

Title: The City of Peterborough Academy, Special School
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Impact Assessment – Section 9 Academies Act Duty

1. Section 9 of the Academies Act 2010 places a duty upon the Secretary of State to take into account the likely impact of establishing the additional school on maintained schools, Academies, institutions within the further education sector and alternative provision in the area in which the additional school is (or is proposed to be) situated.
2. The City of Peterborough Special Academy will be a 90-place non-faith 4-18 special school located in Peterborough, due to open in September 2012. 80 places will be for children with ASD and 10 places will be in-year assessment. The school will eventually be co-located with a 1,100 place secondary school which is due to open in September 2013.
3. We have assessed the impact on the 6 schools within a 10-mile radius of the school site. Of the existing schools in the locality, it is our assessment that the biggest impact will be felt by the Phoenix School, but the impact will be minimal.
4. The Free School intends to cater for those pupils that are at the most academically able end of the ASD spectrum. By co-locating it with a mainstream secondary school it is the Trust's intention that these pupils will have opportunities to access the mainstream curriculum and integrate themselves in a structured way with mainstream pupils as far as possible, rather than act as a standalone institution.
5. The focus on those pupils that are at the most academically-able end of the spectrum should ensure that the loss of pupils is absorbed without threatening the viability of the special or maintained schools these pupils are currently attending.

Background

6. In September 2012 when the school opens it will have a capacity of up to 50 pupils from Reception to Year 7, including the 10 places for in-year assessment. When the school is fully operational from September 2018, it will be able to cater for up to 90 pupils.
7. The Trust behind the Free School, GDFT is an existing multi-Academy sponsor. The LA asked groups to come forward to deliver new schools to fulfil basic need and additional SEN provision and GDFT were appointed as the preferred bidders to apply to open this Free School.
8. While it is not yet possible to formally name the school in the child's statement, the number of expressions of interest received by the LA (as at 14 June) was 47.

Characteristics of the area

9. Peterborough is a city with population of around 178,000 people, which is expected to grow to above 200,000 by 2021. It is ethnically diverse with around 1 in 14 people having an Asian ethnic group and in recent years an increasing number of immigrants from Eastern Europe. The largest Asian ethnic group is the Pakistani population, with around 7,100 people with a Pakistani ethnic group living in Peterborough. The Office for National Statistics categorises Peterborough as a 'new and growing town'.

10. The City of Peterborough Special Academy is to be located in the Peterborough Central ward right in the middle of the City. There are a number of deprived areas across the City and national indices of deprivation rank Peterborough as the 90th most deprived (out of 354) local authority areas. 26% of the population of Peterborough are living in the 10% most deprived Super Output Areas in England, the area where the Free School will be located. The area also has a higher population density than found on average in the East of England and in England, at 4.8 people per hectare.

11. Educational standards in Peterborough with 49.4% of pupils achieving 5 A*-C GCSEs including English and Maths are below the national average. This has been the case for some time and whilst there are year on year improvements, progress remains slow. Two sponsored secondary Academies opened in Peterborough within the last year, taking over failing schools in the City. Attainment outcomes for pupils with special needs tell a similar story, results are well below the national average and also below neighbouring LAs such as Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough.

Special education needs provision in Peterborough

12. At 16% of the 0-19 population there is a higher proportion of children with a statement of special educational in Peterborough when compared to the national average of 13.4%. These children are placed in a range of settings, the provision for children with MLD and ASD is set out in this table:

| <i>Number of Pupils</i> | <i>Setting</i> |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>343</i> | <i>Mainstream school</i> |
| <i>265 with a statement of SEN</i> | <i>Mainstream and special schools</i> |
| <i>1 with a statement of SEN</i> | <i>Specialist out of city setting</i> |
| <i>2 with a statement of SEN</i> | <i>Out of City LA setting</i> |

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <i>4 with a statement of SEN</i> | <i>Independent mainstream setting</i> |
| <i>5</i> | <i>Home educated</i> |
| <i>1</i> | <i>Without a school place</i> |

13. Currently Peterborough schools are able to accommodate some MLD and ASD pupils through enhanced resource provision in mainstream schools, with approximately 60% of these statemented children being taught in mainstream schools and the remaining 40% in special schools inside and outside of the City and home educated. However, Peterborough does not have successful provision for academically-able or high performing ASD and Asperger's pupils. An independent report commissioned by the LA in August 2010 set out the following findings:

- There are insufficient places within 4 out of 5 existing special schools/PRUs to meet needs and deliver statutory responsibilities.
- No foundation stage or secondary higher ability Autism specific provision, although 265 pupils have both an ASD diagnosis and a statement of SEN within Peterborough.
- No KS1 / KS2 provision for children with statements for Behaviour, Emotional and Social Disorders (BESD).
- No speech and language provision for secondary pupils and patchy therapeutic provision.
- Insufficient assessment provision for those with high needs but no statement – e.g. new arrivals.

