

## SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE OF CABINET

### AGENDA

Meeting to be held on Thursday 21 March 2024 at 12.15pm in  
Committee Room 1, City Hall, Sunderland

ITEM		PAGE
1.	<b>Receipt of Declarations of Interest (if any)</b>	
2.	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>	
3.	<b>Minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2024</b> Copy attached.	1
4.	<b>Establishment of a Resourced Autism Spectrum Unit at Mill Hill Primary School</b> Report of the Director of Children's Services (copy attached).	5

Elaine Waugh,  
Assistant Director of Law and Governance

City Hall,  
SUNDERLAND

13 March 2024



## **SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE OF CABINET**

**Held on THURSDAY 11 JANUARY 2024 at 11.00am in Committee Room 1, City Hall, Sunderland**

### **MINUTES**

#### **Present: -**

Councillor Williams in the Chair

Councillors Chequer and Price.

#### **In Attendance: -**

Julienne Collinson (representing the Assistant Director of Law and Governance), Alan Rowan (Retained Education Functions Lead, Children's Services) and Gillian Kelly (Democratic Services).

#### **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

#### **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors G Miller and Stewart.

#### **Proposal to Increase the Number of Specialist Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) School Places at Usworth Colliery Primary School**

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report requesting a decision on the proposal to increase the number of specialist ASD school places at Usworth Colliery Primary School from 12 to 26 places.

Usworth Colliery Primary School was a maintained primary school in the Washington area which as well as a mainstream primary school provision, also offered 12 specialist school places for children with special educational needs who were in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The unit was currently oversubscribed and recent capital works to improve facilities for children currently on roll had resulted in an increase to the wider capacity of the unit and an opportunity to increase the commissioned number of places at the unit.

The proposal to increase the number of places at the unit would result in increased capacity within the local SEN sector, increased appropriateness of SEN placements and increased efficiencies in commissioning.

The Cabinet approved a proposal to commence the School Organisation processes required to increase the capacity of the current Autism Unit in July 2023 and a pre-publication consultation was carried out between 18 September and 3 November 2023. Consultation was also carried out with parents and current staff and the consultation had received 33 responses with the majority being in favour of increasing the number of places in the Autism Unit.

Notification of the statutory proposals was published on 15 November and the statutory notice period ended on 13 December 2023. There were no responses to the notice.

The Retained Education Functions Lead advised that if agreed, it was proposed that the additional placements would come into effect immediately.

The Chair referred to some of the consultation responses and the comments around Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) provision. The Retained Education Functions Lead advised that Children's Services were aiming to establish a unit for SEMH in Washington and it had been planned to change the Thrive unit at Usworth Colliery to a permanently commissioned provision and those responses had related to that element of the proposal. The increasing complexity of needs presented by children recently placed in the ASD unit at the school and the consultation responses received had led the proposal to be amended to remove the SEMH unit and instead focus on the expansion of the existing ASD provision.

The Chair commented that it was good to see locally based provision and that the Council was willing to talk to any school who was interested in hosting additional provision. The Retained Education Functions Lead highlighted that discussions were taking place with a number of schools and further proposals for specialised provision would be coming forward in future months.

Having considered the report, the statutory proposals and representations made, the Committee: -

1. RESOLVED that the statutory proposal to increase the capacity of the existing Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision at Usworth Colliery Primary School from 12 places to 26 places with effect from 11 January 2024 be approved.

## **Proposal to Establish a Resourced Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Unit at Hudson Road Primary School**

The Director of Children's Services submitted a report requesting approval for a proposal to establish a 16-place unit for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs at Hudson Road Primary School.

The number of children requiring additional support due to a special educational need had increased and there was an identified need to increase the range and quantity of high-quality SEN provisions in local areas.

The Council was proposing to create an SEN provision at Hudson Road Primary School for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs to make provision more accessible for a wider range of families. The unit would complement the mainstream offer at the school with children accessing both the mainstream resource and a specific SEN resource.

The proposal would result in increased capacity within the local SEN sector, increased appropriateness of SEN placements and increased efficiencies in commissioning.

