



Leicester
City Council

**MEETING OF THE CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION
SCRUTINY COMMISSION**

DATE: THURSDAY, 2 NOVEMBER 2023

TIME: 5:30 pm

**PLACE: Meeting Room G.01, Ground Floor, City Hall, 115 Charles
Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ**

Members of the Commission

Councillor Batool (Chair)

Councillor Cole (Vice-Chair)

Councillors Barnes, Haq, Joshi, Dr Moore, Pantling and Pickering

Standing Invitees (Non-Voting)

Youth Representatives

Jennifer Day

Janet McKenna

Teaching Unions representative

UNISON Branch Secretary

Members of the Commission are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business listed overleaf.

For the Monitoring Officer

Officer contacts:

Ed Brown (Scrutiny Policy Officer)

Katie Jordan (Democratic Support Officer),

Tel: 0116 454 6350, e-mail: committees@leicester.gov.uk

Leicester City Council, City Hall, 3rd Floor Granby Wing, 115 Charles Street, Leicester, LE1 1FZ

Information for members of the public

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You have the right to attend formal meetings such as Full Council, committee meetings, and Scrutiny Commissions and see copies of agendas and minutes.

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- ✓ to ensure that the sound on any device is fully muted and intrusive lighting avoided;
- ✓ where filming, to only focus on those people actively participating in the meeting;
- ✓ where filming, to (via the Chair of the meeting) ensure that those present are aware that they may be filmed and respect any requests to not be filmed.

Further information

If you have any queries about any of the above or the business to be discussed, please contact:
Katie Jordan, Democratic Support Officer on 0116 454 6350.
Alternatively, email committees@leicester.gov.uk, or call in at City Hall.

For Press Enquiries - please phone the **Communications Unit on 0116 454 4151.**



USEFUL ACRONYMS IN RELATION TO OFSTED AND EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES

(updated November 2015)

Acronym	Meaning
APS	Average Point Score: the average attainment of a group of pupils; points are assigned to levels or grades attained on tests.
ASYE	Assessed and Supported Year in Employment
C&YP	Children and Young People
CAMHS	Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
CFST	Children and Families Support Team
CICC	Children in Care Council
CIN	Children in Need
CLA	Children Looked After
CLASS	City of Leicester Association of Special Schools
COLGA	City of Leicester Governors Association
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CYPF	Children Young People and Families Division (Leicester City Council)
CYPP	Children and Young People's Plan
CYPS Scrutiny	Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission
DAS	Duty and Advice Service
DCS	Director of Children's Services
EAL	English as an Additional Language
EET	Education, Employment and Training
EHA	Early Help Assessment
EHCP	Education Health and Care Plan
EHP	Early Help Partnership
EHSS	Early Help Stay Safe
EIP	Education Improvement Partnership

ELG	Early Learning Goals: aspects measured at the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
EY	Early Years
EYFS	Early Years Foundation Stage: (0-5); assessed at age 5.
EYFSP	Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
FS	Foundation Stage: nursery and school Reception, ages 3-5; at start of Reception a child is assessed against the new national standard of 'expected' stage of development, then teacher assessment of Foundation Stage Profile areas of learning
FSM	Free School Meals
GCSE	General Certificate of Education
GLD	Good Level of Development
HMCI	Her Majesty's Chief Inspector
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information, Communication and Technology
IRO	Independent Reviewing Officer
JSNA	Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KS1	Key Stage 1: National Curriculum Years (NCYs) 1 and 2, ages 5-7; assessed at age 7.
KS2	Key Stage 2: NCYs 3, 4, 5, and 6, ages 7-11; assessed at age 11.
KS3	Key Stage 3: NCYs 7, 8 and 9, ages 11-14; no statutory assessment.
KS4	Key Stage 4: NCYs 10 and 11, ages 14-16; assessed at age 16.
KTC	Knowledge Transfer Centre
LA	Local Authority
LADO	Local Authority Designated Officer
LARP	Leicester Access to Resources Panel
LCCIB	Leicester City Council Improvement Board
LCT	Leicester Children's Trust
LDD	Learning Difficulty or Disability
LESP	Leicester Education Strategic Partnership
LLEs	Local Leaders of Education
LP	Leicester Partnership

LPP	Leicester Primary Partnership
LPS	Leicester Partnership School
LSCB	Leicester Safeguarding Children Board
LSOAs	Lower Super Output Areas
MACFA	Multi Agency Case File Audit
NCY	National Curriculum Year
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NLEs	National Leaders of Education
NLGs	National Leaders of Governance
OFSTED	Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills
PEPs	Personal Education Plans
PI	Performance Indicator
PVI	Private, Voluntary and Independent
QA	Quality Assurance
RAP	Resource Allocation Panel
RI	Requires Improvement
SA	Single Assessment
SALT	Speech and Language Therapy
SCR	Serious Case Review
SEN	Special Educational Needs
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
SIMS	Schools Information Management Systems
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
SLEs	Specialist Leaders of Education
SMT	Senior Management Team
SRE	Sex and Relationship Education
TBC	To be Confirmed
TFL	Tertiary Federation Leicester
TP	Teenage Pregnancy
UHL	University Hospitals Leicester
WIT	Whatever it Takes
YOS	Youth Offending Service

YPC	Young People's Council
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PUBLIC SESSION

AGENDA

FIRE / EMERGENCY EVACUATION

If the emergency alarm sounds, you must evacuate the building immediately by the nearest available fire exit and proceed to the area outside the Ramada Encore Hotel on Charles Street as directed by Democratic Services staff. Further instructions will then be given.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests they may have in the business to be discussed.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of the Children, Young People, and Education Scrutiny Commission held on 19th September 2023 are attached and Members are asked to confirm them as a correct record.

4. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer to report on the receipt of any petitions.

6. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS, AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer to report on any questions, representations, or statements of case received.

7. CALL-IN ASH FIELD

**Appendix A
(Pages 1 - 174)**

The Strategic Director for Social Care and Education submits a report to provide an update on the Executive decision taken by the Assistant City Mayor for Education on 28 September 2023 relating to withdrawing the funding for the Residential Provision at Ash Field Academy totalling over £400k per annum, with effect from 1 September 2024.

The Children, Young People, and Education Scrutiny Commission is recommended to either:

- a) Note the report without further comment or recommendation. *(If the report is noted the process continues and the call in will be considered at Council on 23 November 2023); or*
- b) Comment on the specific issues raised by the call-in. *(If comments are made the process continues and the comments and call in will be considered at Council on 23 November 2023); or*
- c) Resolve that the call-in be withdrawn *(If the committee wish for there to be no further action on the call-in, then they must actively withdraw it. If withdrawal is agreed the call-in process stops, the call-in will not be considered at Council on 23 November 2023 and the original decision takes immediate affect without amendment).*

8. HIGH NEEDS BLOCK - VERBAL UPDATE

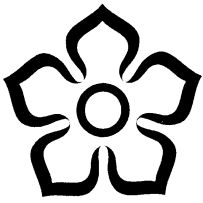
The Director for Social Care and Education will provide a verbal update to confirm the detail of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) report, due to go to the December meeting, and will also refer to undertaking some informal Scrutiny work on this matter.

9. WORK PROGRAMME

**Appendix B
(Pages 175 - 178)**

The Commission's Work Programme is attached for information and comment.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS



Leicester
City Council

Minutes of the Meeting of the
CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION SCRUTINY COMMISSION

Held: TUESDAY, 19 SEPTEMBER 2023 at 5:30 pm

P R E S E N T :

Councillor Batool (Chair)

Councillor Haq
Councillor Dr Moore

Councillor Pantling
Councillor Pickering

In Attendance

* * * * *

13. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Barnes, Martin Samuels and Jennifer Day.

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members were asked to declare any interests they may have had in the business to be discussed.

There were no declarations of interest.

15. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

AGREED:

That the minutes of the meeting of the Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission held on 11th July 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

16. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair announced Martin Samuels, Strategic Director Social Care and Education would be leaving Leicester City Council. On behalf of the

commission thanked him for his knowledge and support and wished him good luck for the future.

The next meeting date would now be held on 2nd November 2023.

17. PETITIONS

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

18. QUESTIONS, REPRESENTATIONS, AND STATEMENTS OF CASE

The Monitoring Officer reported that none had been received.

19. FAMILY HUBS

The Strategic Director of Social Care and Education submitted a report updating the commission on the progress towards the Family Hubs model in line with the Family Hubs and Start for Life programme funded by the DfE. The focus was being placed on developing an integrated network of support both online and at physical locations across Leicester in line with the programme's 178 minimum expectations.

The report and the following points were noted:

- 75 Local Authorities had been selected by the DfE and DHSC as being eligible to receive a share of £300m funding. The 75 LAs that were provided with funding, were the ones with the highest deprivation levels.
- 5 Local Authorities had been chosen in the East Midlands:
 - Leicester City
 - Derby City
 - Lincolnshire
 - Northamptonshire
 - Nottingham
- Additional Authorities were given the opportunity to apply for a smaller amount of funding, which Leicestershire County were successful in that bid.
- The purpose of family hubs were intended to provide a central access point to enable families to receive support and advice from an increased number of touchpoints, across the city. This includes a number of main buildings explicitly named as Family Hubs, with co-located teams of specialist services and a network of buildings, that may already be accessed by families and are accessible to families. There would also be a Virtual Family Hub, via a website.
- There are 178 minimum expectations attached to the funding.
- Family Hubs funding has to be evidenced to developing and delivering the start to life offer which covers children from conception to 2 years old, 1001 critical days.
- The Family Hub offers support, advice and services for people during pregnancy and those with children from 0-19 or up to 25 for those with

special educational needs and disabilities.

- The Family Hub Network would bring partners from across all sectors (health, social care, leisure) to work together to provide joined up local services for children, young people and families. This localised offer would improve access to services and improve the connections between families and professionals, services and providers.
- Work would be completed together for the benefit of children, young people and families in Leicester, helping them to build trusting and supportive relationships and meeting their needs in a way that is accessible to them.
- The plan was initially released to LCC on 8 February 2023, which realised the funding for year one. The final revised version was submitted on 25 August 2023 and the policy would be confirmed in the next few weeks.

The Chair thanked the team for their presentation and the hard work that had been put into the Family Hubs Programme, to overcome challenges and frustrations faced with the guidance and contact provided by the DfE.

In response to Members questions it was noted that:

- Family Hubs were a new beginning to ensure LCCs own workforce would be integral with training.
- The Family Hubs were there to replace and improve the existing services, to give a universal offering of support that would be accessible to everyone.
- Training was being offered across the teams internal workforce, including all of the Early Help Practitioners across the 12 children, Young People And Family Centres.
- As part of the sustainability of Family Hubs, would be for volunteers to be trained to be able to help with support needs.
- The five key family hub sites wont all be one of the existing children, Young People And Family Centres.
- The 178 expectations were decided by the Central Government. The requirements from LCC are to provide services and improve outcomes and support within the community.
- Work would continue with schools across the City, to look at how we can provide training with the kind of professionals within the school setting. Keep in touch meetings were happening with head teachers to talk to them about family hubs and what it would mean for families and schools.
- Children, Young People and Family centres would now be funded out of the general fund.
- Two parent champions would attend the Family Hubs Programme Board, to assure their voices are represented.
- People within the community would receive training, to be able to engage within their communities to understand the needs which will support the planning and skills required within the communities.
- The team had been working really hard to ensure a balance between meeting family's needs, with positive contributions and ensuring the

Family Hub Programmes requirements were met.

AGREED:

1. The commission notes the report and thanks officers for the presentation.
2. Family Hubs to stay on the work programme and bring an update to the commission in 6 months' time.
3. Comments and suggestions made by Members be noted.

20. CHILDREN AND SOCIAL CARE

The new Director of Childrens Social Care, Damian Elcock introduced himself to the Commission and talked to Members about the service and his previous experience.

The Chair thanked Damian for joining the meeting and introducing himself.

21. UNACCOMPANIED ASYLUM-SEEKING CHILDREN (UASC)

The Head of Corporate Parenting and The Strategic Director of Social Care and Education provided a verbal update on the current situation on Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC).

The following update was provided:

- In Leicester today there was currently 48 UASC, 3 referrals were being dealt with by National Transfer Scheme (NTS). 2 more were due to arrive on Cycle 39. Making the total 53 children.
- The background communities were Afghan, Iranian, Sudanese, Syrian and Egyptian.
- 47 children were male and 1 female.
- 10 children were in, in-house and IFA foster care. 2 were in a residential. 36 were in supported living, as the majority of arrivals were 16+.
- There had been 6 spontaneous arrivals.
- 11 had been placed in hotels as adults and claimed to be children on arrival in the City.
- Local Authorities with high numbers of UASC, notably Kent and some London Boroughs were transferring UASC to all regions across the UK on a rota and take turns to receive UASC.
- The UASC rota started on 1 July 2016 and was voluntary. It was made mandatory on 23 November 2021.
- Frequency of cycles varied according to the weather & pressure on SE Local authorities.
- Improved weather in August, saw 5 cycles in 3 weeks.
- The quota for Leicester City Council for UASC was 86 under based on 0.1% of the children population.
- Options were being explored to expand the placement sufficiency in the provision.

- The Home Office does fund part of our placements and care system, however it does not fund the total cost of UASC.
- For young people who come through the National Transfer Scheme, we are guaranteed finances up to their 18th Birthday.
- If young peoples cases were under review with the Home Office and an asylum claim has not been completed, the Home Office can refuse to fund LCC.

As part of the discussions it was noted that, at the Strategic Migration Board, Members and Officers from Local Authorities would come together, alongside the Home Office team to specifically look at development around UASC Accommodation and how collectively work can be done to improve the system that isn't working correctly.

AGREED:

1. The Chair to follow up by email with questions.
2. Members to be kept informed of any key issues.
3. Comments to be taken on board.

22. AN UPDATE ON RAAC IN LEICESTER CITY SCHOOLS

The Strategic Director of City Development and Neighbourhood Services presented a presentation and gave a verbal update to the Commission on the latest position of RAAC in Leicester City Schools. It was noted that:

- RAAC was extensively used in building across the 1950s and 1980s in post war construction.
- RAAC was originally intended to have a 30 year life span.
- The codes of practice associated with the design of RAAC from the 1950s to 1980s were CP114 Reinforced Concrete in Buildings and CP116 Structural Use of Precast Concrete.
- The building codes recommended minimum end bearings of only 45mm for roof panels and 60mm for floor panels.
- Structural concerns of RAAC had been known about, the concerns around RAAC first emerged more seriously in 2018 which focused on a management style approach and to review it periodically.
- Since 2018 the guidance continued to evolve. In December 2022 the DfE changed the guidance significantly and introduced a 5 stage process.
- In April 2023 the Institute of Engineers (IStructE) issued guidance on being more definitive in relation to end bearings. It was stated that any end bearings below 75mm presented unacceptable structural risk to buildings.
- The first school in the UK to be assessed under the new guidance was Mayflower Primary School. LCC were the first Local Authority to get involved with RAAC and move the situation forward in terms of

information that was given to the DfE and look more closely at the ramifications of the IStructE Guidance.

- An analysis of every single school was completed based on age of construction type.
- Focus visits had been conducted between LCC and the DfE. Any school closures or agreements were agreed between LCC and the DfE technical advisor to ensure a joint approach with the education body.
- Mayflower School was having a temporary school built, this was being completed by the DfE. LCC were supporting with help from the Planning and Estates provision.
- The two schools affected in Leicester are Mayflower Primary School and Parks Primary School.
- Work has been quickly to avoid an impact on children's education. Parks Primary were operating from two local council owned buildings.
- LCC were meeting weekly with the DfE to ensure that the education settings is right for children and staff.
- Parks Primary will have to have a temporary school arrangement, which was being put into place. They will also require a full rebuild.
- RAAC isn't exclusive to schools. 1500 analysis checks had been completed on LCC buildings and 100 site visits. Only 1 building was being looked at more closely with intrusive surveys, all other buildings had been confirmed as not having RAAC.
- All LCC housing stock had also been confirmed as non RAAC.

The following was noted from discussions and questions from Members:

- RAAC can sometimes structurally look similar to other concrete panels. This was the case at Willowbrook School, which is an academy in Leicester and had a number of intrusive surveys which determined it wasn't RAAC.
- The mean average at Mayflower School was 52mm. The survey went through every panel centrally and by the end every ceiling in the school had been pulled down.
- Mayflower School was an unexpected event and within 48 hours we a face to face provision was put into place.
- LCC pushed the DfE and advised they did not want the children to be located over several sites and was able to grant permission for a temporary school to be built in one location.
- The building that was due to have a more intrusive survey, the RAAC was only located in an isolated area, this had been closed off and the rest of the building was operational.
- One special school had concerns and a survey was completed. The surveys were handled in a different way, to cause minimal disruption to the children attending.

AGREED:

Members had been reassured that possible rack issues in schools were being addressed and all schools in the city have the requirements for the safety standards.

23. WORK PROGRAMME

Members of the Commission were invited to consider content of the work programme and were invited to make suggestions for additions as appropriate to be brought to future meetings.

24. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.34pm.

Appendix A

CALL-IN OF EXECUTIVE DECISION
Review of Ash Field Academy's Residential Provision
funded from the Education budget

CHILDREN, YOUNG PEOPLE AND EDUCATION
SCRUTINY COMMISSION

– 2 November 2023

COUNCIL – 23 November 2023

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Jacob Mann
- Author contact details: Jacob.Mann@leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: V1

1. Summary

An Executive decision taken by the Assistant City Mayor for Education on 28 September 2023 relating to withdrawing the funding for the Residential Provision at Ash Field Academy totalling over £400k per annum, with effect from 1 September 2024 has been the subject of a seven-member call-in under the procedures at Rule 12 of Part 4D, City Mayor and Executive Procedure Rules, of the Council's Constitution.

The procedure rules state that a scrutiny committee or any five councillors may request formally that the decision be called-in for a further review by giving notice in writing to the Monitoring Officer within five working days of the decision.

The seven Councillors who signed the call in were: Councillor Bajaj (Proposer), Councillor Haq (Seconder), Councillor Gregg, Councillor Kennedy-Lount, Councillor Kitterick, Councillor Porter, and Councillor Sahu.

2. Recommended actions/decision

The Children, Young People, and Education Scrutiny Commission is recommended to either:

- a) Note the report without further comment or recommendation. *(If the report is noted the process continues and the call in will be considered at Council on 23 November 2023);* or
- b) Comment on the specific issues raised by the call-in. *(If comments are made the process continues and the comments and call in will be considered at Council on 23 November 2023);* or
- c) Resolve that the call-in be withdrawn *(If the committee wish for there to be no further action on the call-in, then they must actively withdraw it. If withdrawal is agreed the call-in process stops, the call-in will not be considered at Council on 23 November 2023 and the original decision takes immediate affect without amendment).*

Council is recommended to either:

- a) Support the Assistant City Mayor's decision, and thus confirming the decision with immediate effect; or
- b) Recommend a different decision to the Assistant City Mayor. (The original decision will still stand, unless the Assistant City Mayor takes a further decision to amend the original.)

3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

The decision was considered at the Children, Young People, and Education Scrutiny Commission on two occasions on:

25 October 2022

11 July 2023

4. Background and options with supporting evidence

The Executive Decision Report and Decision Notice are attached at Appendix A and Appendix B.

5. Detailed report

The call-in submitted to the Monitoring Officer was in the following terms:

“We the undersigned wish to call in the Cabinet Decision to withdraw the funding for the Residential Provision at Ash Field Academy, with effect from 1 September 2024. This Call In is in order to examine the impact of the decision on the children, their carers and families.”

The Monitoring Officer has confirmed that the call-in satisfies the requirements of the procedure rules and it has, therefore, proceeded as per the process set out at Rule 12 of Part 4D, City Mayor and Executive Procedure Rules of the Council’s Constitution.

Where a call-in has been made, officers are to take no further legally binding action, unless the circumstances of Rule 12 (f) are fulfilled, and the matter shall be referred to a meeting of the full Council. Prior to this it shall be referred to the relevant Scrutiny Committee if one is programmed or a special scrutiny committee if one is convened.

The call-in may however be withdrawn if:

The relevant scrutiny committee/commission makes a resolution to withdraw; or

The sponsor and seconder of the call-in inform the Monitoring Officer that they wish the call-in to be withdrawn.

Following consideration of a call-in by full Council, the original decision will be deemed to be revived in its entirety. Any agreement by the decision maker to change the original decision will require a further formal Executive Decision.

6. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

6.1 Financial implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from the call-in in addition to those in the decision report.

Kirsty Cowell, Head of Finance, Ext. 37 2377

6.2 Legal implications

The legal implications arising from the call-in are explained in sections 2 and 5 above

Kamal Adataia, Monitoring Officer, Extn 371401

6.3 Equalities implications

There are no comments in addition to those in the decision report.

Kalvaran Sandhu, Equalities Manager, Extn 376344

6.4 Climate Emergency implications

There are no further climate emergency implications to those provided in the decision report.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 372284

6.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None

7. Background information and other papers:

None

8. Summary of appendices:

Appendix A Executive Decision Report – Ash Field Academy Residential Provision dated 28 September 2023

Appendix B Decision Notice - Ash Field Academy Residential Provision dated 28 September 2023

9. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)?

No

RECORD OF DECISION BY CITY MAYOR OR INDIVIDUAL EXECUTIVE MEMBER

1.	DECISION TITLE	Review of Ash Field Academy's Residential Provision funded from the Education budget
2.	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	None
3.	DATE OF DECISION	28 September 2023
4.	DECISION MAKER	Assistant City Mayor for Education
5.	DECISION TAKEN	<p>1) To withdraw the funding for the Residential Provision at Ash Field Academy totalling over £400k per annum, with effect from 1 September 2024.</p> <p>2) To agree that officers will work in partnership with both special schools that have residential provision (Ashfield and Millgate), the NHS and Adult Social Care to look at sustainable options for the residential element in both schools.</p> <p>3) To ask that officers work alongside scrutiny to carry out some focussed work in respect of the high-needs block.</p>
6.	REASON FOR DECISION	<p>The Residential Provision at Ash Field Academy is funded from the High Needs Block grant. The grant is paid by the Department for Education for the provision of education for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.</p> <p>The High Needs Block grant, cannot be used for non-educational activities, including residential schemes.</p> <p>The High Needs Block grant was overspent by £4.6m for 2022/23 and the Local Authority is required to bring the overspend back into budget.</p> <p>Whilst the Residential Provision is noted to be Outstanding by Ofsted and provides social learning benefits for children and young people with disabilities. The service is only available to 35 to 40 children and young people attending Ash Field Academy and these activities can be provided during the normal 25-hour school week.</p> <p>An extensive consultation exercise has taken place and details can be found in the associated report.</p>
7.	<p>a) KEY DECISION Y/N?</p> <p>b) If yes, was it published 5 clear days in advance? y/n</p>	No
8.	OPTIONS CONSIDERED	Option 1. Do nothing - The residential provision continues to put additional strain on the High Needs Block funding, at a time when the Council must develop a recovery plan, detailing how the local authority is going to bring the overspend back into

**RECORD OF DECISION BY CITY MAYOR OR INDIVIDUAL
EXECUTIVE MEMBER**

		<p>budget. The continued funding of the provision is an inappropriate use of the High Needs Block funding. Also, only a small number of pupils attending Ash Field Academy can access the residential provision.</p> <p>Option 2. Continue to fund the Ash Field Academy Residential Provision, via the LA General Fund, and to widen access to pupils beyond the school - The Council's General Fund is overspent and cannot fund a non-statutory service. Concerns have also been raised that the option would reduce access to pupils attending Ash Field Academy and the school may not be able to support external pupils and there may be registration implications.</p> <p>Option 3. Remove the funding with effect from 1 September 2024 – This is the preferred option.</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>DEADLINE FOR CALL-IN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Members of a Scrutiny Commission or any 5 Councillors can ask for the decision to be called-in. • Notification of Call-In with reasons must be made to the Monitoring Officer 	<p>5 October 2023</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>SIGNATURE OF DECISION MAKER (City Mayor or where delegated by the City Mayor, name of Executive Member)</p>	<p><i>Via Dempster</i></p>

Executive Decision Report Leicester City Council

Review of Ash Field Academy's Residential Provision

Date of meeting: 26 September 2023

Lead member: Cllr Vi Dempster

Lead director/officer: Martin Samuels

Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
- Report author: Tracie Rees
- Author contact details: Tracie.Rees@Leicester.gov.uk
- Report version number: 1.4

1. Summary

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to provide an overview of the findings of a consultation exercise, proposing to end funding of over £400k per annum for the Residential Provision at Ash Field Academy from 1 September 2024 (Appendix 1).
- 1.2. Ash Field Academy is a special school, providing education to children and young people between the age of 4 to 19 years with additional learning, communication and sensory needs ranging from profound and multiple learning / physical disabilities to moderate learning disabilities. All pupils attending the school have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). Both the school and its residential provision is rated as outstanding by OFSTED, and the quality of support offered to the children and young people is not in question.
- 1.3. The provision is currently funded via the High Needs Block (HNB), which overspent by £4.6m in 2022/23. The HNB is intended solely for provision of education and should not be spent on non-educational activities.
- 1.4. A formal consultation was launched on 26 September 2022 and closed on 9 January 2023. Council Officers met with pupils, their families / carers, staff and their union representatives during December 2022 and January 2023. A total of 378 respondents replied via the Council's Citizen Space platform (Appendices 2a and 2b). Information and testimonials were also submitted by some pupils.
- 1.5. A formal petition was also submitted, with a total of 1261 valid signatures (1809 not valid), triggering a formal discussion with senior officers, which was discussed at the Children's, Young Persons & Education Scrutiny Commission meeting on 11 July 2023.
- 1.6. Of the 378 responses submitted:
 - 94% did not support the proposal
 - 3% were in support of the proposal
 - 2% partially supported the proposal
 - 1% did not respond to the question

The key concerns and the Council's responses are detailed at paragraph 5.4.

