

**Proposal to change the designation of the
Worthing High School SSC from Additional
Learning Needs to Social Communication Needs
and increase from 14 to 18 places**

CONSULTATION



www.worthinghigh.net

Consultation ends March 6th 2020

Introduction

West Sussex County Council has been developing a new Education and Skills Strategy to support the inclusion of all children and young people, particularly those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). This strategy builds on the SEND strategy for 2016-2019 and the outcomes of the 2018 Ofsted/CQC SEND Local Area inspection.

The new SEND and Inclusion Strategy for West Sussex 2019-2024 has been co-produced during the spring term 2019, with a wide representation of stakeholders, indeed more than 150 people have participated in the development workshops and events. The stakeholders have included parent carers and young people as well as education providers and other professionals from across social care, health and education to ensure it relates to other County Council strategies.

West Sussex County Council are consulting on proposals for the addition of four new Specialist Support Centres (SSC's) and the re-designation of an existing SSC in West Sussex Maintained Schools via www.westsussex.gov.uk/sscphase2.

WSCC, in its role as commissioner of school places, has been working in partnership with ourselves and has asked that we consider changing the designation of our existing SSC from Additional Learning Needs (ALN) to Social and Communication Needs (SCN) and increasing from 14 to 18 places.

As an Academy, whilst the governing body of Worthing High will take the final decision, this will also need to be confirmed by the Regional Schools Commissioner for the South East before any change could be implemented.

We would value your ideas and comments on these proposals and I urge you to read this document and respond to us with your views by completing the response form at the back of this booklet or on-line via www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/whsssc20

Pan Panayiotou

**CEO and Headteacher
SDET & Worthing High School**

Proposal

Pupil numbers – a national issue

West Sussex County Council has been closely monitoring the number of pupils across the country and this number has been rising for the last five years including the number of pupils with SEND.

Pupil numbers – the picture in West Sussex

West Sussex is not excluded from this rise and the County Council has been working alongside schools in recent years to expand the number of places available. The needs of children with SEND is becoming more complex. There is a shortage of specialist planned places, locally to meet demand for places.

Depending on the requirements of the Educational Health and Care Plan, children will require a place in a mainstream school, SSC or maintained Special School. In recent years, the requirement for SSC and Special School placements has increased significantly and projections indicate that this trend will continue. Additional capacity is therefore required in both SSCs and Special Schools to enable children to have a school place close to home to reduce revenue costs of Out County placements in the Independent and Non-Maintained Sector and costly home to school transport costs.

The SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2019-2024 which sets out how the County Council will support the inclusion of all children and young people, with a particular focus on those with SEND.

The vision is that all children and young people in West Sussex will, irrespective of their learning needs or abilities, gain the skills and confidence to live well in their community. They will be supported and nurtured through an educational system that responds to their circumstances and prepares them for adulthood.

Within the Strategy three priorities have been identified:

- Knowing our children and families well (an inclusive, person centred approach).
- Meeting the needs of our children and young people through our schools, educational settings and services.
- Working together towards solutions (collective responsibility).

As part of the new strategy, a review of existing specialist provision has been undertaken. In addition, the number of children with SEND that are educated in placements out of the county as their needs are not able to be met in maintained schools or academies has also been reviewed. Increasing provision for children and young people with SEND through the creation of additional places in SSCs will assist with the aim of enabling children to attend school locally.

Best Start in Life: the proposal will positively impact on the outcomes for children and young people with SEND and enable them to be educated locally. It is also a key part of the SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2019 - 2024.

The needs of children with SEND are also becoming more complex and this is driving increased financial pressures across the system. There is a shortage of local specialist educational provision to meet need, particularly in relation to Social

Communication Needs and Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs. This is resulting in the County Council needing to increase the number of children educated in specialist placements with independent providers. There is also an increased demand for top-up funding across all settings.

There is a lack of capacity within mainstream schools to provide a graduated response to additional needs. Many schools are facing financial pressures and therefore do not have the capacity to provide additional support to pupils. As a result, this is driving up the demand for more specialist education services, as children with low level SEND who could potentially attend mainstream schools are being educated in more specialist provision. This is coupled with an increase in the number of pupils being excluded and the need to provide costly alternative provision.

A number of schools were approached to explore opportunities for the development or expansion of SSC places based on geography and identified need; the potential for development (available land) and the interest from the school in having or expanding such facilities.

