

Appendix A - Consultation Responses

Reynalds Cross Special School.

1. I would like to say I think this is a fantastic proposal. Not only will it benefit a wonderful school and the pupils who attend there, but also the youth centre itself in the form of the much needed repairs.

Reynalds cross provides an amazing learning environment for children with special educational needs and I think it will be fantastic if they are able to offer this to more children. As were aware they are currently at capacity and this will allow them to give more children a fantastic and catered learning opportunity.

2. More of a question than a view- we provide school medicals for pupils at Reynalds Cross where there is a medical and a speech terrapin room for this purpose. Will similar facilities be available at Coronation youth centre or will pupils have to travel?

3. I would fully support this proposal. Whilst I would always view mainstream education as the starting point for any placement consideration, the reality is that for some children and young people they will require a highly specialist provision in order to meet their needs. Having worked for SMBC since April 2018, I am aware that we are sending children and young people out of borough at huge financial and social cost due to a lack of in house provision. The implications of this position are psychological, social and economically counterproductive to meeting the needs of these complex children and young people. The current provision at Reynalds Cross is well developed and high quality. The proposed expansion is an efficient and pragmatic solution that will go some way to enable SMBC to develop SEND capacity in borough.

4. As a headteacher we are very excited about the prospect of acquiring the CYC. I can fully endorse , not only would it facilitate the older pupils at Reynalds Cross in a fantastic transition base for their next steps in life , but also to support revitalising the usage of the building for the community. Freeing up the space in school, would allow the school to work with the LA in providing spaces for those most vulnerable, many of which will be without a school placement. As a headteacher, it is very unfulfilling to receive referral after referral, where I feel we can meet the needs of the pupil but do not have the capacity in school . The impact on those pupils and the families is massive. However, to make the building viable the governors and myself , still need some additional questions answered, which I hope will be answered beginning of November

5. I am emailing to give my views on the proposal to expand Reynalds Cross Special School from September 2021. I think that expanding the school would have a positive impact on:

- the pupils who would attend the youth centre and their families as I discuss in the attached presentation.
- the pupils who are based in our current building and there will be more space and access to facilities.

- other SEN pupils in the borough as we will be able to accommodate more pupils.
- the local community - as we will be able to help provide community activities in the centre, we will use local facilities and we can continue to be positive role models for pupils with SEN in Solihull (we currently do work experience in Touchwood and, prior to COVID, could be seen in the town centre on Thursday mornings wearing Touchwood t-shirts and delivering memos, putting up displays etc).

6. Narrated presentation click here to view. https://solgrid365-my.sharepoint.com/:v/g/person/apearson_solgrid365_org_uk/EYn365F8HIBAtFgBZUe8q_gB6eUAXj0MRcwBheIKa5yXkg

7. Please accept my comments and views on the proposal of Reynalds Cross expansion from September 2021. It would make a real difference to Reynalds Cross School to be able to have an additional building as this will be able to offer further skills and opportunities to pupils and build on an already excellent 14-19 programme. It will further their opportunities for independent skills and act as a transition between college, further supporting those that will find leaving Reynalds Cross difficult. The additional space will enable pupils to access opportunities such as travel training, further independent living opportunities.

8. As a parent with a child at this school and also as a parent governor I think that this a great opportunity for the school and pupils and will provide a valuable transition for the pupils and their parents before the pupils at 18/19 leave what feels like a secure and safe environment for them. During this process I would like clarity on the provision for school transport, particularly in relation to the distance criteria that is applied.

9. The Governors at Reynalds Cross are very excited by the prospect of acquiring Coronation Youth Centre, although do have a number of questions and concerns. These are predominantly around the state of the building and the finances. In particular, we have concerns about the funding for the first year, as there will be a reduced number of pupils, meaning a smaller amount of income to manage the staffing and the upkeep of the building. Will there be any additional financial support for year 1? We also have questions around health provision to this site, not only School nurses, but also OT, SALT and physiotherapy. We believe there will be no school meals served and pupils will be preparing their own food which is fantastic for their life skills, but will there be financial compensation for pupils on free school meals? Ultimately, we can see the enormous benefits of pupils being able to stay in their own community and not have to go to out of borough placements. The impact of this can be detrimental. It will also benefit the LA in terms of the high cost of out of borough placements. It will also mean additional places for our Solihull pupils. This will mean so much to families. The opportunities for Reynalds Cross pupils will be huge: enabling the older pupils to have a safe transition from the current site in Olton to another site will help with the ultimate transition out of school and will also enable them to develop the independence and life skills they desperately need. The Youth Centre is perfectly placed to enable pupils to use public transport and the local shops. Once our questions have been answered and our concerns addressed, we hope to be able to have Coronation Youth Centre as part of the Reynalds Cross

provision and offer more places to pupils in Solihull and better opportunities for our older pupils.

