

Proposed development of a Resource Base at Victoria Park Nursery School, Newbury

Committee considering report:	Executive
Date of Committee:	19 March 2026
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Heather Codling
Report Author:	Neil Obbard

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval to develop an existing space at Victoria Park Nursery School into a SEND Resource Base, following the formal public consultation period, which ended on 25 February 2026.
- 1.2 A decision is required within two months of the end of the representation period (the formal consultation period). If a decision is not made within that 2-month period, the proposal is legally required to be referred to the Schools Adjudicator, who will then make the determination.
- 1.3 The proposal will support nursery-aged children in West Berkshire that present with additional needs, particularly around communication, social interaction, emotional regulation and early developmental delay, to make sure the children receive the right support as early as possible. This will lead to better outcomes improving children's communication, social interaction, emotional regulation, and readiness for Reception.
- 1.4 Children who access a Resource Base typically move into Reception with improved communication, better social and emotional skills, a clearer understanding of their needs, and a smoother transition plan with the receiving school. This leads to more successful placements and greater long-term stability and can reduce the number of children who later require specialist school places or high levels of individual support.
- 1.5 This proposal represents a significant and strategically aligned enhancement to the Council's local specialist SEND offer. It directly supports the delivery of the SEND Sufficiency and Inclusion Strategy, responding to sustained growth in demand for high-quality, in-borough provision for children with complex needs.

2 Recommendations

That Executive:

- 2.1 Approves the proposal to repurpose an existing space (Family Hub) at the Victoria Park Nursery School site to establish a Resource Base that will support nursery-aged children in West Berkshire with additional needs.
- 2.2 Notes that the proposal supports the Council’s SEND Sufficiency and Inclusion Strategy, delivering cost avoidance through reduced reliance on independent and out-of-area placements.
- 2.3 Delegates authority to the Head of SEND, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Education, to oversee the implementation and ongoing monitoring of the expanded provision.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
<p>Financial:</p>	<p>The capital cost of the scheme is estimated at £650,000 and is to be funded from the Department of Education's High Needs Provision Capital Allocation Grant. Following consideration at Executive a Capital Funding Bid will be made through Asset and Capital Group to seek approval for inclusion into the capital programme.</p> <p>We are still working up costs with the nursery but expect this to be in the region of £12,750 for a 15-hour, 38-week placement. Approximately £6,500 of this will be covered by early years funding, with the remainder paid through the High Needs Block as top-up. This provision will set the expectation of children accessing mainstream provision at school, rather than specialist.</p> <p>The average cost of mainstream provision is £4,800 compared to maintained special school at £22,500 and independent/ non maintained special school at £68,000.</p> <p>We believe that a resource provision at Victoria Park will be good value for money and support improved outcomes for children by providing early support and intervention.</p> <p>There are no Home to School Transport implications or potential for cost avoidance as HTST doesn't apply to pre-statutory children. It should however support reduced costs for families in transporting their children to and from school.</p>

Proposed development of a Resource Base at Victoria Park Nursery School, Newbury

<p>Human Resource:</p>	<p>The Resource Base will be staffed by experienced early years practitioners and supported by the nursery SENCO (teacher in charge). Staff will have specific training in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communication and interaction • autism • sensory needs • behaviour regulation • early learning and development <p>Other professionals, e.g., speech and language therapists, and occupational therapists, educational psychologists, may also visit.</p> <p>Staffing will be funded through existing SEND funding mechanisms and aligned to EHCP needs.</p>
<p>Legal:</p>	<p>The proposal supports the Council's statutory duties under the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice, and Section 27 sufficiency duties. It also supports the Council's non-delegable duty under Section 42 to secure EHCP provision.</p>
<p>Risk Management:</p>	<p>Key risks relate to delivery timescales, staffing recruitment and maintaining integration with the mainstream school. These will be mitigated through phased delivery, early recruitment planning, and ongoing governance through SEND and school QA arrangements.</p>
<p>Property:</p>	<p>The proposal to develop an existing space (formerly the Family Hub Space) at Victoria Park Nursery School into a Resource Base is based on the needs of the local community and the nursery's ability to deliver high-quality early support.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-quality provision - the nursery already provides a strong and nurturing early years education. Its staff have experience supporting children with different needs and inclusion is a core part of the nursery's ethos. This makes it a safe and supportive place for a Resource Base. At the last <u>Ofsted Inspection in 2022</u>, the school was rated as 'Outstanding'. • Suitable space for specialist support - the site has indoor and outdoor areas that can be adapted for