The Cabinet approved the commencement of the School Organisation processes required to develop the proposal in July 2023 and a pre-publication consultation was carried out between 8 September and 3 November 2023. Consultation was also carried out with parents and current staff and the consultation had received 47 responses with 100% being in favour of the creation of a resourced provision for children with SEMH needs.

Notification of the statutory proposal was published on 15 November and the statutory notice period ended on 13 December 2023. There were no responses to the notice.

The Retained Education Functions Lead advised that if agreed, it was proposed that the Council immediately begin the procurement processes required to provide the necessary resources for the delivery of the unit. Together for Children would also include Hudson Road as a placement destination for children with an EHCP identifying SEMH as a primary requirement from September 2024.

Councillor Chequer asked if students would come from the immediate local area or from across the city and queried if there was a perception of high need in that area. She also asked if neuro-diverse children would fall into SEN/SEMH category or would provision be allocated on a needs basis.

The Retained Education Functions Lead highlighted that there was currently no SEMH unit in the primary sector so in theory the provision was city wide. Following the pattern which was being established for ASD units, these had started off as city wide and would eventually become localised. This was a phased approach but predominantly based on local provision. He noted that whatever was the primary aim of an EHCP would direct the provision, so this was needs based.

The Committee having fully considered the proposal it was: -

2. RESOLVED that approval be given to the proposal to develop a 16 place Special Educational Needs (SEN) unit at Hudson Road Primary School for primary aged pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs with effect from 1 September 2024.

(Signed) L WILLIAMS  
Chair

**SCHOOL ORGANISATION COMMITTEE OF CABINET  
21<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2024**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY SHEET – PART I**

**Title of Report:**

Establishment of a resourced Autism Spectrum Disorder Unit at Mill Hill Primary School

**Author(s):**

Director of Children’s Services

**Purpose of Report:**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to implement the Council’s proposal to establish a 16-place unit for children with needs associated with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at Mill Hill Primary School.

**Description of Decision:**

School Organisation Committee of Cabinet is asked to:

Note the responses to the statutory and pre-publication consultations and consider the statutory proposal which is to:

**Develop a 16 place Special Educational Needs (SEN) unit at Mill Hill Primary School for primary aged pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder needs with effect from 1st September 2024.**

Under the provisions of the relevant Regulations, the Authority may approve published proposals with or without modification or may reject them.

The Committee is requested to approve the proposal as detailed above.

Is the decision consistent with the Budget/Policy Framework? Yes

If not, Council approval is required to change the Budget/Policy Framework

**Reason for the Decision**

The proposal will contribute to the sufficiency of SEN school places across the city. This will increase the number of high quality, local SEN places, reduce waiting times for special schools, allow Sunderland based children to access appropriate provision within their localities and create efficiencies in the wider cost of delivering a SEN infrastructure in Sunderland.

**Alternative options to be considered and recommended to be rejected:**

Retain the existing number of SEN places. A deficit in local, specialist places will remain resulting in children either not being expediently placed in an appropriate school setting or being placed in a setting that requires travel outside their locality and will result in greater cost pressure on the Council.

**Impacts analysed.**

Equality  Privacy  Sustainability  Crime and Disorder

**Is the Decision consistent with the Council's co-operative values? Yes**

**Is this a "Key Decision" as defined in the Constitution? Yes**

**Is it included in the 28-day Notice of Decisions? Yes**



**ESTABLISHMENT OF A RESOURCED AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER UNIT AT MILL HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S SERVICES****1. Purpose of the Report**

The purpose of this report is to seek approval to implement the Council's proposal to establish a 16-place unit for children with needs associated with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) at Mill Hill Primary School.

**2. Description of Decision****2.1 School Organisation Committee of Cabinet is asked to:**

Note the responses to the statutory and pre-publication consultations and consider the statutory proposal which is to:

**Develop a 16 place Special Educational Needs (SEN) unit at Mill Hill Primary School for primary aged pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder needs with effect from 1st September 2024.**

Under the provisions of the relevant Regulations, the Authority may approve published proposals with or without modification or may reject them.

The Committee is requested to approve the proposal as detailed above.

**3. Current Position**

3.1 The number of children who require additional support due to a special educational need has increased in Sunderland. More children are now attending mainstream schools who require significant additional interventions to support them in their school place. This at times can exceed what a mainstream school has the resources to offer.

