

Consultation to remove SEN Unit

For pupils with Physical Disability (PD) at Kings College, Guildford

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Document Control

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28/09/21	1.1	Final for publication

1 Introduction

Kings College Guildford, part of the multi-academy trust Athena-GEP (“the trust”), is proposing to remove the Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College, Guildford, from December 2021. The space vacated by this unit will be redirected for educational use and/or community use. The statutory process for removal is outlined below.

2 Background

Kings College Guildford is a secondary school, situated in Park Barn, Guildford Surrey. The school has 415 pupils currently on roll (as of 24th September 2021), with pupil admissions in Year 7 having doubled since 2017.

No pupils currently attend the Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit. There have been no formal admissions to this since September 2015. The last pupil to leave the unit was in June 2020.

The school has a ‘Good’ Ofsted rating from the last inspection, in July 2018.

3 Proposal

The proposal is to remove the provision from December 2021., subject to approval by the Regional School Commissioner.

Should the proposal be agreed, it will enable the school to utilise the space for further educational provision of existing (and upcoming pupils) and/or reallocate space for community use.

4 Rationale

There has been no demand for places in this dedicated special unit in the last three academic years (and no pupils currently attend), as all schools can now offer a suitable environment for these pupils, supported by funding from their Local Authority and duties within the Equalities Act 2010.

The Local Authority under which this provision sits, Surrey County Council, are supportive of this proposal. Please refer to their Educational Justification as outlined in Appendix 3.

5 Considerations

5.1 Pupil Placement

School places are allocated in accordance with the Children and Families Act 2014, which requires the Local Authority to take into account the pupil’s special educational needs, parental request for schools and the formal view of the schools requested before making a decision.

5.2 Staffing

The proposed change will have no impact on staffing at Kings college, Guildford.

5.3 Land & Buildings

All equipment has already been removed by Surrey County Council. The space allocated to the Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College, Guildford has undergone minor refurbishment works, so that it can be reused.

5.4 Finance & Resourcing

The school was in receipt of transitional funding for the vacant place in 2019/20 to support staff and maintenance costs when the pupil numbers declined. There was no funding received in 2020/21. There is no ongoing budget impact of this change.

The minor refurbishment costs have been borne by the school using its ongoing revenue budget.

6 Consultations, approvals and timescales

In order to enact the proposed changes, we must follow the statutory process outlined by the Department for Education 'Making significant changes to an open academy and closure by mutual agreement' guidance.

6.1 Public Consultation

A public consultation will run for a 4-week period from Tuesday 28th September to Tuesday 26th October.

Consultation feedback is sought via the following methods:

- Online questionnaire
- Letter
- Public Forum

This will provide an opportunity for consultees to make their views known before a final business case is proposed.

6.2 Authority to Decide

Following this, feedback will be summarised and submitted to the Regional Schools Commissioner, as part of the overall business case to be considered at the Headteachers' Review Board in November, with the formal removal date being confirmed at this time.

6.3 Outcome

The outcome of this consultation will be posted on the trust website for Athena-GEP under our consultations area and referenced on the school website.

7 Your feedback

We would like to know what people think about the proposal to remove the Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College, Guildford, from December 2021 and redirected space for educational and/or community use.

Please provide feedback via the following methods:



- Response to our online consultation questionnaire
[Follow link to start survey: <https://forms.office.com/r/Mq07HKy7M5>]
[Alternatively use QR code opposite]
- Letter received, addressed to
Alastair McKenzie, Principal, Kings College, Guildford
Southway, Guildford, Surrey, GU2 8DU
- Public Meeting hosted online at 5:30pm, Monday 11th October
Alastair McKenzie, Principal, Kings College, Guildford
[Follow link to enter meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/3095566387>]

All feedback must be received by **4pm on Tuesday 26th October 2021**.

8 Appendix 1: SCC Educational Justification

Please refer to separate document.

9 Appendix 2: Frequently Asked Questions

9.1 Impact on Pupils and their Families

How many pupils will be impacted by this closure?

None. There are currently no pupils at this Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College Guildford.

What has recent demand been?

Recent demand has shown no formal admissions to the Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College, Guildford, for the last six years – since September 2015. Three pupils have worked their way through secondary school, with the final two pupils leaving in June 2020.

Year	New Admissions	Pupil Numbers	Occupancy Rate
2021 (based on current)	0	0	0%
2020	0	0	0%
2019	0	2	66%
2018	0	2	66%
2017	0	3	100%

Why is the removal being sought now?

By monitoring pupil admissions over a period of six years, the school, trust and Local Authority have sufficient evidence to determine that there is no demand for this provision. The unit has been vacant for the last academic year. By waiting until now, the service is therefore being phased out over a period of time, assured that there is no demand.

Has COVID had an impact on the unit's pupils or families?

We have seen no change in demand for the Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College, Guildford, as a result of COVID.

Where will pupils go instead?

Pupils will alternatively be educated in the local mainstream secondary school or special school, according to parental preference. All schools across the nation are required to make adjustments to accommodate those with disability under the Equalities Act 2010, therefore all schools are accessible to these pupils.

Is the alternative for pupils better or worse for the pupil's education?

