

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
8 JANUARY 2024**

SEND RESOURCE BASE REMODELLING AT HEATHFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an overview of the work being undertaken to remodel the existing Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) resource base at Heathfield Primary School.

Summary

2. The resource base at Heathfield Primary School, which is part of Lingfield Academy Trust, has been in its current configuration for a number of years. The Lingfield Academy Trust has worked in partnership with Darlington Borough Council to explore how the resource base can be remodelled effective from September 2024 to be more reflective of and responsive to the needs of Darlington children and young people with SEND. The remodelling would see the base change to have a primary remit of support for communication and interaction needs which is aligned with the presenting need of Darlington children and young people with SEND. The base would be incrementally filled over a 3-year period supporting children from Reception to Year 2.
3. This remodelling proposal falls within the DfE significant change process for Academies and therefore requires a period of open consultation. Following which a business case can be submitted to DfE for review and determination.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that the Children and Young People's Scrutiny Committee note the work being undertaken to remodel the existing resource base at Heathfield Primary to align with and respond to the presenting needs of Darlington children with SEND.

Tony Murphy
Assistant Director Education and Inclusion

Background Papers

No background papers were used in the preparation of this report.

Helen Watson : Extension 5866

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no impact on Crime and Disorder
Health and Wellbeing	This report has a positive impact on children's health and wellbeing.
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	This report has no impact on Carbon and Climate Change
Diversity	This report has a positive impact on inclusion
Wards Affected	All wards
Groups Affected	Children and Parents/Carers of children with SEND will be positively impacted
Budget and Policy Framework	This report ensures that the resource base is efficient and effectively aligned to presenting need in Darlington.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
Council Plan	This report has a positive impact on the Children and Young People's priorities in the Council's plan.
Efficiency	This report has a positive impact on efficiency ensuring resources are aligned to have a positive impact on children's outcomes.
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. The resource base at Heathfield currently has 16 places with a specific remit to provide individualised learning support to children with cognition and learning needs. An analysis of the needs of Darlington children has not identified cognition and learning as an area of where there is a continued requirement for a designated resource base. Communication and interaction needs now represents a growing proportion of presenting need within Darlington, increasingly identified in early years settings. There is one primary school resource base currently with a remit of social communication and interaction needs and demand for places in this resource base is significantly outstripping capacity. It has been oversubscribed for a 3-year period and is expected to be in the same position of oversubscription in September 2024.
6. In response to this oversubscription position, it is proposed that the resource base at Heathfield will be remodelled to respond to the growing need for individualised learning support to children with communication and interaction needs. The resource base will focus on children in their early years of primary education and therefore will be for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2. The resource base will develop as part of a 3-year programme. The base will initially commence with 8 places and gradually build to a 24-place provision. The incremental growth in the resource base place numbers will continue to remain under review to ensure it is at a level and rate to ensure continued quality and success of the provision.
7. The remodelling of the Heathfield resource base also presents the opportunity to ensure resources to meet the holistic needs of children are co-located and can operate on a needs-led basis and as a hub of support. It is therefore, also proposed, that the Speech and Language resource currently located at Northwood School (also part of the Lingfield Academy Trust) transfers into Heathfield to coincide with the opening of the remodelled base. There will be no impact on current support levels for children in either setting.
8. The remodelling of a resource base falls within the DfE significant change process and therefore a period of statutory consultation is required on these remodelling proposals. **Appendix 1** provides an overview of the consultation documentation. The statutory consultation will run for a period of six weeks commencing on 8 January 2024 and concluding on 18 February 2024. The consultation will be open to Darlington residents through the Council's website and supplemented by focused engagement sessions with key stakeholders.
9. Following the conclusion of the statutory consultation Lingfield Academy Trust will be able to submit a Business Case to the DfE to through the significant change process to change the primary designation of the resource base, following which DfE will make a determination if the proposed changes can take place.