3.2 There is an identified need to increase the range and quantity of high-quality SEN provisions in local areas. This ensures children for whom a mainstream school place is appropriate to them can continue to access that within their own locality while also ensuring schools have the correct resources to meet increasing demand from pupils with additional SEN needs.

3.3 The Council proposes that, to make provision more accessible for a wider range of families, it will create a SEN provision at Mill Hill Primary School for pupils with ASD needs. This will allow children who require a greater level of support from within the locality to access an appropriate school place with bespoke support.

3.4 The unit will complement the mainstream offer at the school with children on roll accessing both the mainstream resource and educational offer and a SEN offer from within a specific resource.

3.5 The proposal will ensure additional facilities are available to meet educational, sensory needs, provide access to specialist equipment (where required) and, by

creating a local SEN offer, will reduce the time children are required to travel to access a special school place.

#### **4. Outcomes**

4.1 The proposal would secure the following outcomes:

##### **4.2 Increased Capacity Within the Local SEN Sector**

The proposal will provide an additional 16 primary school places to Sunderland's current SEN offer. Given the proposal aims to ensure SEN places are available in localities in the first instance it is anticipated that children accessing provision would be from South Sunderland with children from other planning areas accessing places as appropriate.

##### **4.3 Increased Appropriateness of SEN Placements**

The ongoing diversification of the range of SEN provision in Sunderland will ensure that there are multiple levels of placements for local children. The creation of additional resourced units provides greater opportunity for those children who can thrive in a mainstream environment but who need additional support, while those who require a special school place are more likely to be accommodated quicker due to the increased local capacity across the wider SEN sector.

##### **4.4 Increased Efficiencies in Commissioning**

A consequence of increasing local access to SEN provision is that pupils do not have to travel as far to access central, citywide or out of area provisions. Being able to provide local facilities therefore reduces commissioning costs such as home to school transport costs and the costs associated with out of area placements.

#### **5.0 Consultation**

5.1 In January 2024 Cabinet approved a proposal to commence the School Organisation processes required for the development of the Council's proposal.

5.2 An informal (pre-publication) consultation on the proposals took place between 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023. The pre-publication consultation outcomes are attached at Appendix 1.

5.3 Consultees recommended in the relevant statutory guidance were consulted via a survey that was made widely available on the Council's website and the website of Mill Hill Primary School.

The consultation received 53 responses. Of these: -

- 91% of responses to the question 'Do you agree with the proposal to create a resourced provision for primary aged children with special educational needs relating to Autism at Mill Hill Primary School?' supported the Council's proposal.

5.4 The Council published notification of the statutory proposal for the development of an ASD unit at Mill Hill Primary School on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024. The statutory notice period ended 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2024. The statutory notice was published in the following places:

- Sunderland City Council's website
- Mill Hill Primary School's website
- The Sunderland Echo

5.5 In addition to the publication of notices the following groups were consulted with as part of this process:

- Parents of pupils attending the school
- Current staff

5.6 The Council received no responses to the notice. The statutory notice and the full proposal document are attached at Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

5.7 There were therefore no objections to the proposal.

## **6.0 Next Steps**

6.1 Subject to approval of the proposals contained within this paper the Council will commence procurement processes required to provide necessary resources, teaching bases and support spaces to facilitate the delivery of the Unit.

6.2 Together for Children will also include Mill Hill Primary School as a placement destination for children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) identifying ASD as a primary requirement from September 2024.

## **7. Reasons for the Decision**

7.1 The proposal will contribute to the sufficiency of SEN school places across the city. This will increase the number of high quality, local SEN places, reduce waiting times for special schools, allow Sunderland based children to access appropriate provision within their localities and create efficiencies in the wider cost of delivering a SEN infrastructure in Sunderland.

## **8. Alternative Options**

8.1 Retain the existing number of SEN places. A deficit in local, specialist places will remain resulting in children either not being expediently placed in an appropriate school setting or being placed in a setting that requires travel outside their locality and will result in greater cost pressure on the Council.

## **9. Impact Analysis**

**Equalities Analysis** – The proposal is not projected to disadvantage any individual, social group or organisation. The Equalities Assessment is attached as Appendix 4.

