

Proposal to remove the Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) at George Abbot School

April 2022



SURREY
COUNTY COUNCIL

George Abbot VI Resourced Provision Educational Justification Statement

1.0 Needs Analysis

Introduction

- 1.1 This paper examines the educational demand for Visual Impairment specialist school places across Surrey and the impacts of the proposal to remove the Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) at George Abbot School in Guildford.
- 1.2 Under sections 13 and 14 of the Education Act 1996 and Part 27 Section 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014, Surrey County Council and other Local Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that:
 - i) There are sufficient schools for primary and secondary education in their areas.
 - ii) They keep under review the educational provision for children and young people who have special educational needs and or a disability (SEND)
- 1.3 The Department for Education expects Local Authorities (LA) to manage their specialist estates efficiently to avoid detriment to schools' educational offers, creating disadvantage to children and young people who have SEND or the LA's financial position. This means ensuring the sustainability of maintained specialist school places that are appropriately matched to need-type, phases of education and geographic location.
- 1.4 This a vital role that local authorities retain in an increasingly school-led education system and one that requires long-term strategic planning. Special School sufficiency planning is informed by accurate SEND systems-data, mid-year population estimates, the trajectory of housing growth for each district in Surrey and historical as well as current tracking of learner movement trends. Detailed local knowledge enhanced through consultation with parents and carers and good relationships with local schools also supports the strategic approach to evidence-informed place planning.
- 1.5 This paper is an education justification in response to the Learning Partners Academy Trust's proposal. Following the needs analysis, Surrey County Council does not object to the proposal to remove the Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) at George Abbot School in Guildford.

Background: Special Educational Needs and/ or Disability (SEND) in Surrey

- 1.6 Children and young people with SEND have differing needs and are educated in a range of mainstream or specialist settings. Alongside the general presumption of a right to a mainstream education, parents of children with an EHCP and young people with an EHCP have the right to express their preference for a place at a particular mainstream school, special school, special post-16 institution or specialist college.

- 1.7 Special schools (in the maintained, academy, non-maintained and independent sectors), special post-16 institutions and specialist colleges all have an important role in providing for children and young people with SEN and in working collaboratively with mainstream and special settings to develop and share expertise and approaches.
- 1.8 Surrey's existing maintained specialist estate comprises of 25 special schools, and 51 SEN Units or Resourced Provision in mainstream primary and secondary schools.
- 1.9 Originally not all mainstream schools were adapted to admit pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) who required access to a mainstream curriculum. The arrangements were for pupils to attend a Resource Provision at a school that had been adapted to ensure the needs of pupils with visual impairments were met. Resourced Provisions are where places are reserved at a mainstream school for pupils with a specific type of SEN, taught mainly within mainstream classes, but requiring a base and some specialist facilities around the school. Three secondary and two primary schools across the county had been adapted and pupils were generally placed at the 'nearest' school with resourced provision to their home address.
- 1.10 Pupils with Visual Impairment named as the primary need on their EHCP attend a variety of educational settings. **Table 1** indicates the proportion of pupils attending educational settings across Surrey.

Table 1: Breakdown of Children and Young People with VI as a Primary Need Against Where they are Educated

Educated in Resourced Provision or SEN Unit at a Mainstream School	35%
Educated in Mainstream Schools	45%
Educated in FE Colleges	9%
Educated in Special Schools	11%

- 1.11 George Abbot in Guildford has Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI), but the school has not admitted any new pupils into the Resourced Provision in Year 7 for the past three years, with the last entry in 2019. **Table 2** also indicates that the number of pupils on roll in the Resourced Provision at George Abbot School have fallen year on year since 2017.

Table 2: Numbers on Roll and New Admissions for the Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) Since 2017

Academic Year	Number on roll in unit	Number of new admissions into unit
2017	9	0
2018	6	0
2019	5	1
2020	5	0
2021	3	0

- 1.12 There is a total of three pupils on roll at the Resourced Provision at George Abbot School, two in Year 11 and one in Year 13. It is an appropriate time to consider the closure of the Resourced Provision as all pupils on roll have chosen to move on to other further educational settings at the end of the 2021/22 academic year.

2.0 Alignment with Local Strategy

Local Area Demand, and PD Specialist School Placements

- 2.1 Of the 11,622 statutory Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) maintained by the county for children and young people who have SEND, Surrey currently has 107 statutory EHCPs for children and young people with Visual Impairment (VI) identified as their primary need. Visual Impairment (VI) is the eleventh highest area of need in the county.

