



FOR PUBLICATION

DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CABINET

10 July 2023

Report of the Executive Director of Children's Services

Gamesley Early Excellence Centre - Relocation
(Cabinet Member for Education)

1. Divisions Affected

1.1 Etherow

2. Key Decision

2.1 This is not a key decision

3. Purpose

3.1 For Cabinet to:

a) Consider the outcome of the non-statutory consultation on the proposed co-location of Gamesley Early Excellence Centre to the Gamesley Primary School site

b) Approve the transfer of Gamesley Early Excellence Centre to the Gamesley Primary School site.

3.1 Information and Analysis

Gamesley Early Excellence Centre, Winster Mews, Gamesley, Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 0LU is a 52 place Local Authority Maintained Nursery School which caters for pupils aged from 2 to 5 years. Since the vacation of an external childcare provider from within the same building, there has been a substantial

amount of empty space. This has subsequently increased the running costs of the building and poses challenges for the future sustainability of the Nursery School. DCC recognises the fundamental importance of the Nursery to the Community and to ensure that the Nursery provision is viable for the future proposes transferring the Early Excellence Centre within the footprint of Gamesley Primary School which is next door, a one minute walk away.

If approved, there will be remodelling works, new toilet facilities and a separate entrance required at Gamesley Primary School in order for them to facilitate the proposed move. The Academy trust, as landlord are in the process of obtaining quotations for the works. On 24 January 2022 Cabinet approved £750,000 for the Gamesley rationalisation project and this will fund the necessary works required.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 A non-statutory consultation took place from 24 April 2023 to 6 June 2023. A copy of the consultation document can be found in Appendix 2. There were 4 responses to the consultation which all were in support of the proposal. There were common themes to the responses and therefore they have been grouped together.

In support

4 respondents were in support of the proposal listing agreement with the proposal and stating it would be beneficial to the pupils.

Space

2 respondents requested clarification over where the Nursery children would be housed on the school site and wanted to ensure that there would be no negative impact on the existing children at Gamesley Primary School or their staffing ratios

Local Authority Response – The Nursery will be run as a separate entity within the school site and due to falling rolls in previous years, two classrooms are able to be made available for the Nursery to operate from. There will be no impact on the noise levels or staffing ratios of existing Gamesley Primary School children.

Housing

1 respondent queried the impact of capacity within Gamesley Primary School when the new housing estate was completed and wanted assurance that this had been considered.

Local Authority Response – When reviewing the appraisal options for the proposed co-location, an assessment of the Primary Schools capacity was undertaken. The school has capacity for 315 pupils, but due to falling birth rates in the locality, the projected numbers for the school are due to decrease as below which leaves the school with accommodation to house the Nursery

School. The Authority constantly monitors demographics to ensure that there are sufficient school places and will continue to do so. The majority of the housing in Gamesley Primary Schools normal area has now been completed, with 72 dwellings due to be completed in 2023/24. The completed housing has been included in the projections.

Year	2023/24	2024/25	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28
Projected Primary School Places	196	188	182	181	182
Surplus Primary School Places	119	127	133	134	181

6. Alternative Options Considered

- 6.1 Not to proceed – The school would remain in its existing location but the budget would not be balanced.

7. Implications

- 7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 These are held on file in the Children's Services Development Section

9. Appendices

- 9.1 Appendix 1- Implications.
- 9.2 Appendix 2- Non statutory Consultation Document

10. Recommendation(s)

That Cabinet:

- a) Notes the outcome of the non-statutory consultation on the proposed co-location of Gamesley Early Excellence Centre to the Gamesley Primary School site
- b) Approves the transfer of Gamesley Early Excellence Centre to the Gamesley

Primary School site.

11. Reasons for Recommendation(s)

11.1 In response to the support from the consultation.

12. Is it necessary to waive the call in period?

12.1 No

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Implications

Financial

- 1.1 If approved, there will be some remodelling, new toilet facilities and separate Nursery entrance required at Gamesley Primary School to ensure that the accommodation offered is suitable for Nursery Provision. The Academy Trust have engaged with a contractor and will provide DCC with a quotation for the works. It is envisaged that the financing of the works will be met by the Gamesley rationalisation budget (£750,000) which was approved by Cabinet on the 24 January 2022.

Legal

- 2.1 The Local Authority can make limited changes to maintained schools which are not prescribed changes under The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013. These limited changes include the transfer of a school to a new site where the proposed main site is within two miles of the main entrance of the school on its current site. Local Authorities are nevertheless required to adhere to the usual principles of public law to act rationally and within their powers, take into account all relevant and no irrelevant considerations; and follow a fair procedure.