## **10. Other Relevant Considerations / Consultations**

10.1 **Co-operative values** – At Annual Council in May 2015, it was resolved that the following statement be included in the Constitution to reflect the values of the “Co-operative Council”.

*“Sunderland City Council is a co-operative council and in being so will act ethically in all its actions while adhering to and actively promoting its co-operative values of self-*

*help, self-responsibility, democracy, equality, equity and solidarity. These values will underpin its decision making and actions.”*

## **10.2 Financial implications**

The average cost of EHCP ‘Top Ups’ for 16 ASD places in the proposed resourced provision would be £5,440 per place per year giving a total estimated funding requirement of £0.087m per year which would be met from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. This reflects an estimated total saving of £69,173 per place per year when compared to the cost of an independent or out of area placement. Total potential cost avoidance to the High Needs Block as a result of the proposals above would be £1.106m.

In January 2024 Cabinet approved capital works required to develop the provision at Mill Hill Primary School. That approval is subject to the outcomes of this meeting. Costs have been initially estimated at £0.65m based on similar programmes procured in recent years. This is subject to review following the development and procurement of an appropriate capital scheme. This will be funded from within the current approved capital programme.

## **10.3 Legal Implications**

Throughout the process, from informal consultation to the publication of the statutory proposal, the Council has complied with the requirements of the applicable legislation (the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013) and has also adhered to the Department for Education’s 2023 Statutory Guidance ‘Making Significant Changes (‘Prescribed Alterations’) to Maintained Schools’.

## **11. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Pre-Publication Consultation Outcomes

Appendix 2 – Statutory Notice

Appendix 3 – Full Proposal Document

Appendix 4 – Equalities Assessment

# Proposal to Develop a Special Education Needs Unit at Mill Hill Primary School

53

Responses

02:13

Average time to complete

Closed

Status

1. Do you agree with the proposal to create a resourced provision for primary aged children with special educational needs relating to Autism at Mill Hill Primary School?

Yes	48
No	4
No Comment	1



2. If no, please tell us why you do not agree with the proposal

3

Responses

Latest Responses

3. Do you have any additional comments to make on the proposal?

24

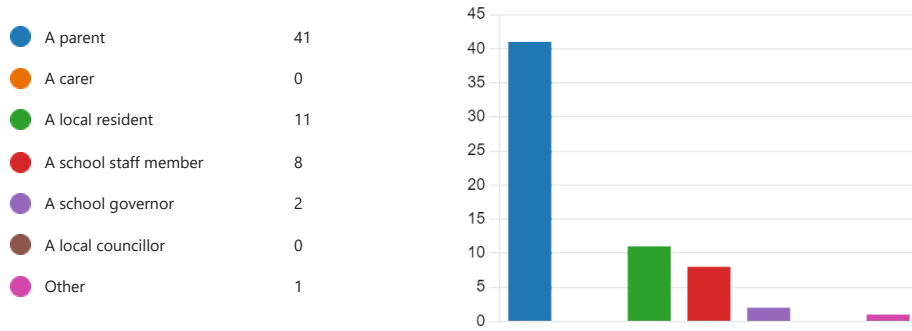
Responses

Latest Responses

11 respondents (46%) answered **child** for this question.



4. Are you responding to the survey as one of the following? (choose as many as applicable)



5. How did you hear about this survey?

51  
Responses

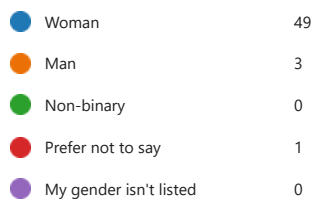
Latest Responses  
"Via the Headteacher"  
"Email"  
"My wife"

[Update](#)

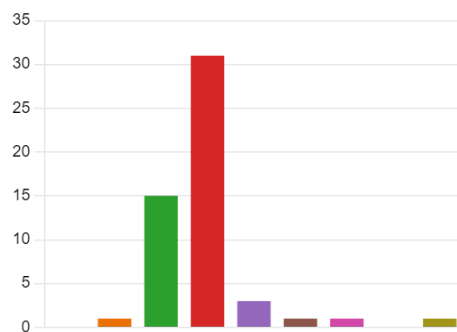
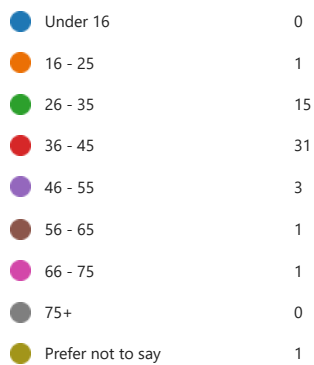
6 respondents (12%) answered **Email from school** for this question.



