

Record of operational decision

Decision title:	To approve the proposal to add an autism base at Leominster Primary School, Earl Mortimer College and Aylestone School, from 1 September 2023
Date of decision:	8 May 2023
Decision maker:	Head of Educational Development
Authority for delegated decision:	The authority for the specified officer to take this decision as set out in the Children and Young Peoples scheme of delegation line 91. https://councillors.herefordshire.gov.uk/documents/s50108429/Children%20and%20Young%20People%20Scheme%20of%20Delegation.pdf
Ward:	All
Consultation:	<p>Herefordshire Council conducted a public consultation from 22 March – 21 April 2023. This included the 3 named schools in this decision and also St Weonards Primary School, which is an academy, therefore a separate decision will be taken by the Department for Education's Regional Director.</p> <p>In total there was 24 respondents: In support 21 Against 1 Neither in support or against 2</p> <p>Summary of Reasons (some respondents gave several reasons):-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome additional provision/it will help to meet demand 15 • Know a child who would/would have benefitted 12 • Will help many children 4 • Supportive of inclusive environments/ASD and neuro typical children being educated together 3 • Reduce burden on other provision 2 <p>The against response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places will not be spread evenly across year groups • Will lead to a disproportionate number of children with autism in a small school population [St Weonards]
Decision made:	Approve the addition of an autism base at Leominster Primary School, Earl Mortimer College and Aylestone School.
Reasons for decision:	Herefordshire Local Authority has two existing mainstream autism bases (MABs). One is for primary age children, at Hampton Dene Primary School as part of their Language and Communication Centre (LCC) and The Bridge is for secondary-age pupils at The Bishop of Hereford High School.

	<p>The purpose of the MABs is to allow children who need additional support to access mainstream education to gain that support from specialist staff who work from the base classroom. The criteria for being offered a place at a MAB is that the children must have a diagnosis of autism and a level of educational need that can only met through a MAB as identified in their Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).</p> <p>Both existing MABs are now full for new admissions in September 2023. Additionally, as a result of information received from the education and health staff at the Child Development Centre where children are assessed, diagnosed and supported in the Early Years, it is evident that there will be a need for a significant expansion in the number of specialist primary mainstream autism base places and we will need this additional capacity from September 2023. We have also had a high level of demand from parents who are seeking secondary specialist autism base provision as their children move from primary school to secondary school.</p>
<p>Highlight any associated risks/finance/legal/equality considerations:</p>	<p>Financial - The MABs are funded in the same way as special schools and other specialist provision. The new MABs will be funded for 8 places plus individual pupil top-up funding in accordance with the level of need described in their EHC Plan.</p>
<p>Details of any alternative options considered and rejected:</p>	<p>All schools were considered, however, there are limited school that have the space to provide such a base and have the geographical spread.</p>
<p>Details of any declarations of interest made:</p>	<p>None</p>

Signed..... Date: 8 May 2023

Head of Educational Development