



11 January 2023

Dear parents and carers,

RE: Proposal of a new specialist resource provision for children aged 4 to 9 years of age.

As you may be aware, Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) has been conducting a major, cross-county, strategic review into provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). The Shared Learning Trust, and in particular The Rushmere Park Academy (TRPA), have invested considerably over the years in the recruitment and training of staff to support students with SEND, which has resulted in a wealth of internal expertise. As such we have been in discussions with CBC to locate a specialist resource provision (SRP) at the academy to provide education to a maximum of 10 students, who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Condition (ASC).

Why does The Rushmere Park Academy have an interest in developing an SRP?

The Shared Learning Trust and The Rushmere Park Academy passionately believe in inclusivity and all staff across the academy, and indeed the trust, work extremely hard to ensure all students are able to achieve success. We plan to provide support and outreach expertise to other local schools and providers, ensuring best practice is shared.

The proposed provision will be an important part of Central Bedfordshire's graduated approach to meeting ASC needs locally. It will allow local students who may be struggling at existing main-stream schools to make good progress in a smaller resource provision and support them in all areas of their development.

Why is this being proposed?

There is an increasing number of pupils with speech, language and communication needs who have a broader and more complex level of need, including social communication difficulties that cannot be met in main-stream education.

These pupils need access to a mainstream curriculum and academic challenge, balanced with a safe space to be in, where work can be done to support self-regulation, build resilience and protect emotional wellbeing. This has led to this proposal.

How will admissions work?

The SRP is designed to accommodate a maximum of 10 pupils with ASC. Central Bedfordshire Council will manage admissions to the SRP completely independently from the school. The referral pathway is through CBC and no pupil can be admitted without CBC's prior agreement.

Pupils must be subject to an Education Health Care Plan. Those considered appropriate for admission based on EHC Needs assessment will be referred through the CBC SEND Team. The decision to admit will be taken by an appropriate Team Manager following consultation undertaken in compliance with S39 (6) Pupils and Families Act 2014.

Have your say

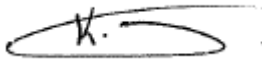
We would like to hear from you regarding your thoughts and opinions on this provision and ask you share any views regarding this proposal to myself by 12 noon on Monday 13th February 2023 by email to kevin.martin@thesharedlearningtrust.org.uk

How the decision will be taken?

This is a consultation, and no decision has been made yet. All comments received to this consultation will be made available to the Board of Trustees of The Shared Learning Trust, members of Central Bedfordshire Council and the Department for Education. All responses may be made available in public reports, although personal details will be removed to respect individual privacy.

Thank you in anticipation of your continued and valued support.

Yours Sincerely



Kevin Martin
Chief Operating Officer
The Shared Learning Trust