6. Which gender do you identify as? (please tick one box only)

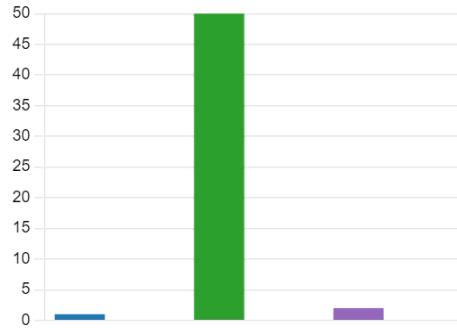


7. Please specify your age group



8. How would you describe your ethnic group?

Asian or Asian British	1
Black or Black British	0
White or White British	50
Mixed Ethnicity	0
Prefer not to say	2
Other	0



9. Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

Yes	3
No	47
Prefer not to say	2



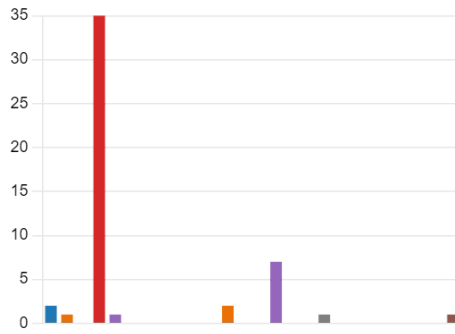
10. Do you live in Sunderland?

Yes	50
No	2
Prefer not to say	0



11. Which ward in the city do you currently live in?

Barnes	2
Castle	1
Copt Hill	0
Doxford	35
Fulwell	1
Hendon	0
Hetton	0
Houghton	0
Millfield	0
Pallion	0
Redhill	0
Ryhope	2
Sandhill	0
Shiney Row	0
Silksworth	7
Southwick	0
St Anne's	0
St Chad's	1
St Michael's	0
St Peter's	0
Washington Central	0
Washington East	0
Washington North	0
Washington South	0
Washington West	0
Prefer not to say	1





**THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SUNDERLAND**

**NOTIFICATION OF STATUTORY PROPOSAL FOR MILL HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**ESTABLISH A RESOURCED AUTISM UNIT FOR PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, that it is the intention of Sunderland City Council, Plater Way, Sunderland SR1 3AA to make a prescribed alteration to

**Mill Hill Primary School, Torphin Hill Drive, Doxford Park, Sunderland, SR3 2PJ**

by establishing a 16-place resourced Special Educational Needs Unit with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024. The Unit established will provide for special educational needs associated with Autism. This will be based at and managed by Mill Hill Primary School.

Mill Hill Primary School is a Primary School maintained by Sunderland City Council.

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposals. The complete proposals have been published on the website <https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/article/13038/School-organisation-consultations>

Copies of the complete proposals can be obtained from: Alan Rowan, Sufficiency and Capital Lead (Education), Together for Children, City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland SR1 3AA,

or by e-mailing [alan.rowan@togetherforchildren.org.uk](mailto:alan.rowan@togetherforchildren.org.uk)

Within four weeks from the date of publication of the proposals, any person may object to or make comments on the proposals by sending them to Alan Rowan, Sufficiency and Capital Lead (Education), Together for Children, City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland SR1 3AA or by e-mailing them to [schoolorganisation@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation@sunderland.gov.uk).

Signed: Patrick Melia

Chief Executive

Sunderland City Council

Publication Date: 25 January 2024



## THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF SUNDERLAND

### NOTIFICATION OF STATUTORY PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) UNIT AT MILL HILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### **Local Authority Proposal**

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, that it is the intention of Sunderland City Council, City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland, SR1 3AA to:

Develop a 16 place SEN unit at **Mill Hill Primary School** for primary aged pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024.