There has been a positive response to increasing provision for children with SEND from a range of stakeholders including West Sussex Parent Carer Forum during the consultation process undertaken as part of the SEND and Inclusion Strategy in the summer of 2019.

Worthing High is one of these schools and has been asked to consult on re-designation of our existing ALN SSC to a SCN SSC. In addition, to increase the planned places from 14 to 18.

What is the definition of Social Communication Needs

Communication and Interaction (Social Communication Needs)

Within the code of practice (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25>), communication and interaction is defined as follows:

Paragraph 6.29

'Children and young people with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) have difficulty in communicating with others. This may be because they have difficulty saying what they want to, understanding what is being said to them, or they do not understand or use social rules of communication. The profile for every child with SLCN is different and their needs may change over time. They may have difficulty with one, some or all of the different aspects of speech, language or social communication at different times of their lives.'

Children and young people with Autistic Spectrum Disorder, including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism, are likely to have particular difficulties with social interaction. They may also experience difficulties with language, communication and imagination, which can impact on how they relate to others. Communication and interaction needs could include:

- difficulties with producing or responding to expressive or receptive language

- difficulties uttering speech sounds
- difficulties understanding spoken and other communications from others
- difficulties with understanding age-related social conventions of interaction, such as turn-taking during conversations or appropriate level of physical contact during play.

Worthing High School - Worthing



Re-designation from Additional Learning Needs to Social Communication Needs – plus additional 4 places (Total 18)

Number of planned places – 18 places
(This may be available from September 2020)

Worthing High School is a secondary academy located in Worthing, West Sussex. It has pupils aged 11-16 and currently has an SSC offering provision to pupils with ALN.

What are the transition arrangements for the students currently within the SSC?

We wish to reassure parents/carers and students that if this re-designation is agreed, their child's placement within the SSC will **continue** whilst their EHCP is maintained through the Annual Review process and they remains at Worthing High School. There will be transition planning that will ensure the current level of provision and support remains person centred and meets the needs of all SSC students as stated in their EHCP. The re-designation will **not** negatively impact the provision offer and education that students receive at Worthing High School. If you have any questions regarding this consultation, please do not hesitate in contacting Alex Simpson SENCO.

Who is being consulted?

This consultation booklet is being sent electronically to all parents/carers, school governors, trustees, teachers and support staff who work at Worthing High.

Copies are also being sent to headteachers of the neighbouring schools in the localities, local councils, MPs, Church Dioceses, leaders of the early years facilities, community groups, unions and professional associations.

Copies will also be available from the school office by calling 01903 237864.

Following the end of the consultation period on 6th March 2020 responses will be analysed and used to inform the governing body proposal to the Regional Schools Commissioner of the South East.

What would any new buildings look like?

Worthing High School has already secured planning permission to refurbish the existing SSC facilities on the school site to enable the development of a new SSC facility with SCN Designation.

Should ESFA Capital Funding not be allocated for this project (decision due April 2020) then WSCC have committed to fund any refurbishment costs of the existing SSC to enable the transition to an SSC for SCN prior to the designation change being implemented.

Transport implications and safe routes to school

Our existing Travel Plan is not expected to require any changes to be made. Our Full Planning Application covered the transport implications of having additional students on site.

School budgets

School budgets are calculated using a range of factors, the most significant of which is the number of pupils. An increase in pupil numbers in the SSC would result in an increase of the budget in line with associated costs. We will continue to work together with the local authority to ensure that Worthing High has the right amount of funding to support the proposed number of pupils.

We will access 'Growth funding' if necessary which is specifically targeted at expanding schools in the first year.

Preferred Options

The proposal set out in this booklet is part of the County Council's *preferred* option appraisal, following full discussions with the schools involved.

If you have sound educational reasoning why this proposal is not the best, please include them in your response.

How to make your views known?

1. Complete the online survey on here:
LINK
2. Contact Worthing High School
Email: office@worthinghigh.net
Tel. 01903 237864
3. Complete the response form at the end of this booklet and return to Worthing High School by post/hand or scanned image.

Questions & Answers

If you have any questions you would like answered before responding, please ask directly in school.

