to secondary school. There are no funding implications in closing the resource and the school will not be financially disadvantaged. There is no impact on the existing staff as a result of this proposal. The school does not have accommodation and assets that are dedicated to the sole use of the provision.

What are the legal implications?

- 14 This proposal has been brought forward by Leeds City Council with the support of the School and Governing Body. Consultation was carried out in accordance with section 19(3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and with the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. The regulations set out that with any reorganisation of specialist provision at a community school, such as Gledhow Primary School, the local authority is the proposer and the decision maker.
- 15 There are no legal implications as the specialist support provided to pupils with Speech and language difficulties in Leeds will continue to be available in all mainstream schools to those pupils who are identified as needing to access it.
- 16 At its meeting in September 2021 Executive Board members agreed that in the future, and in response to the recommendation of the Children and Families Scrutiny Board, anonymised consultation responses be shared in full with Executive Board Members as 'background documents'. These would be published alongside the agenda papers, but not form part of the formal agenda. Executive Board members are asked to consider the summary of responses in this report as part of their decision making, with the full consultation responses being available for reference by Members if needed.

What are the key risks and how are they being managed?

- 17 There are no identified high risks with this proposal. It is not considered a contentious proposal as pupils in Leeds are benefitting from an improved SALT offer within their local mainstream school.

Does this proposal support the council's 3 Key Pillars?

Inclusive Growth

Health and Wellbeing

Climate Emergency

- 18 Approval of the proposal supports the Child Friendly City aspiration to 'improve educational attainment and closing achievement gaps for children and young people vulnerable to poor learning outcomes'.
- 19 Pupils being able to access the SALT support within their local community in an inclusive learning environment, also contributes towards delivery of targets within the Children and Young People's Plan such as our obsession to 'improve achievement, attainment and attendance at school'.

- 20 The proposal supports the council's climate agenda by reducing the need to transport children across the city to attend a resourced provision. Reduced travel also positively impacts on health through reduction in the city's carbon footprint and could be attributed to improving a child's wellbeing through a shortened home to school journey time.

Options, timescales and measuring success

a) What other options were considered?

- 21 No other options were considered. The specialist provision is no longer required at this school beyond the 2021/22 academic year. The statutory process to decommission the resource provision is therefore being followed.

b) How will success be measured?

- 22 The lack of demand for these specialist places over recent years, demonstrates the effectiveness of the new NHS pathway and the confidence of parents and families in choosing their local mainstream school for the delivery of such provision rather than choosing a Resource Provision.

c) What is the timetable for implementation?

- 23 If Executive Board approval is given to progress the proposal to a formal consultation, a Statutory Notice would be published at the end of March. The outcome of this Statutory Notice would be presented at a future Executive Board meeting.

Appendices

- 24 Equality, Diversity, Cohesion and Integration Screening form

Background papers

- 25 Anonymised consultation responses received in relation to this proposal