

To Staff, Parents, Carers, Guardians and other interested parties

17 October 2011

Dear Consultee

Consultation on the proposal to close the residential provision at St Lawrence School, Horncastle

As you may be aware the County Council undertook a review of special school provision in 2010 and published the Strategy for Special School and Mainstream Unit provision in March of this year.

As a part of this work a review of residential provision in Lincolnshire Special Schools was undertaken. The purpose of this review was to determine the needs of the authority in relation to residential education both now and in the future. The review confirmed that there is an ongoing need to provide 24 hour educational opportunities for a small number of children with complex medical and or physical needs and for those children with severe learning difficulties and associated communication difficulties. With this provision continuing to be made at St Francis and St Bernard's School as is currently the case.

In relation to the residential provision currently offered at St Lawrence School, the review identified that the number of pupils requiring residential provision as a requirement of their Statement of Special Educational Need had declined year on year, resulting in only a small number (8) of Key Stage 4 pupils in residence from September 2011. The local authority is of the view that they will not be requiring residential provision in the future for children and young people where their special educational needs are such that they are stated to attend St Lawrence School. Given the ages of the present young people with a residential statement at the school, the provision will be surplus to requirements from April 2013.

The school has sought to make use of the residential facilities by offering opportunities to children and young people to be resident as part of a tailored package of support with 8 young people currently taking up this offer. It is of the view of the authority that this additional support should be accessed in the individual young person's community or through an extended day offered by the school as is the case for children and young people with similar needs attending special schools elsewhere in the county.

These matters have been fully discussed with the school and at a meeting of the Governing Body on the 17th May 2011 the governors agreed to stop any future admissions to the residential provision with the intention of closing the residential provision in April 2013. This time frame has been used as it takes into account the age range of those currently in residence, the specific needs of each young person as described on their statements and the established strategy of a phased return to living at home in the final two terms of the young person attending the school. This decision was shared with parents in a letter dated the 25th May 2011 with the opportunity for parents to contact the school to discuss this proposal in relation to the specific needs of those young people currently in residence.

This letter marks the beginning of a 7 week consultation period which forms the first stage of a statutory process. The County Council would like to hear your views on this proposal prior to reaching a decision on the proposal to close the residential provision of St Lawrence School in April 2013. If you would like to comment on this proposal please use the form and contact details enclosed to respond by 2 December.

Yours sincerely



Matt Clayton
School Organisation Planning Manager
Property and Technology Management.

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