



PROPOSAL TO EXPAND DRUMBEAT SCHOOL & ASD SERVICE

Notice is given in accordance with Section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013/3110 that Lewisham Council intends to expand the permanent capacity of Drumbeat School & ASD Service from 171 places to 203 places with effect from January 2020.

Name, address and contact details of proposer:

Lewisham Council, Laurence House, 1 Catford Road, London SE6 4RU

Name, address and category of school:

Drumbeat School & ASD Service, Roundtable Road, London BR1 5LE

This is a community special school.

Description of alteration:

The Council proposes that Drumbeat School & ASD Service's capacity should permanently increase from 171 to 203 pupils from January 2020.

The proposal means that over time the school will cater for a cohort that has increased by 32 students from its current published capacity.

To achieve this expansion, the Council will be utilising spare space within the school which will be re-purposed to provide appropriate teaching accommodation.

Evidence of demand:

The council conducted a SEND review in summer 2016. This review confirmed the growing SEND population within the Borough and highlighted four key areas around place planning which should be further explored regarding existing provision.

Specifically relevant to this proposal was the increase in the number of children and young people being diagnosed with a primary need of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), resulting in a need to cater for this increase and reduce the need to place out of Borough.

Following this review, further analysis has been conducted by the Children with Complex Needs (CWCN) service to better understand what exactly the place requirement is, but also how best to meet it. In completing this analysis, the CWCN service have considered how the system currently works, what best practice looks like, where young people are currently being placed and how the rise in young people with SEND relates to population growth.

Specifically in relation to this proposal, the analysis identified the need for an immediate increase of ASD places. Thus far, Drumbeat School have been able to go over number by 10% as allowable by the statutory guidance, and so currently caters for 187 pupils. However for the school to increase its numbers further this statutory consultation process must take place.

The need for a number of these places already exists, as can be shown by the pressure to commission additional ASD places outside of Lewisham as Drumbeat School is currently full and therefore in effect oversubscribed. These commissioned places outside of the Borough, are often in expensive, and distant, independent provision.

Objectives:

The objective of the proposal is to utilise additional capacity within the school buildings to accommodate the increase in demand for ASD provision within the borough and reduce the need to commission out of borough placements, as placing young people in provision that is further afield does not benefit the young person in terms of social inclusion or a sense of community. There is often an extensive amount of travel time (often in isolation) which is disadvantageous also. The ability to cater for our young people and their families close to home will allow the wider range of support systems to function in the best interests of those young people and their families.

The proposal would build on the good (with outstanding features) Ofsted rated standards for teaching and learning already in place at the school and provide additional places without having any negative impact on other schools, academies and educational institutions in the area. The proposal would also have a positive impact on travel distance/time for some students.

This proposal forms part of Lewisham Council's response to the statutory obligation to provide sufficient school places.

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation:

The additional places proposed would enable the school to grow to admit up to 203 pupils in total. This may not occur on the date of first expansion. It is not possible to be more specific as each year group is a different size, dictated by need.

Effect on other educational institutions in the area:

It is not anticipated that the proposed expansion of Drumbeat School will have any impact on other educational facilities within the local area. The proposal has been made to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers that is being experienced within the Borough and to reduce the reliance on out of borough provision.

Project Costs:

The proposal seeks to utilise existing space within the school buildings, and does not require any capital finance.

Commenting on the proposal:

Within five weeks from the date of publication of this proposal (by 12 noon, 8 November 2019), any person may comment on, support, or object to the proposal in writing to Matt Henaughan, Strategic Service Planning and Business Change, 2nd Floor Laurence House, 1 Catford Road, London SE6 4RU, matt.henaughan@lewisham.gov.uk

Signed: Matt Henaughan, Strategic Service Planning and Business Change, Children and Young People's Services

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