Mill Hill Primary School is a maintained primary school maintained by Sunderland City Council.

The new provision will be developed on the current Mill Hill Primary School site with pupils attending the unit expected to access resources from both the resourced unit and from within the wider mainstream school offer.

#### **Reason for the Development of a Special Educational Needs Unit at Mill Hill Primary School**

The number of children who require additional support due to a special educational need has increased in Sunderland. More children are now attending mainstream schools who require significant additional interventions to support them in their school place. This at times can exceed what a mainstream school has the resources to offer.

There is an identified need to increase the range and quantity of high-quality SEN provisions in local areas. This ensures children for whom a mainstream school place is appropriate to them can continue to access that within their own locality, while also ensuring schools have the correct resources to meet increasing demand from pupils with additional SEN needs.

The Council proposes that, to make provision more accessible for a wider range of families, it will create a SEN provision at Mill Hill Primary School for pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans on the Autistic Spectrum. This will allow children who require a greater level of support from within the locality to access an appropriate school place with bespoke support.

The unit will complement the mainstream offer at the school with children on roll accessing both the mainstream resource and educational offer and an SEN offer from within a specific base in the school.

The proposal will ensure additional facilities are available to meet educational, sensory and nurture needs, provide access to specialist equipment (where required) and, by creating a local SEN offer, will reduce the time children are required to travel to access a special school place.

The proposal would secure the following outcomes:

#### **Increased Capacity Within the Local SEN Sector**

The proposal will add an additional 16 primary school places to Sunderland's current SEN offer. Given the proposal aims to ensure SEN places are available in localities in the first instance it is anticipated that children accessing provision would be from South Sunderland with children from other planning areas accessing places as appropriate.

#### **Increased Appropriateness of SEN Placements**

The ongoing diversification of the range of SEN provision in Sunderland will ensure that there are multiple levels of placements for local children. The creation of additional resourced units provides greater opportunity for those children who can thrive in a mainstream environment but who need

additional support, while those who require a special school place are more likely to be accommodated quicker due to the increased local capacity across the wider SEN sector.

### **Increased Efficiencies in Commissioning**

A consequence of increasing local access to SEN provision is that pupils do not have to travel as far to access central, citywide or out of area provisions. Being able to provide local facilities therefore reduces commissioning costs such as home to school transport costs and the costs associated with out of area placements.

### **Effect on other Schools, Academies and Educational Institutions in the Area**

The proposal is anticipated to have positive implications for other schools, academies and educational institutions in the area.

Increased local ASD capacity will ensure that pupils are placed appropriately and that children, for whom it has been identified that a mainstream place is not appropriate, will not be retained in that setting due to lack of capacity in the SEN sector. This will ensure schools and academies can allocate resources more effectively and that school rolls are reflective of the provision and support an individual mainstream school can offer.

### **Project Costs**

The capital costs associated with the development of the Unit, as well as increasing the school's wider ability to respond to pupil SEN needs, are contained within a capital project budget. The current estimate for development works is £0.650m.

### **Pupil Numbers and Admissions**

The unit will have the capacity to provide 16 places for local pupils. All pupils will be in receipt of an Education, Health and Care Plan that names Mill Hill Primary School as a suitable setting to meet their educational needs. Places will be allocated by Together for Children's SEN placement panel.

### **Displaced Pupils**

The proposal will not result in displaced pupils. It will ensure that pupils that require a SEN provision but who have historically had to travel outside their home localities to access an appropriate school place can be accommodated at a setting that is near their home.

The development will use surplus class bases at Mill Hill Primary School so there will not be a reduction in either the availability of mainstream places or the level of support that is available to the current non-SEN cohort.

The development will also provide wider specialist facilities that can be accessed by the school's mainstream pupils who may have extra support needs but who do not need a SEN school place should that be identified as appropriate. Areas that may be used by the wider cohort include sensory therapy, calming or group areas.

