Children & Young People’s Services



**Parents and Pupils Booklet**

**Consultation on Proposals**

**To Increase Pupil Numbers at Mill Green School**

2nd September 2024 – 7th October 2024

**St Helens Council wants to know your views on our proposals to consult on increasing pupil numbers at Mill Green Special School.**

**The consultation period will run from 2nd September 2024 to 7th October 2024.**

**Consultees will have the opportunity to complete an online survey.**

**Children and young people will also be directly consulted with.**

**Also, officers from St Helens Council will deliver two consultee engagement sessions at Mill Green School on the 16th September 2024. These will take place between 10.30am to 11.30am and from 2.00pm until 3.30pm.**

**Please note these are not drop-in sessions but an opportunity for the Council to present on its proposals and undertake meaningful consultation with consultees. Therefore, we would ask consultees to arrive in time for the start of the face-to-face session.**

**What is this consultation about?**

The Council is proposing to enter a period of statutory consultation to permanently increase pupil numbers at Mill Green School during the academic year 2024/25 and beyond. The number of children assessed as having special educational needs is increasing, both at a local level and nationally. Consequently, there is an increasing demand for special school places in St Helens for children whose needs cannot be met in mainstream school.

In response to the additional demand for in borough special school places the Council is proposing to increase pupil numbers in Mill Green from 134 to 170 for the start of the academic year 2025/26. It is also proposing to gradually increase pupil numbers further to 190 beyond 2025/26 to accommodate future anticipated demand for special school places.

The Council are proposing to renovate Parr Library to accommodate the increase in pupil number from the beginning of the school year 2025/26.

Further internal modelling of the existing building is not feasible, as this has already been carried out to allow for previous increases in pupil numbers. This proposal will also support the smooth transition for those children moving from Lansbury Bridge to Mill Green.

 **Why are we consulting?**

To progress this proposal the Council must have due regard for the statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers ‘making significant changes’ (prescribed alterations) to maintained schools, January 2023. Significant changes include expansion and increasing pupil numbers by 10% in special schools. This requires the Council to enter a minimum period of 4 weeks of consultation with young people, parent/carers, and key stakeholders. The outcome of the consultation will inform future decision making.

**When and how would the proposals be implemented?**

The proposals mean that pupil numbers at Mill Green would increase from 134 to 170 from the start of the academic year 2025/26. In addition to this the Council are also proposing to increase pupil numbers to 190 beyond 2025/26. To achieve this the Council, propose that Parr Library will be renovated to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers from the start of the academic year 2025/26.

**What this means for you and your child**

The Council and Mill Green School do not anticipate any disruption to Mill Green students. The Council and the school will work in partnership to put plans in place to mitigate against any disruption students might encounter because of this proposal. Should at any point, young people, parents, or key stakeholders raise any concerns arising from theses proposed changes the Council and the school will listen to these concerns and take appropriate action to address any problems that may arise before, during and after any of the changes we are proposing.

**Transport**

Transport will continue to be arranged for eligible children and young people in accordance with the Council’s Transport Policy.

The school with support, will risk assess and put in place a revised transport plans to mitigate against risks associated with a potential increase in the volume of traffic created because of additional pupil numbers.

**Consultation Process**

The information we have provided along with planned face-to face meetings with consultees should be enough to enable you to form a view on the proposals. At this stage we have not worked out every detail as we need to listen to your comments and concerns so that we can take account of these later in the process.

We are sorry that due to the volume of responses we receive when consulting on proposals for schools we will not be able to enter into correspondence with interested parties during or after the consultation period. Therefore, it is important to attend the consultation event if you require clarification or more information on what we are proposing.

All responses will be made available to elected members for decision making purposes as they will be collated and included in a report to the Council’s Cabinet who will then make the final decision.

**Who will be consulted?**

We welcome views from any interested parties and will also be contacting certain groups directly as part of our consultation, these include:

* Parents of children attending Lansbury Bridge or Mill Green School
* Children and young people at Lansbury Bridge and Mill Green School
* Governors and staff
* Other special schools in St Helens
* Elected members
* The local Member of Parliament
* The community via public notices and the Council’s website
* Professionals who work with young people with SEND.

**Proposal to increase pupil numbers at Mill Green Special School**

For completion by consultees:

Please ensure you have read the booklet carefully before submitting your responses by accessing the following link <https://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/MillGreen/>

If you would like an acknowledgement of your comments, please confirm your:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Email address |  |

or

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Home address |  |

Please return your completed form no later than 7th October 2024 to:

Sarah Rogers,

School Place Planning Manager,

PO Box 512, WA10 9JX.

Email: sarahrogers@sthelens.gov.uk