Catchment Area and Admissions

14. The City of Peterborough Special Academy (CPSA), like most special schools does not have a policy for prioritising admissions when over-subscribed. The Trust has however produced the following admissions statement:

The school will admit any pupil where the school is named in the Local Authority Statement of Special Educational Needs. Prior to the naming of the school in the Statement the LA will have consulted fully with the school in line with their statutory obligations. The school will provide the LA with the school profile outlining the needs of the pupils for which they are best able to provide and details about the organisation and curriculum offered.

15. The school does not have a defined catchment area and referrals will

either be made by Peterborough City Council or Cambridge County Council. Routinely for mainstream schools we would create a proxy catchment area which is created based on the distance travelled to secondary school by the majority of children in the LA (80%), which is 3.12 miles. As this distance from the permanent site only covered three other schools and the determining factor for pupils with special needs is actually time rather than distance, for the purposes of this assessment we have assessed the impact on the six closest schools, which covers a ten-mile radius.

16. There are two community special schools catering for pupils between 11-19, two all-through community special schools, one all-through independent special school and one 8-16 independent special school within 10 miles. There are no non-maintained special schools in the 10 mile radius.

Impact on other schools

17. All the special school head teachers have been consulted and are very supportive of the proposal to create an ASD/MLD specific school. They believe this provision is needed for children whose disability means they are unable to reach their full potential within a mainstream school environment.

18. Below is a discussion of the likely impact of the proposed school on the schools flagged as being most at risk from losing pupils, as well as, those which are poorly performing and operating with significant surplus capacity. The table below shows that of the six schools that were assessed, it is our view that opening the Free School will have a minimal impact on all these schools. A map showing the location of the Free School in relation to surrounding schools can be found at the end.

| School name | Distance (miles) from Free school | Number of pupils | School capacity | Ofsted Rating | Age range | Special Educational Needs priority |
|--------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|-----------------|---------------|-----------|---|
| Nene Gate | 0.37 | 37 | 55 | Satisfactory | 11-16 | BESD - Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulty |
| Marshfields School | 0.84 | 164 | Not known | Good | 11-19 | MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty |
| Heltwate School | 2.46 | 125 | Not known | Good | 4-16 | MLD - Moderate Learning Difficulty and SLD - Severe Learning Difficulty |
| The Phoenix School | 3.63 | 102 | Not known | Outstanding | 2-19 | ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|------|----|----|--------------------------------|------|---|
| Park House | 5.53 | 12 | 14 | Good with outstanding features | 6-19 | ASD - Autistic Spectrum Disorder |
| Sacrewell Lodge | 8.23 | 0 | 3 | NA | 8-16 | SpLD - Specific Learning Difficulty and ASD |

Nene Gate – Impact - Minimal

19. The Nene Gate special school is an 11-16 community special school which opened in January 2008. It is 0.37 miles from the site of the Free School. The school has capacity for 55 pupils but had a surplus of around 20% in 2010/11. The school was undersubscribed for entry 2011/12 with a shortfall of around 20%.

20. Nene Gate school caters for pupils with Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties so it is likely to lose some potential pupils and the head teacher is very supportive of the Free School. Last inspected in March 2011, it received an overall effectiveness rating of 'satisfactory'.

21. The school has an average point score of 24.7 for the end of Key Stage Two, lower than the LA average of 27.3 and lower than the national average of 27.6. A very small percentage of pupils undertook GCSEs and their results are not available as they have been suppressed due to the low number.

22. In their application the group included a letter of support from this school. Overall, it is our assessment that the impact of establishing the City of Peterborough Special Academy on the Nene Gate School would be minimal. They would not be adversely affected by the Special Free School in any way.

Marshfields School – Impact - Minimal

23. The Marshfields School is a popular 11-19 community special school which opened in May 2011, catering for pupils with MLD. It is 0.84 miles from the site of the Free School. The school has capacity for 159 pupils but is oversubscribed and is currently catering for 163 pupils.

24. The school has an average point score of 16.5 for the end of Key Stage Two, lower than the LA average of 27.3 and lower than the national average of 27.6. No pupils undertook GCSEs. Last inspected in May 2011, it received an overall effectiveness rating of 'good'.

25. Although the Free School may draw some pupils away from this school the impact on this school is likely to be minimal due to the fact it is a popular oversubscribed school, with a waiting list.