- 1.7. Despite the objections, the consultation exercise found little justification for funding the residential provision from the High Needs Block, and the social learning benefits offered by the provision could be delivered within the normal 25-hour school week (as it is in other schools). The provision is used by 35 to 45 (22-

28%) of the 160 pupils attending the school, which demonstrates the academy can meet the needs of its other children and young people within the normal 25-hour school week.

- 1.8. The cost of the provision equates to approximately £10k per pupil, per year, which is in addition to the monies paid by the local authority for the education provision at the school. It should be noted that as of 31 August 2022, the Academy had £2.7m of revenue reserves, nearly 46% of its annual revenue budget of £5.98m. It may be open to the Academy to draw on this funding to continue operating the provision.
- 1.9. Therefore, it is recommended that the funding for the service is withdrawn from September 2024 as detailed at Option 3, and that the council should work with the academy, to explore the potential for alternative funding, other than from the council for the provision, although no guarantee can be made. It should also be noted that the Council is looking to cease the funding, but any decision to close the facility will be for Ash Field Academy.

2. Recommended actions/decision

- 2.1. The City Mayor & Executive is recommended to:
 - a) Agree to withdrawing the funding to Ash Field Academy with effect 1 September 2024 for its Residential Provision.
 - b) Agree for officers to work with Ash Field Academy to look at alternative funding or operational opportunities to mitigate the removal of the funding.
 - c) It is also recommended the offer of support is extended to Millgate School, who's residential funding was removed 2 years ago, to determine if there are join opportunities for the provision of a wider respite offer for children and young people with neurodiverse issues, as well as those with a physical disability.

3. Scrutiny / stakeholder engagement

- 3.1. Details of the communications and engagement for the consultation plan and activities are detailed at Appendix 3.
- 3.2. The Academy governors, pupils, families / carers and staff and their union representatives have been engaged throughout the review process and were informed prior to the launch of the consultation in September 2022, which had been delayed due to the death of HM The Queen.
- 3.3. A discussion took place at the Schools' Forum on 21 September 2022 and involved a presentation of the proposal for the consultation.

- 3.4. A report was taken to Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission on 25 October 2022, where an extensive discussion took place. The conclusions from the Commission were;
- a) noting the content of the report,
 - b) extension of the consultation period,
 - c) comments and suggestions from the commission are fed into the consultation,
 - d) the commission object to the withdrawal of funding in principle from Ash Field Academy and
 - e) officers engage further to explore expanding their residential provision to take in other children from across the city, and if the school decides to expand their provision the council to assist finding alternative funding sources and provide funding through its general fund or other services funds such as the NHS.
- 3.5. A meeting was held with school staff, parents and pupils on 7 December 2022 to discuss the proposals of the consultation and make representations to the council regarding the provision (see appendix 4 and 5a, 5b and 5c for full details). A further meeting was held on 6 January 2023 with Cllr Cutkelvin in attendance to meet staff, pupils and parents.
- 3.6. City of Leicester Association of Special Schools (CLASS) and the Parent Carer forum were contacted and informed about the consultation.
- 3.7. The Department of Education requested details on the consultation, which were shared in November 2022.
- 3.8. A further meeting took place with the Children, Young People & Education Scrutiny Commission on 11 July 2023 to share the consultation findings. The commissioning noted the concerns and requested that officers of the Council provide support to Ash Field Academy to look at alternative funding opportunities.

4. Background and options with supporting evidence

- 4.1. Executive approval was given for a formal consultation exercise to take place, proposing to cease the funding for Ash Field Academy's Residential Provision from the High Needs Block (HNB) with effect from 1 September 2024. The HNB is ring fenced for the provision of education and with the increased number of children and young people being assessed as needing an Educational Health and Care Plan (EHCP) priority needs to be given to the education of these children.
- 4.2. The High Needs Block for the local authority was overspent by £4.6m in 2022/23, resulting in the LA's overall DSG (dedicated schools grant) reserve being £6m as at 31 March 2023. The local authority is required to submit a deficit recovery plan to the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) by September 2023 detailing how the Council will eradicate the now recurring annual overspend from the High Needs Block and the LA's overall DSG deficit position.

- 4.3. Extensive consultation and engagement took place between September 2022 and January 2023, and the feedback has been collated and analysed to inform this report and recommendations for the City Mayor / Executive to consider.
- 4.4. Based on the details and information gathered 3 options have been considered, as detailed at paragraph 5.15. Option 3 is the preferred option, which seeks to remove the funding from the High Needs Block with 1 September 2024.

5. Detailed report

- 5.1. This report summaries the findings of the consultation, key themes identified and the council's response, and how the Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been taken into consideration. It then provides some comparator information of pupils accessing residential support from Ash Field, and other special schools at Nether Hall and Westgate, with similar disabilities before drawing to a conclusion.

Consultation findings summary

- 5.2. The consultation findings report (Appendix 2a) confirmed there were 378 respondents to the consultation. Of those responding 356 (94%) were not in support of the proposal, 7 (2%) partially supported the proposal, and 12 (3%) support the proposal, 3 (0.8%) did not answer the question. All individual comments can be found in Appendix 2b.
- 5.3. The key themes identified in the feedback received have been categorised as follows:
1. The provision is educational
 2. It's immoral to close the provision
 3. There is no alternative provision available
 4. The provision is supportive and provides respite
 5. There is the need to explore alternative funding for the provision
 6. The provision is cost effective in the long term
 7. It is a social opportunity for the pupils at Ash Field Academy
 8. Concern over staff redundancies
 9. A recognition of the value of the provision

- 5.4 In response to each of these points above:

1. The provision is educational

- 5.4.1. The education aspects of Education, Health, and Care Plans (EHCPs) are written for the identified education need, and provision is required to be delivered during the 25 hours of the normal school week. It should be noted that there are children with similar disabilities who are attending other special schools that do not have a residential provision and they are able to deliver these requirements of their EHCPs within the 25-hour school week. Also, there no teaching staff allocated to the Ash Field residential provision.
- 5.4.2. In the Children and Families Act 2014 (annex 3 of the Code of Practice) certain types of healthcare or social care support may be considered as educational and

training. This requirement would need to be recorded in Section F of a child's EHCP, meaning the local authority would be required to ensure this provision was available and this would be funded from the High Needs Block. None of the children or young people attending Ash Field Academy have this requirement documented in their EHCPs.

- 5.4.3. Recommendations around provision within EHCPs, are made by a range of professional including Health, Social Care, the school and Educational Psychologist, as part of the annual review process. The final decisions on EHCPs are made by the Resource Allocation Panel, made of multi-disciplinary professionals.

2. It's immoral to close the provision

- 5.4.4. Whilst we recognise the provision is Ofsted rated outstanding, the conditions on how the high need block grant is spent are clearly outlined by the government, within the Children's and Families Act 2014. Leicester City Council, despite a range of interventions to date to manage the HNB expenditure continues to experience statutory demand for high needs support exceeding the grant resources available. Therefore there is a requirement to look at all other options to reduce this overspend and resultant deficit.

3. There is no alternative provision

- 5.4.5. An alternative to the provision at Ash Field Academy exists and is available for pupils through the Disabled Children's Service (DCS). This alternative service is managed by Leicester City Council and provides short break/ respite provision or offers a personal budget through which families can buy the package of support that best suits their needs. There are currently 283 children and young people in receipt of such support, which is based on a statutory assessment and provided with a funded package for social care support.

- 5.4.6. Included in the 283, there are approximately 30 who attend Barnes Heath House on a regular basis for overnight respite. The average stay is 2 nights per month. However, priority is given to children who are looked after who have complex needs, and this does impact on the number of children and young people who can receive respite support at that facility. There is currently a strategic review in progress regarding short breaks within the council, and the proposal to cease funding for Ash Field Residential Provision only in September 2024 allows the council time to have completed the review and implemented any changes needed.

4. The provision is supportive and provides respite

- 5.4.7. It is fully recognised that the residential provision provided at Ash Field Academy is supportive and provides respite, as stated by staff and parents throughout the engagement and consultation. However, the High Needs Block is specifically ringfenced for education provision. Therefore, should there be social care or health needs of the pupils, this would need to be funded through alternative routes, either the local authority's General Fund or via the NHS.

5. There is the need to explore alternative funding

5.4.8. There is potential for alternative funding for the provision to be identified from other sources, be it from the NHS or through a funded package of social care support, and it is recommended that officers help facilitate this, working alongside the school. There is the option for the school to look at funding through raising charitable funds themselves and seeking parental contributions, where possible.

6. The provision is cost effective in the long term

5.4.9. It was suggested from many contributors throughout the engagement and consultation process that the young people accessing the service have greater independence and therefore fewer needs from social care, although there is no evidence to show this will be the case.

Additionally, the provision was seen as preventative in terms of mental health, wellbeing and preparing for adulthood. However, these skills can and should be included within the curriculum for all pupils, as they are in other Special Schools.

7. It is a social opportunity for pupils at Ash Field Academy

5.4.10. It is recognised the provision offers social opportunity for pupils who would not normally have access to community or social activities due to their complex health conditions, as stated by several pupils and parents, in a safe environment with trained staff. Whilst the Council recognises the social benefits the residential provision provides to 35 to 45 of the 160 pupils attending the academy, the school could choose to offer after school clubs and groups to enable its children and young people to experience social activities.

A residential review also took place at Millgate School in 2021, with similar issues raised. The final recommendation identified that whilst the provision was excellent, it was not educational as described in section F of the pupils EHCPs, and an agreement was reached to withdraw the funding. The Trust has since reviewed its budgets and identified an approach to continue operating the provision by offering social care residential placements on a longer-term basis.

8. Concern over staff redundancies

5.4.11. The consultation feedback identified staff redundancies as a concern. It should be noted that it would be a choice of the school whether they chose to close the provision rather than a direct decision by the council.

9. Recognition of the value of the provision

5.4.12. Whilst it has been recognised throughout the engagement and consultation process that the residential provision at Ash Field Academy is noted as outstanding by Ofsted. The provision costs approximately £400k per annum and only supports 35 to 45 (22-28%) of the 160 pupils attending the school.

It should be noted that there are over 1,000 pupils based in Special Schools across the City, who do not have access to this type of provision, and whilst it would be good to offer this to all pupils with special educational needs and

disabilities, unfortunately, the funding is not available, and priority needs to be given to the provision of education.

Consultation meetings feedback

5.5. Meetings were held with pupils, families / carers, staff, and their union representatives in December 2022, and again in January 2023, see Appendices 4 (local authority records), 5a, 5b and 5c (Ash Field Academy records). A range of themes from these discussions included:

- Opportunity for pupils to gain further skills and socialise in a safe environment with their peers. Also, that they have learnt so much from accessing the provision.
- It takes young people with disabilities longer to learn than can be done in the standard 25-hour school week, such that this provision offers extra support to learn.
- Provides families with valuable respite, and the risk potential of family break downs, if it was not available.
- The provision is educational for the pupils and if the provision closes there would be further costs for social care.
- Wanting to understand the reasons for the proposed withdrawal of the funding.
- That it is an outstanding facility and therefore why change it?
- The impact pupils felt it would have on them if it was not available to them and to future pupils.
- The perception from staff that references to residential provision have been removed from section F of EHCPs.

5.6. The questions and points raised during the discussions are noted within the appendices, however the council wish to be clear that the use of residential provision to support children and young people in educational provision is rare. For most pupils, the type of skills gained in this provision can be supported within the usual school day. In exceptional cases where residential provision is recommended it is predominantly due to social care needs or a full-time arrangement (38- or 52-week provision) due to the high complexity of need. This would therefore not apply to pupils attending Ash Field Residential provision as this a temporary part-time provision, should their needs change recommendations can be made by professionals at annual review meetings.

5.7. Additional emails and letters were received in response to the consultation and can be found in appendix 6. A health professional also submitted a Safeguarding Policy which can be found on Ash Field Academy School website [safeguarding-and-child-protection-policy-nov-22-rd-sept-23.pdf \(primarysite-produced.s3.amazonaws.com\)](#) , in reference to providing a safety net in terms of social care. There is no evidence to demonstrate the residential provision is used for children and young people who have a statutory social care need for this type of support.

Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission (October 2022)

5.8. A report was taken to the commission to discuss the proposals on 25 October, leading to extensive discussions, and representations made by a parent of a former pupil and a staff union member. Details of the meeting and discussion can be found here [Agenda for Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission on Tuesday, 25 October 2022, 5:30 pm \(leicester.gov.uk\)](https://www.leicester.gov.uk/agenda-for-children-young-people-and-education-scrutiny-commission-on-tuesday-25-october-2022-5-30-pm). The Commission moved to object to the funding being withdrawn and requested officers engage with Ash Field Academy to explore expanding their residential provision to take children from across the city and if the school decided to expand their provision the council to assist funding alternative funding sources and provide funding through its general fund or other services such as the NHS. Officers have engaged with the Head Teacher and Governors, but they have refused to consider other funding options until after a decision is made about the funding.

Comparator Information (Ash Field / Nether Hall and Westgate)

5.9. Table 1. below shows the number of pupils from Ash Field, Nether Hall and Westgate who access the short breaks services, accessing either Direct Payments or Barnes Health Provision. For reference the identified health conditions of those pupils is also included. This shows similar conditions across both Ash Field, Nether Hall and Westgate. Of the 20 pupils who access Barnes Heath from the 3 schools above, 8 of those pupils also access the residential provision at the Ash Field Academy.

Table1: Breakdown by school

School	Direct Payment	Barnes Health	Health Conditions
Ash Field Academy (160 pupils)	48	7	Physical, Profound & Multiple learning Disabilities, Visual Impairment, Medical, Severe Learning Difficulties, Language Delays, General Learning Difficulties, Epilepsy, Downs Syndrome.
Nether Hall School (132 pupils)	37	6	Physical, Profound & Multiple learning Disabilities, Visual Impairment, Medical, Severe Learning Difficulties, Language Delay, General Learning Difficulties, Autism.
Westgate School (180 pupils)	43	8	Medical Epilepsy, Language Delay, General Learning Difficulties, Communication, Interaction, Autism.

Conclusion

5.10. This report has sought to address whether the £400k used to fund Ash Field Academy is the correct use of the High Needs Block (HNB) funding grant, for education provision. It has been acknowledged throughout the review and subsequent consultation the Ash Field Academy's Residential Provision, is an Outstanding provision as recognised by OFSTED and continues to be highly valued by pupils and parents who access this facility.

- 5.11. As stated above the HNB is part of the DSG from the government with clear criteria on how it can be spent. This budget is ring-fenced and therefore no additional monies can be added to or transferred out and used in other areas. Like many other local authorities nationally Leicester City's HNB is in significant deficit on an annual basis, however there are clear expectations on the local authority from the DfE to develop a recovery plan to ensure this deficit is eliminated. The LA have already taken significant steps to address the deficit and this has required an in-depth review of all areas of spend in the HNB, resulting in funding reviews, including in the areas of Special School funding, Millgate Residential Provision and Mainstream School top-up funding.
- 5.12. The review of Ash Field Academy's Residential Provision was not to ascertain whether it was a good provision, but to understand if the funding of this provision meets the conditions of the HNB grant. Educational provision as defined in the grant, is "that outlined in Section F of an EHCP", as identified by professionals. The grant conditions are clear that any funding to meet health or social care needs should be funded by relevant agencies.
- 5.13. It has been identified that there are pupils with similar needs who are attending other Special Schools within the City, these pupils have their preparing for adulthood needs met, through the 25 hour a week curriculum. Their only access to residential provision would be through the Council's Barnes Heath House provision. Additionally, of the 160 pupils in Ash Field Academy only 35 to 45 access the residential provision, and all other pupils within the school have these needs met within the school day.
- 5.14. In conclusion, the recommendation of the review is that whilst it is an outstanding provision, it is not a requirement in section F of the EHCP of any of the pupils attending the academy, therefore, it should not be funded from the High Needs Block grant.

5.15. Summary of the options with preferred option

Option 1: Do nothing and continue to fund the provision from the High Needs Block

Advantages

- Provision remains open to the pupils at Ash Field School.
- Potentially less demand for the local authorities Disabled Children's Service.

Disadvantages

- Provision continues to put additional strain on the High Needs Block funding, at a time when the Council must develop a recovery plan, detailing how the local authority is going to bring the overspend back into budget.
- Continues the inappropriate use of the High Needs Block funding.
- There are only a small number of pupils with EHCPs in the city and those pupils attending the school who can access the residential provision

Option 2: Continue to fund the Ash Field Academy provision, via the LA general funds, and to widen access to pupils beyond the school

Advantages

- Provision remains open to the pupils at Ash Field School
- Expansion of short break provision availability in the City
- Potentially less demand for the local authorities Disabled Children's Service
- Equality of provision availability for all pupils with EHCPs in the City

Disadvantages

- The general fund is overspent and cannot fund a non-statutory service
- Reduced access to current pupils from Ash Field Academy
- Unclear if Ash Field Academy can support/accept external pupils and registration implications

Option 3: (Preferred) Cease funding the provision from September 2024, and the LA to work with the school to find alternative funding as the school has indicated it would be interested in doing so.

Advantages

- Reduction on the High Needs Block grant overspend and the inappropriate use of the grant.
- Equality of provision availability for all pupils with EHCPs in the City

Disadvantages

- Potential increase in demand for Disabled Children's Service short break service.
- If the Academy chose to close the provision because of the funding ceasing, there may be some staff redundancies.

5.16. Option 3 is the preferred option, ceasing the funding for the residential provision from the High Needs Block. If the academy ceases the provision this would be their choice whether or not to close or reduce the provision.

6. Financial, legal, equalities, climate emergency and other implications

6.1 Financial implications

6.1.1 Once a decision has been made the LA will need to seek further approval from the DfE to reduce Ash Field's HNB funding for the residential provision.

6.1.2 Whilst approval may be required the DfE are also emphasising the need for LAs to ensure that HNB funding is being used appropriately as one element in the LA's efforts to reduce their in year and cumulative DSG (dedicated school grant) deficits. As per the HNB operational guidance, DSG HNB funding can only be used to meet the educational costs of pupils. Some children and young people may

require residential educational placements, particularly those with the most complex needs, which are full time in nature and under these circumstances this would be paid for by the HNB.

- 6.1.3 The LA has been incurring significant in year deficits in the HNB funding, as a result of rising demand for EHC plans outstripping the additional funding provided by the DfE. The deficit between grant allocation and expenditure in 2022/23 is £4.6m (£6.1m in 2021/22) which means the LA's cumulative deficit on its DSG reserves is now £6m at the end of March 2023.
- 6.1.4 Government has extended the legislation they put in place in 2020 which means that LA's DSG deficits cannot be funded from LA's general funds to prevent council tax services being cut to fund the education budget. The legislation runs out in March 2026 and the DfE have indicated that there will be *no* further extension. The DfE have said that *'it is crucial during this extension, we all play our part. Alongside the SEND improvement plan, the DfE will support all LAs to look at what positive action can be taken now to bring high needs costs under control, to bring down DSG deficits and to prepare for wider SEND system reform... which would address the unintended consequences of the 2014 reforms.'*
- 6.1.5 This means that pressure is being applied to the LA to eliminate the HNB deficits and the LA is currently drafting a management recovery plan which is a requirement for all LAs with a DSG deficit.
- 6.1.6 As outlined in the report the LA has taken steps already to reduce the cost of HNB provision (special school funding review including the phasing out of non-educational residential provision at Millgate, review of SEND support to mainstream schools together with expansion of in-house capacity to avoid high-cost independent sector placements).
- 6.1.7 The preferred proposal in this report to end HNB funding for this provision would make a further significant impact on reducing our underlying HNB deficit.
- 6.1.8 The general fund budget for the disabled children's service is already being used to ensure that the LA is meeting its statutory obligations for the cohort of children and young people with needs. There is considerable pressure on this service as demand has increased in recent years. The LA's severe overall financial position has been outlined and emphasised in the 2023/24 budget report. The LA is not in a position to expand and pay from the general fund further provision to the extent that it is non-statutory.
- 6.1.9 For context, as at 31 August 2022 Ash Field academy trust had £2.73m of revenue reserves which is 45.6% of their annual revenue of £5.98m. Our in-house special schools equivalent percentages are considerably lower at 1.7%, 3.6%, 9.2% and -35.6%.

Martin Judson, Head of Finance

6.2 Legal implications

Part 3 of the Children and Families Act 2014 sets out the duties placed on Local Authorities for children and young people in England with SEND. High Needs Block (HNB) funding provides the funding for support packages for an individual with special educational needs in a range of settings. The purpose of the HNB is to ensure equality and equity of opportunity for all children and young people irrespective of their need.

It should be noted that some of the decision-making around SEN provision, particularly the level of provision and type of placement to be provided under an EHCP, can be determined by the SEND Tribunal regardless of the authority's position. If educational provision is specified in an EHCP, the local authority is under a duty to secure that. It is therefore important to ensure that residential provision is not specified in any individual EHCPs.

The preferred option highlights a potential saving. When taking decisions, the Council needs to be mindful of the welfare of the children and young people who may be affected and not simply seeking to address financial concerns. The decision to cease the funding from the HNB does not necessarily mean the residential provision will close; the future of the provision is a decision for the Academy.

Julia Slipper, Principal Lawyer (Education & Employment), tel: ext 6855

6.3 Equalities implications

6.3.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, public authorities have a Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which means that, in carrying out their functions, they have a statutory duty to pay due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act, to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't, and to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't.

6.3.2 Protected Characteristics under the Equality Act 2010 are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

6.3.3 The report recommends ceasing funding the residential provision from September 2024. This has been covered in the Equality Impact Assessment (Appendix 7) on the residential provision and that is part of a wider review of the operating model.

6.3.4 There is potential that if funding is removed and alternative provision/funding is not found, it will impact on disabled children and their families that are currently using the residential provision, and this is likely to be a disproportionate negative impact for the protected characteristics of age and disability, particularly on those children with complex needs. It is therefore important to review the Equality Impact Assessment to monitor with any potential risks identified and consider if any mitigations are possible.

6.3.5 The report also references a potential mitigation of using Disabled Children’s Service short break service but recognises the increased demand on the service may not be sustainable and that many children may not be eligible for the service. As such it must be recognised some direct support may need to be given to the children and their families to adjust, should the residential placements cease if funding is removed.

Kalvaran Sandhu, Equalities Manager, Ext 6344

6.4 Climate Emergency implications

6.4.1 There are no significant climate emergency implications directly associated with this report.

Aidan Davis, Sustainability Officer, Ext 37 2284

6.5 Other implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

None

7. Background information and other papers:

8. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1: Ash Field Academy Consultation Details

Appendix 2a: Ash Field Academy Consultation Findings Report

Appendix 2b: Ash Field Academy Consultation anonymised comments

Appendix 3: Ash Field Academy Consultation: Communications Plan

Appendix 4: Record of questions, answers, and statements from 7 December 2022 engagement meeting – LA Record

Appendix 5a, b & c, Staff, Parents and Pupils consultation meeting 7 December 2022 – Ashfield Record

Appendix 6: Ash Field Academy Residential Provision consultation emails received

Appendix 7: Equality Impact Assessment

9. Is this a private report (If so, please indicate the reasons and state why it is not in the public interest to be dealt with publicly)? No

10. Is this a “key decision”? If so, why? No

Ash Field Academy Residential Provision

Overview

Ash Field Academy provides education and support to children and young people between the ages of 4 and 19 years of age, who have complex health and medical needs. All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

The school has capacity for 160 pupils and currently provides overnight residential provision for up to 18 pupils per night, four nights per week during term time. Annually, 35-45 (22-28%) of Ash Field Academy's pupils are accessing the residential provision. Many of the pupils accessing the service have profound and multiple disabilities and require specialist care and facilities to support them.

