

APPENDIX 1

Dear parents, staff & governors of the Pupil Referral Unit, Torbay School and other interested parties

Torbay Council has been reviewing its provision for pupils with emotional, social and behavioural difficulties. One option that the Council is now considering is to formally amalgamate the Pupil Referral Unit with Torbay School.

Under a collaborative partnership arrangement these two organisations have been working closely together for the last 2 years. The Pupil Referral Unit has been led and managed by the Headteacher from Torbay School since September 2012. As a result we now believe that it is in the best interests of both organisations to formalise that arrangement and the reasons for the proposal are outlined in the consultation paper attached.

This consultation is the first step in the amalgamation process; as stated above it provides you with more information about why this proposal is being considered and it also provides you with an opportunity to comment on what is being proposed. Any responses received will then be used to inform the decision making.

This consultation will be sent to other interested parties including other Torbay schools, the local Diocese offices and neighbouring Local Authorities.

If you require this document in a different format or would like any further information then please contact 01803 208260,

It is important to remember we are holding this consultation to gather your views.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Richard Williams', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Richard Williams
Director of Children Services

The amalgamation of the Pupil Referral Unit and Torbay School

Consultation Paper Autumn 2014

WHAT IS THE PROPOSAL?

Torbay Council is proposing to amalgamate the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) with Torbay School.

In order to do this the council proposes to close the existing PRU and then expand Torbay Behavioural, Emotional & Social Difficulties (BESD) School to include the provision that was on offer at the referral unit.

WHY DOES THE COUNCIL WANT TO AMALGAMATE THE TWO PROVISIONS?

The Council has been reviewing its existing provision for pupils with challenging behaviour including those that are not statemented.

In 2012 the PRU was aligned more closely with Torbay School to support the development of high quality alternative provision for children and young people aged between 11 and 16. The Headteacher of Torbay School was appointed as Executive Headteacher taking over the responsibility of the PRU. Since then the Local Authority has worked closely with the Headteacher and both school Governors and the PRU management committee to continue to develop provision for vulnerable young people with behavioural and emotional health difficulties. All provision for excluded pupils and those with behavioural needs that the Local Authority has responsibility is now accessed via the PRU under the management of the Torbay School.

However, currently the PRU remains the responsibility of the Local Authority and is governed by a management committee that is independent of the Torbay School. The Headteacher of Torbay School is therefore accountable not only to his governing body but also the management committee of the PRU. Both organisations have individual budgets and neither the school governors or the management committee have a clear understanding of the needs of the other provision. The Local Authority therefore believes that it is both financially and strategically more sensible to have these services delivered by a single provider under a single management structure. This would enable the school and the PRU to effectively share resources and provide opportunities for staff to work in both settings.

To achieve this local authority is therefore formally consulting on the proposal to close the PRU and to re-designate Torbay school to provide 56 places for non statemented children that have emotional and behavioural difficulties. This will include all the sixth day provision for excluded pupils. This is in addition to the existing 60 places at Torbay School.

WHY IS IT NECESSARY TO CLOSE THE PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT?

Any changes to school organisation are governed by the DfE and their latest guidance states that, in order to bring these two education providers under one leadership team with one governing body and one DfE number, one of the

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provisions must be closed and then the other expanded to include the closed provision.

So this means that technically the PRU will have to close on the date of implementation to be specified in the statutory notice. Then on that same day Torbay BESD School will be expanded to include the provision for 56 places at the Waterleat Road, Clennen Valley, Polsham and Hillside sites for children aged 11-16 who are currently attending the PRU.

WHEN WILL A DECISION BE MADE AND WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

The purpose of this consultation is to gather the views of interested parties on the proposal to inform the decision making process; it will run from the 15th September 2014 until 13th October 2014. After that date all the responses received will be collated and submitted for a decision on whether the Council will proceed with implementing this proposal or not.

If the Council decides to approve the proposal then the Council will publish Statutory Notices outlining it in more detail. Copies of this notice will be placed in the local newspaper and in the local area surrounding the related provision and school. There will then be a period of 4 weeks for people to make “representations” either in support or against the proposals. Full details on how to make a representation and the deadline for doing so will be outlined in the Statutory Notice.

At the end of the 4 week representation period the Council then has up to two months to decide whether to go ahead with the closure and amalgamation.

Once that decision has been made the proposals will be implemented on the date specified in the statutory notice.

It is a long process but it ensures that there is ample opportunity for all those affected to have their say.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR VIEWS HEARD

Attached to this document is a response form which gives you an opportunity to give us your views on the proposals. We do have to ask for your name since everyone and anyone is entitled to return one form only.

In addition to completing a response form, or instead of, you can also send your views by letter or email to the following addresses.

Letter: Samantha Poston
Schools Capital & Planning Officer,
Schools Capital & Planning Team, TDA
3rd Floor Tor Hill House
Union Street
Torquay
TQ2 5QW

Email: schoolscapital@torbay.gov.uk

If you would like additional copies of this document and response form, or require it in a different format or language, please telephone 01803 208260.

CONSULTATION ON AMALGAMATION OF PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT AND THE TORBAY SCHOOL

Response Form

Autumn 2014

This response form sets out questions relating to the Consultation Paper. Please read each question and indicate your preferred response by ticking the relevant box. Your comments are also welcome and space has been provided after each question for this purpose.

Before completing the response form, please provide the following information (block capitals)

NAME:

Please indicate which of the following you represent:

a) SCHOOL OR SCHOOLS, please specify

Please tick one of the following boxes as appropriate:

Governor

Staff

Parent

Other, please specify

b) ANOTHER ORGANISATION, please specify

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1. Do you agree with the benefits of amalgamating the two provisions?

- Yes**
- No**
- Not sure**

Comments:

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2. Do you have any other options for consideration?

Please indicate below any other options that are not included in this consultation, giving reasons for these and any supporting information:

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THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS RESPONSE FORM

Please return your completed form by **13th October 2014** to:

Samantha Poston
Schools Capital & Planning Officer,
Schools Capital & Planning Team, TDA
3rd Floor Tor Hill House
Union Street
Torquay
TQ2 5QW