10. The proposal for the expansion of Reynolds Cross school to Coronation Youth Centre is one that I fully support. As a teacher at Reynolds Cross the additional site would provide us with more appropriate facilities to support our 14-19 pupils, where the primary focus is getting them prepared for their futures in the community. Many pupils come to Reynolds Cross at a young age and stay in the same school building for the duration of their education with us, sometimes 15 years or more. Whilst this does have some benefits and whilst it is lovely to see our young people grow into young adults it is not preparing them fully for the future, for transitions and for life after Reynolds Cross. Many parents feel anxious about them leaving Reynolds Cross for the same reasons- it's all they have ever known. Not only would the new site offer a "change of scenery" for our older pupils, the community links are much better suited to promoting independence and life skills. The travel and retail opportunities in the area are much wider than the current site can offer. The space and facilities at Coronation Youth Centre are also more suitable with more of a social focus, and a home from home environment where pupils can practice their life skills such as cooking and cleaning. In addition, the proposal would create space at the current school site which is much needed. It could support our existing cohort who have increasingly complex needs and need more space to support their needs, or by creating spaces for more pupils within borough to attend.

11. As a parent, I would like fully support this proposal. The current Reynolds Cross site in Olton is bursting at the seams and the chance to acquire a site that would enable the Special school intake to increase and at the same time provide a fantastic opportunity to allow the older pupils to transition to a different site that is more fit for purpose and will allow them develop and adapt to the outside world when they eventually leave school. There will, no doubt, be many questions to consider but my thoughts at this early stage are around school transport provision to the new site as opposed to Reynolds Cross school. School free meals entitlements and how this will work if there is no standard kitchen environment. What on-site support will be provided in terms of school nursing, SaLT, physio and O/T?

12. As per my previous email and our conversation I can confirm the following issues should Reynolds Cross expansion take place to an off site provision for upper school children:

We currently provide on site support due the complex needs of the children in this school, these children usually continue through the school and continue to need nursing input; we do not have the resources to provide onsite support at a different site.

If we were to provide support on a remote site we would need nursing resource, equipment including set up of our IT systems and an identified room.

We have provided whole school training sessions virtually this year and that has gone well so we are likely to continue this going forwards but individual training and competency takes significant time and nursing contact. If pupils are moving from main Reynolds site to remote site as they progress through the school, unless staff

are rotating to this provisions there will be significant training needed for this staff group.

We currently have link learning disability nurses for each of the 4 named special schools and a link family support worker for the 2 special needs nurseries in Solihull. If there is to be provision on a different site we would need to consider if this link role can be provided here – at this time we would not have the staffing resources to facilitate this. This would feel inequitable of children and families can access this up to a certain point but then it is not available to them as they move up the school and to a new site.

Please can I ask that special school nursing staffing resources and nurse intervention requirements be considered.

Please can I ask that nursery provision for Reynolds Cross children also be considered at this time as service provision feels inadequate compared to children in the North of the borough.

Mill Lodge Primary School

1. I think this is an excellent proposal and a great school choice to support the local community as well as a Headteacher who will ensure its success. My only query is how it differs from the ARP at Dicken's Heath and if there is demand in the local community, does Dicken's Heath offer EYFS places for example or one focus on high order needs than the other? I hope this proposal goes through and is well received. Thank you for supporting those with autism and our community families that require this additional provision and support.

2. I am pleased to see some proposals to expand SEND provision in Solihull and agree with both proposals going ahead. Unfortunately, this still seems way under capacity for the number of places needed for children with SEND and only meets a couple of types of need, not SEMH; places for which are really lacking in Solihull. I would also like reassurances that Mill Lodge ARP will definitely accept KS1 children, as provision for our younger Solihull pupils is really limited – some specialist provision say they meet needs of children at this age but don't accept applications from younger pupils. Can something go into the criteria to ensure that this cannot happen for this ARP? Thank you for the opportunity to share our views and best of luck with moving forwards with these projects.