Whilst staying in the residential facilities, pupils are involved in various leisure activities and have opportunities to practice their independence skills. Staying in the residential provision and the activities included are free of charge to pupils and parents.

None of the school's pupils have an EHCP stating residential provision is required, and no teaching staff are employed to deliver the service. However, there are a number of non-teaching staff employed by the Academy to deliver support and care for the pupils during their stay in the residential provision.

Ash Field Academy's residential provision is currently funded by the High Needs Block (HNB) grant which Leicester City Council receives from the Government to deliver educational services. The HNB grant is not intended for non-educational activities or services.

It is acknowledged the academy provides an outstanding residential service for its pupils and is highly regarded by all who use or are involved in the facility, not least the pupils and their parents/guardians. The service isn't accessed by all pupils at the academy and is not available to children with SEND who aren't pupils of the academy, of which there are over 1,000 across the city.

The council does have a legal duty to provide short breaks / respite support for some eligible children and young people with SEND, however this is supported through the council's Disabled Children's Service.

The purpose of this consultation is to invite views on whether the council should cease HNB funding for the residential provision from August 2024. The HNB is intended for educational services for SEND pupils across the city.

It should be noted that at this stage no decision has been made regarding withdrawal of funding for the residential facility.

If the post-consultation decision is to no longer fund the residential provision with the HNB grant, the council would work with Ash Field Academy to identify potential alternative funding.

About you

Are you responding as....

Please select only one item

- Pupil at Ash Field Academy who uses the school's residential support services
- Pupil at Ash Field Academy who does not use the school's residential support services
- Parent of a pupil at Ash Field Academy who uses the school's residential support services
- Parent of a pupil at Ash Field Academy who does not use the school's residential support services
- Member of Ash Field Academy residential staff
- Member of Ash Field Academy school staff or governors
- Member of staff or governor at another school
- Parent of a pupil who attends another school
- Member of Leicester City Council staff
- Health professional
- Local resident
- Other

If Other, please specify

What is your postcode?

Please note: we collect postcode data to gain a better understanding of which parts of the city / county respond to our consultations. We cannot identify individual properties or addresses from this information.

The proposal

It is proposed to cease HNB funding for the residential provision from August 2024. The HNB is intended for educational services for SEND pupils across the city.

It should be noted that at this stage no decision has been made regarding withdrawal of funding for the residential facility.

If the post-consultation decision is to no longer fund the residential provision with the HNB grant, the council would work with Ash Field Academy to identify potential alternative funding.

Do you agree with the proposal to cease HNB funding for Ash Field Academy's residential provision?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Partially

If you disagree with the proposal (or only partially agree), please indicate why.

Supporting documentation

Please upload any relevant documentation to support your comments

Equality monitoring

The information you provide in this final section of the questionnaire will be kept in accordance with terms of current Data Protection legislation and will only be used for the purpose of monitoring.

Your details will not be passed on to any other individual, organisation or group. Leicester City Council is the data controller for the information on this form for the purposes of current Data Protection legislation.

Ethnic background:

Please select only one item

- Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi
- Asian or Asian British: Indian
- Asian or Asian British: Pakistani
- Asian or Asian British: Any other Asian background
- Black or Black British: African
- Black or Black British: Caribbean
- Black or Black British: Somali
- Black or Black British: Any other Black background
- Chinese
- Chinese: Any other Chinese background
- Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Asian
- Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Black African
- Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Black Caribbean
- Dual/Multiple Heritage: Any other heritage background
- White: British
- White: European
- White: Irish
- White: Any other White background
- Other ethnic group: Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller
- Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group
- Prefer not to say

If you said your ethnic group was one of the 'Other' categories, please tell us what this is:

Age:

Please select only one item

- under 18
- 18 - 25
- 26 - 35
- 36 - 45
- 46 - 55
- 56 - 65
- 66+
- Prefer not to say

Sexual orientation. Do you consider yourself to be ...

Please select only one item

- Bisexual
- Gay / lesbian
- Heterosexual / straight
- Prefer not to say
- Other (please specify)

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities and has lasted or is likely to last for at least 12 months. People with HIV, cancer, multiple sclerosis (MS) and severe disfigurement are also covered by the Equality Act.

Do you consider yourself to be a disabled person?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If you have answered **'Yes'** to the above, please state the type of impairment that applies to you. People may experience more than one type of impairment, in which case you may need to tick more than one box. If none of the categories apply, please tick 'Other' and state the type of impairment.

Please select all that apply

- A long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy
- A mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder
- A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches
- A social / communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or Asperger's syndrome / other autistic spectrum disorder
- A specific learning difficulty or disability such as Down's syndrome, dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D
- Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses
- Deaf or have a hearing impairment
- An impairment, health condition or learning difference that is not listed above (specify if you wish)
- Prefer not to say
- Other

If Other, please say

How would you define your religion or belief?

Please select only one item

- Atheist
- Bahai
- Buddhist
- Christian
- Hindu
- Jain
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Sikh
- No religion
- Prefer not to say
- Other

If Other, please specify

What is your sex?

Please select only one item

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say

Is your gender identity the same as your sex registered at birth?

Please select only one item

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

If No, what term do you use to identify your gender? (leave blank if prefer not to say)

Appendix 1

Consultation Findings on Proposed Reduction in High Needs Block Funding for Ash Field Academy's Residential Provision

1.0 Introduction

- 1.01 A Statutory Consultation was carried out by Leicester City Council (“the Council”) between 26 September 2022 and 9 January 2023 to seek views on whether the council should cease funding for the residential provision at Ash Field Academy with effect from September 2024.
- 1.02 The consultation was originally intended to close in December 2022, however, further to the Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission on 25 October 2022, it was proposed and agreed the consultation regarding the continuation of High Needs Block funding for Ash Field Academy's Residential be extended to January 9th, 2023. This was to allow a full 12 weeks for respondents to submit their views since the Ash Field Academy Residential Review Report (<https://protect-eu.mimecast.com/s/Be4LC36ONtGRqYrSq2dFr?domain=consultations.leicester.gov.uk>) was published in the public domain. This report included further detailed information regarding the review process, findings and recommendations which may have been of assistance to respondents.
- 1.03 Ash Field Academy provides an Outstanding Residential provision for its pupils and is highly regarded by all who use or are involved in the facility, not least the pupils and their parents/guardians. However, this service is not accessed by all pupils of the academy and is not available to other young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), who aren't pupils of the academy. Annually, approximately 35-45 (22-28%) of Ash Field Academy's circa 160 pupils access the Residential provision.
- 1.04 The Residential provision is currently funded by the High Needs Block grant which the Council receives from the Government as allocated by the Department for Education. The High Needs Block funding is designated by Government to be for the provision of education only and should not be used to fund any non-educational activities, except in exceptional circumstances. Unfortunately, the Residential provision at Ash Field Academy cannot be considered as an exceptional case.
- 1.05 The Council does have a legal duty to provide short breaks / respite support for eligible children and young people with SEND, which is supported through the Council's Disabled Children's Service.

Appendix 1

2.0 Methodology

- 2.01 Email communications were sent out at the start of the consultation to the provision's key stakeholders to advise them of the consultation having opened, its purpose and to provide detail on how to access it online. Additionally, typed correspondence was provided to Ash Field Academy suitable for them to cascade to parents, staff and governors as was requested.
- 2.02 The consultation was available to complete online on the council website at <https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/ash-field-academy>
- 2.03 Various board/group members and organisations were engaged with, to inform about the consultation. These organisations represent the interests of people who are supported by Ash Field Academy's residential provision:

Group/Organisation Name
Parents/ carers of special school pupils
Ash Field Academy Staff and Parents
Trade Unions
City Mayor / executive
Ward councillors
Special schools (via CLASS - City of Leicester Association of Special Schools)
Parent Carer Forum
Schools Forum
Other stakeholders <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SEND Information, Advice and Support Service (SENDIASS)• School Governors
Media (Leicester Mercury)
Leicester City Council Social Care & Education Staff
Leicester City Council staff
Leicester City Residents

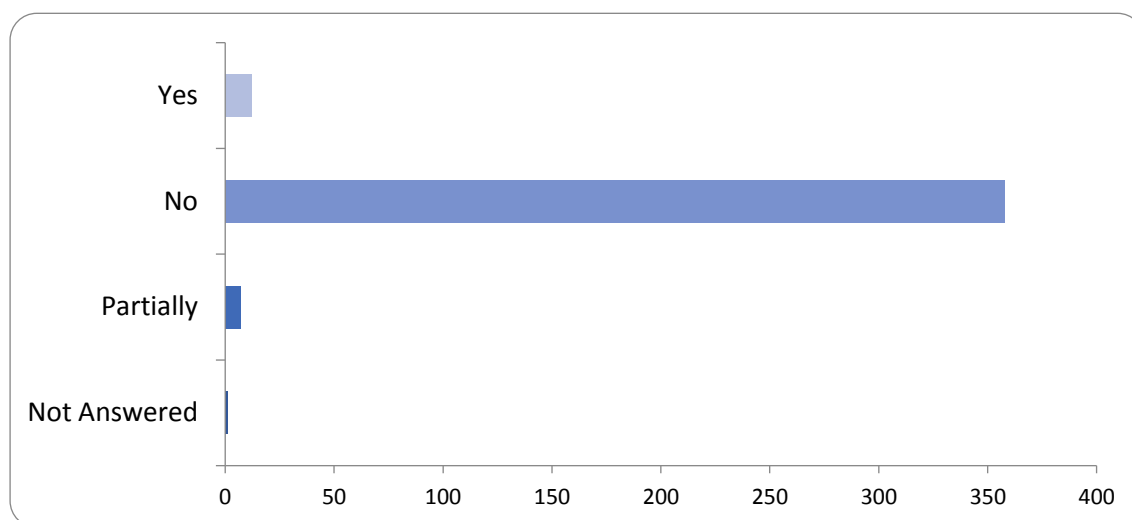
The full stakeholder engagement plan can be found in Appendix 5.

- 2.04 A discussion took place at the schools Forum on 21 September 2022 to present the proposal for the consultation.
- 2.05 Further communications were circulated to stakeholders in light of the consultation end date being extended to 9 January 2023, along with links to the published Ash Field Academy Residential Review Report. Anyone who had already submitted a response ahead of the report being published was able to respond again.
- 2.06 School staff, parents and pupils were met by officers of the Council on 7 December 2022 to discuss the proposals of the consultation. A further meeting was held on 6 January 2023 with Cllr Cutkelvin in attendance too to meet staff, pupils and parents.

Appendix 1

3.0 Consultation Survey Findings

- 3.01 A total of 378 responses were received in response to the consultation survey.
- 3.02 Of these, 94% disagreed with the proposal. 2% partially agreed, 3% agreed and 1% didn't answer.



- 3.03 The majority (29%) of respondents identified themselves as “Other”, or “Local Resident” (21%). 82% of those identifying as “Other” gave a post code beginning “LE” and many stated they were friends or relatives of current/past pupils/staff, had professional links to education/social care, were past members of staff at the academy.

Identifier	Number of Responses	Percentage of responses (%)
Other	108	29
Local resident	79	21
Member of Ash Field Academy school staff or governors	33	9
Member of staff or governor at another school	32	8
Health professional	25	7
Parent of a pupil at Ash Field Academy who uses the school's residential support services	20	5
Parent of a pupil who attends another school	19	5
Pupil at Ash Field Academy who uses the school's residential support services	18	5
Member of Leicester City Council staff	16	4

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Not Answered	12	3
Parent of a pupil at Ash Field Academy who does not use the school's residential support services	7	2
Member of Ash Field Academy residential staff	6	2
Pupil at Ash Field Academy who does not use the school's residential support services	3	1

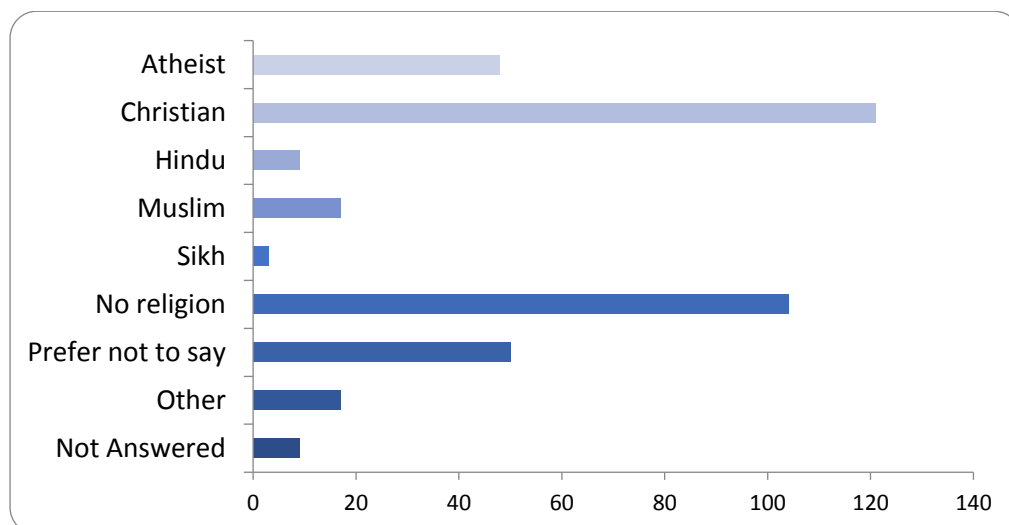
3.04 The majority of responses were submitted by people who identified as White British (74%) and some ethnicities were not represented within the responses gathered. This would indicate that the views of people who are not White British are not so well represented. Currently 63% of pupils accessing the residential provision are White British and of the total population of pupils attending the academy, 37% are White British. Less than 50% of Leicester residents identify as White British.

Ethnicity	Total	Percent
Asian or Asian British: Bangladeshi	0	0.00%
Asian or Asian British: Indian	37	9.79%
Asian or Asian British: Pakistani	0	0.00%
Asian or Asian British: Any other Asian background	1	0.26%
Black or Black British: African	1	0.26%
Black or Black British: Caribbean	5	1.32%
Black or Black British: Somali	0	0.00%
Black or Black British: Any other Black background	0	0.00%
Chinese	0	0.00%
Chinese: Any other Chinese background	0	0.00%
Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Asian	2	0.53%
Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Black African	0	0.00%
Dual/Multiple Heritage: White & Black Caribbean	5	1.32%
Dual/Multiple Heritage: Any other heritage background	3	0.79%
White: British	278	73.54%
White: European	2	0.53%
White: Irish	6	1.59%
White: Any other White background	1	0.26%
Other ethnic group: Gypsy/Romany/Irish Traveller	0	0.00%
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	3	0.79%
Prefer not to say	30	7.94%
Not Answered	4	1.06%

3.05 The majority of respondents identified as “Christian” (32%), having “No religion” (27%) or as “Atheist” (13%). Over 45% of the pupils accessing the residential provision are recorded as following no religion. There are slightly more pupils in the school as a whole identifying as Muslim/Islamic. This would

Appendix 1

indicate that the responses received are not proportionally representative of the different religious groups affected by the proposal.



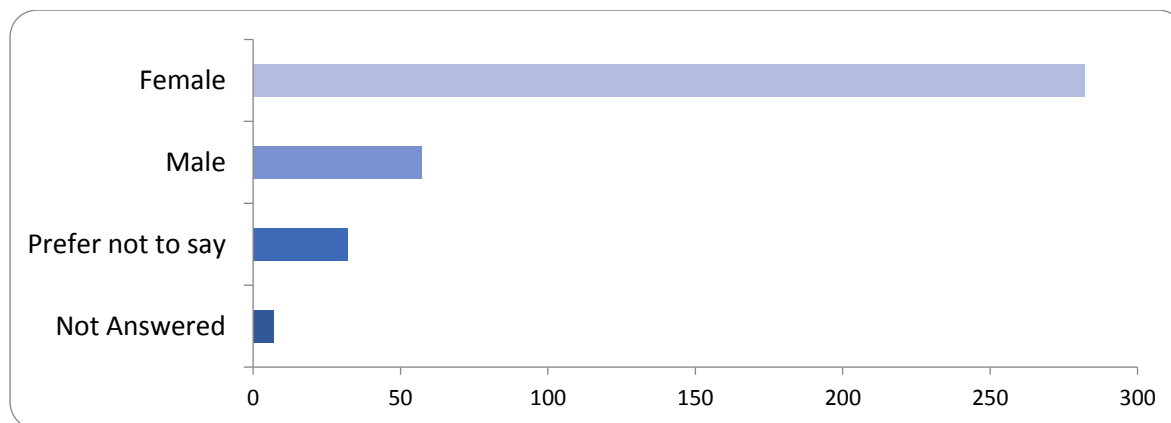
3.06 15% of respondents identified as disabled. Of these, the range of types of disabilities identified are given below and it is evident some respondents identified as having multiple disabilities:

Type of disability	Total	Percent
A long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy	16	4.23%
A mental health difficulty, such as depression, schizophrenia or anxiety disorder	25	6.61%
A physical impairment or mobility issues, such as difficulty using your arms or using a wheelchair or crutches	23	6.08%
A social / communication impairment such as a speech and language impairment or Asperger's syndrome / other autistic spectrum disorder	13	3.44%
A specific learning difficulty or disability such as Down's syndrome, dyslexia, dyspraxia or AD(H)D	14	3.70%
Blind or have a visual impairment uncorrected by glasses	5	1.32%
Deaf or have a hearing impairment	5	1.32%
An impairment, health condition or learning difference that is not listed above (specify if you wish)	9	2.38%
Prefer not to say	10	2.65%
Other	7	1.85%
Not Answered	305	80.69%

3.07 75% of respondents identified as female. 60% of respondents said their gender was the same as at birth, 39% did not state whether their gender was the same as at birth or not, 1% said their gender had changed. Approximately

Appendix 1

60% of pupils accessing the residential provision are male, which is proportionally representative of the school as a whole. The views of males are less well represented in the results of this consultation. It was not unexpected to receive a higher proportion of responses from females however given the propensity for females to take on caring responsibilities and given the higher rates of female education staff.



3.08 Most responses were received from working aged adults between 26 and 55 years of age. Thus would indicate that the views of children and young people and those of older people are less well represented.

Age bracket	Total	Percent
under 18	15	3.97%
18 – 25	20	5.29%
26 – 35	70	18.52%
36 – 45	93	24.60%
46 – 55	82	21.69%
56 – 65	54	14.29%
66+	16	4.23%
Prefer not to say	24	6.35%
Not Answered	4	1.06%

3.09 The survey elicited responses from people of various sexual orientation.

Sexual orientation	Total	Percent
Bisexual	12	3.17%
Gay / lesbian	9	2.38%
Heterosexual / straight	286	75.66%
Prefer not to say	53	14.02%
Other (please specify)	14	3.70%
Not Answered	4	1.06%

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3.10 87% of respondents included verbatim comment to support their view on the proposal. Comments received were categorised into several recurring themes, as shown below.

Theme of Comments	Percentage of comments reflecting theme (%)
The provision is educational	38.67
The provision provides support/respice	31.47
The provision provides social opportunities	19.2
Non-specific, generally positive about the provision	14.4
No Comment	13.07
It is morally right to offer this provision	11.47
There is no/few alternatives to this provision	11.73
The provision is cost effective in the long term	5.87
Alternative funding should be found	3.47
Concern for staff/risk of redundancies	1.6

3.11 Of the 378 responses received, 4 responses appeared to come from just 2 people. In one instance, it appeared the person responding replicated their original response and added more detail to their verbatim comment. In the other instance, it appeared that the same person responded twice but with differing views on whether they agreed or disagreed with the proposal. Given the low number of possible duplicate responses (2) in this analysis of 378 responses in total, these will have had little impact on the overall results and therefore no effort has been made to exclude them.

Do you agree with the proposal to cease HNB funding for Ash Field Academy's residential provision? - proposal agreement	Themes of Comments	If you disagree with the proposal (or only partially agree), please indicate why. - proposal comment	Supporting documentation
No	Supportive/Respite	Hi, my name is [REDACTED] and I am a student who goes to the Residential Department twice a week. I just wanted to write this	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	Residential is a place where you can learn independence, self confidence and communication skills. Its a chance to see friends	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	The residential setting at Ash Field is a huge resource for many families. It allows children to spend social time, that they may not	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	<p>I'm a single parent to two disabled children that both have nuro muscular disease both on ventilators at night both in wheelchairs I have two hands My eldest stays in resi for 2 reasons</p> <p>One he gets to spend time with friends doing social things and learning life skills.</p> <p>he can't go to our parks in the area he is incapable of running or playing football like his peers</p> <p>friends Hes made at Ashfield they just get it they know his needs he can't sleep over at friends' houses for the equipment that he needs to take with him bipap machine cough assist assist machine suction machine and meds every for hours this is X2 as my daughter needs all the above</p> <p>Residential give him the life skills that I may have missed when</p>	Not Answered
No	No alternative, Supportive/Respite	I personally struggled with respite care for my boys who both have an EHCP and diagnosis of Autism.	Not Answered

No	No alternative, Staff concern, Supportive/Respite	<p>Dear council.</p> <p>My name is [REDACTED], I want to speak to you to tell you that the residential part of Ash field academy is at serious risk of shutting down, the department is a second home for us in school, you are putting a risk of key and vital skills to learn when they leave school.</p> <p>Ash Field Academy provides education and support to children and young people between the ages of 4 and 19 years of age, who have complex health and medical needs. All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).</p> <p>Whilst staying in the residential facilities, pupils are involved in various leisure activities and have opportunities to practice their independence skills. Staying in the residential provision and the activities included are free of charge to pupils and parents.</p> <p>Resi needs to stay open because it gives us freedom and a place</p>	Not Answered
No	Moral, Social, Supportive/Respite	<p>My name is [REDACTED] I am a student at Ashfield Academy. In my opinion closing resi down will be devastating to everyone that stays in residential. The staff that work there would lose their jobs.</p> <p>I like resi, I can chill out and chat with my friends and have a good laugh. It teaches me skills what I didn't have before. Resi is an incredible place to be for so many reasons in my opinion. The resi staff are so devoted to us students to help us learn new skills and to be independent and help other pupils in the future.</p>	Not Answered

No	Moral, Social, Supportive/Respite	<p>In my opinion and from nearly 7 years working as a member of staff there, the residential department at Ash Field academy was a shining example of what a residential school for SEND students should be. The devotion to the welfare and education of the students by the residential staff and the quality of the residential care provision was second to none.</p> <p>Any students who were able to stay in the Residential school benefited immeasurably from the chance to spend time with friends and peers and to have a sense of independence. In some cases I believe this also benefited some of the students'</p>	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	<p>It's unfair for the children both my disabled children will suffer they learn so much education from resi and self care With having two disabled children my oldest is 16 he helps me with his sister's needs and is classed as a young carer him self ...for him to stay in resi two nights a week to get away from home events he's enjoying being a young adult with his peersdue to</p>	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	<p>Having a brother that goes to Ash Field Academy, the residential unit that is a major part of the schools huge success has had a brilliant impact on my brothers life.</p> <p>The residential unit helps pupils and my brother to be more independent so, that when they eventually leave the school as young adults there isn't a challenge that they haven't already faced and conquered. Thus giving them the confidence they need going forward into their adult lives.</p> <p>It enables the students to be around their friends after school hours to do what any normal child or young adult normally does</p>	Not Answered