Timescales for consultation

The consultation will run from 3rd February until 6th March 2020. Your comments will be collated and analysed before being passed to our governing body at the end of the consultation (Meeting date 18 March 2020). The governing body will then consider the responses and make their decision.

If the decision is to support the proposal then a Significant Change Application will be made to the Regional Schools Commissioner.

Due to the volume of responses we receive when consulting, we will not be able to acknowledge written responses or enter into correspondence with interested parties during or after the consultation period.

A list of frequently asked questions will be made available to view online and will be updated throughout the consultation period.

Privacy Statement

Worthing High will use this survey to collect personal or special category data in order to fulfil a statutory duty. The data will be processed in accordance with the 2018 Data Protection Act, the General Data Protection Regulations and any subsequent data legislation. All data will be anonymised and used for statistical analysis before being forwarded to the Regional Schools Commissioner (if necessary) for further consideration.

The school will securely store consultation data electronically for a period of up to 5 years before being destroying it appropriately.

Worthing High School is registered as Data Controller (Reg. No. **ZA000617**).

For further details and information about our Data Controller arrangements please see www.worthinghigh.net

INSTRUCTIONS

- Please ensure you have read the consultation document before completing the survey
- Children and young people under the age of 13 need the consent of a parent / carer to participate
- Please complete the last section (About You), If you do not wish to provide an answer, please select 'prefer not to say'. The County Council asks 'About You' questions to help it monitor the effectiveness of its consultations. The data provided also helps the school to meet its Public Sector Equalities Duties under the 2010 Equalities Act.

The results of the survey will be anonymised and summarised to remove any personally identifiable details and made available on the school website.

1. Please provide your postcode, including a space in between, e.g. PO19 1RH

2. Are you under the age of 13? If so, you will need parental/carer consent from your parent/carer to participate. Please provide their contact details in the boxes provided below so that we can contact them if we need to:

Name of parent/carer:

Contact telephone number for parent/carer providing consent:

3. Are you responding as....? (please tick all that apply)

A parent/carer	
Staff member	
Governor	
Trustee	
Local resident	
Student/Pupil	
Other	

3.1 If you are Parent/Carer how many children do you have and how old are they? Please write in

- Pre-school (ages 0-4) 0 1 2 3 4 5 or more
Primary (ages 4 - 11) 0 1 2 3 4 5 or more
Secondary (ages 11 -18+) 0 1 2 3 4 5 or more

4. Please indicate whether you are (please tick one box only for each question)

- In support of the re-designation of the SSC within the school to SCN
- Object to the re-designation of the SSC within the school
- Neither support nor object to the re-designation of the school SSC

5. Please indicate whether you are (please tick one box only for each question)

- In support of the expansion of places within the SSC
- Object to the expansion of places within the SSC
- Neither support nor object to the expansion of places within the SSC

6. How much do you agree this school is centred on the needs of the children and learners?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

6. If you have any further views you wish to express about this school or the issues raised above, please use the space below to do so.

About You

The school asks the 'About You' questions to help it monitor the effectiveness of its consultations and to help undertake an equalities analysis in order to meet its Public Sector Equalities Duties under the 2010 Equalities Act. It is only for these reasons that you are asked to provide the information below and the data you provide will be separated from both the respondent details and the response comments. You do not have to provide this information if you do not wish to. In this case, please choose the 'Prefer not to say' option.

1. How old are you?
 - 12 or under - please do not answer any further questions unless parental consent has been given
 - 13-16
 - 17 - 24
 - 25 - 44
 - 45 - 64
 - 65 plus
 - Prefer not to say

2. Are you?
 - Male
 - Female
 - Prefer not to say

3. Is your gender the same as the assigned to you at birth? Please select one option only.
 - Yes
 - No
 - Prefer not to say

4. Ethnicity – what is your ethnic group?

White		Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	
Mixed/multiple ethnic groups		Other ethnic group	
Asian/Asian British		Prefer not to say	

5. Religion - What is your religion?

Buddhist		Sikh	
Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant)		Any other religion	
Hindu		Unknown	
Jewish		No religion	
Muslim		Prefer not to say	

6. Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability, which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?
 - Yes, limited a lot
 - Yes, limited a little
 - No
 - Prefer not to say

7. What is your sexual orientation?
 - Heterosexual
 - Bisexual
 - Gay or Lesbian
 - Other
 - Prefer not to say

END OF SURVEY