	<p>quieter, structured sessions. Its layout would allow children to move easily between the Resource Base and main nursery rooms. This is important because the model is based on small-group work alongside inclusion in the main nursery.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meets local need - West Berkshire is seeing more young children with communication, interaction, sensory and developmental needs. There is currently, no Resource Base for Early Years settings and some children must travel further or wait for specialist support. A Resource Base here brings early help closer to home.• Strong leadership - the leadership team has demonstrated commitment to SEND and inclusive practice. They are willing and able to work with the local authority to establish the Resource Base safely and effectively. This provides confidence that it will run well.• Good accessibility for families - the site is centrally located for the community it serves. The site is easy for families to reach, and this supports equitable access to early SEND support.• History/ Background of the Site – The Old family hub building in Victoria Park was originally a Children’s Centre. These were set up in existing school buildings or extensions provided. When the Children’s Centres ceased to exist, the accommodation was returned to the school (or Nursery in this case). The Family Hub then operated from part of the existing Nursery and is a school asset. West Berkshire owns the freehold to the nursery including the old family hub. The 2 parts of the building are intrinsically connected to each other and by using the old hub building for an early years SEN resource base it allows free flow of pupils and staff from the nursery school directly into the resource base as required during the day. This reduces the need to potentially transport these children to other nursery location before and after sessions which can be disruptive and inefficient to their education.• Disposal Options – None considered. Using the existing hub building for a different, noneducational use, would bring a number of safeguarding challenges for the council/ nursery to overcome to ensure the users were clearly and robustly separated from the children attending the nursery. Currently due to the family hub historical clientele (the majority being parents with young children), the site in many ways works as one location with the ability to flow between the sites as
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Proposed development of a Resource Base at Victoria Park Nursery School, Newbury

	<p>required. Construction work would be required to ensure access between the two buildings is robustly limited, additional security fencing would need to be installed and new risk assessments would need to be produced to enable the level of safeguarding was appropriate for another use. This would place the existing nursery under additional pressure and impacting their teaching day. Please also be aware that the site is relatively small with no parking available does not make the site particularly appealing to non-educational users. To obtain an accurate market value for this part of the school site will require engaging with a commercial valuer. We have no revenue budget to achieve this.</p>
<p>Policy:</p>	<p>The proposal aligns with National Policy and the West Berkshire Council SEND and Inclusion Strategy 2024–2029, the SEND and AP Improvement Plan (2023 - 2025), and the Delivering Better Value programme, Equalities Act 2010, SEND Regulations 2014, Children, Families Act 2014 SEND Code of Practice 2015, EHC Plans (Regs 11-17), Reviews Regs (18-20), Mediation (Regs 33 – 42) and EHC assessments (Regs 3-10)</p> <p>Building Bulletin (BB) 104, Building guidelines</p>

Proposed development of a Resource Base at Victoria Park Nursery School, Newbury

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X			The recommendations aim to enhance inclusivity and accessibility for children with protected characteristics, focusing on local provisions that reduce travel burdens and enable students to remain in their communities.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			The plan will directly impact the lives of families and children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities as it aims to ensure there is sufficient education places within the borough in terms of education and alternative education provision. By increasing in-borough sufficiency of education placements, a more inclusive and supportive environment is enabled for pupils with SEND.
Environmental Impact:	X			Local placements reduce the environmental impact associated with long-distance travel for pupils needing specialized provisions.
Health Impact:	X			Effective SEND Sufficiency requires robust data collection, validation, and analysis systems to monitor needs, progress and outcomes and reports to the SEND Strategic Improvement Board. This work is part of the Delivering Better Value Ensuring Sufficiency Data subgroup.
ICT Impact:	X			Effective SEND Sufficiency requires robust data collection, validation, and analysis systems to monitor needs, progress and outcomes. This work part of the Sufficiency Data subgroup.
Digital Services Impact:		X		N/A