No	Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	My name is [REDACTED] and I am a student at Ashfield Academy, I been here for 7 years since 2015. The reason why I think resi should stay open is because, staying in resi help young people develop skills that will be useful when young people leave school. Resi is also a place where students can spend time with each other and have fun like a sleep over. The students learn life skills like how to make meals or how to	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	I feel that the possibility of ceasing the funding that enables Ash Field Academy to run a Residential Department would be a catastrophically bad decision. In my role as wider leader for Healthy lifestyles I'm in a privileged position to be able to see the incredible benefits our residential department has on our pupils lives on a daily basis and how it develops their independence and prepares them for the future. Our school is different, as for many of our children we need to cater for their individual needs and this looks so very different to a mainstream school. There is a seamless link between their education during the day and how that is then further developed and put into practice in the evening. Equally, pupils bring skills to the school day that they have learned through their time in the residential department. An example of this is the closeness in which I work with the team in the residential department to ensure that pupils continue to receive the very highest levels of movement and physical education through the extended day and residential programme. I have read this in your report as the programme being referred to as leisure activities. This could not be further from the truth. We provide high quality sessions by	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	The residential at Ashfield is outstanding, both my girls stay once a week which is where they learn vital life skills which will enable	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	My daughter [REDACTED] attended Ashfield and made use of the residential school. If it had not been for the residential school she would not have had the opportunity to build friendships that	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	The residential provision is a crucial part of learning for my son	Not Answered

No	Educational, Moral, Supportive/Respite	This is the most disgusting low decision the council has made by far not only did they sell the EPH down the river to a company not fit for purpose but now want to withdraw a life or death order	Not Answered
No	Educational, Moral, Social, Staff concern, Supportive/Respite	<p>I disagree because if you take away the funding for Resi, also known as residential, then you are making important life skills harder to achieve for children like me.</p> <p>It will be devastating for all of us, students, staff and parents, not forgetting future generations of children who should have access to this type of education.</p> <p>The things I learn in resi have really helped me with my confidence, coping with difficult situations and emotions and spending valuable time with my friends that I wouldn't be able to do otherwise.</p> <p>You see I can't go to friends houses because their parents might not be able to do my medication or tube feed and some friends couldn't go because of things like wheelchair access. Without resi we will be isolated and cut off from our friends.</p>	Not Answered
No	Educational, Fund differently, Social	Ashfield has been a big part of my sons life for the past 12 years the residential has brought out the best in my son, his confidence has boomed, his independence has grown so much he	Not Answered
No	Educational	My son is with special needs n kids like him don't get experience	Not Answered
No	Educational	The provision is educational. My child has profound & multiple learning disabilities. This is the only opportunity to take part in	Not Answered

No	Educational	<p>My grandson really benefits from Ash field Resi. I can really see a big difference in him since he's had the specialist education they provide. His confidence, his abilities, independence skills and desire to live as independently as possible as an adult, are all remarkable.</p> <p>When you consider the level of disability and complex health needs, this improvement is remarkable and should be encouraged and funded because it's essential. There is nowhere else for him to access this kind of education. During the school day he is working hard on academic ability, he wants to go to</p>	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Supportive/Respite	<p>My grandson [REDACTED] whom we fostered 9 years ago goes to that residential & to be honest it has made him who he is today, You can teach certain things in school time but for a fully disabled person...after school is where this ends really & to be able to interact with people he knows & trusts is truly amazing!</p> <p>Ashfield Residential is above & beyond what we ever expected &</p>	<p>https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/</p>
Partially	Cost effective, Fund differently, No alternative, Social	<p>I can see the Council's point of view that the HNB funding is being used for Short Breaks rather than for educational provision which only Ash Field School can access and that this may not be appropriate use of the funds. However, the children who do access the residential unit gain valuable independence and social skills which would be very difficult to gain elsewhere. Children who travel to specialist provision have a much longer school day due to the school not being local to them and using transport. There simply isn't time before and after the school day for the average family to support their child independence skills. In</p>	Not Answered

No	Cost effective, Educational, Moral, No alternative, Social, Staff concern, Supportive/Respite	This is essential education which is bespoke and tailored for each child. My son has benefited immensely from this provision. His confidence has grown, he has been able to learn and practice skills for independent living which he could not achieve at home. The reason is that in order to truly put into practice, these skills must be used in an environment away from home with other disabled young people. It's essentially practicing "living with peers" This involves a complex set of skills, not only practical things such as cooking, cleaning and budgeting but emotional and communication. Learning to work together to achieve what is needed with effective communication and emotional regulation. Without the skills and the environment to practice and develop, their future is bleaker and likely to need far more input from adult social care at huge cost to the local authority.	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Educational, Moral, No alternative, Social, Staff concern, Supportive/Respite	This is essential education which is bespoke and tailored for each child. My stepson has benefited immensely from this provision. His confidence has grown, he has been able to learn and practice skills for independent living which he could not achieve at home. The reason is that in order to truly put into practice, these skills must be used in an environment away from home with other disabled young people. It's essentially practicing "living with peers" This involves a complex set of skills, not only practical things such as cooking, cleaning and budgeting but emotional and communication. Learning to work together to achieve what is needed with effective communication and emotional regulation. Without the skills and the environment to practice and develop, their future is bleaker and likely to need far more input from adult social care at huge cost to the local authority. This is not a respite facility, inevitably families get a break and this is much needed but it's remit is not respite. To call it respite or use that as an argument to defund is wrong and should not be used in the decision making at all. Representatives of the LA have	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	These families need the support	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Because this an important provision for children and their parents	Not Answered

No	Supportive/Respite	It's vital that a service like this exists in leicester for children that	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	It is vitally important for the students that access the provision and to remove funding would be a detriment to all involved.	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Such a valuable service, for pupils, parents and the community as	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	I know first hand how dedicated the staff are, and how beneficial	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Young people deserve the opportunity to have this respite in	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	This centre provides so much mentally and physically to all of	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	It provides so much support for children (and parents)	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	It would be a travesty to lose it	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	There is a need for this to support families.	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	It's an essential service for vulnerable people. It offers a life line	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Just consider how important it is for the students and their	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	As an adult we take things for granted. The res allows pupils to access the residential and be able to be independent. It supports	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	V vital for mental health and well being	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	It is vital for the families of the people who need this provision,	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	It offers support to those that need it	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	A much needed place for service users and families	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	I disagree because it's a tremendous amount of help for parents	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Pupils need residential area as a source of independence	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	To give children & parents a well-needed break.	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	This service provides respite for children and young people who need support.	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Provision of residential care in a familiar and welcoming environment is a much needed service for the children and	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	This facility is crucial to these young people and their families. Staff are amazing and the provision is essential in their development and for their well being.	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	The support it provides for the children and parents	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Residential services are vital across the country to help families	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	These children need this residential care & support.	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	It's a safe haven for the pupils and their parents/ carers. It gives	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	The students and their families and depend on this as a form of	Not Answered

No	Supportive/Respite	Ashfields residential service supports young people and their families in a setting that is safe and nurturing. Young people are	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Although it states that the provision is not used by all pupils, the pupils that it does serve and will hopefully continue to serve, gain	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	It is an invaluable service that offers vital support for the pupils,	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Please sign this consultation to keep Ash Field Academy Residential Provision for children & young people with Special Educational Needs open. https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/sec/ash-field-academy/ As a former member of staff at Ash Field Academy for years, I have been fortunate to have worked there and have witnessed all of the amazing work, energy and love that goes into every part of a pupils stay, it is an outstanding nurturing space which for some children this is the only opportunity to have such experience with peers. It is absolutely like family for some. As outlined in Every Child Matters there're are five key outcomes which really matter for children and young people's well-being and the residential unit provides for each of these:	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	As the send code of practice develops provision using a person centred approach it is important we look at the child at the centre, within their education, their family, their community and	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	For some parents of special needs children this is the only respite they receive. Unless you live with a child with special needs you	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	It is important that these children feel that they have a safe place	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	The ability to have independence and opportunity to learn how to	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	The facilities and support this gives to the children and young	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Children and parents alike need this, where are these children	Not Answered
Yes	Supportive/Respite	These children and parents need this help, if you went in and	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Service users need this support as its helping both parents and	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Because residential schools such as ash field are extremely important to families and children that need additional help and	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	This is a key support system for the children and parents of the	Not Answered
No	Supportive/Respite	Because it is so important to us. There are so many things we can	Not Answered

No	Social, Supportive/Respite	This proves an invaluable provision for parents and children, not only do parents get a break but the young people have an opportunity to spend time with their friends and have a 'sleep	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	Valuable asset that enables students to enjoy life experiences that they would otherwise not have.	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	Because it is an important life line for parents and their child. It offers respite and more than that, independence, life skills and	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	Residential care is an invaluable service that provides relief for the children in question, their families and the siblings. It may	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	It's the one place where the children and students attending feel comfortable and fully themselves around their peers. They look	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	It's a fantastic provision providing the students with opportunities to be carried for and have enrichment activities, appropriate to	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	I used to be a sw for disabled children. I know what a lifeline the residential unit was for both the children and young people and	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	I have worked on the County council as an escort for 4 years. I have been escorting passengers to Ashfield for 4 years. The children go into the residential for up to 1,2,3 nights or even a	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	I feel this school offers a unique opportunity for the children who attend to make real and lasting friendships outside the regular	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	The staff in Resi are amazing and they help to encourage my independence. Resi is a place where I am able to have fun with	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	This is a vital resource, not only for the students to gain vital social and independence skills but also as a very rare opportunity	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	The students love Resi. They look forward to it. also gives parents/guardians a little break. Its also like a sleepover for the	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	Residential at Ash Field Academy is a place where students get to spend time doing activities and spending time with staff and their	Not Answered
No	Social, Supportive/Respite	Resi is such an important part of our school and an incredibly valuable resource in providing respite care, social activities,	Not Answered

No	Social, No alternative	<p>These young people need a space to be young people. To be with friends, to have independence.</p> <p>In the 'outside world' there are limited activities for them to do in an evening a day limited places for them to interact with friends with similar conditions.</p> <p>The resi service needs to stay to give young people the chance to have some time away from parents/carers and also for the</p>	Not Answered
No	Social	<p>I can understand why you are proposing this.</p> <p>But these children need access to the residential part of Ashfield as you have said Some of these children have profound disabilities where they can not access activities outside of school</p>	Not Answered
No	Social	<p>The residential unit represents hope, friendship and the future for so many children and families. This unit has been outstanding for 40 years and brought so much life experience and joy to students.</p>	Not Answered
No	Social	<p>The residential department of Ash Field is an important part of the school and this funding makes it possible for it to still be run,</p>	Not Answered
No	Social	<p>The children will become isolated without it.</p>	Not Answered
No	Social	<p>This school is a much needed centre for young adults with</p>	Not Answered
No	Social	<p>The residential provision provides some of the City's most</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>this a highly valued provision by families in the city</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>It is an excellent service for these children</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>Such an amazing place doing great things that are so vital and</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>It's a vital provision for the children and their parents</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>Its a valuable and necessary facility for those who need additional</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>The residential part of the school is so important for many of the</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>Any partial closure will impact the students negatively. Holistic</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>Without the necessary funding, the residential department would</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>Residential education is an important facility to help individuals</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>Offers great support to those that need it</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>The residential provision provides a much needed stepping stone</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>The setup is vital for the children and would ruin so many of their</p>	Not Answered
No	Positive	<p>This is a resource that is desperately needed for the young people</p>	Not Answered

No	Positive	This facility has made a massive difference in these young peoples	Not Answered
No	Positive	This residential school makes a huge difference to these young	Not Answered
No	Positive	Surely if it is helping those students then they need this facility,	Not Answered
No	Positive	This is important for kids with special needs.	Not Answered
No	Positive	The residential services provide a vital service for the community	Not Answered
No	Positive	looks and sounds to me like it's still needed and gives help.to	Not Answered
No	Positive	This is a vital service that enables young children/teenagers to	Not Answered
No	Positive	SEND pupils need more funding - not less. This is a fantastic	Not Answered
No	Positive	They provide children with amazing opportunities to excel and	Not Answered
No	Positive	Ashfield academy is a much needed facility for its users.	Not Answered
No	Positive	Much needed for supporting students	Not Answered
No	Positive	I have seen the value this service offers to children & young	Not Answered
No	Positive	A valuable service that cannot be easily replaced	Not Answered
No	Positive	This needed for the children sake	Not Answered
No	Positive	It is a greatly valued provision for our pupils	Not Answered
No	Positive	The residential facility is key to improving the quality of like for	Not Answered
No	Positive	The children really need this provision	Not Answered
No	Positive	These children deserve this place!	Not Answered
No	Positive	The residential provision is essential for some very needy	Not Answered
No	Positive	This is a vital local service	Not Answered
No	Positive	This is a service that is much needed for our young disabled	Not Answered
No	Positive	It is a vital service	Not Answered
No	Positive	This facility is needed for the benefit of pupils and their families.	Not Answered
No	Positive	Ashfield is an asset to the city and valuably to the people that	Not Answered
No	Positive	It is an essential provision	Not Answered
No	Positive	Ashfield is a wonderful school and the residential provision is a	Not Answered
No	Positive	It provides a service much needed for the pupils who go there.	Not Answered
No	Positive	There should be no reduction in funding. Quite the opposite.	Not Answered
No	Positive	It is a vital service for these children and their families	Not Answered
No	Positive	Why reinvent the wheel! This provision is more than fit for	Not Answered
No	Positive	This is a valuable service for children with SEND and their families	Not Answered
No	Positive	Ash Field Academy is doing amazing things for its pupils and it's	Not Answered
No	Positive	Residential care is essential to the development of certain groups	Not Answered
No	Positive	It is needed	Not Answered

No	Positive	It's a much needed facility and changes the lives of the children	Not Answered
No	Positive	This is a much needed provision and is desperately needed for	Not Answered
No	Positive	Funding needs to stay	Not Answered
No	Positive	Having worked with children with children with SEND and their	Not Answered
No	Positive	The funding is needed to continue the great work that Ashfield	Not Answered
No	Positive	This service is one of a kind. I have seen first hand the difference	Not Answered
No	Positive	Horrendous idea to withdraw for a fabulous service	Not Answered
No	No alternative, Supportive/Respite	This is clearly a necessary support for the children who attend, especially those who stay overnight. Where else will they get this	Not Answered
No	No alternative, Supportive/Respite	Parents desperately need a break if this is the only provision that parents can access and trust its very much needed	Not Answered
No	No alternative, Supportive/Respite	As there is not enough provision of services for young people with disabilities across the city as it is. You have stated that short breaks are provided via the disabled Childrens team, a team that	Not Answered
No	No alternative, Supportive/Respite	It would deprive those in most need of the service access to it also denying the parents of any respite	Not Answered
No	No alternative, Supportive/Respite	The service provides children with support for their extra needs. It can often be a lifeline for parents who need support with those	Not Answered
No	No alternative, Supportive/Respite	Many students are severely disabled, and family need help, also more funds would be spend special transportation daily, making	Not Answered
No	No alternative	This facility has been vital for the care of the students of Ashfield	Not Answered
No	No alternative	There is a lack of facilities for children with SEN at is it	Not Answered
No	No alternative	There are no educational hubs in any part of the city for SEND	Not Answered
No	No alternative	This provision is highly in need for children with needs and would	Not Answered
No	No alternative	This is an essential service for these children and their families	Not Answered
No	No alternative	Good for the students have no where else to go. With all the	Not Answered
No	No alternative	There are not enough provisions for people with SEN additional physical needs. Quite a few organisations are closing, but what	Not Answered
No	No alternative	The residential provision provides a vital role to the pupils and	Not Answered
No	No alternative	There's so many children that have been here for a long time and children that are in need of your help and care. No other school	Not Answered
No	No alternative	Where will these children and families get the much needed	Not Answered
No	No alternative	Vulnerable pupils are missing out and they have no where else to	Not Answered

No	No alternative	The residential service provides a vital service to parents and pupils who are able to access it. Anecdotal evidence from both parents and pupils is overwhelmingly positive and very clear	Not Answered
No	Moral, Supportive/Respite	I think it is needed to support, grow and include people who get left behind in society due to their different needs and their life is	Not Answered
No	Moral, Supportive/Respite	You are removing a vital resource from some of the most vulnerable youth in society. Removing their chance of	Not Answered
No	Moral, Staff concern	I can't agree to any cut to public service especially a cut to some of the most vulnerable in our society. The programme had been rated as 'outstanding' by Ofsted for its ability to increase the pupils' outcomes which clearly suggests it is	Not Answered
No	Moral, Social, Supportive/Respite	The provision provides students with extra enrichment and their families with vital respite. A nation can only be judged on their	Not Answered
No	Moral, No alternative	There is no viable alternative for the students at Ash Field. Funding cuts should not be made for the most vulnerable of	Not Answered
No	Moral, Fund differently	This service is vital to the children who attend Ashfield academy. The Residential service that they offer within the school environment is inspirational, the staff go above and beyond each and everyday to ensure each individual student has a bespoke and positive schooling experience. By ceasing this funding it will have a detrimental effect on the students, staff, parents and	Not Answered
No	Moral	Stripping of essential social care morally wrong.	Not Answered
No	Moral	You have been paying it all this time and nothing has been mentioned. All of a sudden it's not allowed. You can't change the	Not Answered
No	Moral	All the persons deserve the same as all able-bodied persons.	Not Answered
No	Moral	SEND provision should be protected	Not Answered
No	Moral	Removing money from young people with complex needs?	Not Answered
No	Moral	We face a SEND crisis, and a Labour Council is expected to be	Not Answered
No	Moral	The most vulnerable children should not be paying for national	Not Answered
No	Moral	This is a vital part of enabling access to services for both disabled	Not Answered
No	Moral	I feel it is discrimination against children and families who have	Not Answered
No	Moral	Why take even more away from children/young adults who are	Not Answered
No	Moral	The children need us.	Not Answered

No	Moral	If Leicester city council can't provide for those who are most in	Not Answered
No	Moral	Valuable provision for students who are already let down by the	Not Answered
No	Moral	How is this question even being asked? These children deserve to	Not Answered
No	Moral	This proposal is an attack on disabled people and workers. The	Not Answered
No	Moral	Shortsighted vision. These students deserve the opportunities to	Not Answered
No	Moral	The children need the support, everything I'd be taking away	Not Answered
No	Moral	Such a valuable service to our students. Atrocious they are	Not Answered
No	Moral	Young people with additional needs must be supported to	Not Answered
Partially	Fund differently	Timing, council should seek to work with Ashfield so structure	Not Answered
No	Fund differently	How will Ashfield give residential provision with no funding?	Not Answered
Yes	Fund differently	The provision should be funded by social care / transitions /	Not Answered
No	Fund differently	If other streams of funding can be reliably sourced, that can commit to a long term investment, then funds could be reduced.	Not Answered
Partially	Fund differently	Can the bed provision not be reduced and the additional funds saved dispersed between other schools who are desperately	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	This residential is incredibly important for our students and parents and daily life skills	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	I taught at Ash Field for 7 years. I could see how much the residential element of the pupils' schooling helped them to	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	Gives parents some respite and gives pupils skills necessary for independent living	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	As a former employee and mother of a disabled child I understand the importance of the residential unit.	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	Taking away vital support for students with additional needs and their families. The support is there to assist these children /	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	This is one institution that gives these children the sense of normalcy. Children can learn life skills and when money is spent	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	Having worked with the students who attend resi I have been able to see amazing results in mental health, learning of living	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	This is a critical offer for our children and their families. The City fails to offer enough opportunities for independence for	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	I have first hand experience of how residential provision at Ashfield Academy benefits the residents through through non	Not Answered

No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	I feel this service offers a lot to the pupils who use it as it enables independence as they learn valuable skills. promotes mental	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	It's such a massive help to put most vulnerable students that need that extra help. Parents at home either can't manage or	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	This is education for the children who access it. It surely falls under the compulsory section of any EHCP/SEND provision	Not Answered
No	Educational, Supportive/Respite	Totally wrong to be removing this facility. It creates so much independence, social skills and also offers some respite to	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	This facility clearly helps the children attending to make friends and learn skills that will aid their independence in the future. They are therefore LEARNING life skills that they would not access	Not Answered

No	Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	<p>on field residential is essential for students</p> <p>The school's overarching aim is as follows: For all pupils to receive the very best education and care; to be best supported to live happy and fulfilling lives beyond Ash Field; to enjoy as much independence as possible; and to be able to positively contribute to society. Resi plays a fundamental role in ensuring the school meets this aim. With this in mind and using information from our pupils' Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), as well as local and national research, we have identified key objectives that our children need support in and that we believe Resi can most effectively impact on. These objectives are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Independence: we particularly focus on the life skills that will support learners to be more independent beyond our doors and in their adult lives; • Social Skills: we are keen to ensure that our pupils are able to make positive, healthy relationships with both their peers and those older and younger than them. We recognise that for pupils in wheel chairs and with complex medical needs, socialising outside of school is extremely difficult. This could be extremely detrimental to pupils; Resi can meet this need and ensure positive outcomes in this area. • Emotional Self-Regulation: we know that having a special need 	https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/
No	Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	These services are vital for our children to reach their full potential and engage with their peers. Vital for parents to have much needed respite for their own mental health. Also hugely	Not Answered

No	Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	The residential plays a huge part in the pupils education. It promotes independence, confidence and life skills that they can take away with them when heading into adulthood to try lead the most independent life as possible. Even if they are not fully able to live alone, having basic skills such as brushing teeth, making a cup of tea or being able to put the	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	The decision to withdraw funding from our Residential Department will not just effect the current students that attend but it will also effect the students that join ash field in the future. They will not be as fortunate as me and the other students that love and attend resi every week The residential department teaches us just as much as our lessons	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	Questions and speeches given during the pupil meeting with the local authority are attached.	https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/
No	Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	I am a student at Ash Field Academy. I would like to persuade you to keep Resi open because it teaches kids with disabilities how to be as independent as they possibly can. Independence is a life skill which is more difficult for children with a disability. Resi isn't like a baby day-care centre, you get treated like a normal student like you would in school. Resi teaches students with disabilities how to be independent, look after	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	Because resi is so important to us. We learn things we never thought we would. Like I've learned to trust a member of staff in the middle of the night and not just rely on my mum. I've learned	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	This provision has been crucial for my son's development over the	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	Education is not only about what is delivered during the school day in the classroom. These students and their families need the	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	The students get a lot out of the residential provision, not only	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	These children should be given every opportunity to experience "normal things" social skills are a huge part of their development.	Not Answered

No	Educational, Social	Because it is an essential resource for the students. Everything takes longer for these children and young people to do, so they need more time to learn the things than other kids. Extra hours in school in the Resi department gives them gives them opportunities to catch up on things like communication and interaction skills, to build independence abilities and to improve their mental health and emotional wellbeing.	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	Because 'Resi' is a crucial part of my daughter's education. It is a	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	This is a great asset to young people with additional needs to learn basic life skills and socialise With other peers with additional needs there's nothing like it anywhere and is beneficial to these youngsters, you mentioned respite and help from disabled Childrens services, i for one am in this system with my daughter	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	My children have all had the chance to stay overnight at friends or grandparents to learn about being separated from their carers	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	This provision is crucial to the social and mental health well being	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	I taught at Ash Field for approximately 18 years working principally with children with complex needs. The children gained so much from using the residential facilities, not just socially but	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	Education should include developing life skills and independence for those most at need which this service clearly does. Add to this	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	As a mother of a daughter who attends ashfield academy the residential department has done wonders for my daughter. She is	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	The residential department provides students with vital education and social opportunities that can not be met in the school setting.	Not Answered
No	Educational, Social	The Residential provides the pupils with independence skills and	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative, Supportive/Respite	There is no otherservice for these pupils. The are educated necessary life skills within the residential it's a vital part of education and supports pupils and their families.	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative, Supportive/Respite	There is only one other overnight provision within the city which has a waiting list of well over a year to access ..there is a definite , desperate need for another overnight provision for SEND young	Not Answered

No	Educational, No alternative, Social, Supportive/Respite	Good quality care and education for SEN children is very difficult to find and expensive. This is a vital service therefore for both pupils and their families; pupils are able to extend their	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative, Social, Supportive/Respite	This outstanding provision provides an extended education provision that is so valuable to pupils. Pupils continue to develop their personal development goals and allows them to practice	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative, Social	The provision is classed as outstanding it provides children with the children with social and emotional activities and prepares them for adulthood where are these children going Access the	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative	The pupils are able to learn important life skills at the residential school which they might not be able to do at home due to	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative	It is a well needed service for the pupils of our school to gain such needed life skills and independence and if this is taken away they	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative	This is an invaluable service that gives children and young adults the support and teaching to learn key skills, without this service	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative	Although not staffed by teachers the residential provision teaches important life skills (part of students ECHP's and curriculum as	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative	Its a place where this special students can learn skills to help them with their future independence.	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative	Education comes in many forms not just english maths and science. This facility seems to be teaching them how to fuction	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative	SEND provisions are exceptionally important to students, parents and the wider community. These facilities offer opportunities that are simply unavailable elsewhere they are a lifeline for many families and provide young people with opportunities that their	Not Answered
No	Educational, No alternative	This department is vital to these children and families. It enables the students to become independant, to learn new skills and to	Not Answered
No	Educational, Moral, Supportive/Respite	Please maintain the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities(SEND) funding for Ashfield Field Residential School. It is the only facility for children children with disabilities and special medical needs in Leicester city, county and Rutland. Respite care does not give the same level of support. The school provides skills education in personal development, communication and academic learning that cannot	Not Answered