3. Regarding the above proposal, I think it is a great idea and a much-needed provision in the borough. I am just writing with a couple of questions however. In the consultation document it states, "The School is highly regarded for its inclusive practice and is fully compliant with AET National Standards." I would be interested to know who it is that assesses these standards? Are the current parents of children at the school with additional needs asked for their views? My second question is regarding the management of the provision. I understand that the ARP will be overseen by the Head Teacher of Mill Lodge. How will her role in this ARP impact the current school in terms of her time and will consideration be given into ensuring there are adequate senior staff available to deal with all issues that could arise and need her time?

Responses covering both proposals

1. This is just to say that both of your proposals have my wholehearted support. Good luck with them both.
2. These two proposals are very close to my heart as well as to where I live. I am a parent of three children. One of my children attends Mill Lodge Primary School and my eldest child has special needs. Mill Lodge is an ideal site to open an ARP giving new purpose to the old children's centre. Children with Autism can struggle with mainstream education and being able to be on a school site but in a more specialised provision would only enhance their education. By enabling children to stay within the locality of their home can mean that those children are able to form friendships with their peers and give parents a support network of other parents who are in the same boat as them. As a parent of a child with Autism it can feel very lonely and that you are constantly fighting a losing battle. By having other parents nearby that understand what you're going through (even though situations are not the same) you are able to get through life. Parents would be able to feel as though their child is having a 'normal' education whilst knowing that they are getting the more specialised support they need. Moving children into the ARP who are struggling with mainstream schooling is also massively beneficial to the school. Having a child with Autism in a classroom environment can be very distracting for both teachers and the other children in the room – meaning that teaching may not be as focussed for all of the children.

I'm a huge advocate for children having the schooling that they need – that does not mean that all Autistic children should be in mainstream education. Some children can thrive, but so many struggle. School is an environment that can be very difficult for a child with Autism.

My eldest has been in both mainstream and specialist provision in Solihull. Whilst his mainstream education worked for a while, as he got older he struggled. He left mainstream in Year 5 and moved to a specialist provision. Unfortunately for him this meant travelling for 1.5 hours every morning and afternoon as there were no spaces for him locally. Had we had the opportunity of an ARP this would have only made his, and my family's, life manageable. I would have been able to take him to school instead of putting him on a taxi every morning. When meetings were organised with professionals or EHCP reviews I wouldn't have had to clear a whole day to attend and ensure that other people were able to look after my other children.

By enabling children who need specialist provision to stay in their locality you are therefore enabling families to have a much better life. Living with a child with Autism is hard enough without having to factor in going to a school that isn't near your house; your child having friends, but not being able to play outside of school because they live too far away; not having your own network of friends because your child is 'difficult'.

The Reynolds Cross proposal is also a very positive move for the borough. By renovating the Coronation Youth Centre and repurposing it to increase numbers in the 14-19 year group will again enhance those young people's educational experience. By increasing the capacity that Reynolds Cross can cater for, more

children will get the specialist provision they so desperately need without travelling out of borough to get it.

As a local resident, and parent of two children in the youth section, having a refurbished centre that provided some kind of provision for the youth in this area would be hugely beneficial. My 14 year old wants to spend time with her friends after school but that would involve her 'hanging out' in either Shirley Park or Green Lane Park – neither of which are an option! Having a safe space for them to go where they can enjoy each other's company out of school would be amazing.

Specialist youth provision would also be hugely beneficial to my family. My 18 year old spends most of his time (as I'm sure many young people do now) playing computer games and talking to his friends via social media platforms. Whilst I understand that being able to utilise technology is hugely beneficial in this day and age it would be great for him to go to a youth group and socialise with peers. He did used to go to a specialist youth group in the north of the borough, but this relied on an adult transporting him and all his friends, yet again, lived no-where near.

Both of these proposals would create more jobs within the area. This is also of great interest to me as I am qualified in both early years and play-work; have worked in out of school provision and education and have experience with special needs (particularly Autism). I look forward to the new prospects that these bring to Shirley.