Proposed development of a Resource Base at Victoria Park Nursery School, Newbury

<p>Council Strategy Priorities:</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>The sufficiency plan is linked to DBV Programme and SEND & Inclusion Strategy in terms of the following priorities:</p> <p>Priority 3: Inclusion, Priority 4: Developing Local Specialist Provision and Support, Priority 4: Strengthening Alternative Provision and Priority 6: Preparing for Adulthood</p>
<p>Core Business:</p>	<p>X</p>			<p>The proposal will support any of the Council's Priorities for improvement and is business as usual in the following ways:</p> <p>1) Enhanced service delivery via the SEND Sufficiency plan will enable the council to better understand and meet the educational needs of pupils with SEND. This in turn reduces reliance on costly independent educational placements whilst increasing sufficiency of capital places to meet growing demand.</p> <p>2) Efficient use of resources: by strategically planning and allocating resources to meet local SEND demand for education places, the council can make more effective use of its funding with the aim of making financial savings and freeing up resources for other critical areas.</p> <p>3) Compliance: having a SEND sufficiency plan helps the council to meet its statutory duties regarding SEND. It also supports the council in managing reputational risks associated with unmet needs.</p> <p>4) Longer term planning: the sufficiency plan enables the council to be better positioned to respond to population changes and evolving needs.</p> <p>5) Promote inclusion and equal opportunities: through the SEND Sufficiency Plan, the council demonstrates the commitment to inclusivity and ensuring that children and young people have access to appropriate education services to meet their needs.</p>
<p>Data Impact:</p>		<p>X</p>		<p>N/A</p>

Proposed development of a Resource Base at Victoria Park Nursery School, Newbury

<p>Consultation and Engagement:</p>	<p>A statutory consultation and wider engagement exercise was undertaken, generating 85 formal responses.</p> <p>Engagement activity included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and carers of children with and without EHCPs. Including the Parent Carer forum. • School staff, Governors and Education, Health and Social Care Professionals. • Residents. • Targeted social media and residents’ bulletin communications. • 2,552 members of the Community Panel • Elected members • Local Members of Parliament • ICB • SENDIASS • Union Representatives • Parish Councils • Relevant West Berkshire Staff • All West Berkshire Head Teachers • 3 Public drop-in sessions were completed at the Nursery <p>Social media engagement significantly exceeded typical education consultations, demonstrating strong awareness and visibility.</p> <p>Overall support for the proposal was exceptionally strong, with 88.2% of respondents supporting or strongly supporting the expansion.</p> <p>Key themes raised focused on implementation quality (staffing, design, funding) rather than opposition to the principle of the new resource base.</p> <p>Appendix C Consultation Summary</p>
<p>Playing Field Land Compliance (change of use)</p>	<p>This project does not impact on playing field land compliance (S77)</p>

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 West Berkshire continues to experience sustained growth in demand for specialist SEND provision, particularly for pupils with Complex Needs. Existing maintained special schools are operating at or near capacity and without additional local provision the Council faces increasing reliance on high cost independent non maintained special school placements.
- 4.2 Victoria Park Nursery currently provides effective support for several children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). By establishing a dedicated, high- quality teaching environment, the nursery will be able to extend this support to a greater number of early years children before they transition to Primary or Infant school. Early identification and targeted intervention at this stage aim to ensure that children's needs are recognised promptly and appropriate support is implemented. Ultimately, this early engagement is intended to increase the number of children who are able to progress successfully into a mainstream school setting.
- 4.3 By utilising the outstanding provision at Victoria Park Nursery to run and operate this resource base, we are not only drawing on their established expertise but also making effective use of existing space that has limited alternative functions due to its size and location. The area is situated within a secure, safeguarded site with restricted access, making it particularly well- suited for a specialist early years resource.

Approval of this proposal will:

- 4.4 Improve continuity and outcomes for pupils with complex needs.
- 4.5 Increase local specialist capacity in a densely populated area.
- 4.6 Reduce pressure on special schools and the High Needs Block; and
- 4.7 Support delivery of local and national SEND strategy priorities.

5 Supporting Information

- 5.1 This report sets out the rationale and proposal for developing an Early Years SEND resource base at Victoria Park Nurse to address increasing SEND demand within West Berkshire.