No	Educational, Moral, Social, Supportive/Respite	This gives children life lessons to help them in the future moving towards independent living. The residential experience provides some respite care for families and the students. They provide	Not Answered
No	Educational, Moral, No alternative	Absolutely disgrace to even propose it. Places such as Ash Field Academy are strongly needed to provide EDUCATION in all areas of life and are few and far between and a LIFE SAVER to those	Not Answered
No	Educational, Moral, No alternative	The service provided in the residential department is education of a sort that could not be provided in other settings. It is a disgrace that the city council is even contemplating cutting the High Needs	Not Answered
No	Educational, Moral, No alternative	I think that it's vital that we fight for the needs of special needs children and their education. The ash field residential department provides that education for all its pupils.	Not Answered
No	Educational, Moral	It is an important part of our community. Resi is an extension of the school day where the three objectives of Independence, social skills and emotional self-regulation are at	Not Answered
No	Educational, Moral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the HNB is a set amount of money, it should be impossible to overspend, let alone by an amount as big as £6,000,000. Residential should not be penalised because the person in your department responsible for distributing the funds, is clearly terrible at their job. • Ash Field were told that it was not necessary for Residential provision to be included on the EHCP's, and now you're using it as a point against us in the strategic review. Although you claim that no decision has been made, this clearly indicates that this is something that has been planned for a while, as the EHCP's are legally protected, which by extension would have protected the 	Not Answered
No	Educational, Moral	This is extremely unfair for the educational provision for these	Not Answered
No	Educational, Moral	This is an absolute joke. These young people, flourish, and grow happily in the purpose built facility, like other schools funded, they have the specially trained staff to teach, help and nurture	Not Answered
No	Educational, Moral	More and more children are being recognised on the special needs spectrum, so closing schools and withdrawing funding	Not Answered
No	Educational, Moral	The opportunity to develop lifelong skills such as independence,	Not Answered

No	Educational, Fund differently, No alternative, Social, Staff concern	<p>Recognising that the funding of the HNB is likely to alter in the future there needs to be real consideration given to the funding of the residential provision from alternative funding sources within LCC. We would urge the Executive to consider and make a political decision on not only the HNB but use of the General Fund.</p> <p>That the residential provision under criteria for the HNB is not educational is a spurious one for the students at Ash Field. How do we value education - can it be measured by SATs results, progress against arbitrary lines of progress, GCSE results or in a wider context of education in preparation for life outside formal education? Is all education measurable? It has been stated that</p>	Not Answered
No	Educational, Fund differently, Moral, Social, Supportive/Respite	The residential unit at Ash Field is invaluable in providing care, a home from home AND an education. Education is about so much more than academic subjects and outcomes that are measured by exams.	Not Answered
Partially	Educational, Fund differently	I do not entirely agree with the statement that the provision only supports non-educational activities. For pupils with SEND,	Not Answered

No	Educational, Cost effective	<p>...having consulted extensively with members employed at Ash Field's residential provision, and discussed the issue at some length with both the school leadership and the LA, UNISON disagrees with the proposal on several grounds.</p> <p>Firstly, the rationale upon which the proposal is based is unsound. Essentially, the LA's position is that the residential provision's work with pupils is not sufficiently educational to justify HNB funding. This has been made clear by both elected members and officers during our meetings on the subject, and indeed is alluded to in the conclusion of your scrutiny report, which argues that, "...the educational benefits are not clear, and the learning or Preparing for Adulthood activities could be part of the curriculum, which could easily be transferred into the school day," (para. 4.31). Not only does the report fail to offer any evidence in support of this claim, but it in fact illustrates precisely the opposite. A few select examples of what is plainly educational activity (noting that the LA has, despite numerous requests, provided no definition of what it or any other relevant body considers to be "education") identified by the report include:</p> <p>"The independence flat supports pupils to learn shopping, cooking and washing skills." (4.6)</p> <p>"One case study provided by the Academy, identified a pupil who had attended the provision from the age of 8 years old. He had developed various independent skills more recently wanted to hoist himself and dress independently. With support of staff, he was able to achieve this goal." (4.7)</p>	Not Answered
No	Educational	Students with the complex needs of those attending Ash Field require support/ education/training that extends beyond the	Not Answered

No	Educational	Ash Field's residential provision provides a continuation of the education our pupils receive during the school day. There is continuity provided through liaison with class teachers and resi staff work on the educational targets and goals identified which feed into their EHCP outcomes. For some pupils, the residential provision offers educational opportunities that pupils cannot access during the school day or the chance to learn and practise	Not Answered
No	Educational	Young people with SEND will require more time for learning and	Not Answered
No	Educational	Schooling is fundamental to our society	Not Answered
No	Educational	Absolutely disagree. It is providing a education just as Millgate School was. How the LA treated Millgate and pulled thier funding	Not Answered
No	Educational	This service is crucial to the development of these students, I	Not Answered
No	Educational	I don't only disagree with it, I am disgusted with it! We must support facilities like these, you can see how the residents thrive, the staff put so much effort, love & care into it as	Not Answered
No	Educational	I completely disagree that this provision is not Educational!! the majority of the children this provision supports do no follow a traditional curriculum. Instead they need educating on their	Not Answered
No	Educational	Ash Field Residential provides an educational setting where children with disabilities can learn valuable skills and	Not Answered
No	Educational	The residential service is clearly an educational provision, the role	Not Answered
No	Educational	High needs block grant is for educational services. Education starts at home! The residential service is "home" for	Not Answered
No	Educational	Everything that Ash Field Academy does provides a vital education service to the children and young people who go there,	Not Answered
No	Educational	Residential is an essential part of my daughter's education. I note that you have said that children do not have residential stated in	Not Answered

Partially	Educational	Our residential provision has proven to make a significant positive impact on outcomes for our learners. They are learning those incredibly important communication, social and independent skills needed to thrive in life beyond Ash Field. Although we aren't a respite provision I know the opportunity has offered families respite opportunities from 24/7 care for sometime more than 1 of their children.	Not Answered
No	Educational	The definition of educational seems to be focussed on 'academic'	Not Answered
No	Educational	The residential centre is very important for enabling	Not Answered
No	Educational	The aim to provide pupils with skills to be as equipped	Not Answered
No	Educational	This is part of the education for these going people who have	Not Answered
No	Educational	It's teaching the students life skills and a way of being	Not Answered
No	Educational	I am a parent of a child with SEND and also work in supporting children and young people with SEND in the county. Resi is an extension of the school day at Ashfield or the students attending.	Not Answered
No	Educational	It's an amazing extended education provision for children who	Not Answered
No	Educational	Because this work is unique and vital. A member of my family	Not Answered
No	Educational	Because the children need this to learn them their own	Not Answered
No	Educational	The children need this to help them with independent living	Not Answered
No	Educational	It's a much needed provision that is very much an educational	Not Answered
No	Educational	The Children gain so much from being at residential life skills and	Not Answered
No	Educational	It is very important for our pupils independence and social	Not Answered
No	Educational	This provision is an essential element of the students learning,	Not Answered
No	Educational	I have seen first hand how the Residential Department has	Not Answered
No	Educational	The services that Ashfield provide help already disadvantaged	Not Answered
No	Educational	As a relative of 2 children that use this service I have watched	Not Answered
No	Educational	Residential provision for SEND pupils is still education and will	Not Answered
No	Educational	It would be a devastating blow to the education and	Not Answered
No	Educational	The residential gives the children life skills helps them to learn to	Not Answered
No	Educational	This is not a rest bite service, this is educational for the pupils.	Not Answered
No	Educational	The work they do is educational in that it's focuses on life skills	Not Answered
No	Educational	The residential dept continues to educate the pupils and	Not Answered

No	Educational	This provision is an essential lifeline to many pupils, allowing them to be independent and thrive in their own right. To take this	Not Answered
No	Educational	This is such a valuable resource for disadvantaged and disabled	Not Answered
No	Educational	Providing after school care and overnight provision is supporting these children with important life skills. This is part of the overall	Not Answered
No	Educational	It provides essential and valuable learning activities and	Not Answered
No	Educational	Ceasing this is not supporting the students for the future, this offering helps students prepare for the future of living	Not Answered
No	Educational	This is an educational establishment. Education is not limited to a	Not Answered
No	Educational	Although it doesn't provide what is traditionally considered education, the residential capabilities allow learning to take place.	Not Answered
No	Educational	This facility offers crucial life skills for promoting the	Not Answered
No	Educational	In my experience of school's in Leicester this provision is not provided, at ash field they have sent an amazing bar for other SEN	Not Answered
No	Educational	My name is Ethan Holland and I have been a pupil at Ashfield Academy for 6 years. In my experience, the Residential Department has helped me grow and develop In ways I could	Not Answered
No	Educational	It's stated the HNB funding is for educational purposes and the	Not Answered
No	Educational	This is a crucial provision which gives these disadvantaged	Not Answered
No	Educational	I believe it is an extension of the school, where children are able to learn new skills and prepare for the future, through 3	Not Answered
No	Educational	This is helping children be independent	Not Answered
No	Educational	It's extremely important in educating pupils and teaching valuable	Not Answered
No	Educational	Ashfield provides a great service to the children in our	Not Answered
No	Educational	Vital experience and learning opportunity for the young people	Not Answered
No	Educational	Residential is not a place of respite. This is a place where we teach children valuable life skills. Without this service many	Not Answered
No	Educational	Most important life skills to help with Developing young people	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Supportive/Respite	The proposal reveals complete ignorance of what residential provision offers, how it facilitates good learning for both pupils and any siblings who those pupils would otherwise be living with	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Supportive/Respite	This service is invaluable to some of our most vulnerable members of society and their families. To take away funding from	Not Answered

No	Cost effective, Social, Supportive/Respite	Resi is an essential support for CYP with SEND and their families. It supports increased independence, social interactions and gives family members a much-needed period of respite. To remove	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, No alternative	Short-term savings but the resources buildings & staff have value which will be difficult to re-instate. Families of these children will	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Fund differently	At present it provides an exceptional service. By defunding (help with finding other funding!!!?) and taking away a service that in	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Educational, Supportive/Respite	It should be noted that while students with needs at the level of those attending Ash Field may be able (for their parents'/carers' sake) use the residential provision as respite care, such respite care (a) very doubtfully will replicate the 'readiness for the world'	Not Answered
No	Cost Effective, Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	I believe that the residential department should stay open because it's a great place where students get to spend time with their friends and learn independence skills like cooking, shopping and laundry that will greatly benefit them in there life	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Educational, Social, Supportive/Respite	In my opinion resi is an excellent opportunity for young adults to gain independence and social a life for the future and everyday life, It also gives parents an opportunity to have a break. It will be devastating for many staff and students if resi shuts down. Residential gives students to spend time with each other as it has the equipment to help us with the hoisting and staff trained with	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Educational, Social	Because you will take away the money to support the students and there independent and social life in a safe trusted	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Educational, No alternative, Social	The provision for young people with disabilities is very low. This is an educational and social provision that prepares young people for the adult services by teaching independence skills. Thus will	Not Answered

No	Cost effective, Educational, Fund differently, Moral, Social	<p>Our community cannot and should not take any more cuts!</p> <p>Our children gain invaluable skills and education from Resi that they wouldn't get in any other setting. Our pupils are given the opportunity to develop vital life skills and to experience things that they would never be able to experience without it.</p> <p>It is an essential service for the children and families.</p> <p>It is better to support this cohort early on to ensure skills are developed. If we are waiting until pupils are 16+ then we often see these students failed as college options are just simply not prepared to support the needs of our pupils.</p> <p>Your plans are short sighted and will come with huge consequences for all. The costs of supporting these children and young adults will fall on your shoulders in the future if they do not have the opportunities that the Residential services provide.</p> <p>It is safe to assume that providing care and support for these students further down the line, students who will be less independent, will potentially be much more costly to you.</p> <p>Carers and parents across the city are at breaking point. They deserve more support. We need to fight for further funding from</p>	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Educational	Independent life skills are extremely important for young people with learning difficulties, and if anything will save money in the	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Educational	Education is not just academic. Every penny spent educating these young people with independence and life skills will pay	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Educational	Although the fund from which the residential wing is currently funded is broadly for educational purposes, the residential wing at Ash Field does provide many widely beneficial educational services. Education is not only, or in some cases even primarily,	Not Answered
No	Cost effective, Educational	The work, care and support that is given to these young people to empower them with life, communication and social skills that will	Not Answered
No	Cost effective	These services provide vital support for children and families. It reduces pressure on other services. I believe the decision to cut	Not Answered
No		The residential department is fundamental for the pupils. It allows them to learn to be independent which is something they	Not Answered
No			Not Answered

Not Answered			Not Answered
No			Not Answered
No			Not Answered
Yes			Not Answered
No			Not Answered
No			Not Answered
No			Not Answered
No			Not Answered
Yes			Not Answered
Yes			Not Answered
No		Please see notes taken by Jenny Eshelby, Principal of Ash Field	https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/
No		Notes of meeting between parents and local authority officers,	https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/
No		Notes of meeting between pupils and local authority officers,	https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/
No		Please see supporting documentation regarding our response	https://consultations.leicester.gov.uk/
No		Because the council is not reliable.	Not Answered
No			Not Answered

Draft consultation communications plan

Project Details	
Project number	N/A
Project name	Ash Field Academy Residential
Project lead	Clare Nagle

Version	Date	Author	Amendment Details
V1	15.07.22	Sophie Bower-Scott	Initial draft comms plan
V2	24.08.22	Clare Nagle	Amends to draft plan
V3	25.08.22	Sophie Bower-Scott	Amends to draft plan

1. Purpose, aims and objectives

1. To consult and seek views on the proposal to reduce and eventually cease Council funding of the Ash Field Academy Residential facilities from the High Needs Block funding over a 3 year period.
2. To canvass the input of stakeholders into the proposals ahead of presenting a further report and recommendations for executive agreement.
3. To share the proposals and methodology for reducing and eventually ceasing Council funding of the provision and to determine: stakeholder impact and support.

2. Communication risks and challenges

2.1 Risks

- There is a political risk that this is seen a funding cut for a school who provide specialist education and respite opportunities to pupils with complex physical disabilities and special educational needs within the City.
- There is a financial risk if the Council do not undertake this exercise the High Needs Block will continue to increase.
- There is a financial risk of the school going into financial deficit if the proposal is progressed, unless changes are made to the operation and/or funding of their residential facility - this could include closure of the facility
- There is a financial risk that the Council may see an increase in demand for respite provision delivered outside of the school if pupils are unable to access the residential facility currently offered through the school

2.2 Challenges

- Gaining support and understanding from the school, parents and pupils, and the general public for the need to remove funding.
- Pupils who are not currently eligible for respite provision could become eligible if their access to the school's provision is reduced or removed. This coupled with the need to provide alternative respite arrangements for any pupils already assessed as eligible for respite services would require the Council to increase capacity in its current respite offering.
- The review into the funding of Ash Field Academy's residential provision coincides with a review of their per pupil funding rates and decommissioning of an assistive technology service that the school was being funded to provide.

3. Audience

3.1 See stakeholder profile in section 4

3.2 The focus would be on Ash Field Academy.

3.3 Key messages:

- Nationally, there has been increased demands in High Needs funding with local authorities increasingly under pressure, as a result of recent government policy changes the local authority may not use funds from its resources to fund any overspends in the High Needs Block.

- Locally, there has been increase demand on special school places between 9% - 11.5%. Furthermore, the number of pupils up to the age of 25 with Education Health and Care Plans has increased by 12% - 13.%.
- The residential provision at Ash Field Academy currently receives £407,000 per annum from the Council's High Needs Block budget. This budget should only be used for educational provision. The High Needs Block budget is over-spending by over £6 million each year; it was overspent by £6.1m for 2021/22 and is forecast to be overspent again by £5.7m in 2022/23 despite receiving an increase of £6.4m in additional funding.
- The residential provision at Ash Field Academy is only accessed by Ash Field Academy students. Only 8% of Ash Field Academy's students currently access the residential provision.
- The equitability of SEND educational provision across Leicester's SEND population is a key concern.
- Whilst the residential provision at Ash Field Academy is rated "outstanding" by Ofsted and is of huge benefit to the students who access it, it is not universally accessible to all.

4. Communication methods:

4.1 A questionnaire will be available online through the consultation hub. The questionnaire will pose specific questions relating to the strategy document (see below)

4.2 Specific engagement with key stakeholders including Ash Field Academy staff, Parents, Unions, CLASS, Schools Forum, School Governors, Parent Carer Forum and SENDIASS

Audience	Direct Comms	Virtual Meeting	Social Media	Schools Extranet	Partner Comms	LCC website	Citizen space	Members bulletin
Parents/ carers of special school pupils	✓					✓	✓	
Ash Field Academy Staff	✓					✓	✓	
Trade Unions	✓					✓	✓	

City Mayor / executive	✓	✓					✓	✓
Ward councillors	✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
Special schools (via CLASS - City of Leicester Association of Special Schools)	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓	
Parent Carer Forum	✓	✓				✓	✓	
Schools Forum	✓	✓				✓	✓	
Other stakeholders (list required) • SENDIASS • School Governors	✓ ✓	✓				✓	✓	
Media (Leicester Mercury)	✓					✓	✓	
SEND Staff Social Care & Education Staff	✓ ✓					✓	✓	
LCC staff						✓	✓	
Leicester Residents						✓	✓	

5. Consultation Milestones

Deadline	Activity	Lead
12/09/22	Inform school staff	
12/09/22	Inform parents/pupils	
12/09/22	Inform councilors	
12/09/22	Inform Unions, Schools Forum	
19/09/22	Consultation go live	
TBC – Sept/Oct	Briefing for School Governors	
TBC – Sept/Oct	Meeting with Parents	
12/12/22	Consultation ends	
12/12/22 – 06/02/23	Analysis of consultation feedback	Sophie Bower-Scott
09/02/23	Lead Members' Briefing	
02/03/23	City Mayor's Briefing	
21/03/23	Report to Children's Scrutiny Commission	
03/23	Confirm final decision with school	

Draft consultation text for Professionals (amendments to be made for Public/Parent and Carers)

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This consultation is being undertaken as a result of government policy changes to the High Needs (funding) Block (HNB) whereby the local authority may not fund any part of the overspend with the HNB from its general resource.
- 1.2 Council officers carried out a review of Ash Field Academy's residential provision during the first half of 2022, visiting the academy and speaking with pupils, staff and governors, as well as inviting feedback from parents, in order to fully appreciate the provision's impact.

BACKGROUND/CURRENT FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

National Context

- 2.1 Pressures on the high needs budget is a recognized national issue, which is well documented across local government. The pressure on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) has led to more and larger overspends in recent years. Latest figures from the Department for Education (DfE) show that there are now 354,000 children with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) in England, an increase of 11% in 2018 alone
- 2.2 Local authorities' budget data for 2019-20 recorded that at the end of 2018-19, about half of all authorities experienced an overspend, amounting to over £250m in all, while others were still carrying forward surpluses. The national net position was an overspend of £40m, and authorities were forecasting that there would be a net overspend of £230m at the end of 2019-20.
- 2.3 The DSG is a specific grant, and the conditions of grant make clear that it can only be spent on the Schools Budget, and not on other aspects of local government expenditure. But where there is an overspend on the DSG, local authorities could decide to fund that from general resources.

Local Context

- 2.4 Forecast overspend in the HNB for 2019/20 is now £6m. From 2020/21 the DfE have provided additional HNB funding from 2020/21 nationally and for Leicester the increase is 13% or £6m. This will *only* address the existing funding shortfall of £6m with no residual amount left for further growth.

- 2.5 No allowance has been made in the additional DfE funding for growth in subsequent years and DfE representatives have indicated that there is unlikely to be any further increase in the foreseeable future. Current growth forecast figures demonstrate, that we are likely to see increase in pupils across the SEMH and ASD spectrum leading to a circa £5 million funding pressure.
- 2.6 Direct costs for places charged to the HNB have increased by 9%, 8% and 11.5% in the years 2016/17, 17/18 and 18/19 and forecast to be 6% in 2019/20. This translates to £3.1m, £3m, £4.7m and £2.5m. Numbers of pupils up to the age of 25 with EHC plans have increased over the same period by 12%, 15% and 13.8% which illustrates the significant variation in unit costs of the increasing numbers of pupils with a plan.

Government policy changes

- 2.7 The continued and on-going pressures on the dedicated schools grant (DSG) has been acknowledged by the government, and to address this matter a consultation to review of the current policy was launched to consult on changing the conditions and regulations applying to the (DSG).
- 2.8 The consultation took place from 11 October 2019 to 15 November 2019, via government software to clarify that local authorities are expected to carry forward any deficits they may have on their DSG accounts, and the deficit does not have to be covered by their general reserves.
- 2.9 Leicester City Council was notified on the 30th January 2020, of the published outcome which can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/consultation-on-changing-the-dedicated-schools-grant>. In summary is the local authority may not fund any part of the overspend from its general resources, unless it applies for and receives permission from the Secretary of State to do so and any proposed deficit require a clear plan to bring the DSG budget level.

PROPOSAL

Summary and Scope

- 3.1 We propose to reduce and eventually cease High Needs Block (HNB) funding for the Ash Field Academy residential provision over a 3-year period. This would see the HNB funding for the residential provision reduced by £200,000 in April 2023, a further £100,000 in April 2024, a further £100,000 in April 2025, and stopped by April 2026.

- 3.2 The proposals are intended to ensure equitability of SEND provision for pupils across Leicester City, and would deliver a reduction in the significant overspend of the Council's High Needs Block grant. Reducing this overspend is essential to ensuring the sustainability of SEND provision across the City.
- 3.3 It should be noted at this stage there has been no decision regarding closure of the residential facility. The Consultation seeks to provide feedback to the Council on the current funding model for the residential provision and the proposal to reduce and eventually cease this funding over a 3-year period. Whilst the Council proposes to stop funding the residential provision at Ash Field Academy, this is yet to be decided and may or may not impact the future running of the facility.

IMPACT OF PROPOSALS

- 4.1 The approach outlined above is designed to provide fair and equitable funding of opportunities for our population of over 1000 children with SEND.
- 4.2 The consultation process will allow Ash Field Academy, parents, pupils, and other interested stakeholders to respond and challenge these proposals and provide evidence of any modifications required. We will consult directly with special schools and Schools' Forum as well as other stakeholders.
- 4.3 The proposal will reduce the High Needs Block overspend by £400,000 per annum by 2026 and help to ensure sustainability of SEND provision across the City,

TIMING

- 5.1 The consultation will launch on 19th September 2022 and close on 12th December 2022.
- 5.2 A decision is expected to be made by the end of March 2023, and the school will be informed of the outcome in April 2023.

EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 A full EIA will be carried out following once the consultation has closed and responses are analysed.

Ash Field Academy Staff, Parents and Pupils Consultation

7 December 8.30am – 11.30am

Present throughout: Tracie Rees (TR), Clare Nagle (CN), Jenny Eshelby (JE), Bev Snow (BS)

Acronyms

ASD – Autism spectrum disorder

CYP - Children and Young People

DfE - Department of Education

EHCP - Education Health and Care Plan

HNB - High Needs Block Funding

LA – Local Authority

SEND - Special Education Needs and Disabilities

Part 1: Residential Staff Consultation

TR provided an introduction and background to the consultation to staff

- Significant pressure on LA budgets, services will need to be reduced or ceased, could include statutory provision. Most services are funded from the General Fund.
- The Residential provision at Ash Field is paid for by High Needs Block (HNB), which is directly funded by the government.
- Currently Leicester City Council has a forecast overspend 22/23 of the HNB of just under £6m, which is due to not enough money being received from central government. This money is ring fenced for children and young people (CYP) with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in the city.
- In Leicester we have 3,300 CYP with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and another 10,000 pupils with SEND needs in mainstream schools, which also requires additional funding, all funded from HNB
- The number of CYP with SEND has increased in Leicester by 9% year on year for the last 2 years. This reflects the national picture. The council has a legal duty to provide support and education for these pupils.
- Government is putting pressure on local authorities to reduce their overspend. TR was interviewed by the Department of Education (DfE) and asked what plans were in place to reduce £6m overspend. TR confirmed all options were being considered.
 - Ash Field Academy was not only provision with a residential provision funded from the HNB. Millgate special school has a residential provision, and the council withdrew the monies as it was deemed to be non-educational.