Heltwate School – Impact - Minimal

26. Heltwate School is a 4-16 community special school which opened in

the 1990s. It is the closest school offering reception provision located 2.46 miles from the site of the Free School. The school has capacity for 127 pupils. The school was undersubscribed for entry in 2011/12.

27. The school has an average point score of 11.7 for the end of Key Stage Two, lower than the LA average of 27.3 and lower than the national average of 27.6. No pupils undertook GCSEs.

28. Heltwate School caters for pupils with both Moderate and Severe Learning Difficulties so it is likely to lose some potential pupils. Last inspected in March 2011, it received an overall effectiveness rating of 'good'.

29. The type of need being catered for at this special school is different to the Free School. Our overall assessment, therefore, is that the establishment of the Free School is likely to have a minimal impact on Heltwate School.

The Phoenix School – Impact – Minimal

30. The Phoenix School is a 2-19 community special school which opened in September 2004. At 3.63 miles away from the site of the Free School, it is the next closest school offering reception provision and the closest offering ASD provision. The school has capacity for 75 pupils but is oversubscribed and is currently catering for 90 pupils.

31. The school has an average point score of 20.8 for the end of Key Stage Two, lower than the LA average of 27.3 and lower than the national average of 27.6. No pupils undertook GCSEs.

32. The school caters for pupils with ASD, but because it caters for those pupils that are less academically-able it is more likely that the Free School offer will complement this school. The school was last inspected in March 2009, it received an overall effectiveness rating of 'outstanding' and the Head teacher is very supportive of the Free School.

33. Our overall assessment, therefore, is that the establishment of the Free School is likely to have a minimal impact on the Phoenix School. Although the Free School may draw some pupils away from this school, it is oversubscribed, with a waiting list and the pupils being catered for are at the less academically-able end of the ASD spectrum.

Park House – Impact – Minimal

34. Park House School is a small 6-19 independent special school which opened in February 2005. It is 5.53 miles away from the site of the Free School. The school has capacity for 14 pupils. The school was undersubscribed for entry in 2011/12 with 12 applicants for 14 places, a shortfall of 15%.

35. This school caters specifically for those ASD pupils with severe needs. No attainment information was available. Last inspected in January 2012, it received an overall effectiveness rating of 'good with some outstanding features'.

36. Our overall assessment, is that the Free School is likely to have a minimal impact on the Park House School. Park House School is popular with parents and carers for pupils with severe needs. The type of need being catered for is very different to those that the Free School will attract.

Sacrewell Lodge – Impact – Minimal

37. Sacrewell Lodge School is a small 8-16 independent special school which opened in September 2010. It is 8.23 miles away from the site of the Free School and offers ASD provision. The school has capacity for 3 pupils and has no pupils on roll. No attainment information or an Ofsted report was available.

38. Due to the size of the school and lack of take up of places it is our overall assessment that the establishment of the Free School is likely to have a minimal impact on Sacrewell Lodge School.

Impact on post-16

39. Three of the six schools referred to above have sixth forms. Due to the type of need being catered for in this Free School it is our assessment that the relative lack of alternative, proven post-16 options means that the establishment of the Free School would only have a minimal impact on existing post-16 provision.

Impact on Primary Schools

40. The Free School does not have any feeder primaries and accepts children on the basis of referrals from the LA.

Local authority view

41. Peterborough City Council is fully supportive of this Free School. The local authority themselves identified the need for the special school and the secondary school with which it is to be co-located. The local authority conducted the procurement of the Academy Sponsor that will run this Free School. The local authority remains closely involved and are managing the build programme.

42. Peterborough City Council were asked to provide their views on the Free School proposal and responded to that invitation on 22 May 2012. In their response, the Council again stated their support for the Free Schools policy and acknowledged the potential for the City of Peterborough Special Academy to meet the increased need for places for pupils with ASD in the Peterborough Central ward.

Representations

43. No direct representations have been received by the Department but a public consultation has been carried out by the proposer group. The findings of the consultation showed there was strong support for the Free School amongst the stakeholders questioned. At no stage during the open evenings

and liaison with interested parties did the proposers encounter direct criticism or opposition to the City of Peterborough Special Academy Free School proposal.

Conclusion

44. To conclude, officials consider the likely impact of establishing the City of Peterborough Special Academy on other special schools, maintained schools, Academies and FE institutions in the area the school is to be marginal. The type of offer the Free School plans to provide means that all competing schools should remain viable, and any negative impact on particular institutions is outweighed by the positive impact that the school will have on parental choice. On this basis we conclude that it is appropriate for the Secretary of State to enter into the Funding Agreement with the GDFT.

Map of special schools in the Peterborough area

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