

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION FOR THE  
LINKED PROPOSALS TO:**

- **CLOSE TORBAY PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT and**
- **EXPAND TORBAY (BEHAVIOURAL, EMOTIONAL & SOCIAL DIFFICULTIES) SCHOOL**

<b>School Name &amp; Address:</b>	PUPIL REFERRAL UNIT The Polsham Centre 25 Higher Polsham Road Paignton TQ3 2SZ
<b>DFE Number:</b>	880/1106
<b>Local Authority area:</b>	Torbay
<b>Diocese (if applicable):</b>	N/A
<b>Proposals published by:</b>	Torbay Local Authority
<b>Date proposals published:</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2014
<b>Proposed implementation date:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2015

<b>School Name &amp; Address:</b>	TORBAY SCHOOL 170b Torquay Road Paignton TQ3 2AL
<b>DFE Number:</b>	880/7046
<b>Local Authority area:</b>	Torbay
<b>Diocese (if applicable):</b>	N/A
<b>Proposals published by:</b>	Torbay Local Authority
<b>Date proposals published:</b>	23 <sup>rd</sup> October 2014
<b>Proposed implementation date:</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> January 2015

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### **1. Description of alteration and evidence of demand:**

The Local Authority (LA) proposes to close the Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015 and then on the same day expand Torbay Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) School to include, under the school's management and governance, the provision for 74 non-statemented children aged 11-16 with emotional and behavioural difficulties at the existing PRU sites.

Overall demand for specialist places for primary and secondary aged children with BESD needs is rising so it became a priority for the LA to review its current arrangements and maximise opportunities for enhancing and developing that provision.

Historically provision for this type of needs has been developed on separate sites over a number of years and whilst these children would have specialist places available to them, these provisions were standalone without the benefit of management through a school.

Following a review in 2012 the LA appointed the Headteacher of the Torbay School as the Executive Headteacher of the PRU. This brought the PRU in closer alignment to Torbay School – a special school that caters for secondary aged children with BESD.

Since then the LA has been working closely with the Headteacher and both the school governors and the PRU management committee in the development of alternative provision; the aim was for all provision for excluded pupils and those with behavioural difficulties to be accessed via the PRU under the management of the Torbay School.

However, the PRU remains the responsibility of the LA and is governed by a management committee that is independent of the Torbay school whilst the school is governed by a governing body. This means that the Headteacher is accountable to two separate bodies that have individual budgets and not necessary a clear understanding of the needs of the other provision.

The LA 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 also enable the school and the PRU to effectively share resources and provide opportunities for staff to work in both settings. The overall aim is to facilitate the ongoing development of a high quality alternative provision for these vulnerable secondary aged children.

To achieve this, the LA is proposing to amalgamate the two provisions from the implementation date of 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015.

All changes to school organisation are governed by the DfE and their latest guidance states that in order to bring these two educational providers together under one leadership team with one governing body and one DfE number, one of the provisions must be closed and then the other expanded to include the closed provision. This therefore means that technically the LA must close the PRU on the implementation date whilst simultaneously expand Torbay School to include the PRU's provision.

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During the development of these proposals a consultation was carried out by the LA with all interested parties including the management committee and governing bodies of the provision affected by the proposals, all Torbay Schools, the local Diocese offices and the neighbouring local authorities. The response rate was low at 2.6%; however, all the responses received were 100% in support of the proposal.

The lack of response is regretful, but past experience shows that this is usually a sign that parties are in favour of the proposal or at least have no strong opinions against it. There will be another opportunity for parties to register their opinion through the current representation period which is outlined in paragraph 6 below.

### **2. Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice):**

The aims of this proposal are to secure the management and governance of alternative provision for pupils aged 11 to 16 with emotional and behavioural difficulties under one provider; Torbay School.

Consolidating the PRU with Torbay School under a single management system is in line with the LA's objective to provide a more coordinated continuum of provision for secondary children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It provides both strategic and financial benefits with the school becoming the centre for curriculum leadership across the whole BESD provision for secondary phase pupils in Torbay.

Key outcomes would be:

- The sharing of teaching resources
- The sharing of BESD and specialist expertise
- The more effective planning of a continuum of provision secondary aged children with these needs
- The realisation of cost efficiencies through shared support services
- Opportunities for staff to work in both settings providing more job security and scope for progression

### **3. The effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area:**

There will be no change to the alternative provision currently provided in Torbay; Torbay School will continue to provide sixth day alternative provision for all excluded pupils.

### **4. Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved:**

There are no project costs to implementing this proposal.

### **5. Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation:**

The proposals are being published and implemented by Torbay Council; the proposed implementation date for both proposals is 1<sup>st</sup> January 2015.

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### **6. A statement explaining the procedure for responses: support; objections and comments**

The statutory notice detailing this proposal was published on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2014 in line with statutory guidance.

There now follows a 4 week representation period during which time parties can write in either in support or opposing the proposals.

These representations will then be collated and shared with the decision maker as they make the final decision as to whether implement the proposals or not.

The representation period will begin from the date of publication 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2014 until 20<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

Representations need to be forwarded by the closing date to:

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