- The Council is reviewing its statutory respite / short break provision for CYP with SEND to ensure it is flexible and responds to changing needs and increased demand. This includes looking at options funded with Health.
- The Ash Field consultation report seeks to withdraw the funding for the non-statutory Residential Provision (over £400,000 per year) in September 2024.
- No decision has been taken yet and the consultation extended until 9 January following publication of the report.
- Once the consultation ends the feedback will be presented to the Lead Member (Cllr Elly Cutkelvin) and the City Mayor and Executive to make an informed decision.
- A report will also be shared with Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission.
- Officers from the Council have met with Jenny and Chair of Governors regarding the provision being available to a wider cohort of CYP as a possible option to support the council's statutory respite / short break provision. This would not be funded from the HNB monies.
- Jenny confirmed the school wants to wait until consultation process and a decision before they consider anything else. However, there are concerns about the safety of the CYP at the school if others with complex social care needs were able to use the provision.

Q1: In school day what is classed as education?

A1: TR explained that all EHCPs should be delivered within the 25-hour school week. However, it was accepted that not all CYP could not undertake academic qualifications because of their complex health and care needs, and for some individual's functional skills to support independence would be noted as an outcome in their EHCP.

JE confirmed 9 Ash Field pupils have it noted on their EHCPs that they 'would benefit' from the Residential Provision.

TR confirmed none of the EHCP's stated 'it must provide' in section F. Therefore, the council does not have a legal duty to fund this provision.

Q2: When were the EHCPs last check?

A2: The council last checked EHCP's of pupils from Ash Field in mid-October 2022.

Q3: How will the school deliver the additional learning if the Residential Provision was closed, as it would not be possible to cram additional hours into the school day?

A3: TR explained that she was aware that not all CYP at Ash Field Academy used the Residential Provision and had not been advised that the school was not able to deliver the requirements of the EHCP's for those who didn't access the facility. Therefore, she understood that the school could deliver the required support within the normal school week for the majority of pupils. She also explained that other schools, such as Nether Hall have CYP with similar needs, who can deliver the outcome of individuals EHCP's during the school day. TR advised that the council

recognises how good the provision is, and ideally it would be good to give it to all SEND CYP, but this is not financially viable.

Q4: Is the overspend down to the City's poor financial management?

A4: TR explained that other Local Authorities have similar challenges, with far more with higher deficits when compared to the city. When contacted by DfE, she did ask is there anything else Leicester could do to reduce costs and wasn't advised of anything else to consider.

Q5: CYP have been referred to the school because of its Residential Provision and therefore the requirement did not need to be included in the EHCP, because it was part of the school offer.

A5: TR advised she was not aware of this position and 'consults' are made that matches the CYP educational needs as defined in Section F. However, she would check with the relevant staff to understand if any recent referrals have been made based on the Residential Provision.

Q6: What defines education?

A6: TR explained that CYP with complex SEND needs may have their educational outcomes noted in their EHCP as functional skills to support independence, rather than academic achievements. However, any outcomes noted in Section F of an EHCP should be deliverable within the 25-hour school week. TR acknowledged that the Residential Provision was noted as outstanding by Ofsted and she understood that it provided the opportunity for developing friendships and further learning, especially skills around independence.

Q7: Why inspected by Ofsted if not education?

A7a: JE noted Ofsted inspected due to registration Residential Special School, with specific guidelines and governance.

A7b: TR advised the authority takes on board the Ofsted registration point.

Q8: Why is a labour LA cutting funding?

A9: TR explained that all LA's are having their budgets cut by central government and the council's City Mayor and Executive is having to make difficult decisions about the future of services.

Q10: A request was made for the City Mayor to meet with those affected at Ash Field.

A10: TR agreed to ask the Lead Member (Cllr Elly Cutkelvin) and City Mayor to attend a future meeting.

Q11: What is the reason for recommending for withdrawal?

A11: TR explained that the council needs to reduce its spend on the HNB, therefore all non-statutory services were being considered, this includes Ash Fields Residential Provision which spends over £400k per year on the facility.

Q12: How justify blue pathway? Some pupils not on that pathway. What do you determine in education?

A12a: TR explained that some CYP with complex needs, may have their educational outcomes noted as functional skills, rather than academic achievements. However, any outcomes noted in Section F of an EHCP should be deliverable within the 25-hour school week. TR explained that education We know some is functional schools and deemed to be delivered during the school day. Nether hall School same cohort, school able to support during the day.

A12b: JE explained that those attending Nether Hall school are likely to have better outcomes if they had access to residential provision.

A12c: TR explained that in an ideal world all CYP would benefit if more money could be spent on residential support and extending the school day, but this was not financially viable.

Q13: Doesn't the council realise that if CYP are not able to support themselves in the future, it will cost the council more as they will be reliant on Social Care?

A13: TR explained that it was important to support all CYP with SEND needs to develop independence skills and work was currently in progress with the Leicester college to develop their 16 plus offer, with an increased focus on functional skills.

Q14: It is better to teach functional skills earlier in life, rather than waiting until they are 16 years old. The staff member noted from personal experience, Leicester College had failed a young person as no package of support was available.

A14: TR advised that Leicester college was willing to develop their offer and wanted to work with the council and special schools to develop a comprehensive package linked to an internship programme.

Q15: Is Leicester City Council funding Leicester College?

A15: TR advised that Further Education is funded directly from government. The council were approached Leicester College, to understand why referrals are dropping. Placement sufficiency data was shared with them, and it was explained that an improved 16 plus offer was needed linked to internships and employment opportunities. The college confirmed they are keen to work to develop this approach.

Q16: The report is full of holes; council staff only spent a few hours in the school so have made a judgement / assumption without the full facts.

- Shocking the Council can write reports – no context about the school works. These CYP are the most vulnerable and needy in the society.
- The Council should get rid of things like electric bikes and focus on its CYP
- Should be able to provide this provision to every child.

A16: TR explained that the purpose of the consultation was to receive feedback and therefore if the report does not correctly reflect the Residential provision and what is achieved for the CYP attending the facility, this needs to be included in the feedback, which will be considered by the Lead Member (Cllr Elly Cutkelvin), City Mayor and Executive, which will be considered as part of the decision-making process.

Q17: Rather than accepting the situation the Council should be challenging the situation. Is the Council fighting the government to increase the funding?

A17: TR explained that she is aware that representation is made wherever possible.

Q18: Why was the report only made available 4 weeks ago when Unison challenged.

A18: TR explained that the report had been published and the consultation had been extended until 9 January 2023 to enable a full 12-week consultation period.

Q19: Why isn't Peter Soulsby fighting for more funding, why doesn't he refuse to make cuts? If the politicians won't fight, then Unison will.

A19: TR explained this is a political question and will ask the politicians to respond.

Q20: If funding is ceased, the money would be used somewhere else. Why can't you use funding from somewhere else and put in the HNB?

A20: TR explained that the council's General Fund is also in a difficult position and is moving towards the provision of statutory services only.

Q21: How can the council fund non-Ash Field CYP if there is no money?

A21: TR explained that the council has a statutory duty to provide respite / short breaks support for eligible CYP, which is funded from the General Fund. The council currently provides a Direct Payment to support families to secure respite support and in some cases uses the council's own residential home at Barnes Health House for short breaks. However, places are limited, and the council is currently reviewing the provision to ensure more places are available in the future, this includes options to work and share costs with health. Discussions have taken place with Jenny and the Governors to seek their views on potentially using the Residential Provision for non-Ash Field CYP.

Q22: Do you know where the Residential Provision is based? It is in a corridor in the middle of the school. If other pupils were placed there, they wouldn't be able to use facilities as the pupils do at Ash Field? As registered as a Special School – only have a corridor, bedroom and lounge – where can they do activities not facilities. If the decision to open to wider children and young people, would Ash Field pupils have priority?

A22: This would be a discussion for the future, if the school decides to open up the Residential Provision.

JE, the first cohort were identified as medical and then complex ASD, this mix would not be safe for Ash Field CYP.

It was noted the date of school opening was wrong, TR confirmed the council will change and update in the next report.

Q23: A request was made to ask the decision makers to get to know what the school does and value the provision provides before making a decision.

A23: TR advised she would make a request to politicians.

- Staff noted Ash Field Academy is like a beacon, with recent visitors from Malaysia, it is unique and needs to be kept alive.
- It doesn't feel the Council understand what the school is offering, how you make recommendations based on short visit.

Q24: Recent budget reports new money, £2 billion, what is coming into Leicester?

A24: TR explained that no details have been received as yet, but Leicester is likely to receive in the region of £3m, which is still not enough to cover the current overspend to the HNB.

Q25: Feels like the decision has already been made and you have taken everything we have discussed negatively.

A25: TR explained that she has responded to the questions asked, but the minutes from the meeting will be shared with the Lead Member, City Mayor and Executive as part of the decision-making process. However, she also explained that the school and individual staff members and their union representatives can provide feedback on the proposal and advise of any misrepresentations.

Q26: Who is the Executive made up of?

A26: Executive made up of Elected Members – Sir Peter Soulsby (City Mayor), Cllr Adam Clarke, Cllr Piara Singh, Cllr Sarah Russell, Cllr Danny Meyers, Cllr Elly Cutkelvin, Cllr Mustafa Malik, Cllr Sue Hunter, Cllr Vi Dempster.

Q27: It feels like the whole meeting, is about ticking boxes, it feels you have made decision and ticking box – we had meeting and seen the staff.

A27: TR to invite City Mayor/Executive to the school.

Part 2: Parents

Jenny Provided an introduction from the school

Tracie Rees introduced herself as Director for SEND and Early Help at the City Council, with Clare Nagle in attendance taking notes. TR confirmed the consultation was open to 9 January. If parents have already provided a response, they can provide further feedback following the publication of the report.

Q1: Can the school send further clarification out to parents regarding this point?

A1: JE confirmed the school will send further clarification out to parents.

- TR provided an overview of the rationale behind the proposal.
- Significant pressure on LA budgets, services will need to be reduced or ceased, could include statutory provision. Most services are funded from the General Fund.
- The Residential provision at Ash Field is paid for by High Needs Block (HNB), which is directly funded by the government.
- Currently Leicester City Council has a forecast overspent 22/23 of the HNB of just under £6m, which is due to not enough money being received from central government. This money is ring fenced for children and young people (CYP) with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) in the city.
- In Leicester we have 3,300 CYP with and Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and another 10,000 pupils with SEND needs in mainstream schools, which also requires additional funding, all funded from HNB.
- The number of CYP with SEND has increase in Leicester by 9% year on year for the last 2 years. This reflects the national picture. The council has a legal duty to provide support and education for these pupils.
- Government is putting pressure on local authorities to reduce their overspends. TR was interviewed by the Department of Education (DfE) and asked what plans were in place to reduce £6m overspend. TR confirmed all options were being considered.

Q2: Parent noted the closure of such a provision will lead to high rates of pregnancies in CYP.

A2: TR advised that the council understand the families / carers concerns, but no decision has been made at this time.

- Parent: you have failed our children there are hardly any teachers.
- Parent: in a recent City Mayor twitter exchange it was indicated decision has been made.
- Parent: the school failed not to support CYP.

Q3: Have you any experience of disabled CYP, people don't understand the pressures?

A3: TR advised that she is a carer for her brother with a learning disability, so is fully aware of the pressures faced by family / carers.

Q4: You think it's not education, the Residential is education. Why has it been funded for all these years, and now decided it is not education? If you had outstanding mainstream school, you wouldn't be closing such a provision.

A4: TR advised she was not aware of the historical reasons for the creation of the Residential Provision, but the HNB fund was overspent, and the council was looking at all non-statutory items to look at where savings could be made. She also explained that individuals CYP's EHCP should be deliverable within the 25-hour school week, whilst acknowledging the Residential Provision was rated as outstanding by Ofsted and she understood it provided the opportunity for developing friendships and further learning, especially skills around independence. She also explained that no other school had this type of facility funded by the council.

Q5: Are Children and young people not valued?

A5: TR explained that all CYP are valued, but there was limited funding and priority had to be given to education.

Q6: Parents are trying to get residential in section F of EHCP's but being blocked.

A6: TR advised that she was aware of recent requests, but all EHCP's had been checked in Oct 2022 and not included this as a statutory requirement.

Q7: Parent, if the issue is about overspend, the proposal is discriminatory due to other budgets and services.

A7: TR explained that the Council has reducing budgets and will need to cut spending in a number of other areas, full details will be available in the council's budget report, which will be published in Jan 2023.

Q8: Parent, this council need to fight cuts.

A8: TR confirmed the council do regularly fight and challenge budgets.

Q9: CYP need more support and the school is a support to the families. Our CYP can't just go anywhere, as there are no parks and nothing else for them. Also, Mental health is off the scale and more CYP are self-harming. Officers here are going through the motions, what the Mayor said in his twitter, showed he has no respect.

A9: TR advised that all comments will be noted and feedback from the meeting would be considered as part of the decision-making process.

Q10: Parent, what about CYP in the future? Parents frightened for CYP, there are other CYP we need more places, so much revenue for schools and academy.

A10: TR advised that the savings from the proposal would fund more education placements for the increasing number of CYP with SEND. She also explained that the council cannot comment on the academy's decisions, as it's a matter for JE and the governors to decide if they wish to keep the Residential Provision open if a decision is made to withdraw the council funding in 2024.

Statement from parent:

Education for all children and young people is important. The residential provision is totally education. Communication and Interaction, the residential offers a different form of Communication and Interaction with Ash Field pupils can't have that outside of school due to transport, their health and other needs.

For the children and young people Ash Field is their community, they can't access Communication and Interaction as part of EHCP plan, they need more than what is available in school. Ash Field pupils don't get this like other children and young people, also for Cognition and learning, not recognised as strictly, without standing in front of wipe board. Social Emotional and Mental Health is the biggest deal when starting a new school, as well as learning to be independent, setting up for life so not so dependent and knowing who to trust. What happens when our children and young people grow up?

Is this how society looks after the weakest? Sensory and physical, how it happens in residential provision and children and young people want to study academically during the day, therefore wider learning can't just happen during the day.

There is a lack of understanding of what education is for Ash Field CYP, some academic and support for the future, back-up for the future. Need to helpful to be acknowledged.

Q11: If this is removed where will this need be met?

A11: TR explained that the council has a legal duty to provide educational activities as set out in section F of an EHCP. All plans have been checked and whilst a number stated that individual pupils would benefit from residential support, none stated that it 'must' be provided. All EHCP's should be deliverable within a 25-hour school week.

Q12: If the school can't meet need – why would the council look for residential in provision?

A12a: BS, provided some background regarding the history of the residential, it used to be in listed in plans a number of year (two previous heads), always put into EHCPs and funded separately. School had a Residential offer, so all pupils offered, and education place and the school were told by the City council no longer needed to include residential provision in EHCP.

A12b: TR advised that she was not aware of the historical reasons for funding the Residential Provision, but the financial situation was difficult and savings for non-statutory services needed to be considered.

Q13: If the Residential Provision closes, there will be knock on effects for CYP and more cost to the council in the future.

A13: TR explained that in her previous role as Director for Adult Social Care & Commissioning, the need for young people to be supported to gain independence was important, and therefore the council was working with Leicester College to

develop their 16 plus offer to focus on this aspect and to develop internships and employment opportunities.

Statement from parent:

- If the Residential Provision closes CYP will be less independent.
- A number of pupils have life limited conditions, maximum benefits are here at Ash Field education experience all over, can't get it anywhere, can't access due to physical needs, therefore these young people need enhanced life, not live into adulthood.

Q14: Why break it? It's been an outstanding for so many years, why change it, the children and young people don't do well with change.

A14a: TR explained that if a decision is made to withdraw the funding, this will give the school at least 18 months to look at other options for funding the provision. TR also confirmed that there have been some initial discussions with JE and the Governors around possibility of using the Residential Provision for respite / short breaks.

- Ash Field Academy is not respite, its education.

A14b: JE confirmed early conversations had taken place regarding the possibility of using the facility for CYP with complex medical needs or Autism (ASD), but there were concerns about the limited ability to mix cohorts due to the vulnerability of Ash Field pupils. Ash Field is education based and focussed on developing a range of skills. Therefore, at this time the school is not prepared to make a decision to provide respite or short breaks until a decision regarding the finding has been made.

Q15: Could the Council provide details of other funding decision or where services have kept funding?

A15: TR confirmed the funding for Millgate School's residential provision was withdrawn and the Special School Banding and Element 3 Funding for Mainstream Schools has been reviewed.

Additional statements from parents:

- The closure of the Residential Provision could be a breach of the Equalities Act.
- It takes longer for Ash Field children and young people to learn in every sense, the extra time in the residential provision provided the extra input needed for CYP to achieve.
- There needs to level the playing field, which is what the school and residential provision offers, pupils need extra support and specialist support to learn.
- I have 2 children, 1 in mainstream who has access to friends and the community, Ash Field was Community for the other child. The community is not wheelchair friendly, due to medical needs I couldn't ask other parents, the residential provision essential for children to learn with peers without the input from parents, it's a safe environment to learn.

- £400k is a drop in the ocean, especially when the council is spending money on other things such a bike lane's that aren't used and a new market.
- If 5 young people go into crisis without the residential support, it would cost the council £2m for those CYP to go into care. Therefore, it's not a cost savings longer term the funding proposal is a short-term saving.
- Peter Soulsby needs to listen to arguments. There is lots of money going to Children's homes, could the funding not be taken from them?
- knock on effect of families going into crisis, due to complex health needs of the CYP, staff understand and know how to support and manage needs.
- Carers at breaking point in the city.

A16: TR acknowledged the concerns raised by the parents and carers and advised that she would ask the Lead Member (Cllr Elly Cutkelvin) and or the City Mayor to visit the school to listen to the families worries. She also reiterated the council's legal duties towards children in care and council's difficult financial position. She also urged parents and carers to submit any further concerns as part of the formal consultation process. In terms of Equalities this would be taken into consideration as part of the legal review.

Part 3 Pupils

JE introduced the meeting and asked the students to make points and ask questions.

Tracie Rees introduced herself, telling students everything you say to Clare, and I are listening and will make sure your comments, worries about the proposals are noted down. The people making see the details and comments, which include the City Mayor and team making the decision.

Q1: xx stays in resi on Tues, been talking about it. xx communicates through switches. His TA shared a video of xx answering the following questions, which he responds yes to for each one:

- Do you like staying in resi?
- Do you learn new things in resi?
- Is resi important to you and your friends?

A1: Tracie asked if she could receive a copy of the video for the consultation.

Q2: xx gave a speech on his views:

My name is xx, I am a student at Ash Field Academy. I would like to persuade you that we can keep resi open because it teaches kids with disability how to be as independent as they possibly can. Independence is a life skill which is more difficult for children with a disability. Resi isn't like a baby day care centre, you get treated like a normal student like you would in school. Resi teaches students with disabilities how to be independent, look after yourself, cooking and doing your own daily care, such as brushing your teeth on your own. They teach you how to be responsible for yourself. Resi gives you the opportunity to spend time with your friends. It gives your parents break and the children from family. It is a different environment than school. I think it's really beneficial for me and other students because you wouldn't get to communicate with your friends as much as you can in resi.

If resi closed, it would feel like you're losing a part of your family and you would lose your independence. At home, parents automatically do things for you, but in resi, they allow you to try and do it on your own, which means you can build your independence over time.

If you think independence is not educational, than have another think about it because without independence where would you be now? How would you feel if you had a disability and your independence (our resi) was taken away from you? Whether you have a disability or not, independence is for EVERYONE!!

Q3: xx also provided a speech:

My name is xx, I want to speak to you to tell you that the residential part of Ash Field Academy is at serious risk of shutting down, the department is a second home for us in school, you are putting a risk of key and vital skills to learn when they leave school.

Ash Field Academy provide education and support to children and young people between the ages of 4 and 19 years of age, who have complex health and medical needs. All pupils have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

Whilst staying in the residential facilities, pupils are involved in various leisure activities and have opportunities to practice their independence skills. Staying in the residential provision and the activities included are free of charge to pupils and parents.

Resi needs to stay open because it gives us freedom and a place to express ourselves, learning independence, social skills and gives us the confidence we need later on in life.

The school has capacity for 160 pupils and currently provides overnight residential provision for up to 18 pupils per night, four nights a week during term time. Annually, 35 – 45 (22-28%) of Ash field Academy's pupils are accessing the residential provision. Many of the pupils accessing the service have profound and multiple disabilities and require specialist care and facilities to support them.

If you take it down then there will be damage done it won't just affect the staff who specifically work there it will be devastating for the families and their kids that go there, there is no other resi, please I'm begging you to re-think and keep this second home of ours open for me it has helped me to become the kind and sensible young man I've become, please re think because we can't afford to lose it, its our pride and joy, it keeps us going.

I truly believe with resi I don't know how I would cope with day-to-day struggle, without support there it would be truly impossible to cope before of my autism personally speaking.

Thank you for listening to my speech.

Q4: xx was unable to attend the meeting, and had provided a statement for a member of staff to read on his behalf:

My name is xx I am a student at Ash field Academy. In my opinion closing resi down will be devastating to everyone stat stays in residential. The staff that work there would lose their jobs.

I like resi, I can chill out and chat with my friends and have a good laugh. It teaches me skills what I didn't have before. Resi is an incredible place to be for so many reasons in my opinion. The resi staff are so devoted to us students to help us learn new skills and to be independent and help other pupils in the future.

I believe it helps parents and families so that they get a break. If resi was to be closed, friends won't be able to socialise or sleep over at others houses. It is not possible for me to sleep or go to a lot of my friends houses because of my equipment (wheelchair, ventilation machine) and care needs, it would be too much for parents and carers. Resi is the only opportunity I have to really socialise for a good period of time with my friends.

I have been lucky enough to go on a few residential trips. This wouldn't be possible with resi. Some families can't afford holidays with their children, rei gives them the opportunity to have holidays.

Please think about what you are doing.

Q5: My name is xx do you have any idea what affect closure of the resi will have on pupils' mental health? It is a vital part of pupils' lives, imagine never going to friends for sleep over? It is a space to socialise to meet needs.

A5: TR advised that the council is aware of the potential impact. The council is aware of concerns raised, by staff told and we talked about the support resi gives, parents also told us about concerns if it wasn't available.

Q6: xx asked, you say that resi isn't education, why? It is a space to practice communication and interacted?

A6: TR explained that the council recognises the Residential Provision is rated as outstanding and also know students rate the facility. The problem is that the local authority doesn't have the money, it comes down to the financial position. We know it has value out of the normal school day, there are big pressures by the council, £400k spend a year for the Residential Provision and there are lots of other CYP with SEND needs we need to make sure we meet needs of other children too, the £400k would provide approximately for 30 places during day for pupils.

Q7: Do you not want children and young people to live independently and prepare for adulthood?

A7: TR advised that this should be a goal for all CYP and reiterated that a decision hasn't been made yet, but the council needs to look at all options to reduce costs.

Q8: Next year I will be moving into own home, I wouldn't be able to do that without all of the support from resi.

A8: TR explained that ideally the council would want to offer all CYP in the City a resi opportunity, but we have over 3,300 pupils with an EHCP and a further 10,000 pupils with SEN needs, but unfortunately the council cannot afford to fund this, and the priority has to be to provide 25 hours of education a week for all CYP. The government is due to give £2 billion for education, which works out at £3m for Leicester, so even if they gave more money, it would help but not cover the gap in the high needs block.

Q9: xx states the resi is educational it helps develops social and independent skills, it's unfair for pupils for the future who need to develop the skills.

A9: TR explained that promoting independence is important but can be taught in the day.

Q10: Why can't you use / help us find other funding?

A10: TR explained that if the decision is made to withdraw the funding in 2024, the council would work with the academy to look at alternative funding opportunities, although it could not guarantee the future funding.