2.2 The Department for Education statutory guidance 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools' dated January 2023, explains that in making changes that are not prescribed, local authorities and governing bodies will work together and

- ensure that the proposal is aligned with wider place planning/organisational arrangements, and that any necessary consents have been gained;
- not undermine the quality of education provided or the financial viability of other 'good' and 'outstanding' schools in the local area;
- ensure open and fair consultation with parents, any affected educational institutions in the area and other interested parties.
- they have secured planning permission if applicable
- they have the consent of the land owner where the land is not owned by the governing body

Human Resources

- 3.1 None

Information Technology

- 4.1 None

Equalities Impact

- 5.1 The local authority is required to have 'due regard' to the duties set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Public Sector Equality Duty, 'PSED') in determining these proposals. The proposals aren't considered to have any impact on PSED.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 6.1 Not applicable

Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)

- 7.1 Derbyshire County Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient primary and secondary school places and is committed to working in close partnership with schools, academy trusts, the dioceses and key partners to ensure that the supply of school places across Derbyshire is in the right location, is of sufficient size, is viable and of good quality. We know that schools can face challenges in meeting pupils' needs, particularly where pupil numbers are falling, and that in some cases, changes to the pattern of school organisation in an area can help secure the viability of schools, improve opportunities and raise standards.

Proposal to Co-locate Gamesley Early Excellence Centre to Gamesley Primary School

Introduction

Gamesley Early Excellence Centre, Winster Mews, Gamesley, Glossop, Derbyshire SK13 0LU is a 52 place Nursery School which caters for pupils aged from 2 to 5 years.

The school is owned and run by Derbyshire County Council (DCC) and since the vacation of an external childcare provider from within the same building, there has been a substantial amount of empty space. This has then subsequently increased the running costs of the building and poses challenges for the future sustainability of the Nursery School.

DCC recognises the fundamental importance of the Nursery to the Community and this proposal will ensure that the Nursery provision is viable for the future.

The Executive Headship role of the Nursery School is currently being undertaken by the Headteacher of Gamesley Primary School, the former head leaving the post at the end of the spring term.

The Primary School staff are also supporting and developing strong links with the Nursery School staff in other key areas such as safeguarding and pastoral care.

It is proposed that the co-location will commence from the 1st September 2023.

What are we consulting on?

DCC, working with the Governing body of Gamesley Early Excellence Centre and Victorious Academy Trust is proposing to relocate the school to co-locate on the site of Gamesley Primary School.

Gamesley Primary School opened as a new school on 1st December 2018 as part of Victorious Academy Trust. The school is located 160 feet from the Early Excellence building, a one-minute walk.

The school currently has a capacity of 315 with a pupil admission of 45. The current admission numbers have been significantly below this for a number of years and this has meant that there is sufficient accommodation within the school footprint to accommodate the Nursery school.

The approach to co-location

Both schools wish to retain their individual identity and autonomy, but also

make the most of the opportunities that co-location presents to co-operate and collaborate, enriching the learning, pastoral and social experiences of pupils, staff, parents and the local community through the sharing of knowledge, ideas, skills, expertise and resources.

The schools' vision is that the co-location be characterised by a sense of developing a learning campus with a shared educational ethos. Strong and meaningful links between the schools will ensure that everyone feels valued within an ethos of mutual respect, and that a range of exciting joint initiatives can develop organically over time.

How it will work

The schools are conscious of the need to work with pupils, staff, parents, governors and the local community to prepare them for the co-location, address any anxieties they may have, and ensure the change is as smooth as possible. In order to achieve this, they intend to develop a transition plan mapping out steps for collaboration, which along with the current Headship arrangements can build up gradually with time.

Anticipated benefits

It is anticipated that the co-location will result in many mutual benefits for staff, pupils, parents and the local community.

Gamesley Primary School has a well-recognised strong commitment to inclusion which is demonstrated by the open, welcoming approach of staff, pupils and governors to the concept of co-location and the staff's immediate offers of things they would like to share with the Nursery School.

Some of the anticipated benefits for both schools are as follows:

Co-location will provide the opportunity for a smoother transition to Primary School for the Nursery pupils as they will be familiar with the site and staff. Staff from both schools will have valuable opportunities to share knowledge and skills in relation to inclusion, special needs and a range of curriculum areas.

Both schools will benefit from economies in sharing some facilities (such as specialist learning spaces, dining and some play spaces) as well as staff (such as premises and kitchen staff) and resources and services (such as ICT).

The consultation and decision making process

This consultation will run from 24th April to 26th May 2023.

There is no formal requirement for a statutory consultation as the distance between the two schools is less than two miles.

However to fully engage with the parents/guardians, wider community and stakeholders we welcome your views on the proposal and all observations will be considered very carefully and a decision will be sought by Derbyshire County Council Cabinet Members on the 6th July 2023.

To take part please email your views to jenny.webster@derbyshire.gov.uk , write to Jenny Webster, Derbyshire County Council, Children's Services, County Hall – Room 178, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AG or alternatively hand them into the school office in a sealed envelope marked CONSULTATION for the attention of Jenny Webster (Childrens Services).