

**REPORT TO:** Executive Board

**DATE:** 16 June 2016

**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director, People & Economy

**PORTFOLIO:** Children, Young People & Families

**SUBJECT:** Closure of Westfield Primary School Resource Provision Base for Pupils with Hearing Impairment and Specific Learning Difficulties

**WARD(S)** Borough-wide

1.0 **PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1.1 This report seeks permission to commence consultation on the closure of the Primary Hearing Impaired Resource Provision Base at Westfield Primary School.

2.0 **RECOMMENDATION: That the Board approve the commencement of consultation on the closure of the Hearing Impaired Resource Provision Base at Westfield Primary School.**

3.0 **SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

3.1 Westfield Primary School has a Resource Provision Base for six pupils with hearing impairment (HI) and specific learning difficulties.

3.2 Demand for places at the Resource Base has decreased over recent years as parents of children with significant hearing impairment are choosing to educate their children in a local mainstream provision rather than in specialist HI provision. From September 2016 there will only be 3 pupils accessing provision.

3.3 Children now make greater progress by being part of a mainstream peer group with language support. As a consequence many children with a hearing impairment are now being successfully placed in their local school with a package of support.

3.4 In 2015/2016 we ceased the secondary specialist Resource Provision base at Wade Deacon High School due to lack of numbers. The funding this released is now being invested in strengthening and increasing the level of peripatetic specialist teaching and non-teaching support. This allows pupils to be educated in their mainstream setting with additional support when appropriate.

3.5 The three pupils within the Resource Provision Base at Westfield will

remain at the school in mainstream and will be allocated additional teaching assistant support. They will also be provided with support from the peripatetic specialist team.

3.6 This approach is supported by the Head Teacher of Westfield Primary School.

#### 4.0 **CONSULTATION PROCESS**

4.1 If the Board give permission to undertake a consultation, the pre-statutory consultation will commence on 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2016 for a four week period ending on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2016.

4.2 As part of the consultation meetings will be held with governors, staff, and parents of pupils from the Resource Base, as well as the CCG, other schools, trade unions and other neighbouring Local Authorities.

4.3 A report on the outcome of the consultation will be taken to Executive Board on 15<sup>th</sup> September 2016 and if permission is given a statutory consultation will commence on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2016 closing on 19<sup>th</sup> October. The report considering the outcome of this consultation will then be presented to Executive Board on 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016.

#### 5.0 **POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 By increasing the peripatetic team support can be provided to more pupils with a hearing impairment.

#### 6.0 **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The Resource Base currently receives £10,000 for each of its 6 places giving it a total of £60,000. £20,623 is provided for a Signer each year and an additional £5,081.73 is allocated for each pupil placed in the base.

#### 7.0 **IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

##### 7.1 **Children & Young People in Halton**

Supporting pupils with a hearing impairment in their mainstream local school is more inclusive as it allows pupils to be educated within their own community.

##### 7.2 **Employment, Learning & Skills in Halton**

None identified.

##### 7.3 **A Healthy Halton**

None identified.

7.4 **A Safer Halton**

None identified.

7.5 **Halton's Urban Renewal**

None identified.

8.0 **RISK ANALYSIS**

8.1 As reducing number of parents are choosing to have their children educated in a HR Resource Base it is becoming more difficult for the base to be financially viable and to be able to recruit the appropriately qualified staff.

9.0 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

9.1 This proposal is aimed at ensuring pupils with Hearing Impairment can be educated within their own local community and is therefore more inclusive.

9.2 An Equality Impact Assessment will be undertaken on this proposal.

9.0 **REASON(S) FOR DECISION**

Provide a more inclusive offer for pupils with HI giving them the opportunity to be educated with support alongside their peers.

10.0 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

Retaining the current provision. This was rejected as it is less inclusive and more costly.

11.0 **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

A decision will be required by Executive Board prior to 1st January 2017.

12.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Statutory Notice January 2010	Rutland House	Ann McIntyre 0151 511 7332 ann.mcintyre@halton.gov.uk