Pupil statements regarding the Residential Provision:

- I have learnt as much from resi as school, wouldn't be able to sit here and join conversation without resi.
- xx, stated the resi holds pupils together as a second family, keeps motivated, helps with emotional needs to cope.
- xx, stated he can see friends more often when in the resi and see staff.
- xx, stated we've a got future and friendships that the resi offers, things need to be done in school different.
- xx don't know what feel – we wouldn't live without resi – really annoyed, without staff, you can't take away from us – really annoyed – it's our home, taking away our independence you have no idea how this feel.
- xx it's breaking us quite hard, we have a say, when we found out it was hard, becomes more difficult to think about.
- The resi makes you feel happy and independent.
- xx, stated that being in the resi has provided me with life skills like cooking, making a cup of tea, I won't be independent as I am now, I have the confidence and do these things, it is educational.
- xx shared he liked being with friends it makes him happy, also achieved also with personal needs.
- xx finds the resi really fun.
- Going to cost lots of money if the resi closed, with redundancy pay. We have spoken a lot education side, if resi is great place, staff is amazing, advice and support, been a lot over the last year, won't be as mentally well. I have made decision to stay as school for an extra year, help with dealing with my own house, I would only be able to do this with resi.
- xx is leaving Ash Field this year, and has enjoyed the resi, it has helped with life skills and dealing with other people, learnt lots and it would be sad to see it go.
- xx states when you walk into resi, it is joyful and jolly, feel calm, safe and at home like your proper home. Staff are all happy, get to chill out and express how you feel it is a heart-warming place to be. If you're new person, you know you are in safe hands.

TR thanked all the students for their comments and assured the group these would be passed on to the Lead Member (Cllr Elly Cutkelvin) the City Mayor and Executive to consider as part of the decision-making process. TR also explained that further comments could be fed back through JE if needed.

Consultation meeting for staff: 7th December 22

Tracie Rees (TR) gave background to the proposal

- Looking at all council spend.
- Budget reductions from central government – putting pressure on to deliver services.
- A number of services being looked at for cutting.
- In terms of Ash Field Residential provision – paid for from the HNB – each year government gives money and this element is for special needs education. Currently this is overspent by 31st March by just under £6 million. Have to provide support for all children but not enough money from the government. 3000 children have an EHCP as well as 10,000 with SEND who are supported by mainstream schools but without an EHCP. All funded from high needs block. This has put a pressure on money they have. 9% increase in last 2 years of number of children with a plan or deemed to have a need – legal duty to provide support for and educate. Pressure on LA from the government about its spend of HNB – want to know how they'll reduce the overspend.
- Tracie has been interviewed and plan had to be sent back.
- Millgate's residential removed – reason was that it was non-educational and the support provided could be provided through the school day.
- In a position where report has been written for the consultation – seeks to consult on withdrawing the funding from September 2024. Formal consultation process extended to 9th January at request of Scrutiny Committee in October to allow more time for comments to be made.
- After consultation, information is gathered and a document is prepared for City Mayor and Executive members – they will then make the decision. The report will be shared with us before the decision is made.
- Discussed with Jenny and the governors the opportunity to use residential provision for the wider cohort – duty to provide respite and short breaks support for – have a shortage. Possibility that if we wanted to open up our provision differently. No guarantee of the funding at this point.

Staff

Will be shared with City Mayor and Executive who make the decision so that they get the full picture.

Staff member: You mentioned that the education that the pupils get in Resi can be achieved in the school day – how would this work?

TR:

- None of the EHCPs state that they need to have residential provision.
- It's more than other children get.
- Would have to look at individuals as to how this would work for individuals within the school day.

Jenny Eshelby (Principal) noted that 9 pupils have resi in and 6 within section F.

TR clarified they might mention it in them but they don't say 'must'. They've checked with legal and this means it's not a requirement on the LA to provide it.

JE asked that the language was changed as this is different to it not being included in the pupils' EHCP. JE also questioned this in general as plenty of elements of the EHCP do not say 'must' – they are not written as a list of must statements but the expectation is that what is covered in it is provided.

Staff member added that there isn't enough time to do everything that's done in resi in the school day.

TR noted that other schools don't have residential and they manage.

Staff member asked about how the LA is managing the finances.

TR explained that:

- the overspend is significant but they account for every penny of it
- they are audited and Leicester is deemed to be good and meeting need
- TR asked government/DfE what else could be done and they couldn't say
- DfE did note that it is not as bad as other authorities
- At the moment the council are not expected to pay it back – they could expect this in the future and would have to cut services elsewhere to make up the deficit

Staff member noted that Resi is just part of the school offer – therefore the EHCPs discourage the writing of it because it's just part of the school offer. When Resi stopped being funded separately to the school, the pupils were entitled to use the provision and so it no longer had to be put in the EHCPs.

TR: Children are not specifically recommended to come to Ash Field because of residential.

Staff member asked why the money is being removed from the residential department.

TR said the cost is around about 400k per year. They don't feel it is education so it doesn't have to be provided from the HNB.

Staff member said that it was being said it's not education but it can be fitted into the school day – so how is it not education?

TR said that it is a grey area. It's a 400k spend.

Union rep: Why is the residential department Ofsted inspected if it's not education?

TR: because it's registered as a special school. Children's homes are Ofsted registered

JE explained the governance and expectations of a Residential Special School under Ofsted are different to that of a children's home – and that we are registered as a school and are inspected as such.

Union rep: Why is the labour local authority so keen to cut – shouldn't they be fighting to prevent this?

TR: That's a political question so I can't answer. However, you will see that all councils are pushing back as much as they can but TR is instructed to respond to the DfE.

Staff member: is it about being education or about money.

TR: it's because it's not education and because we need to save money.

Staff member: for some of our children, the education is very different for these children – it's not maths or English – cutting this is like cutting maths and English in mainstream.

TR: but Nether Hall meet need without it.

JE stated that she was sure Nether Hall meet need but she believed that if Nether Hall were offered access to residential, they would expect their pupils to make greater progress.

TR: agreed - if we could spend more money supporting children beyond the school day, they would all have better outcomes.

Staff member: How do we make up for the amount of learning time that would be lost?

TR: adult support – most of our pupils would go onto further education. LCC are working with Leicester College to develop their offer for those who have SEND so that when they leave school (16 and beyond) more access it. It is around enhancing their functional skills, provide internships etc.

Staff member: we've learnt that the younger we can develop these skills, the greater the development they make – starting at post 19 isn't going to have the same impact.

Staff member: Leicester College currently fails children with SEND even without complex needs from personal experience.

TR: we are working with Leicester College.

TR: We know the cohorts of what's needed going through – we've shared this with Leicester College. They are saying that they can support more now that we've had that conversation to enhance the curriculum.

Staff member: reading the report, I found it quite offensive. It felt that it was written by people who didn't understand our school at all. Also, when it talked about being accessed by others in the city, it becomes a respite service, not education.

TR: in terms of the report, if you think there is something that's not right, we don't work here and whilst Clare and her team did spend time here, you can write comments in response to the report regarding anything you disagree with.

Staff member: asked how long Clare spent in Resi.

CN: a couple of hours.

TR: report can be responded to.

Staff member: but the report has gone out for the general public to review it as it stands – this means it is biased – it is not an accurate reflection and so could distort responses.

TR: you can respond to it and that will be included in the response to the decision makers. We can state the length of time spent here and any concerns regarding that.

Staff member: report is saying that the provision can be put into the school day – you haven't spent time in the school at all and so how can you make a judgement that it can't be. It seems shocking that as a council, these reports can be written that then go out and help people think it's fair or reasonable. There's a sense of bringing our school down to the level of provision at other schools – we can't just get rid of the things that are different between schools. Why not get rid of the bike lanes and focus on providing for the children who really need it.

JE clarified that we don't feel other schools are not doing a good job – they are – it's that we don't see why our provision should be reduced, just to match other schools. We should be trying to ensure every pupil who needs it, has the right provision.

TR we would like to provide it to all schools – but we don't get enough funding

Staff member: then we should be saying to the government that we don't have enough. We need more funding. Is LCC doing this?

TR: yes

Union rep:

- the report was put out after the consultation started – LCC need to go to the press to make it clear that this is happening and to encourage people to engage in the process with this information.
- I have had a letter from Peter Salisbury – he said he has been pleading with the government – I don't think working class people should be pleading or begging – we need to organise and fight for it. Perhaps the politicians can – UNISON are organising this – in the past this has been prevented rather than supported – will you support this?

TR: again this is political and needs to be relayed to the politicians

Union rep requested TR do this – TR responded that both union rep and TR could feed this back

TR: going back to non-Ash Field pupils as respite. Do have a number of children across the city who have disabilities who need respite support – carers need a break – respite provision. This is something where there is a shortage. We are looking to potentially increase that – not funded from HNB but from the general fund. For some families, there are potential breakdowns, want to support them – that is the sort of provision we are looking for. Also looking at health, some need support due to complexities. So this respite could be funded from the general fund.

Staff member: one minute it's education, then it's not education. If this money is withdrawn, then other spending will be needed from other pots. Why can't other pots fund the HNB.

TR: it's difficult as there are some things we can't fund e.g. residential here. The general fund has already been considered and it's been decided it can't come out of that.

Staff member: do you know where our residential is? It's literally a corridor between two buildings. Barnes Heath take children from all over the city – they also keep them in the day time. Our environment would not work for various needs e.g. behaviour. It would be a corridor with a lounge. It's in the centre of the school between primary and secondary – there are no extra facilities – we use the day school's. I don't think that the people making these recommendations can have been on the premises to understand this. As Ash Field students and as a residential special school, they can access all the other facilities. Barnes Heath take pupils during the day as well as the evening. If it is respite for a wide range of pupils, I can't see how the environment would work.

TR: I understand what you're saying. Barnes Heath provision has a lot of evening respite support

Staff member: even if only offered at night, there is only bedrooms, bathrooms and a lounge – it's not what would be expected for respite.

Staff member: if opened up to other children – would our children take priority? The waiting lists currently are so long to get one night especially in places that can meet our children’s needs – would our children take priority so that they can get what they need?

TR: this would have to be part of any discussion for the future – we would need to look at the needs of the child who come here in the first place

JE:

- Explained what was offered re the respite to us, explaining that it was for us to take a cohort of children with complex autism who also had medical needs. That we felt this wouldn’t work with the cohort we have especially in the environment that we have – the mix just wouldn’t work so our pupils just couldn’t attend.
- Clarified around our (govs) decision not to engage in the respite conversation until a decision is made on the current Resi provision as it stands because this is the service that we believe should stay and by engaging in the respite ideas etc, we feel it’s almost accepting the decision on our current provision which we think needs to happen after the decision is officially made. We hope that the funding will remain for it as it is.

Staff member expressed difficulty for staff in the length of time not knowing and how much we care about our pupils and what happens for them.

TR: said that they are just sharing an opportunity to the school and as an academy they can’t force this. TR said that in relation to the length of time, she would ensure Sir Peter Salisbury is made aware that the decision needs to be given as soon as possible after the consultation so that staff know.

Staff member: Millgate is different with fewer numbers and is respite so unsure why it’s based on the same principle. They are looking at funding it themselves – we couldn’t do that, it’s too big a unit.

Staff member: concerned about the word respite being said so many times – we are not respite – we are education

Staff member: the date Resi opened is incorrect – it was much earlier than the date mentioned in the report. Noted that they have been working there a lot longer than the date suggested.

Staff member: there seems to be a lack of understanding of so many factors. The decision makers should come and get to know our school. Believe they would be touched by what they see as other visitors are and this would give more clarity about what we do.

TR: I can make that request.

Staff member: visits to the school from international people brings in money to the city.

Staff member: what about the money going in that has recently been announced in the budget?

TR: We don’t know if this will go directly to schools – we think 3 million would be gained in the city. Even if that came to the city council, it wouldn’t be enough to even cover the current deficit. Then there’s the increasing numbers and places we need.

Staff member: Surely we need to keep the provision we already have given the need.

TR: We need the placements during the school day. We are looking at the options for this which will all cost money.

JE asked if the 6 million deficit was cumulative or in year.

TR cumulative.

JE asked for the in year amount.

TR said she wasn't sure but would provide this.

Staff member: feels like a 'fait a complis' and not a consultation – in the meeting, they've not taken one point and said it will be taken back – everything said has been negative in response. Don't know how the report to the decision makers can be unbiased.

TR: We will take all of the comments back. Know Jenny and govs will be sending back a response too. Staff can do this too and union reps. We do not make decisions – the executive will, using all that info.

Staff members: It feels the decision has been made – it feels this is just ticking boxes.

TR: We don't make the decision and it hasn't been made yet.

**Notes from parents and carers consultation meeting at Ash Field with Tracie Rees and Clare Nagle:
07 12 22**

Parent: Some of us did the written consultation early on but we understand that we can now do it again. Could you explain please?

TR: explained the extension of the consultation to 9th January and that a copy of the report is now available so people may wish to read that and then make further comments

Parent asked if school principal (JE) could ensure email / message to parents again so all can follow the links and see report easily

JE agreed to do this

TR then gave background to proposal

Parent: what this will lead to is a higher rate of pregnancies and parents in coroner's court due to self harming. The spend by the council is on silly projects. Mental health is a great concern – this is so important. One of you will end up in coroner's court – either from Millgate's or our parents by closing these.

TR: the decision has not been made for Ash Field

Parent: Peter Salisbury indicated that the decision had been made by his messages

Parent: our children are being failed – decisions have been made – the school has failed them too as there are no staff here

Parent: do you have disabled child?

TR: I don't have a disabled child but I do have a disabled brother but I prefer not to discuss my personal life

Parent: this school works hard; residential works hard. We need this. We need time with our other children too. How can it be said that it is not education - This is all about education.

Parent: it's social too

TR: can I respond?

Parent: why aren't the decision makers here?

TR: said that Peter Salisbury has attended other consultation meetings and she would mention it to him – the staff have raised this too

Parent: school is education and the residential wing is on-flowing from that. I don't understand that it's been funded for all these years as an education provision and now suddenly there's a change. If this was a mainstream school providing something that was outstanding, would you be shutting it then?

TR: we are not funding other schools to have residential

Parent: the children here are not valued then

TR: we do care about them

Parent:

- part of the issue for the high needs block is the health element and that's not going to be resolved quickly
- we have also been trying for some time to get residential within the SEMH section and C&I and C&L section of the EHCP but it's being blocked

Parent: you don't want it in the EHCPs

Parent: if the issue is about overspend on the high needs block – this is discriminatory.

TR: how is it discriminatory

Parent: other budgets are not overspent so they aren't losing services but with this one, the one for those with SEND, the services are being cut

TR: there is a pressure on all elements of the budget – the council is looking at reducing budgets for all different services across the council budget – in February there will be a list of areas targeted to reduce costs

Parent: none of that is good and appreciate that this is about central government funding but this council needs to fight those cuts

Parent: the council need to push back and say we need the extra cash

TR: we do regularly – City Mayor has said this. In our city, we currently have a 9% increase in pupils who have an EHCP

Parent: so don't they need more support not less? These people here do the utmost best – there is nothing for these children out of here – it is so vital. They can't see other children – they can't go to each other's houses

Parent: these are the only people we trust

Parent: because of this proposal there is a lot of distress for the children

Parent: are you just here to go through the motions because the decisions been made?

TR: it hasn't been made

Parent: Peter Salisbury has said the decision has been made

TR: the decision hasn't been made. All the comments from the consultation will be put into a report for the executive – as will the comments made here today. We will distribute these after today so you can see what's been said

Parent: the city mayor needs to listen to the pupils – his responses so far have shown a lack of understanding of education and what is being provided by residential

TR: staff also asked for the city mayor to come and meet with parents, staff and children. I will take this back

Parent: it's not just for the children here now – it's for future children too

Parent: you're killing them off – this is life or death – I'm frightened for our children

TR: if the decision is made, it will not close until September 2024

Parent: what if the academy made the school provide for all different groups?

TR: I can't speak for the academy – that will be up to Jenny and the governors – they can consider options to gain funding

Parent:

- I feel that the education argument is a loop hole to try to stop the funding – this is totally education
- take communication – the communication in resi is a different form - different age groups / different agenda etc
- they can't have this normal social interaction with their peers and younger or older pupils outside school normally – they have so much equipment – transport is really difficult
- we try to help the children socialise outside of here -they need more than just going to school – other children get this
- Resi is plain straight-forward education and learning – people don't always recognise what the provision is really about – they don't always see it's education but it absolutely is – it is just a different type of learning
- SEMH I don't even have to explain – being able to stay and depend on others is a huge amount of learning. For my daughter, sleeping in a room on her own was a huge development – if that's not education, supporting her well-being and setting her up for life, I'm not sure what is – she knows how to do stuff and how to be independent – what happens when I'm dead and gone? This is about society – about her being able to live beyond here.
- I could go through the entire EHCP areas of need and explain how it happens in resi
- Then there's the point that it could happen in the school day – children want to learn in the day other things e.g. academics etc – if this is happening in the day then they won't have the opportunity to learn other things like other children do who don't need to learn all of these extra things because they don't have these needs

Parent- this is their community – they can't access what they have here - there isn't anything else out there

Parent: the understanding of education for our children seems to be really lacking in the report

TR: we do understand it's about functional skills and other things and that these are essential

Parent: it's important that that's been acknowledged but it's now important that it's acknowledged by the decision makers

TR: it will be fed back into the report for the decision makers

Parent: so if not here, where will this learning be done?

TR: in strictest sense of it, in the plans, it doesn't say that it's a must requirement in the EHCPs

Parent: that's because we aren't allowed to put it in

TR: we've looked over a long time and it's not in those

Parent: I've been doing this and I've learnt to be very careful what goes in F because if the school doesn't have it, the school potentially can say they can't meet need and potentially we have then lost a school place

Parent: the council don't want it in

JE (Principal) asked Bev Snow to explain the history regarding the EHCPs and why it's not in them any more and for some years

Bev Snow – head of residential care and education: if you go back much further (during headship of David Bateson's – head teacher before last) it was always put in. Then when school and resi were funded together – which was fought for and agreed, residential was just part of the offer – therefore it wasn't necessary to put it in and we were told by LCC that it was no longer needed in the EHCP – as long as Ash Field was in there. It was just part of the offer and would be provided to the pupils who it would make the biggest impact for

Parent: and those who made that decision aren't in charge now and those who are making decisions now won't be when our children are older and struggling – it's a short term decision

Parent: if one of our pupils goes from being in Resi and then goes to a local college in Leicester, someone will have to fund them there and make up for what's been missed - it will cost more at that point as the children will have become more dependent

Parent – it's a short term saving

TR: I understand what you're saying – my previous role was adult social care. It's important to ensure young people are supported in independence as much as possible. Picking up on the college element and making sure that when children leave here they have something to go onto: we are agreeing with Leicester college around a new curriculum – they have a unit for profound and medical needs which is great but under-utilised – they want to change their curriculum and change who they can support. We've shared with them the data for the next 5-10 years – they understand that they need to change their offer. There will then be an opportunity if the pupils want it.

Parent: but if they came out of here not needing that then surely that's better

Parent: we need to remember that some of our children are life-limited so they may not reach that provision so it's important that they get that here and now

Parent: education is an experience – if you're in a wheelchair, just getting in somewhere – things that are classed as special needs don't work for these children – their needs are really complex – some won't live into adulthood - they need the best life they can now

Parent: so why would we get rid of this?

Parent: All of the expertise that is there – it will be lost

TR: Ash Field is an academy – if the decision is made to withdraw it will be from September 2024 – potentially that gives time to look at other options for funding – ways to provide the facility. We've had a discussion about extending the provision to other children – providing respite support and evening support – including those with similar difficulties

Parent: you just used the term respite – we are education

TR: one option is the possibility of Ash Field moving towards respite short breaks provision

JE clarified about our discussions around respite with the LA explaining:

- Explained what was offered re the respite to us, explaining that it was for us to take a cohort of children with complex autism who also had medical needs. That we felt this wouldn't work with the cohort we have especially in the environment that we have – the mix just wouldn't work so our pupils just couldn't attend.
- Clarified around our (govs) decision not to engage in the respite conversation until a decision is made on the current Resi provision as it stands because this is the service that we believe should stay and by engaging in the respite ideas etc, we feel it's almost accepting the decision on our current provision which we think needs to happen after the decision is officially made. We hope that the funding will remain for it as it is.

Parent: can you give an example of a decision where other cuts have been made?

TR: element 3 to mainstream schools / banding adjustments within special schools / Millgate residential – so we've had to make difficult decisions already

Parent: this is easy to cut because they are vulnerable

Parent: someone has used the idea that this isn't education and are trying to use it as a loop hole – but there isn't a loop hole – it is education

Parent: a long time ago it was raised that this was not education and funding was at risk – this was successfully over turned as it was seen as education

TR: we will look at that – I will check case law relating to it - if there was precedent set before – it would go against the law – we wouldn't want to go against that -sometimes individual cases do set precedent

Parent: the council don't care – you're just talking the talk

Parent: let's get Peter Salisbury here

Parent: it takes longer for our kids to learn in every sense so even if one evening a week and night and morning, it makes a difference – for our kids to achieve they need that extra input – it makes me think it is discrimination – we need to level the playing field for these children. We need them in a provision with expert staff to do those things that other families can do all the time

TR: I do understand that from my brother – that they do need extra time and support

TR: are there any other questions

Parent: when will next meeting be and when will Peter Salisbury be here?

Parent: one of my children is at a mainstream school a street away. They can experience playing in the park, being sociable. My other son came here – he can't access his own community – he can't have friends over as we don't have a hoist etc and he can't go there because of his medical needs - other parents can't take responsibility for that. Then he came here and accessed Resi. He has learnt so many independent skills – showering, personal hygiene etc. He's either with me or at school – this is a safe environment for him to come and learn things – how to shower, how to cook – you can't shower in the middle of a maths lesson – you can't just do those things in the school day. Resi adds a huge value

Parent: the suggestion that we can be given a budget and go and find it – it isn't there – there is not the expert services – the school have the expertise and facility

Parent: you have this provision – built up over so many years – and it's excellent – why would you get rid of it

Parent: surely the 400k is a drop in the ocean

Parent: you're talking to people here today who go through this 24-7. That's why we're so passionate about it

TR: we understand that – of course it matters to you – we just don't have the money

Parent: some people won't be here today because they can't be – not because they don't care

Parent: they're just wasting money on stupid things

JE asked for examples of the things parents felt the council were wasting money on

Parents: bike lanes and a new market were stated

Carer: if 5 children here got to crisis point here – it would cost you 2 million. Health, social care and education are often needed for the same child – as an example, for one child it's costing more than it's costing to run this whole provision. If 5 parents got to crisis point from here, you will be spending far more. The provision would have to be specialist for the pupils here – hospitals cost £9000 for one week – the argument is flawed – it's a very short term saving. That's just a fact. Look at the placements currently being paid for by the council. With no saving for two years but building stress up for parents.

Parent: decision makers now are just leaving the problems for the future

JE asked if other funding options could be considered given the costs that had been stated if families were to go into crisis – could resi be kept as we are for education but taking into account the above – could contributions then be made from the general fund / social care in recognition of the above and the potential costs that could happen without this provision – so it's joint funded between the high needs block and other funding streams but with the model kept

TR: one of the considerations already was that it wouldn't be funded by the general fund. It's looking at an overspend of 30 million. In terms of individual children – council does have a statutory duty where for whatever reasons families can't care for them – do have lots of children in care – we want them to be with foster parents or their own parents instead so they do have to be taken into care.

Pupils Consultation Meeting at Ash Field with Tracie Rees and Clare Nagle – 07 12 22

Some pupils had prepared speeches. These are not recorded here but will be submitted, where pupils wish them to be, individually. These notes capture additional questions and comments.

Consultation explained – TR explained that a note would be made of everything said and then the people who make the decision will be able to see what you have said.

Pupil 1 – recorded a video as he is non-verbal. He was using switches to answer a variety of yes/no questions

- Likes staying in Resi
- Learns new things
- Resi important to you and your friends

Pupil 2:

Question: Do you understand the impact this will have?

TR: the council is aware of the concerns raised by staff – they told us about the support it gives – and some of your parents and carers also came in – and now some of the students have shared their views – we’ve heard about what effect it would have on you – we will relay that back

How can you say this is not education?

TR: Recognise that it is rated really highly by Ofsted – we know that students really rate the place and it’s really important to you. The problem that we have is that it comes down to the financial position – we realise that is hard because of the value you put on this. We know what benefit it gives – the council is under massive financial pressure – lots of children need support for their education part let alone residential – we need to make sure they all get an education during the day. 400k would allow us to educate another 30 odd pupils – this would ease the financial pressure we have during the day for pupils

Do you not want children to have as independent a future as possible?