Background

- 5.2 West Berkshire is seeing more young children with communication, interaction, sensory and developmental needs. There is currently, no Resource Base for Early Years settings and some children must travel further or wait for specialist support. A Resource Base located at Victoria Park Nursery brings early help closer to home.
- 5.3 The Victoria Park Nursery is an outstanding setting (Ofsted 2022). The nursery already provides a strong and nurturing early years education. Its staff have

Proposed development of a Resource Base at Victoria Park Nursery School, Newbury

experience supporting children with different needs and inclusion is a core part of the nursery's ethos. This makes it a safe and supportive place for a Resource Base. With the family Hub moving onto new opportunities at the Phoenix Centre, it has opened the opportunity to locate a send resource base at this location.

Proposal

The proposal will:

- 5.4 Provide capacity for up to 8 early years children.
- 5.5 Provide local, early support of children exhibiting SEND need and to support them further to infant/ Primary school.
- 5.6 Provide a purpose designed learning, sensory and outdoor space
- 5.7 Enable continuity of the existing early years spaces at the nursery
- 5.8 Provide early intervention for Early Years children presenting with SEND needs. The aim is to strengthen their transition into cost effective mainstream settings and reduce the demand for high-need SEND placements.

6 Other options considered

- 6.1 Do Nothing: Rejected due to increasing reliance on independent placements and unsustainable High Needs Block pressure.
- 6.2 Develop alternative sites or rebuild sites to accommodate: Rejected at this stage due to higher capital costs, longer delivery timescales and greater risk.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 The establishment of an Early Years SEND Resource Base at the Victoria Park site represents a practical and cost- effective solution for supporting young learners who require early intervention. Providing targeted support at this stage will help reduce future reliance on external providers throughout the pupils' subsequent school careers.
- 7.2 The Victoria Park site is an outstanding location with adequate available space and strong support from both the public and parents. This development will deliver clear educational and financial benefits for the council.
- 7.3 Approval is therefore recommended.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 8.2 Appendix B – Data Protection Impact Assessment
- 8.3 Appendix C - Consultation Summary and Engagement Assurance

9 Background Papers:

9.1 SEND Sufficiency Plan

9.2 Consultation document

9.3 Innovation in SEND: SEND & Inclusion Strategy (2024-2029)

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

The item is due to be referred to Council for final approval

Delays in implementation could have serious financial implications for the Council

Delays in implementation could compromise the Council's position:

Considered or reviewed by Scrutiny Commission or associated Committees, Task Groups within preceding six months

Item is Urgent Key Decision

Report is to note only

Wards affected: Newbury Central Ward

Officer details:

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West Berkshire Council Equity Impact Assessment

TEMPLATE

March 2023

Contents

Section 1: Summary details.....	13
Section 2: Detail of proposal	14
Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics	16
Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts.....	17
Section 4: Review.....	19

Section 1: Summary details

Directorate and Service Area	West Berkshire Council, Education and SEND
What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change).	SEND Placement Sufficiency Analysis August 2024
Is this a new or existing function or policy?	No
Summary of assessment Briefly summarise the policy or proposed service change. Summarise possible impacts. Does the proposal bias, discriminate or unfairly disadvantage individuals or groups within the community? (following completion of the assessment).	The purpose of the SEND Sufficiency Plan is to evaluate need of pupils with special education needs and disability, forecast demand for education places and provide a summary of recommendations to inform capital place planning and addressing the gaps. The plan focuses on inclusivity with the aim to ensure that individuals or group are not unfairly disadvantaged.
Completed By	Catherine Kane
Authorised By	Susan Tanner
Date of Assessment	5 th November 2024

