

PROPOSAL FOR CLOSURE OF RESIDENTIAL CARE PROVISION IN JULY 2020

Purpose

This document is intended to explain the reasons for the proposed closure of the Residential Care Provision and redeployment of the Residential Care Team at St Dominic's School.

Numbers of residential pupils and students have been declining over the years and Local Authorities are now only funding residential places on an exceptional basis at St Dominic's School; we do not expect this situation to change. However, there is increasing demand for day placements. We want to continue to provide the highest quality of education and support for our pupils and students. A very small residential cohort will not provide the pupils and students with the peer group and breadth of residential care offer which pupils and students need, and is not financially sustainable.

We are therefore consulting with families and carers, local authorities, staff and other stakeholders until the middle of March 2019 when we plan to submit the business case for closure of the residential unit to the Regional Schools' Commissioner for approval, subject to consultation. If approved, the residential care provision will close in July 2020.

Context

St Dominic's has a current total capacity of 110 including 30 in the sixth form. There are currently 106 pupils and students on roll with 10 as boarders. The income currently generated by the residential provision is £161k versus running costs of £203k. This position will worsen in 2019/20.

Only three pupils are currently confirmed as residential in September 2019, based on the information to date. However, there may be short-term emergency placements that arise.

In July 2020, there will be, based on the information to date, one Year 10 pupil. Two Year 11 pupils, who will have completed Key Stage 4, may request SDS Sixth Form or may be transitioning to local colleges. See Table 1 for the current and projected number of residential pupils and students.

We will ensure that we work with parents/carers and Local Authorities to ensure that the one residential pupil who we expect currently to be in residence, can access an appropriate day placement.

Residential enquiries

There are currently two requests for residential in the future, one for a current Year 10 placement; this is going to tribunal in January 2019, following adjournment in October. This pupil is currently in a maintained special school setting. The second is for a current Year 9 placement; this pupil has not been assessed yet.

Principles for Change

To ensure the quality and sustainability of the school continues to be secure, we are aiming to respond to the upsurge in day placements and discontinue residential placements in 2020. This will enable the school to be reflective of the changing landscape of the sector and prepare for and respond to a challenging LA funding environment. It is for this reason that we are proposing the closure of the residential provision at St Dominic's School on the grounds of economic and financial sustainability and the demand for increasing numbers of day placements.

This change will lead to us developing and expanding our blended, holistic curriculum plans and needs-led interventions for more day placements, to ensure that EHCP outcomes are met and appropriate provision is in place, promoting inclusion and contributing to high standards of support in line with our ethos.

It is expected that the proposed model will impact positively on pupils and students and the school community in future years, providing effective provision, resources and support for pupils and students and the education team, offering an expert and developing service going forward. We intend to ensure maximum benefit to pupils and students by redeployment of resources within the estate, including utilisation of residential and staff accommodation for pupil use, e.g. the space would be reallocated to improve KS2 provision and to provide additional Y7 classrooms. The additional space would allow the school to potentially increase its capacity from 110 to 150 (subject to DfE approval).

Impact on Staff

All those working in the residential provision will have the opportunity to move to day time roles at St Dominic's in September 2020. Currently, staff work flexibly and on rota between day and evening. Any changes in duties will be discussed with those affected. There may also be some change to working patterns in September 2019, as residential pupils and students leave. We will of course meet with staff and their representatives if the proposal for closure is agreed by the Regional Schools' Commissioner. We do not envisage any redundancies.

Principal's Recommendation

Subject to the processes detailed herein, it would be my recommendation to proceed with the proposal of closing the residential offer at the end of term in July 2020 and to increase the capacity of the school to 150 pupils and students by September 2020. The business case has been approved in principle by the Local Governing Body.

Timetable and Process

A formal consultation, to seek feedback on the above change, will take place for a minimum of 6 term-time weeks between Wednesday 30th January 2019 and Wednesday 20th March 2019.

Your views on any aspect of the proposal will be sent to our Local Governing Body and the OHCAT board of Trustees for consideration. All responses received by the end of the consultation period will be carefully considered and approval sought from the Regional Schools Commissioner to decide the admission arrangements for the school year 2020/2021.

We therefore invite you to take part in this consultation on the proposal to close the residential offer at the end of term in July 2020 and to increase the capacity of the school to 150 pupils and students by September 2020 at St Dominic's School. Comments may be submitted in the following ways:

By paper: See attached response form

Online at: www.stdominicsschool.org.uk

By email to: office@stdominicsschool.org.uk

By post to: St Dominic's School, Hambledon, Godalming, Surrey GU8 4DX

Please do not hesitate to contact me directly if you wish to discuss this matter on a one-to-one basis.

Yours sincerely

Angela Drayton

Angela Drayton
Principal and Regional Lead, Surrey and Sussex Hub
January 2019

Table 1 - Residential Leavers and Remainders, 2005-2020

Year	Leavers	Comment
2005	15	
2006	11	
2007	11	
2008	16	
2009	11	
2010	8	
2011	11	
2012	13	
2013	10	
2014	9	
2015	11	
2016	8	20 boarders remaining
2017	8	12 boarders remaining
2018	3	9 remaining
2019	6	3 remaining
July 2020	2	2 Yr. 11 leavers, 1 Yr. 10 pupil remaining
September 2020	1	1 Year 10 pupil

Consultation Response Form

We are proposing to make changes to our admissions arrangements for the academic year 2020/2021 in order to close the residential provision at St Dominic's School. The rationale for this change is to ensure the continued quality and sustainability of day provision at the school.

As such we wish to consult with stakeholders on the proposed change.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Please tick:

Pupil / Student at St Dominic's:

Parent at St Dominic's:

Governor at St Dominic's:

Staff at St Dominic's:

Other (please state): _____

Do you support the proposal?

YES:

NO:

Comments (please attach separate sheets of paper if necessary):

Signature: _____ Date _____

It is important that you sign and date this form.

Responses must be received by Wednesday 20th March 2019.

Please return response forms either to the School Office, or by post to:
Angela Drayton, St Dominic's School, Hambledon, Godalming, Surrey GU8 4DX,
or by email to: office@stdominicsschool.org.uk (please title your email Consultation).

The information provided will be used for the analysis of responses received as part of the Consultation on the proposal and for the purpose of compiling recommendations for the Department for Education. Personal information will not be shared with any other sections of the Trust.