TR: Of course we want all of our children to have a good education and the life skills for adulthood – we know what the provision provides but we just don’t have the money to continue providing it. The decision is not made – we will take this back and that will feed into the report for the decision-makers

Pupil: you said that instead of funding the residential department, 30 more pupils educated – but by taking it away, more than 30 students here are losing their education by removing it – you’re losing a massive part of education for the pupils here

TR: I understand what you’re saying – in an ideal world, we would like to offer it to everyone – but we currently have about 1000 pupils in special schools and 10000 in mainstream with special needs – and we have to support them all – we can see it’s beneficial to the children here but we have to meet the need of all of those children. There is a lot of money being cut – the government are not

giving us enough money – we think we will get about 3 million pounds from what’s been promised – even with this, it still won’t solve it

Pupil: people say resi isn’t education. It 100% is – it’s helped me develop social skills, cooking, washing clothes. It’s unfair on people who will come here in the future and who need the skills we’ve learnt.

TR: I understand that promoting independence is part of what special schools do – pupils can be taught this in the day though. We have to think about the other children who need their education. It’s a financial difficulty.

Pupil: instead of closing us down – why can’t you support us to find another way to stay open?

TR: the proposal is to withdraw the funding from September 2024 – if the decision is made to withdraw the money and Ash Field decide it can’t operate – we would help the academy to look at the funding options.

Pupil: why can’t it happen sooner

TR: because no decision has been made yet – if a decision is made and if the academy want us to work with them to look at other funding streams, we will do so

JE explained the funding streams being offered so far would not keep resi as it is and it would not be a magic wand that would keep it the same – we hope the LA would work with us to find funding streams that might

Pupil: I think I’ve learnt just as much in resi as I have in school – I don’t think I would have been able to sit here and do this without resi – to have my voice heard.

Pupil: Resi keeps us motivated to do things that we haven’t been able to do before – it helps our emotional needs as well as education, our well-being, which then helps us to learn how to cope – it’s like a second family – that’s what makes resi really stand out

Pupil: when you’re in resi, the friends you have in school well you can see them more than you can at home. When you don’t stay there, can’t see your friends or the staff in the morning

Pupil: you say that we can learn those things during the school day but we have other things to learn during the school day – we have futures – you don’t know what it would mean – you don’t know about me – you don’t know what mentally it does to us – you can pick up a pen but you can’t communicate in school in the same way – in resi you see other people – you can socialise with other people of other ages – without resi we wouldn’t live. It really annoys me – without resi without our staff considering us, without all of this - you can’t just take it away from us. You can’t just take our home away from us – I know we’ve got two homes – but you’re taking away our independence and you have no idea how this feels.

Pupil: you can see the emotion X has but most of us have found this hard and emotional at times – it has become more and more unbearable – we hope we’ll get our message across so that you change your mind and we’re trying to keep strong until then

TR: we'll talk to the city mayor to come and talk to you but also to ensure that the decision is made as quickly as possible so that you're not in this limbo

JE asked if any other pupils had anything to add

TR: If other pupils want to talk to staff and feed that back through the consultation, they can

Pupil: don't take it away from us

Pupil: being in resi has provided me with life skills – cooking, making a cup of tea – doing day to day stuff - without it, I wouldn't be as independent – at home, I can now dress myself – without resi I wouldn't have the confidence to do these things

Pupil – likes being with his friends – it makes him happy –

Staff member added that this pupil has achieved a lot with his personal care needs through being in resi

Pupil: it's really fun

Pupil: we've spoken about the education side – if we're not talking about education though – it's a great place – the staff are amazing – they've given me advice and support – I've been through a lot that I won't get into now but resi has really helped – I don't think my mental health would be ok if I didn't have resi – I am staying at school another year because I will have the support of resi. I'm moving home and resi will help me with this – I'll then be able to live on my own – I'll have carers coming in but I will be taking care of myself - I wouldn't be able to do that without resi

Pupil: I'm leaving this year – I've learnt a lot in resi – answered yes to various things he'd learnt when prompted relating to preparing for adulthood

Pupil: when I walk into resi, it's joyful and jolly – when you go in you instantly feel calm, safe, start to feel at home – the staff are all lovely - you get to do activities and you get to chill out and express how you feel – when you walk in, it's a heart-warming place to be – you know you'll be in safe hands and have a good time.

Ash field Academy Residential Provision – Consultation Emails received

-----Original Message-----

From: SN

Sent: 10 January 2023 09:13

To: consultations <consultations@leicester.gov.uk>

Subject: Ashfield Academy Res

Dear Sir / Madam,

I'm writing to you for you to reconsider the decision on closing the Ash Field Academy Residential centre.

After reading the reports and optimising of the children using the facility I feel compelled to write to you and ask you to reconsider.

The children using the facility are unable to stay at friends houses, due to the equipment / medication needs and for their social development, this is a much needed service. Taking this away will impact their mental health and will continue to isolate them from society.

It's difficult enough to find locations in Leicester which are accessible for multiple wheel chair users to gather.

Mental health is at an all time high with funding stretched, I ask you to re consider.

The facility is great to relieve families and carers for 1 night of respite, whilst caring for other children and relatives.

I'm sure funding can be shuffled to accommodate such an important part of the special needs sector and support the children and families.

Kind regards

SN

From: BK

Sent: 11 January 2023 20:40

To: consultations <consultations@leicester.gov.uk>

Subject: Ashfield closure proposal

This facility is absolutely essential to its users . The needs of the disabled children in Leicester and Leicestershire has grown, due to earlier diagnosis and better medical assessments

To close rather than fund this essential facility, would be a travesty and would put further pressure on mainstream schools, other specialist schools, parents, but more importantly, the young people who benefit from its amazing teachers and facilities

Mon 5 Dec at 10.54

I have found that since xx has been attending the residential department she has become more Self-aware and confident

She has learnt how to deal with personal issues how to look after herself with day to day things like cooking cleaning hygiene and much more.

She's More equipped when it comes to dealing with adults She's More out going when talking to people.

In my opinion it would be a great loss of life skills education to close the residential department down you would be losing a great learning aid for the children at the school.

It is one of the many things that make Ash Field so different from mainstream schools

Yours

KG

Xx grandpa and full-time carer

06/12/2022

From: MJ

Sent: 05 January 2023 17:59

To: TheMayor <TheMayor@leicester.gov.uk>

Subject: Ashfield academy

Good evening,

I write this email with a heavy heart and what Ashfield means to me and my family I am a single parent of two disabled children both which attend Ashfield academy

XX has become so much more independent and has learnt so many new life skills

He also helps me look after his sister she also has neuromuscular disease as

When XX is in residential,

I can concentrate on getting myself better educated by doing online courses so I can come off benefits and get a job support my family.

having both children at home and both on ventilators at night I don't and won't have time to study I don't get any help from any service we used to use rainbows hospice but that got changed to end of life care in the daytime I'm caring for my mum who is in the last stage of dementia

I just don't know what else I can say over then I'm struggling to do my best for my children

I would love to be able to work and have my own social life but without myself getting online courses.

Please save Ashfield

Kind regards

MJ

Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) Tool:

Title of proposal: Ash Field Academy Residential /Respite / Extended Education service provision

Name of division/service: Children's Commissioning Team.

Name of lead officer completing this assessment: Sophie Bower-Scott

Date EIA assessment completed: 03/03/23

Decision maker: Director

Date decision taken:

EIA sign off on completion	Signature	Date
Lead officer:	Clare Nagle/Sophie Bower-Scott	03/03/2023
Equalities officer:	Kalvaran Sandhu	03/03/2023
Divisional director:	Tracie Rees	03/03/2023

1. Setting the context

Ash Field Academy is a specialist school catering for pupils from age 4 to 19. The school serves Leicester City, Leicestershire and Rutland and also admits pupils from other counties. They specialise in providing education for pupils with complex medical conditions or serious physical disabilities. They tend to cater for pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) to those with more Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) whilst mainstream schools have become more inclusive to pupils with less severe learning difficulties. As such, the main curriculum provision at Ash Field Academy is focused on supporting pupils with learning difficulties. In addition to physical and learning needs and disabilities, many pupils at the Academy also have communication and sensory needs. Whilst the Academy caters for pupils who have some level of social and emotional needs, due to the medical vulnerabilities of many of the Academy's pupils, they are not currently able to meet the needs of pupils with significantly challenging behaviours.

The Academy operates a residential provision which pupils can access, with parental agreement, from the age of 8. This provision supports pupil's education around independence, social skills and emotional self-regulation. The residential wing is attached to the main school building and so parts of the school are also used in the evening by pupils staying overnight. There are eight bedrooms and a 'flat' for older pupils' use, allowing 18 pupils to stay at any one time. Most pupils stay for one or two nights per week, with those in the independence flat staying the whole week. To

ensure safety through the night, in addition to three night-waking members of staff, there are two members of staff who sleep on the premises and an 'on call' rota which always includes a member of the Senior Leadership Team or the Head of Residential Education and Care.

This provision is funded by high needs block funding arrangements via the Department for Education. As part of a review of the Re-alignment of Special School Funding from March 2021, there was a recommendation to look at the Ash Field Academy residential provision. The proposal is to undertake a review of the service and rationalisation of the budget for this provision. The intention of the review is to provide an appraisal of several options for how this service is managed and the impact the service has on the pupils.

Of the 160 pupils who attend Ash Field Academy, only 44 accessed respite support during 2020/21. This number has fluctuated during COVID 19 pandemic. The provision is only accessible to Ash Field Academy pupils and not the wider Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) population within Leicester of over 1,000 pupils across all special schools.

The service is currently providing respite to students and their families and this is respite provision that has not been recognised as an assessed "must have" need within the pupils' Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP). There are educational benefits to children accessing the provision which must be considered, though the impact could be considered more social rather than educational. Children and young people attending other special schools may have similar needs but do not have access to this residential provision as they do not attend Ash Field Academy. Additionally other Special School Headteachers may argue they would equally want to offer residential trips, however do not have funding to do this, therefore it is difficult to justify this as education provision under the High Needs Block funding guidance. Furthermore, the learning or Preparing for Adulthood activities could and should be part of the curriculum offered in schools hours and could be transferred into the school day.

2. Equality implications/obligations

a. Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimisation

The review of this service and the work to establish options for the provision is for the Executive to decide on will not mean the immediate cessation of services. The formal review of the service will include a 12 week public consultation and alternative provision to those with an eligible need will be considered.

An outcome of the review may be that the service provision is provided in a formal way, linked to children social care provision, in a way which will enable those impacted to continue to use the service, and those currently unable to use the service because they attend a different school to do so. Alternatively, the funding model of the provision may change so as to incorporate a greater contribution from Health and/or monetary contributions from the children/young people accessing the service.

A final decision on any future model will only be made with the completion of a full Equality Impact Assessment that will support and assess the impact. There may be an impact on those currently using the provision who are not currently assessed as having an eligible need. A re-assessment of those in that situation will be required.

Eligibility decisions are based on protected characteristics and equality legislation along with the children's and families act and SEND code of practice.

b. Advance equality of opportunity between different groups

The proposal will mean that similar provision across the city special schools will be considered. By doing this we will establish if other students and families are at a disadvantage because the provision we have currently only caters for Ash Field Academy pupils. If this is the case then those with eligible needs not accessing the service due to capacity or any other issues will be clearer to us as an authority and will enable the review of this service to identify and manage any issues of inequality.

This is a relevant concern as only one of the city's 6 special schools has this provision for its students and families. Access issues could arise and an uplift in demand may be seen which cannot be met by current service capacity and will potentially lead to a separate project.

c. Foster good relations between different groups

The school has a very good reputation and is a 'lifeline' for many families that are able to send their children to the provision for a period of intensive support delivered in a residential setting. There is often work by staff at the provision that goes above and beyond the remit, and whilst very much appreciated by families who access the service, may also present a level of unrealistic expectations from the communities that use them. This may be because the service and staff work beyond an educational remit and provide support that would be expected from children's social care or early help teams. The service delivers a degree of enablement training to pupils which helps them to

transition into a more independent adulthood than they might otherwise have experienced.

As this service has been available to those at Ash Field Academy for many years, a change in policy allowing access to other schools, or a change in allocation of places to those with assessed need identified in EHCP plans, may see families with historical access lose the provision they have been used to receiving, or see their access to it reduced.

3. Who is affected?

Pupils and families of pupils who attend Ash Field Academy who have a range of complex medical conditions and disabilities, special education needs and special education and mental health needs. This will also impact on staff and management of the respite provision.

4. Information used to inform the equality impact assessment

Information to inform an options appraisal has been gained via engagement with pupils, families and unpaid carers, staff from the school, social care and education, heads of service and team leaders. Data and information teams within social care and education, Census data and local authority data from the Liquid Logic system and the education department have been used to inform the review and to provide evidence of the potential impact of the proposal.

Further consultation and discussions included engagement with head teachers of Leicester's other special schools. A discussion took place at the Schools Forum on 21 September 2022 to present the proposal for the consultation.

Officers of the Council visited Ash Field Academy on 10th February 2022 to observe the residential provision in use, and spoke to staff and pupils whilst onsite. Additionally, school staff, parents and pupils were met by officers of the Council on 7th December 2022 to discuss the proposals of the consultation, and a further meeting was held on 6th January 2023 with Cllr Cutkelvin in attendance too to meet staff, pupils and parents.

A Statutory Consultation was carried out by Leicester City Council ("the Council") between 26th November 2022 and 9th January 2023 to seek views on whether the council should cease funding for the residential provision at Ash Field Academy with effect from September 2024.

5. Consultation

Informal consultation has taken place to date with a) The school leaders, b) parents identified by the school, c) several pupils, d) Local Authority Heads of SEND, e) Local Authority Head of Social Care/ Service Manager and f) City of Leicester Association of Special Schools (Head Teachers) comparator authorities.

A Statutory Consultation was carried out by Leicester City Council (“the Council”) between 26th November 2022 and 9th January 2023 to seek views on whether the council should cease funding for the residential provision at Ash Field Academy with effect from September 2024. The consultation survey was published online in the public domain and attracted much attention from the media and on social media platforms.

Email communications were sent out at the start of the consultation to the provision’s key stakeholders to advise them of the consultation having opened, its purpose and to provide detail on how to access it online. Additionally, typed correspondence was provided to Ash Field Academy suitable for them to cascade to parents, staff and governors as was requested.

A discussion took place at the schools Forum on 21 September 2022 to present the proposal for the consultation. School staff, parents and pupils were met by officers of the Council on 7th December 2022 to discuss the proposals of the consultation.

A further meeting was held on 6th January 2023 with Cllr Cutkelvin in attendance too to meet staff, pupils and parents.

Various board/group members and organisations were engaged with, to inform about the consultation. These organisations represent the interests of people who are supported by Ash Field Academy’s residential provision and encompassed: Parents/ carers of special school pupils, Ash Field Academy Staff, Trade Unions, City Mayor / executive, Ward councillors, Special schools (via CLASS - City of Leicester Association of Special Schools), Parent Carer Forum, Schools Forum, SENDIASS School Governors, Media (Leicester Mercury), SEND Staff, Social Care & Education Staff, LCC staff, Leicester Residents.

94% of the 378 responses received to the consultation survey disagreed with the proposal.

87% of responses included verbatim comment to provide more detail around their views. These comments highlighted several themes around the current and potential impacts felt. The most commonly recurring themes were that the Residential provision offers education to those currently accessing it, teaching them valuable, lifelong independence skills, and that the Residential provision offers support and respite to both pupils and their families which helps to keep both healthy in terms of

their mental wellbeing. The provision gives disabled pupils an opportunity to socialise with their peers in a space that is both physically equipped to cater for their needs and staffed with the support they require to look after their health and care needs. Several comments suggested that alternative, similar provision is either scarce or doesn't exist.

Themes of Comments and Percentage of comments reflecting each theme:

- The provision is educational - 38.67%
- The provision provides support/respite - 31.47%
- The provision provides social opportunities - 19.2%
- Non-specific, generally positive about the provision - 14.4%
- No Comment - 13.07%
- There is no/few alternatives to this provision - 11.73%
- It is morally right to offer this provision - 11.47%
- The provision is cost effective in the long term - 5.87%
- Alternative funding should be found - 3.47%
- Concern for staff/risk of redundancies - 1.6%

6. Potential Equality Impact

a. Age

What is the impact of the proposal on age?

The age of most pupils affected by any change is 8-19, although the school caters for younger pupils who would potentially look forward to accessing the residential facilities in the future. Staff likely to be affected are of working age.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on age?

The service is specifically for disabled children, any changes to the provision could have an impact on those children in terms of their attainment, attendance, wellbeing, and life chances if they are unable to develop the skills and experience that accessing the service gives them. Staying at the residential provision supports children in developing their personal independence, learning skills such as cooking, cleaning, washing themselves, doing laundry, etc., and

enables them to have social opportunities, spending time with their peers away from their parents and outside the pressure of the classroom.

However, the residential provision at Ash Field Academy is one of only two such school provisions. Only children and families that attend the school can access the service. The students of the remaining 6 special schools in Leicester are not able to access this service.

What are the mitigating actions?

A full review of the operating model would mitigate and address the equitability of the current models. If the residential provision at Ash Field Academy were to close, the children accessing it could still seek to access Short Breaks provision delivered via the Disabled Children's Service at their local Council, although it is unlikely they would be entitled to receive the same amount of support as they are able to receive via the school provision.

b. Disability

What is the impact of the proposal on disability?

The service meets the need for children and young people with disabilities, both physical and cognitive.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on disability?

The services are specifically for children any chances to the provision could have an impact on those children in terms of their attainment, attendance and life chances if they are unable to be productive at school. However, it is one of only two schools that has such a provision. Only children and families that attend the school can access the service. The students of the remaining 6 special schools in Leicester are not able to access this service.

What are the mitigating actions?

A full review of the operating model would mitigate and address the equitability of the current models. A full review of the operating model would mitigate and address the equitability of the current models. If the residential provision at Ash Field Academy were to close, the children accessing it could still seek to access Short Breaks provision delivered via the Disabled Children's Service at their local Council, although it is unlikely they would be entitled to receive the same amount of support as they are able to receive via the school provision.

c. Gender reassignment

What is the impact of the proposal on gender reassignment?

Not applicable.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on gender reassignment?

Not applicable.

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable.

d. Marriage and Civil Partnership

What is the impact of the proposal on marriage and civil partnership?

Not applicable.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on marriage and civil partnership?

Not applicable.

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable.

e. Pregnancy and Maternity

What is the impact of the proposal on pregnancy and maternity?

Not applicable.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on pregnancy and maternity?

Not applicable.

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable.

f. Race

What is the impact of the proposal on race?

63% of pupils currently accessing the residential provision are White British, and the majority of the school's pupils are White British (37% approx.), or Indian (19% approx.). Any changes to the residential offer at the school will therefore impact a larger number of White British pupils than any other ethnicity.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on race?

The high percentage of white British pupils will mean that the impact of any review will be more concentrated on this group.

What are the mitigating actions?

Subject to a decision being made, the Council will consider any mitigating actions required.

g. Religion or Belief

What is the impact of the proposal on religion or belief?

Over 45% of the pupils accessing the residential provision are recorded as following no religion. There are slightly more pupils in the school as a whole identifying as Muslim/Islamic.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on religion or belief?

In terms of the review into this residential provision the risk of negative impact is low.

What are the mitigating actions?

Subject to a decision being made, the Council will consider any mitigating actions required.

h. Sex

What is the impact of the proposal on sex?

Approximately 60% of pupils accessing the residential provision are male, which is proportionally representative of the school as a whole.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on sex?

Any change to the service is expected to impact both genders equally.

What are the mitigating actions?

Subject to a decision being made, the Council will consider any mitigating actions required.

i. Sexual Orientation

What is the impact of the proposal on sexual orientation?

Not applicable.

What is the risk of disproportionate negative impact on sexual orientation?

Not applicable.

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable.

7. Summary of protected characteristics

a. Summarise why the protected characteristics you have commented on, are relevant to the proposal?

Age, disability, Race, Religion, sex; these are all relevant to the proposal as the schools provide services for people from a very specific age group, from a wide number of race backgrounds, with a very percentage of one being higher than the others, all with a disability under the equality act, and from both genders, although the use of the service is predominantly male.

b. Summarise why the protected characteristics you have not commented on, are not relevant to the proposal?

The characteristics that have not been identified will be due to lack of data, and the age of the children, who may not be able to identify which applies to them at this point, or due to age they are unlikely to be protected under.

8. Other Groups

a. Children in poverty

What is the impact of the proposal on children in poverty?

Many of the children are accessing this service and poverty is a reason that they may struggle at home and with their attendance and attainment at school.

What is the risk of negative impact on children in poverty?

The residential provision provides a safety net, food, shelter, and for many of the children their own space which whilst at home they would not get.

What are the mitigating actions?

Subject to a decision being made, the Council will consider any mitigating actions required.

b. Other vulnerable groups

What is the impact of the proposal on other vulnerable groups?

Not applicable.

What is the risk of negative impact on other vulnerable groups?

Not applicable.

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable.

c. Other (describe)

What is the impact of the proposal on other groups?

Not applicable.

What is the risk of negative impact on other groups?

Not applicable.

What are the mitigating actions?

Not applicable.

9. Other sources of potential negative impact

Current economic climate is concerning and could have a further negative impact if changes to SEND funding or government policy around SEND provision were to change in response to financial challenges.

Increasing demand for SEND provision could impact the future sustainability of services and capacity.

10. Human Rights Implications

Part 2, Article 2, Right to Education. The school, pupils and parents may consider the provision to provide educational learning, however, through this review and consultation, the view is that this respite provision provides social learning opportunities for the pupils.

11. Monitoring Impact

Subject to a decision being made, Council officers will work with the school to monitor any adverse impact.

12. EIA Action Plan

Subject to a decision being made, Council officers will develop an action plan to mitigate against any potential adverse impacts.

**Children, Young People and Education Scrutiny Commission (CYPE)
Work Programme 2023 – 2024**

Meeting Date	Item	Recommendations / Actions	Progress
11 July 2023	1) Ashfield Centre 2) Introduction to CYPE services	1) Lead Officers to revisit this issue with the view to explore further options and solutions with Ash Field Academy. The Council considers a city-wide review of provision related to the high needs block funding. 2) The key issues discussed be added to the work programme. The Family Hubs item to be added for the next commission meeting.	1) Formal decision called-in and brought back to the commission on 2 November 2) Family Hubs item taken to the meeting on 19 September.
19 September 2023	1) Family Hubs report 2) Children & Social Care – intro to new director and the services. 3) Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children (UASC) 4) RAAC and Leicester City schools – update 5) Work Programme	1) Recommended to keep on work programme for a report back in 6 months. 2a) Members liked the initiative of a charter for Cllrs to be community champions for fostering within their communities, look forward to this being developed. 2b) A future meeting item suggested on children’s homes, a presentation would benefit scrutiny. 5) The following be added to the work programme and allocated to upcoming commission meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children residential homes - deficit recovery plan - Looked after children placements - Recruitment and social services - SEND and Taxi provision 	1) Added as a suggested item for 27 February 2024. 2a) Added to the work programme – date TBC 2b) Added to work programme – date TBC 5) To be confirmed in consultation with the Chair/Vice Chair/officers

Meeting Date	Item	Recommendations / Actions	Progress
2 November 2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ashfield Call-in High Needs Block – Verbal Update 		
December 2023 <i>date tbc</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguarding Annual report DSG high-needs block recovery plan SEND taxi provision School attendance and exclusions report 		
16 January 2024	Council budget reports – general fund report and capital programme		
27 February 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Family Hubs Update (as requested in September 2023) Unaccompanied Asylum Seeker Children – Update Performance report for schools 		

Forward Plan Items (suggested)

Topic	Detail	Proposed Date
SEN support and funding		
Pupil Place Planning (Primary and Secondary)		

Multi-Academy Trusts - Overview		
Children's residential homes and funding pressures		
Looked After Children Placements		
Children not in state-maintained schools e.g.: Academies, Independent, Faith schools.		
Youth Justice Plan		
Early Years Childcare Sufficiency Report		
Youth Services - overview		
Fostering Annual report and Adoption Annual report		
Children in Care Council/Care Leavers		
School Holiday Activity and Food Provision		
Education Govt reports e.g.: white paper / green paper		
Ofsted Inspection reports		
Children's Social Care – Recruitment Issues		
Fostering Community Champions	Outlined at meeting on 19 September – to be brought to a future meeting	
Mental Health impacts on children	Likely to be examined jointly with other commissions	

