

# Statutory notice

## LONDON BOROUGH OF WALTHAM FOREST

### Expansion onto an additional site of Burnside Secondary PRU

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools, Statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers, January 2023 that the London Borough of Waltham Forest is proposing to expand Burnside Secondary PRU, Burnside Avenue, London, E4 8YJ by 20 additional places through the use of a satellite site located in 23-25 North Birkbeck Road, E11 4JF with effect from 1 September 2025. This site will include the co-location of a Family Resilience Centre.

Burnside Secondary PRU presently has a capacity of 46 places aged 11-16 and the proposal will increase the schools' capacity to 66 places, 20 of which will be located at the satellite site at North Birkbeck Road, E11 4JF.

The London Borough of Waltham Forest will implement the proposals.

Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object to, or make comment upon the proposals, by sending their representations to: Rob White, Town Hall, London Borough of Waltham Forest, London, E17 4JF or by emailing: [rob.white@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:rob.white@walthamforest.gov.uk)

Consultation period: Monday 9th September 2024 to Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October 2024

### **Explanatory Notes**

Burnside Secondary PRU is a Pupil Referral Unit for children who are not in mainstream provision for a variety of reasons such as being at risk of, or who have been, permanently excluded from mainstream provision.

The London Borough of Waltham Forest aims to decide whether to approve the proposals by October 2024. If the Council fails to determine the proposals within two months of the end of the representation period it will pass all relevant material to the Schools Adjudicator who will determine the proposals.

## **Supplementary information**

### **Evidence of demand**

Waltham Forest Council (the Local Authority) has a statutory duty under The Education Act 1996 Section 14(1) to ensure that there are sufficient school places for all children and young people who are resident within the Borough. The Authority also has specific duties to arrange suitable full-time education for pupils to begin from the sixth school day after the first day of a permanent exclusion.

In line with national trends, there are high levels of need for early intervention to support and improve children's emotional wellbeing, and for children who are at risk of exclusion from mainstream schools in Waltham Forest. Throughout 2022/23, we saw a significant increase in SEMH needs in the lives of children at risk of exclusion and presented to Fair Access Panel (FAP), consistent with national findings.

The borough currently commissions 46 places at Burnside PRU for children who have been or who are at risk of being permanently excluded. For the last 3 years the Council's Behaviour Attendance and Children Missing Education (BACME) service has commissioned an additional 20 places from another local school as part of the Alternative Offer Schools Agreement agreed via Schools Forum for secondary-aged children requiring places via the Fair Access Panel. Through this period these 66 places have consistently been shown to be required for children with Waltham Forest.

### **Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice)**

Waltham Forest currently has 3 PRUs which are based in the North of the borough: one (Burnside) operates for children of secondary school age who have been or who are at risk of being permanently excluded from school, one (Hawkswood Primary) operates partly to provide places for primary aged children who have been permanently excluded and also for primary aged children who require additional short to medium term interventions but who continue to be on roll in mainstream schools, and one secondary (Hawkswood Therapeutic) which provides short to medium term interventions for secondary aged children who continue to be on roll in mainstream schools.

The location of these centres has proven problematic for the travelling distances and safety concerns for some children and the single secondary PRU site for permanently excluded children and those at risk of permanent exclusion has also raised placement challenges. This has resulted in an additional commission at a local special school for 20 places for children who had been permanently excluded, or who were at risk of permanent exclusion, over the last 3 years. Based on the consistent evidence for the need for these places the Council seeks to add a permanent satellite site for our secondary PRU in the south of the borough. This site aims to reduce travel issues, secure educational opportunities for some of our most vulnerable students and free up places within the special school by moving the commission to a specialist PRU satellite site.

## **Quality of provision:**

Waltham Forest Education Directorate is committed to commissioning quality education placements for children. At its last Ofsted inspection in June 2022 it was confirmed that Burnside Secondary PRU “continues to be good and safeguarding is effective.” In addition Ofsted found that:

“Leaders have a good understanding of the context of their school and the risks faced by pupils. They ensure that staff are trained to be aware of these local issues and how to spot signs that pupils may be at risk. Leaders are ambitious for all pupils. They have designed a programme of study that enables pupils to progress successfully to mainstream or specialist schools.”

“Pupils behave well in lessons and during breaktimes. They listen to each other and follow teachers’ instructions. If pupils get distracted from their learning, teachers speak to them individually in a calm manner. Staff encourage pupils to regain their focus and complete their work. Pupils quickly make friends in school and bullying is rarely an issue. All pupils have a mentor they can report concerns to, and staff deal with these promptly. Pupils trust staff to resolve any issues quickly. Staff work together and with other agencies to keep pupils safe.”

Increasing the number of quality educational places in local schools meets the Council’s objective to provide suitable, high quality places to meet the growing number of children requiring specialist placement within available funding.

The proposed solution will increase standards and ensure that the LA meets its statutory duty to provide an education to children resident in the borough for the following reasons:

- The additional 20 places will provide additional local provision for children to access education
- Burnside Secondary PRU is a “Good” school and leaders are confident that they can replicate the same standards in the new satellite site
- Burnside Secondary PRU is part of the wider Hawkswood Group and so has wide experience of working effectively with vulnerable children
- There are economies of scale in providing for new site provision as part of an existing school

## **The effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area**

The expanded provision will not reduce the intake of neighbouring state funded schools. It will ensure the LA’s statutory duty is met so that pupils who have been permanently excluded or who are at risk of permanent exclusion are provided with full-time education.

## **Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved**

The Local Authority commissions PRU and Alternative Provision places to meet its statutory duties regarding education provision to permanently excluded children. This commission and

placement costs are discussed with local Headteachers at Schools' Forum to provide challenge and ensure it meets children's needs.

The Education Directorate has a Quality Assurance process for all providers who are commissioned to provide PRU and AP placements to ensure quality outcomes for children and provides high level scrutiny of maintained schools' budgets to ensure sustainability and value for money.

### **Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation**

The building work is complete. It is expected that the satellite site would open to the Youth and Family Resilience team in November 2024, with placements for children to be delivered from September 2025.

### **A statement explaining the procedure for responses: support; objections and comments**

Responses should be provided within four weeks of the publication date of this proposal, so by Sunday 6th October 2024 by email to [rob.white@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:rob.white@walthamforest.gov.uk) or by post to Rob White, London Borough of Waltham Forest, Town Hall, London, E17 4JF