

Statutory notice

LONDON BOROUGH OF MERTON

Expansion and Change of Age Range at Melrose Special School

Notice is hereby 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 that the London Borough of Merton is proposing to change the lower age limit and increase the number of pupils at Melrose School, Church Road, Mitcham, CR4 3BE, a maintained special school for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH), with effect from 1 September 2020.

The proposed change in age range would lower the age range at the school from 11-16 years old to 4-16 years old through the introduction of 24 full time equivalent places in the primary phase for children aged 4 to 11. It is also proposed to increase the number of places in the secondary phase of the school to 54.

Melrose School presently has a capacity of 45 places aged 11-16 and the proposal is to increase the capacity to 78, 24 of which will be in the primary phase and 54 in the secondary school phase. The number on roll according to January 2020 school census is 32.

The London Borough of Merton will implement the proposals.

This notice is an extract of the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at <http://www.merton.gov.uk/consultations.htm>

Alternatively you can request a printed copy of the complete proposal from the address below or telephone 020 8545 3289.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object to, or make comment upon the proposals, by sending their representations to: Director of Children, Schools and Families (FAO: Tom Procter, Head of Contracts and School Organisation), London Borough of Merton, Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, SM4 5DX or by emailing: SchConsult@merton.gov.uk

Rachael Wardell
Director of Children, Schools and Families
London Borough of Merton
Civic Centre
London Road
Morden SM4 5DX

Date: 25 June 2020

Explanatory Notes

Melrose is a special school for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.

The London Borough of Merton aims to decide whether to approve the proposals in July or August 2020. If the Council fails to determine the proposals within two months of the end of the representation period it will pass all relevant material to the Schools Adjudicator who will determine the proposals.

Supplementary information

Description of alteration;

The proposal is to lower the age range at Melrose School from 11-16 years old to 4-16 years old through the introduction of 24 full time equivalent places in the primary phase for children aged 4 to 11. It is also proposed to increase the number of places in the secondary phase of the school to 54. The school would therefore have a total capacity for 78 pupils.

Evidence of demand

As illustrated by the table below, the council area has experienced a significant increase in the number of statements/EHCP (Education and Health Care Plans) over the past five years and one of the greatest increase in need is children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH).

Primary Need	Jan-15		Jan-20	
	No.	%	No.	%
ASD - Austistic Spectrum Disorder	289	28%	635	33%
SLCN - Speech, Language and Communication Needs	227	22%	389	20%
MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty	211	20%	325	17%
SEMH - Social, Emotional and Mental Health	116	11%	288	15%
SLD - Severe Learning Difficulty	98	9%	107	6%
PD -- Physical Disability	37	4%	49	3%
SPLD - Specific Learning Difficulty	24	2%	32	2%
VI - Visual Impairment	19	2%	17	1%
HI - Hearing Impairment	11	1%	19	1%
PMLD - Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty	6	1%	10	1%
OTH - Other Difficulty/ Disability	7	1%	57	3%
Total	1045	100%	1928	100%

The council does not have any specialist provision within the borough for primary age children with SEMH and as a result it has been necessary to place children out of borough including in non-maintained provision.

Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice)

The overall objective is to provide sufficient good quality local school places for children with Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH).

At its last Ofsted inspection on 15 May 2018 it was confirmed that Melrose School continues to be good and safeguarding is effective. Leaders are successfully raising expectations and improving the quality of teaching through a number of actions, which has resulted in consistently strong teaching across the school. The curriculum offers a wide range of learning opportunities that suit the needs of pupils and prepares them well for the next stage of their

education and training. Pupils mostly listen and engage in lessons. Pupils say that they feel happy and are well supported by staff.

The school provides value for money in being considerably less expensive to provide education than non-maintained provision and so meets the objective to provide suitable, high quality places to meet the growing number of children with SEMH requiring specialist placement.

This will be enabled by a physical extension to the school in three distinctive areas:

- A specific primary phase will be built with a dedicated entrance and site area
- In the secondary phase the current, inadequate hall will be converted to become two classrooms. This will allow a distinct area for more vulnerable secondary SEMH pupils or SEMH girls, depending on the referrals and cohort
- A new hall facility will be provided that can be timetabled to be used at separate times by primary age and secondary age children

The effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area

The provision of a primary phase at Melrose School will not reduce the intake of neighbouring state schools. There is generally a high demand compared to supply of SEN places.

Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved

The total estimated cost of the capital project is circa £2 million and is being met by Merton Council, with some formulaic government capital grant support. As described above, long term value for money is being achieved as Melrose School is less expensive to provide education than non-maintained provision, especially when transport costs are taken into account, and so the objective is to ensure suitable, high quality places are provided to meet the growing number of SEN children.

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

The official date for implementation of this proposal is 1 September 2020, with a first cohort of primary school pupils being provided within a temporary building. It is aimed that the permanent building will be completed for September 2021; the school will gradually expand to its new capacity as demand increases for sufficient extra classes.

A statement explaining the procedure for responses: support; objections and comments

Responses should be provided within four weeks of the publication date of this proposal so by Thursday 23 July 2020 by email to SchConsult@merton.gov.uk or by post to Director of Children, Schools and Families (FAO: Tom Procter, Head of Contracts and School Organisation), London Borough of Merton, Civic Centre, London Road, Morden, SM4 5DX