Demand for Specialist Secondary School Places

- 2.2 In terms of education provision, Surrey is divided into a number of education areas within the four quadrants: North East, North West, South East and South West of the county.
- 2.3 Across South West Surrey, the latest projected sufficiency modelling indicates the demand for VI secondary places over the next 10 years remains stable and there is no projected growth of demand for specialist provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI).
- 2.4 George Abbot take the majority of the pupils for the Resourced Provision from the immediate locality surrounding the school, with other pupils travelling from the North East of the County.
- 2.5 There is no other resourced provision for secondary pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) within the South West quadrant and no provision in the North East Quadrant. Across Surrey, there are two other secondary schools with Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI): Woking High (North West) and Oxted School (South East) and two primary schools with Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI): Sythwood Primary (North West) and St Stephen's CofE Primary (South East). The location of these schools is shown in the map [Figure 1](#).
- 2.6 The resourced provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) at Woking High and Oxted School have more sustainable pupil numbers than the resourced provision at George Abbot due to having a primary school with Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) located near to them.

- 2.7 Forecasts for provision for secondary pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) across Surrey indicate that there will be an overall increase in demand over the forecast period however this is due to an increase in the South East Quadrant where other areas remain stable.

Table 5: Forecasts for Year 7 to Year 14 SEN Unit/Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment

Residential Area	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Quadrant – SE	10	9	9	12	15	18	22	25	22
Quadrant – NW	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	3	3
Quadrant – NE	7	8	9	7	6	6	4	3	3
Quadrant – SW	5	6	7	8	6	6	6	8	6
Surrey Total	26	27	29	32	31	34	36	39	33

- 2.8 For primary provision, across South West Surrey, the latest projected sufficiency modelling indicates that there is little or no demand for VI primary places over the next 10 years. There is no projected growth of demand for specialist provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI).

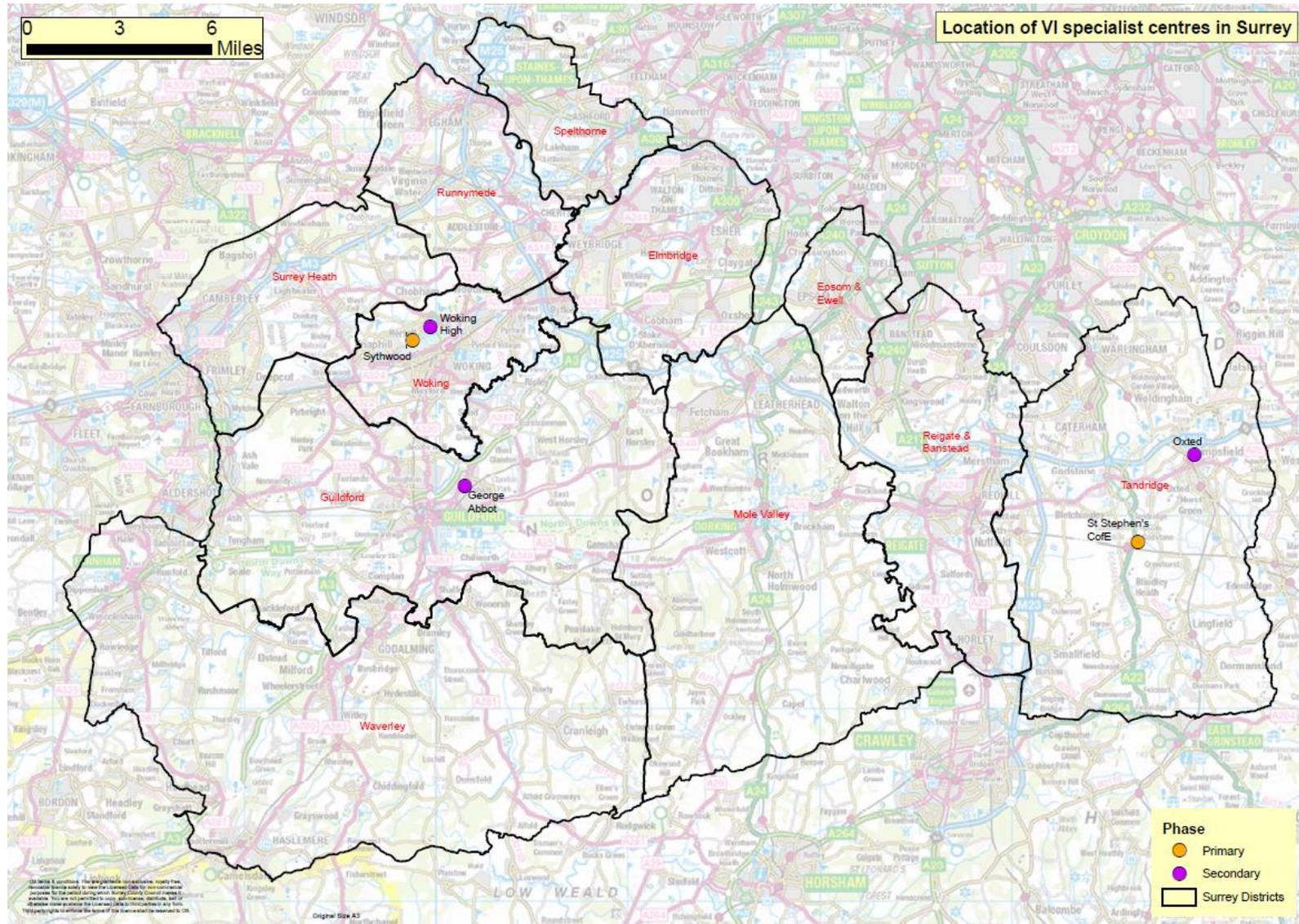
Table 6: Forecasts for Year R to Year 6 SEN Unit/Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment

Residential Area	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30	2030-31
Quadrant - SE	5	10	14	12	10	10	9	9	9
Quadrant - NW	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Quadrant - NE	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Quadrant - SW	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Surrey Total	6	11	15	12	10	10	9	9	9

- 2.9 In line with the forecasts for the South West of the county, the latest projected sufficiency modelling for the North East and North West indicates that there is little or no demand for VI primary places over the next 10 years. There is no projected growth of demand for specialist provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI).
- 2.10 Forecasts for provision for primary pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) in Surrey indicate that there will be an increase in demand over the forecast period in the South East of the County.
- 2.11 The forecasts demonstrate that the demand projected for VI primary places throughout the planning period can be met through the places available in current primary schools. When the demand moves into Secondary there will be sufficient places at Oxted and Woking High School.
- 2.12 Learning Partners Academy Trust are proposing that the Resourced Provision at George Abbot School in Guildford is removed as the resourced provision for secondary aged pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) is no longer sustainable. Analysis of SEND Sufficiency data for this need-type evidence there is no projected increase in demand in the South West of Surrey over the next 9-10 years.

2.13 George Abbot School will continue to utilise staff expertise and resources to support pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) where the mainstream school is identified through the pupil's Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Additional support identified in the pupils EHCP can be provided but the resourced provision with specialist services will be removed from the school. Woking High and Oxted School will continue to support pupils who require a resourced provision as a base with specialist services to support their learning within a mainstream school.

Figure 1- Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) in mainstream schools in Surrey



The proposal is aligned with Surrey's *SEND Partnership Strategy 2019-2022*, which emphasises the local area's vision to ensure:

- *Children and young people are at the centre of our thinking and that we work with families as partners in meeting their children or young people's needs and planning how we will deliver support and provision in the future.*
- *All places, settings and organisations that provide education and/or support to children and their families are welcoming of children and young people with SEND and have a better understanding of their needs.*
- *When new provision and support is created, that Health, Education and the Local Authority share responsibility to ensure that high quality support is in place for children, young people and families when and where they need it.*
- *Children and young people with SEND can access the help and support they need to thrive and achieve within their local communities. They can go to local education provision that meets their needs, access services and play an active role in the community close to where they live.*
- *Families have easy access to information which helps them understand how best to support their child or young person's needs and access the help that is offered.*
- *Children, young people and families have access to the same level of high-quality support and education, wherever they live in Surrey.*
- *We have a good, shared understanding of our children and young people who have SEND in Surrey and our support offer matches their identified needs.*

Summary

- 1.0 Overall, there is not a demonstratable need for Resourced Provision for pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) at George Abbot in Guildford.
- 2.0 The potential to expand the Resourced Provision pupils with Visual Impairment (VI) at Woking High and Oxted School would seek to realise the local area's vision to:
 - Enable all learners to lead happy independent and fulfilling adult lives.
 - Enable all learners to be included in and valued by society.
 - Enable all children and young people to make outstanding progress academically within a safe, caring and healthy school environment.
 - Enable all learners to develop their communication skills to ensure that they can express their thoughts and feelings and can interact with others in their local community as well as wider society.
 - Enable all learners to develop their independence skills to enable a successful transition into society.
 - Enable all learners to develop their physical, emotional and mental wellbeing, so that they can be happy, healthy, empowered and included in society.
 - Work in positive partnerships with parents, carers, fellow professionals and the wider community to ensure that the needs of learners are met, and achievements recognised and celebrated.
 - Provide high quality and continuous training development and support for all staff working at the school and for the wider members of the community including parents, carers and families.
 - Work with other schools and the wider community of professionals to share expertise and develop inclusive opportunities for learners in a range of contexts (employment, social and cultural).