



**Business and Access**

Education, Participation and Skills

To all interested parties

Plymouth City Council  
Windsor House  
Plymouth PL6 5UF

T 01752 306734

E [amanda.paddison@plymouth.gov.uk](mailto:amanda.paddison@plymouth.gov.uk)  
[www.plymouth.gov.uk](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk)

Please ask for: Amanda Paddison

Date 17 September 2018

My Ref AP

## **Consultation on Proposals to Re - designate Plymouth Special Schools**

**Parents and Carers please note:** if your child already attends a Plymouth Special School, the proposals set out in this letter will **not** affect his or her education or the relationship you have with the school.

The City Council is consulting all interested parties on proposals to redesignate all Plymouth Special Schools, with effect from 1 September 2019, to reflect more accurately the needs and age range of pupils who are nowadays allocated places at the schools.

Their current official designations are out-of-date and inappropriate; they no longer reflect the complex range of special educational needs for which our schools now cater. Gradually, over recent years, pupils with a range of special needs have been allocated places in accordance with the more specialist provision that the schools have each been developing. I am therefore seeking your views on proposals to redesignate the following:

The designation of all special schools is changed to 'complex needs'. In addition to this, each school is described through a general and a specific criterion. Each of the specific criteria reflects the current designation of each special school, and provides further description so that pupils can be matched to the most appropriate special school.

### **General criteria for entry into a special school:**

1. All pupils will have an Education Health and Care plan. They will require consistent personalised learning support programmes every day of the week all year round in order to achieve their potential.
2. It is demonstrated that pupils will benefit from a small classes and a peer group, to support both learning and social and emotional development in a nurturing environment.
3. Parents have expressed a preference for a special school.
4. The school is suitable to the child's age, ability, aptitude and special educational needs.
6. Admission to the school is not incompatible with the efficient education and efficient use of resources.

In addition to the general criteria for entry, the following specific criterion for admission applies:

### **Cann Bridge School**

Pupils will have an education health and care plan that refers to cognition and learning as the primary need. Pupils' learning difficulties will mean, for example, that they will not be engaged with subject specific learning by the time they reach the end of key stage 1 or 2. Development in cognition learning will centre on a range of skills that will enable pupils to engage in learning situations and on their growing ability to seek out or direct learning opportunities autonomously. Pupils will have a communication and interaction need, for example, a speech and language need such as the delayed onset of language and/or autism. Some pupils will have a physical disability.

### **Mill Ford School**

Pupils will have an education health and care plan that refers to cognition and learning as the primary need. Pupils' learning difficulties will mean, for example, that they will not be engaged with subject specific learning by the time they reach the end of key stage 1 or 2. Development in cognition learning will centre on a range of skills that will enable pupils to engage in learning situations and on their growing ability to seek out or direct learning opportunities autonomously. Pupils will have a communication and interaction need, for example, a speech and language need such as the delayed onset of language and/or autism. Some pupils will have a physical disability.

### **Courtlands School**

Pupils will have an Education, Health and Care Plan that refers to cognition and learning as the primary need. Whilst pupils will be able to access a subject based curriculum; pupils' special educational needs will affect their rate of cognitive development or speed of learning. This will mean that they will be working well below the standard of national curriculum tests at key stage 1 and 2.

Pupils will have a social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) need. This might present in ways including vulnerability to suggestion and significant difficulty in managing peer interactions.

Some pupils will have a communication and interaction need, for example, autism and/or a speech and language need.

### **Brook Green Centre for Learning**

Pupils will have an Education, Health and Care Plan that refers to cognition and learning as the primary need. Whilst pupils will be able to access a subject based curriculum; pupils' special educational needs will affect their rate of cognitive development or speed of learning. This will mean that they will be working well below the standard of programmes of study at key stage 3 and key stage 4 national tests. Pupils will have an SEMH need, this might present in ways including vulnerability to suggestion and significant difficulty in managing peer interactions.

Some pupils will have a communication and interaction need, for example, autism and/or a speech and language need.

### **Mount Tamar School**

Pupils will have an Education, Health and Care Plan that refers to SEMH as the primary need. This will present as unpredictable and risky behaviour which is likely to result, or resulted in, exclusion from a mainstream setting(s). Some pupils will have a communication and interaction need, for example, speech and language and/or autism.

Pupils will be able to access a subject based curriculum. The majority of students will be working at the standard of national curriculum tests at each relevant key stage. Where pupils are not, it

will be because of restricted access to the relevant programme of study rather than their rate of cognitive development or speed of learning.

### **Longcause Community Special School**

Pupils will have an Education, Health and Care Plan that refers to communication and interaction as the primary need. This will be autism.

Whilst pupils will be able to access a subject based curriculum; pupils' special educational needs will affect their rate of cognitive development or speed of learning. This will mean that they will be working well below the standard of national curriculum tests at each relevant key stage as well as key stage 4 national tests.

Some pupils will have an SEMH need which will be associated with their diagnosis of autism.

### **Woodlands School**

Pupils will have an education health and care plan that refers to sensory and physical as the primary need. This will be a multi-sensory impairment and/or a physical disability and/or the impact of long-term illness and/or social communication difficulties. Pupils' complex disabilities will mean that they are likely to require specialist care for a range of medical needs, for example, gastrostomies and tracheostomies.

Pupils will have a range of learning difficulties. For some, this will mean that they will not be engaged with subject specific learning.

Development in cognition and learning will centre on a range of skills that will enable pupils to engage in learning situations and on their growing ability to seek out or direct learning opportunities autonomously. Other pupils will be able to access a subject based curriculum. However, pupils' Special educational needs will affect their rate of cognitive development or speed of learning. This will mean, for example, that they will be working well below the standard of national curriculum tests at each relevant key stage.

Some pupils will have a communication and interaction need, such as autism.

Children already placed at the Plymouth Special Schools **will not** be affected by the proposed changes of designation and will be able to continue attending the school until the normal leaving date, or in accordance with their Education, Health and Care Plan.

If you would like to comment on these proposals, you can do so by completing and returning the attached response form to the address on the form by **Friday 19 October 2018** at the latest.

For further information contact one of the following:

- ◆ Jim Barnicott, SEND Strategic Advice & Support ☐ (01752) 260256
- ◆ Jo Siney, Head of SEND & Inclusion ☐ (01752) 308744
- ◆ Amanda Paddison, Head of Business & Access ☐ (01752) 306734
- ◆ Julie Reed, Business Support Manager ☐ (01752) 307355

Following the consultation, if the Council decides, in the light of the comments received, to proceed further with the proposals, a public notice will be issued. When the notice expires, the Council will then decide, in the light of any responses to the notice, whether to implement the proposals.

Yours sincerely



Amanda Paddison  
Head of Business and Access