

Frequently asked questions

Mill Lodge Primary School

1. *Will this provide enough spaces or does it need to be bigger?*

Initially we are creating a provision to cater for 8 primary age pupils across Years 1 to 6. The provision will have the capacity to expand to 12 places in coming years in the event that the demand exceeds the 8 places available.

By opening the provision with 8 places initially, this will allow for time for the new provision to become established before increasing the number of places. However, the pupils placed in this provision will have complex needs and it is important that the size of the provision is considered alongside the needs of the pupils that will be placed there.

2. *This provision will only cater for pupils with Autism what about those with other needs such as Social Emotional and Mental Health?*

The Council's SEND School Place Commissioning Strategy identifies a number of priorities for SEND provision development in Solihull to meet the growing demand for specialist provision. This proposal is one of a range of proposals that the Council, in partnership with schools, is looking to develop to widen and enhance our offer for local children.

In recent years the Council has opened new provision at Windy Arbor, Yew Tree, Dickens Heath and Alderbrook Schools and from November 2020 a new provision will open at Tudor Grange Academy Solihull, for secondary age pupils with Social Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH).

As well as the proposal at Mill Lodge Primary School we are also consulting on a proposal to expand places at Reynolds Cross Special School and the development of our Special Free School for pupils with Autism is also underway.

Planning for new provision for primary pupils with SEMH needs is also currently under development and will complement the provision already open at Tudor Grange Primary - Yew Tree and Tudor Grange Academy Solihull.

The number and types of specialist places needed in Solihull is kept under review and the Council's SEND School Places Commissioning Strategy will continue to assess the level of demand and provide a basis for further provision development.

3. Will the new provision at Mill Lodge Primary School cater for pupils in Key Stage 1?

This new provision has been designed to meet the needs of primary age pupils across Key Stage 1 and 2, (years 1 to 6). The building is being designed with bespoke accommodation to allow for teaching in both key stages and the staffing model designed to support this as well.

A number of our additionally resourced provisions are set up to cater for Key Stage 1 pupils as well as Key Stage 2 and this is happening. However, there has been instances where demand has centred around the need for places for pupils in Key Stage 2 and this has hindered the admission of a younger pupil.

It is the intention of this proposal to cater for both KS1 and KS2 pupils.

4. How will Mill Lodge School ARP differ from other ARP's in the area?

We currently have additionally resourced provision for pupils with Autism at Dickens Heath and Windy Arbor Primary Schools. This proposal will differ from the offer at these schools by catering for those pupils with more complex needs.

It is the expectation that the pupils in the provisions at Windy Arbor and Dickens Heath Schools will be able to access mainstream school provision for around 50% of the time however, it is likely that the pupils admitted to the proposed provision at Mill Lodge will need significantly more time based in additionally resourced provision and will access mainstream school if or when it is appropriate to their needs.

5. Who assesses AET National Standards at Mill Lodge School?

The Autism Education Trust Standards have been designed for use across all types of educational settings from mainstream to special and specialist, for pupils from the ages of 5 – 16 years, at all levels of ability. The standards mirror the categories established by the AET training which all staff in Solihull schools and the ARPs access.

Schools and settings receive termly visits from Specialist Teachers from the SISS Autism Team and in September use the Standards to support SENCo's to set targets for their provision to improve their autism provision.

Specialist Teachers then support the school to make changes and will support and review progress throughout the year. It is recommended that this links with the school's improvement plan.

Where specific needs are identified, for example staff training, the introduction of specific strategies or individual support for pupils, the Specialist Teachers will ensure that this is delivered in a timely way, whilst working with the school to ensure that this is then embedded within the practice going forward.

The AET standards will be used alongside the Competencies, which are used to support staff development and CPD, plus the Progression Framework which is used to track pupil progress in non-academic areas.

6. *Will the Head Teacher have enough time to manage the ARP as well as the main school?*

When an additionally resourced provision is created it comes with funding to support teaching staff dedicated to working in the specialist provision. The staff in the ARP are employed by the school, so there will need to be some management time from the Headteacher in terms of line managing the Teacher in Charge and ensuring, alongside governors, that the outcomes for the children placed there are good. This would be similar, to the Head's current role in managing a member of SLT.

It is anticipated that as the staffing ratio is high, with two children to one member of staff, and the staff in the ARP will be trained to have a good understanding of autism strategies there will be very little call on the Head teacher or SLT to deal with day to day issues that could arise.

Recruiting the right staff with the knowledge, skills and experience in this field will be critical to the success of the provision. The Teacher in Charge is crucial to success as they will manage the provision on a day to day basis and support the other staff.

Children will be predominantly educated in the ARP, again reducing the likelihood of SLT/Head needing to resolve any issues. In the first year the LA will provide additional support for the development of the ARP through the SISS Autism Team and Community Educational Psychology Service and provide staff training, so they will also be available to offer additional support and advice in terms of specialist knowledge.

Make your views know.

All of the information about the consultation is available on the Council website at <http://www.solihull.gov.uk/consultations>

Contact us

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