In our view a more local provision of parental choice is better for the pupil's overall education. The pupil no longer has to travel a long distance to a specialist centre. Reduced travel time can reduce anxiety and tiredness of the pupil, thereby having a more positive impact on overall

wellbeing and educational experience. Additionally, a mainstream or special school will be adapted, allowing the pupil to integrate with other pupils across the school.

Our Local Authority, Surrey County Council, who have an obligation to manage their estates efficiently, avoiding disadvantage to pupils with special educational needs or disabilities, concur that the removal of the Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College, Guildford is educationally justified. This action is in line with their overall strategy for providing education to those with their Local Strategy. See Appendix 3 for separately submitted SCC Kings College SEND Centre Educational Justification Statement.

Is the alternative for pupils better or worse for the families of these pupils?

In our view a more local provision of parental choice is better for the families of pupils. Reduced travel times for pupils and parents means that a local school of choice is more accessible for the family unit to engage with.

How will families be impacted by this closure?

No impact. Since there has been no recent demand, there are no longer any staff specifically employed to service the needs of this Special Educational Units – staff have already been deployed to other areas of this growing secondary school.

9.2 Impact on Staff

Will staff be made redundant at Kings College Guildford as a result of this closure?

No. Since there has been no recent demand, there are no longer any staff specifically employed to service the needs of this Special Educational Units – staff have already been deployed to other areas of this growing secondary school.

9.3 Impact on Schools

How can schools accommodate these pupils?

All schools have a requirement to accommodate pupils and staff with disabilities as part of their duties under the Equality Act 2010. Disability Access Funding is available to assist schools in making adaptations to their sites.

Will schools see an increase in demand as a result of closure?

No. Demand has been so low in recent years, there will not be increased pressure on surrounding schools as a result of the closure of this Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College, Guildford.

9.4 Impact on local Community

How will the local community of Kings College, Guildford be impacted by this change?

Since the space dedicated to host the Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit is vacant of pupils and Surrey County Council have removed all equipment, this space can be re-integrated into the school for further use. The school regularly reviews its estate to assess needs for educational use as well as our secondary charitable aim of promoting recreation, leisure and social welfare of inhabitants in the local area. With additional space freed up in school, it is highly possible that additional space will be available for community use.

9.5 Next Steps

Following the public consultation the school will review options with the trust and consider their submissions to the Regional Schools Commissioner, in consultation with Surrey County Council.

The outcome of the consultation will be published on the trust website (<https://www.athenagep.co.uk/>) and available via the school website (<https://www.kingscollegeguildford.com/>).

10 Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment

10.1 Explaining the matter assessed

<p>What policy, function or service change is being assessed</p>	<p>Removal of Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College, Guildford</p>
<p>Why does this Equality Impact assessment need to be completed?</p>	<p>To identify possible impacts on individuals and groups with protected characteristics and planning mitigating action accordingly.</p>
<p>Who is affected by the proposals outlined above</p>	<p>The proposal would impact any pupils currently in (or wishing to apply to) the Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College, Guildford</p>
<p>What evidence has been gathered on the impact of the proposal</p>	<p>The school has not admitted pupils to the Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College, Guildford, in the last 4 years, due to a lack of demand.</p> <p>Consultation with Surrey County Council demonstrated that they are supportive of this move. As a consequence of the lack of demand, Surrey County Council no longer funds the unit for pupils and removed all related equipment. Furthermore, the Local Authority has written an educational justification in support of this proposal (see Appendix 1)</p> <p>We currently await the outcome of the public consultation.</p>

10.2 Characteristics Considered

Which protected characteristics have been considered as part of this assessment. [Please explain]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Age, including younger and older people	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Disability	
<input type="checkbox"/> Gender reassignment	
<input type="checkbox"/> Pregnancy and maternity	
<input type="checkbox"/> Race including ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality	
<input type="checkbox"/> Religion or belief, including lack of belief	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sex	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Marriage/civil partnerships	
Which other characteristics have been considered as part of this assessment. [Please explain]	
<input type="checkbox"/> Carers protected by association	
<input type="checkbox"/> Socio-economic disadvantage	

10.3 Impacts and Mitigating Actions

Characteristic	Disability		
Overall Impact	Positive and/ or Negative		
Impact Identified	Pupils with a disability will not have a dedicated specialist unit to attend		
Supporting Evidence	There has been no new demand for the previous 4 academic years, therefore there is little evidence to support this negative impact. All pupils have now left the unit.		
How we will maximise the positive impact or minimise the negative impact	All schools have a duty to offer facilities appropriate to their pupils with a disability under the Equalities Act 2010, as supported in liaison with the local authority.		
When this will be implemented by	Ongoing		
Owner	Local Authorities e.g. Surrey County Council		
What data do we have on impacted pupils?	Demand for Special Educational Needs Physical Disability Unit at Kings College, Guildford: 0 in last three academic years		
	Year	Admissions	Pupil Numbers
	2020-21	0	0
	2019-20	0	2
	2018-19	0	2
	2017-18	0	3
What other changes are taking place that may impact this group of individuals?	None identified.		
Are there any impacts that cannot be mitigated?	None identified.		