

Report to Cllr J Russell Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Learning and Skills

December 2023

Consultation to relocate Jessie Younghusband Primary School, expand St Anthony's School and associated Catchment Area Changes

Report by Mr S Nyakatawa, Interim Assistant Director (Education and Skills) and Mr A Edwards, Assistant Director (Property and Assets)

Electoral divisions: Chichester North and Chichester West

Summary

St Anthony's School in Chichester is a Special School for children and young people aged between 4 and 16 with moderate learning difficulties. Current places are insufficient to meet the need for special school places in the area resulting in children being placed in the Independent and Non-Maintained Sector (INMS). There is a need to expand St Anthony's to ensure there are appropriate and sufficient places in accordance with the County Council's [Special Educational Needs and Disability \(SEND\) Strategy 2019-2024](#).

Sharing a site with St Anthony's School is Jessie Younghusband Primary School which is a 4-11 Primary School providing up to 210 places. It is proposed to relocate Jessie Younghusband from its current location to a new 1 Form of Entry (FE) Primary School (210 places) which is being built on the housing development west of Chichester, known as Minerva Heights. Relocating Jessie Younghusband would leave a vacant building at the current site which could then be used for the purposes of expanding St Anthony's school.

The creation of a primary school in a new location together with the need to include the additional children who will live in Minerva Heights for future school place planning means it is necessary to consider the appropriateness of current catchment areas for primary admissions in the local area.

Therefore, approval is sought to undertake a consultation to obtain feedback on the proposed changes.

Recommendations

The Cabinet Member for Children and Young People, Learning and Skills is asked to approve the launch of a public consultation, in accordance with the Department for Education's ['Making Significant Change \('prescribed alternations'\) to maintained schools](#), to seek views on the proposals to:

1. Relocate Jessie Younghusband Primary School to the primary school site at Minerva Heights Chichester and, subject to approval of this proposal to
 2. Expand St Anthony's School into the vacant Jessie Younghusband Primary School site and building, and
 3. Review and update the Chichester primary school catchment area to ensure it reflects the changes brought about by the delivery of strategic housing developments across the city.
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Proposal

1 Background and context

- 1.1 There is a need to reduce the number of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) moving from maintained schools and academies into costly out of county education provision. Increasing provision for children and young people with SEND through the creation of additional places in Special Schools will assist with the aim of enabling children to attend school locally and meets a key objective of the County Council's [SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2019 – 2024](#).
- 1.2 In West Sussex there are around 20,000 children and young people with SEND receiving support in an early years setting, school or college, with over 7,200 of these having an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- 1.3 Depending on the requirements of the EHCP, children will require a place in a mainstream school, Special Support Centre (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 maintained Special Schools to enable children to be on roll at a school close to home; to reduce revenue costs of out of County placements in INMS and to reduce costly home to school transport costs.
- 1.4 St Anthony's School in Chichester is a Special School for children and young people aged between 4 and 16 with moderate learning difficulties. Current places are insufficient to meet the need for special school places in the area resulting in children being placed in INMS. There is an urgent need to expand St Anthony's to ensure there are appropriate and sufficient places in accordance with the County Council's Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy 2019-2024.
- 1.5 Sharing a site with St Anthony's School is Jessie Younghusband Primary School which is a 4-11 Primary School providing up to 210 places (Published Admission Number (PAN) of 30). The school is a successful over-subscribed primary school with a Good Ofsted rating.
- 1.6 Sharing a site constrains the potential for expansion for both schools and reduces the opportunities to create the much-needed additional places at St Anthony's on its existing site. The County Council has therefore worked closely with both St Anthony's and Jessie Younghusband Primary Schools to discuss potential options to enable St Anthony's to expand and these discussions have led to a proposal that is intended to be beneficial for both schools.

- 1.7 It is therefore proposed to relocate Jessie Younghusband from its current location to a new 1 Form of Entry (FE) Primary School (210 places/30 PAN) which is being built by the developer on the housing development west of Chichester, known as Minerva Heights. The intention is that all current pupils on roll would relocate to the new site.
- 1.8 The new primary school was secured by way of a Section 106 Agreement and the site is of sufficient size to accommodate an expansion to 2FE (420 places) should demand arising from the new development and wider planning area mean that additional pupil places are required. The relocation therefore provides scope for future expansion of a successful primary school thereby providing greater financial sustainability due to the greater pupil numbers and school budget share.
- 1.9 Under the terms of a Section 106 agreement, CC/4301/14, the housing developer has opted to construct the new 1FE primary school. The latest available construction programme, (as at October 2023), indicates completion of the school site for September 2024 occupation.
- 1.10 Undertaking a consultation at this stage assists in informing consideration about the proposal to relocate Jessie Younghusband Primary School from its existing site.
- 1.11 The creation of a primary school in a new location together with the need to include the additional children who will live in Minerva Heights for future school place planning means it is necessary to consider the appropriateness of current catchment areas for primary admissions in the local area. This is because there is a need to align capacities of the schools that currently provide places for children from this part of the Chichester locality with potential pupil numbers within the relevant catchment areas once the development is complete.