Pupils accessing the main ASD provision will be those who have been identified by an Education, Health and Care Plan Placement Panel as requiring that provision. Mainstream school placements will have been considered unsuitable to meet the needs of pupils. On that

basis there is no displacement associated with the delivery of a SEN unit at Mill Hill Primary School.

### **Impact on the Community**

Wider positive impacts will come from the development of locality provision. Specifically, the ability for young people from South Sunderland to access a site for an ASD placement that enables them to continue to attend a school place near their home without excessive travel.

### **Balance of Denominational Provision**

There will be no impact on the balance of denominational provision as the school does not have a religious character.

### **Special Educational Needs Provision (SEND)**

The proposal will deliver an ASD unit within Mill Hill Primary School's site. This provision will be for primary aged children with the majority who will attend the unit living in the South Sunderland area. It responds to the need for additional ASD places in the city, the ambition to ensure there is appropriate local provision for pupils and utilises the expertise of Mill Hill Primary School in providing for this cohort.

### **Travel**

There would be significant decrease in car use because of these proposals. The delivery of locality sites will enable pupils to access provision nearer to their homes. This will reduce both the period spent travelling to and from provision and the costs associated with that travel.

### **Consultation**

An informal (pre-publication) consultation upon the proposals took place during the following dates:

- 10<sup>th</sup> November 2023 – 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023

Consultees recommended in the relevant statutory guidance were consulted via a Consultation Document that was made widely available on the Council's website and the website of Mill Hill Primary School.

The consultation received 53 responses. Of these:-

- 49 (92%) of the respondents to the question '*Do you agree with the proposal to create a resourced provision for primary aged children with special educational needs relating to Autism at Mill Hill Primary School?*' supported the Council's proposal.

## Submission of Objections and Comments on the Proposal

A copy of this proposal can be viewed on the Sunderland City Council website at

<https://www.sunderland.gov.uk/article/13038/School-organisation-consultations>

It can also be requested via:

E-mail: [alan.rowan@togetherforchildren.org.uk](mailto:alan.rowan@togetherforchildren.org.uk)

Post: Sufficiency and Capital Lead, Together for Children, City Hall, Plater Way, Sunderland, SR1 3AA.

Within four weeks of the Publication Date below, any person may object to or make comments on the proposals by sending their written representations:

*By e-mail to: -*

[schoolorganisation@sunderland.gov.uk](mailto:schoolorganisation@sunderland.gov.uk)

*Or by post to: -*

*Alan Rowan*

*Sufficiency and Capital Lead*

*Together for Children,*

*City Hall,*

*Plater Way,*

*Sunderland*

*SR1 3AA*

Signed: Patrick Melia,  
Chief Executive,  
Sunderland City Council.

Publication Date: 25 January 2024

**EQUALITY ANALYSIS**

You must complete this in conjunction with reading Equality Analysis Guidance

**Name of Policy/Decision/Project/Activity:**  
Establishing an SEN Unit at Mill Hill Primary School

Date:  
22/02/2024

Version Number: One

Equality Analysis completed by:  
Name/Job title: Alan Rowan – Capital and Sufficiency Lead

Responsible Officer or Group:  
Name/Job title: Alan Rowan

Is the Activity:  
New/Proposed ( X )      Changing/Being Reviewed ( )      Other ( )

## 1. Purpose and scope

### Purpose

In this section outline briefly:

- what the policy, decision or activity is and what the intended outcomes/benefits are (linked to the Corporate Outcomes Framework)
- over what period of time the outcomes will be achieved
- why it needs to be implemented or revised
- what populations are affected by the proposal
- who is expected to benefit and how, i.e. young people, older people, carers, BME groups, ward areas/communities, etc
- whether there are any overlaps with regional, sub-regional, national priorities.

The decision is to establish a Special Educational Needs (SEN) unit at Mill Hill Primary School for children with Autism needs (ASD). Mill Hill Primary School is a local authority maintained primary school.

This decision will establish a resourced unit for primary aged children with additional education needs relating to their ASD requirements. It will create new high-quality provision for the local population and contribute to Sunderland's corporate Healthy City aims.

The outcomes will be realised on an ongoing basis from the point of implementation (September 2024)

The proposal needs to be implemented to resolve oversubscription to local ASD providers. It will ensure that young people who need a specialist school place are able to access one locally with a reduction in the requirement to travel to a city centre hub.

