

## Cabinet Meeting on Wednesday 16 September 2020

### Consultation on Proposals for Changes to Marshlands School and Greenhall Nursery



**Cllr Jonathan Price, Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND) said:**

“We have been working with the governing bodies of both Marshlands School and Greenhall Nursery to ensure we maximise the use of the learning environments in both settings. We have also held a four-week consultation with parents, to ensure we get their buy-in to these proposals.

“By changing the age range at Marshlands School, we can ensure that we are accommodating demand for more capacity at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. With Greenhall Nursery, a change to, widen the range of disabilities the Nursery cater for, will increase the numbers of pupils on roll, provide a focused early years curriculum, whilst maintaining their specialism in supporting the needs of children with physical disabilities and complex medical needs.”

#### **Report Summary:**

Staffordshire County Council and the governing bodies of Marshlands School and Greenhall Nursery are proposing the following changes to maximise the use of the learning environments in both settings:

- a. **Marshlands Primary School** – a change of age range, from the current Early Years to Year 6 to focus on children in Year 1 to Year 6 by removing Early Years and reception provision and specialising in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 provision.

and

- b. **Greenhall Nursery**– a change of designation of types of special education needs and disabilities catered for – to include children with needs in the Early Years Foundation Stage prime areas of learning, physical, communication and language and personal, social and emotional development.

#### **Recommendation**

I recommend that:

- a. The proposed changes to the following schools are approved:
  - i. **Marshlands Primary School** – a change of age range, from the current Early Years to Year 6 to focus on children in Year 1 to Year 6 by removing Early

Years and reception provision and specialising in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 provision.

and

- ii. **Greenhall Nursery**– a change of designation of types of special education needs and disabilities catered for – to include children with needs in the Early Years Foundation Stage prime areas of learning, physical, communication and language and personal, social and emotional development.

Local Members Interest	
Cllr Jonathan Price	Stafford North

## Cabinet – Wednesday 16 September 2020

### Consultation on Proposals for Changes to Greenhall Nursery and Marshlands School

#### Recommendation of the Cabinet Member for Education (and SEND)

I recommend that:

- a. The proposed changes to the following schools are approved:
  - i. **Marshlands Primary School** – a change of age range, from the current Early Years to Year 6 to focus on children in Year 1 to Year 6 by removing Early Years and reception provision and specialising in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 provision.

and

  - ii. **Greenhall Nursery**– a change of designation of types of special education needs and disabilities catered for – to include children with needs in the Early Years Foundation Stage prime areas of learning, physical, communication and language and personal, social and emotional development.

#### Report of the Deputy Chief Executive & Director of Families and Communities

##### Reasons for Recommendations:

1. Marshlands School is currently oversubscribed, particularly in Key Stage 2. Greenhall Nursery is undersubscribed. The changes will seek to maximise the use of the learning environments in both settings.
2. The changes are supported by the governing bodies of both schools.
3. It is proposed that all Early Years provision will be based at Greenhall Nursery. This would increase the numbers of pupils on roll at Greenhall Nursery whilst allowing Marshlands School to increase capacity for pupils at Key Stage 1 and 2, where there is a demand.
4. Early Years is a phase in its own right, with a natural transition point at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Greenhall Nursery will provide a specialist focus on this area - maximising opportunities for early intervention and ensuring a formal review of the child and their needs takes place at the end of this stage, with all stakeholders, including the local authority, to agree on the most appropriate future placement for the child.
5. Greenhall Nursery will maintain its specialism in supporting the needs of children with physical disabilities and complex medical needs due to the high level of staff

expertise within this area. The change of designation would enable Greenhall Nursery to support more pupils with a broader range of special education needs and disabilities (SEND) in Early Years, maximising the utilisation of its facilities, site and staff expertise.

6. The changes would enable pupils needs to be met in the local community and prevent the need to place pupils at other non-maintained settings or out of county provision.
7. The two school sites are based next to each other so there is no difference in terms of travel and transport.
8. A four-week consultation has taken place from 1 July 2020 to 29 July 2020 to gather views on the above proposal for Marshlands Primary School and Greenhall Nursery. Views were gained from: parents/carers of children attending both schools, staff at both Marshlands School and Greenhall Nursery, Governors at both Marshlands School and Greenhall Nursery, Schools, early years settings, Voice for Change – parents forum, parent support groups (via SENDIASS), Clinical Commissioning Group, Midlands Psychology Foundation Trust, SEND Partnership Board, local Councillor, Stafford MP, Entrust, Trade Unions. The consultation was also placed on the SEND Local Offer.
9. No formal feedback was received in response to the consultation, although the Headteachers at both schools informally received positive comments on the proposals.
10. The one child who may have been impacted by the change has a place at another school from September 2020, so no current pupils will be impacted.

### **Legal Implications**

11. If following the changes either or both schools covert to academies this should not impact on this arrangement, special schools in Staffordshire continue to work together well, to support the needs of children, regardless of whether they are academies or belong to different academy trusts. The governing bodies of both schools are in agreement with both proposed changes. A child's EHCP will name the school a child is to be placed. If in converting to an academy, the Academy Trust proposed any changes, the Trust must consult the local authority before submitting a proposal for change to the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC).
12. Greenhall Nursery has always taken children from 2- 5 years old. For children not progressing to Marshlands School the age that the child leaves Greenhall Nursery is dependent upon their individual needs. This is discussed and agreed with parents and the local authority and written into the child's EHCP. For all children leaving Greenhall Nursery a supported transition is planned alongside the new school.

### **Resource and Value for Money Implications**

13. Finance advice indicates that there are no financial implications to the change. The increased capacity within Marshlands School may enable more children to be educated within a local maintained school, which may prevent the need for placements within independent settings, this could provide cost savings within the High Needs Budget.
14. Marshlands School is currently oversubscribed, particularly in Key Stage 2. Greenhall Nursery is undersubscribed. The proposed changes would address this, maximising the use of the facilities at both settings.
15. The two school sites are based next to each other so there is no difference in transport.
16. There will be no reduction in staffing as a result of the changes. There are no contractual implications for school staff or changes to terms and conditions. Staff in both settings have the necessary qualifications to educate and care for children of all ages, needs and abilities.

## **List of Background Documents/Appendices:**

**Appendix 1 – Consultation on Proposals**

**Community Impact Assessment – Summary Document**

## **Contact Details**

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