2 Proposal details

- 2.1 It is proposed that consultation is undertaken with the community and all stakeholders to seek views on the proposed relocation of Jessie Younghusband Primary School to the new primary school site at Minerva Heights and the subsequent expansion of St Anthony's School into the surplus site and accommodation. The consultation will also seek views on the proposed changes to the primary catchment area in Chichester resulting from the need to take into account both the new school being built at Minerva Heights and the relocation proposal.
- 2.2 It is proposed that consultation commences in December 2023 to run for a total of 7 weeks. Following the close of the consultation period all responses will be collated, summarised and assessed and reported to the Cabinet Member to determine next steps. If it is proposed that any changes should proceed this will require a Cabinet Member decision to agree the publication of statutory proposals in accordance with DfE Guidance on [Making Significant Changes \('prescribed alterations'\) to Maintained Schools.](#)

3 Other options considered (and reasons for not proposing)

- 3.1 There is an option to undertake an Academy presumption process to seek applications from Academy Trusts to open a new school on the Minerva Heights development. This is not the preferred option as the proposal to relocate Jessie

Younghusband Primary School provides sustainable places and an option to expand an existing Primary School rated as Good by Ofsted. Further, this option would not enable the expansion of St Anthony's School which is required to meet the additional demand for SEND Specialist places.

- 3.2 There is the option to do nothing but this would not enable the expansion of St Anthony's into the Jessie Younghusband site.

4 Consultation, engagement and advice

- 4.1 The Capital and Assets Board (the Council's internal governance process for capital projects) has considered and supports the proposal to launch a consultation and comments from the Board have been incorporated into the final proposal and recommendations. No material changes have been made to the proposal or the recommendations since consideration by the Board.
- 4.2 The Headteachers and Governors of Jessie Younghusband Primary School and St Anthony's School support the proposals.
- 4.3 The Headteachers and Governors of other Primary Schools affected by potential school catchment changes have been consulted on the options.
- 4.4 The details of the proposals have been shared with the local Members for the Chichester North, Chichester South, Chichester West and Chichester East divisions who were offered the opportunity to attend a briefing in October 2023 to ask questions on the proposals.

5 Finance

- 5.1 The construction cost of the new 1FE Primary School at Minerva Heights is to be funded by the developer in accordance with the signed Section 106 Agreement and associated Development Agreement.
- 5.2 Should the consultation result in approval of the proposals, the cost of capital work associated with the development of the surplus Jessie Younghusband site and buildings for use by St Anthony's would be subject to further capital governance in accordance with the County Council's capital governance arrangements but it is envisaged that the costs would be funded from existing SEND grant allocations or prioritised against other competing projects for corporate borrowing.
- 5.3 Revenue funding for mainstream schools is regulated through the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) Schools Block National Funding Formula (NFF). The school would therefore continue to receive funding through the current mechanism. There are no direct revenue funding implications against county council funding as a result of this proposal for relocating Jessie Younghusband primary school.
- 5.4 Revenue funding for special schools is regulated through the DSG High Needs block and once again there are no direct revenue funding implications against County Council revenue funding. The school would continue to receive funding through the current mechanism.

- 5.5 The revenue funding implications against the DSG High Needs Block will be updated should a more detailed business case be brought forward regarding the proposed expansion of St Anthony's.

6 Risk implications and mitigations

Risk	Mitigating Action
That the new developer built primary school will not be complete for occupation in September 2025	There is regular liaison between the County Council and the developer with progress being monitored closely. There is an obligation within the S106 Agreement to provide the new school

7 Policy alignment and compliance

- 7.1 [Our Council Plan](#) sets out the corporate priorities and includes a commitment to help people and communities to fulfil their potential. This proposal will provide primary school places in an area of increasing school age population to best meet the needs of the young people.

- 7.2 Legal Implications

None

- 7.3 Equality Duty and Human Rights Assessment

The arrangements for consultation are in compliance with DfE guidance. The consideration of the equality duty will be applied both to the process of undertaking the consultation and the analysis of feedback to ensure that due consideration is given to the needs of persons with protected characteristics and the requirements of the public sector equality duty.

- 7.4 Climate Change - None

- 7.5 Crime and Disorder - None

- 7.6 Public Health – None

- 7.7 Social Value - Not applicable for this specific proposal.

Steve Nyakatawa
**Interim Assistant Director
(Education and Skills)**

Andrew Edwards
**Assistant Director
(Property and Assets)**

Contact Officer: Graham Olway, Head of Organisation and Planning, 0330 2223029

Background papers -None