It will benefit young people accessing the provision. Those expected to access the provision resultant from the proposals are aged 5 – 11 years of age.

### Intelligence and Analysis

Please describe:

- What sources of information have been used to inform this assessment/analysis (this should include but is not limited to consultations, resident/service user feedback and statistical data and intelligence)
- **What the information is telling you** – this should be broken down by each of the protected characteristics or other identified groups which could be disadvantaged. Each of the aims of the equality act should be considered in relation to each of the protected characteristics.



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The proposals were developed following evaluation of local demand data SEMH places, the costs of provision of travel and the potential requirement to provide out of area or independent provision should places local mainstream places not be developed and consultation with local headteachers. All identified the following.

- There is a deficit in local ASD places.
- There will be emotional, social and education benefits in reducing travel requirements for young people requiring a SEN provision.

In advance of the publication of full proposals the Council carried out a pre-publication consultation. The consultation was live for 6 weeks with 53 responses being received. 91% supported the Council's proposals.

**Gaps in intelligence and information**

Having analysed the information available to you:

- are there any gaps in intelligence or areas where understanding needs to be improved? Please describe what these are and what actions you intend to take to obtain/improve the information. These actions should be covered in the action plan.
- are there any groups who should be expected to benefit who do not? Please describe why not and whether you will amend the decision to change this outcome. This should also be covered in the action plan.

It is not considered that further intelligence would influence the proposals further.

**Additional Impacts**

The policy or action may also have an impact on other groups or individuals which are not covered by statutory requirements. Please outline any additional individuals or groups which have not already been covered. This could include socio-economic groups, voluntary and community sector, carers or specific communities which face additional challenges (such as former coal mining areas or areas of high deprivation)

## 2. Analysis of impact on people

In this section you must **review the intelligence described above and summarise the intended and potential impact of the policy, decision or activity** on the people of Sunderland. This includes specific consideration of the impact on individuals, groups with protected characteristics and communities of interest within the city. Please briefly outline any positive, neutral or negative impacts on the specific groups below. Please note that any negative impacts should have a corresponding action in the action plan in the page below.

In this assessment it is important to remember the **Council is required to give due regard to:**

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

**Each of these aims must be summarised in turn in relation to the groups outlined below.**

Characteristic	List of Impacts		
	Positive	Neutral	Negative
Age	Pupils aged 5 – 11 will be the primary beneficiaries. Proposals will result in increased appropriateness of school place allocation.		
Disability	Provision will be created for pupils with ASD. This will enable pupils who are unable to access a local, suitable school place to do so. Waiting time for places will be reduced, time in less appropriate mainstream settings will be reduced and accessibility of provision will be increased		
Gender/Sex	NA		
Marriage & Civil Partnership	NA		
Pregnancy and	NA		

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maternity			
Race/Ethnicity	NA		
Religion/belief	NA		
Sexual Orientation	NA		
Gender identity	NA		

**Please add any additional groups mentioned in “additional impacts” above to this table.**

### 3. Response to Analysis, Action Plan and Monitoring

In this section please outline what actions you propose to take to minimise the negative, and maximise the positive, impacts that have been identified through the analysis. By considering and implementing these actions the policy or action can be refined to make sure that the greatest benefits are achieved for the people of Sunderland. The performance monitoring process should also be set out to explain how ongoing progress is going to be followed to make sure that the aims are met.

From the analysis four broad approaches can be taken, (No major change; continue with the policy/action despite negative implications; adjust the policy/decision/action; or stop the policy/action). Please indicate, using the list below, which is proposed.

No Major Change ( )

Continue Despite Negative Implications ( )

Adjust the Policy/Decision/Project/Activity ( )

Stop ( )

#### Action Plan

ACTION	WHO	WHEN	MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

**PLEASE ENSURE THE COMPLETED EQUALITY IMPACT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE IS PUBLISHED ON <http://citypoint/equalityanalysis/default.aspx>, WITH THE RELEVANT ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION APPENDED, i.e. POLICY/STRATEGY. THE EQUALITY ANALYSIS MUST BE PRESENTED AT ANY DECISION POINT.**