Section 2: Detail of proposal

<p>Context / Background</p> <p>Briefly summarise the background to the policy or proposed service change, including reasons for any changes from previous versions.</p>	<p>The SEND sufficiency plan and analysis was conducted in response to the council’s statutory duty to develop a sufficiency plan in response to increasing demands for SEND placements in West Berkshire. The trend is consistent with national growth in EHC Plans. The analysis identifies the need for expansion of in-borough provision, including SEN Units/Resource Provision within mainstream settings, enhancing pathways for Alternative Provision and provision of additional capacity in special schools. The plan seeks to address and mitigate the reliance on out-of-borough placements which is financially unsustainable and limits access to inclusive education.</p>
<p>Proposals</p> <p>Explain the detail of the proposals, including why this has been decided as the best course of action.</p>	<p>The primary proposals include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expanding special school capacity for Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH), and Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) needs. 2. Increasing the number of SEN units in mainstream schools to accommodate the projected 7.6% growth in primary phase and 7.1% in secondary phase demand by 2026/27. 3. Enhancing local alternative provision (AP) to meet diverse educational needs and provide reintegration pathways. 4. Developing post-16 SEND pathways, such as supported internships, vocational training, and employment preparation programs to support transitions into adulthood.
<p>Evidence / Intelligence</p> <p>List and explain any data, consultation outcomes, research findings, feedback from service users and stakeholders etc, that supports your proposals and can help to</p>	<p>This assessment is based on multiple data sources, including the Department for Education (DfE) School Capacity Survey (SCAP) methodology, LG Inform data on SEND profile for West Berkshire, DfE’s Local Authority Interactive Tool which compares West Berkshire against statistical neighbours and West Berkshire’s internal SEND data from Capita.</p> <p>The analysis was cross referenced with colleagues in Education, SEND and Inclusion to add more commentary to the analysis.</p>

Equity Impact Assessment

<p>inform the judgements you make about potential impact on different individuals, communities or groups and our ability to deliver our climate commitments.</p>	
<p>Alternatives considered / rejected</p> <p>Summarise any other approaches that have been considered in developing the policy or proposed service change, and the reasons why these were not adopted. This could include reasons why doing nothing is not an option.</p>	<p>Alternatives Considered / Rejected</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Do Nothing: Maintaining current levels of provision was rejected due to projected demand increases of 29% in primary and 31% in secondary EHC Plans, which would necessitate even greater reliance on costly out-of-borough placements.2. Increase Reliance on Out-of-Borough Placements: This option was rejected due to increasing high costs, limited local access, and the Council's strategic priority to improve in-borough provisions.

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Protected Characteristics

Protected Characteristic	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of Impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner* (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The plan supports age-appropriate educational pathways, especially for post-16 pupils transitioning into adulthood.	Not at this point		
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Expanding local SEND provisions enhances accessibility and reduces reliance on out-of-borough placements.	Not at this point		
Gender Reassignment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Marriage & Civil Partnership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Pregnancy & Maternity	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provides equal access to quality education within the local area, supporting	Not at this point		

Equity Impact Assessment

				diverse needs across communities.			
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Provides equal access to quality education within the local area, recognising the need for more gender responsive teaching strategies given the higher number of males in the children and young people population	Not at this point		
Sexual Orientation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable in this project's scope.			
Religion or Belief	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable in this project's scope.			

Section 3: Impact Assessment - Additional Community Impacts

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Rural communities	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable in this project's scope.			

Equity Impact Assessment

Additional community impacts	No Impact	Positive	Negative	Description of impact	Any actions or mitigation to reduce negative impacts	Action owner (*Job Title, Organisation)	Timescale and monitoring arrangements
Areas of deprivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Improved local SEND services increase accessibility for economically disadvantaged families	Not at this point		
Displaced communities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reducing out-of-borough placements supports community stability.	Not at this point		
Care experienced people	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	The plan promotes local, consistent support for children in care, addressing their unique vulnerabilities.	Not at this point		
The Armed Forces Community	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable in this project's scope.			

Section 4: Review

Where bias, negative impact or disadvantage is identified, the proposal and/or implementation can be adapted or changed; meaning there is a need for regular review. This review may also be needed to reflect additional data and evidence for a fuller assessment (proportionate to the decision in question). Please state the agreed review timescale for the identified impacts of the policy implementation or service change.

Review Date	August 2025
Person Responsible for Review	Neil Goddard, Director for Education and SEND
Authorised By	

EDI employee related EQiA's should now be sent to Human Resources hrenquiries@westberks.gov.uk.

Data Protection Impact Assessment – Stage One

The General Data Protection Regulations require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) for certain projects that have a significant impact on the rights of data subjects.

Should you require additional guidance in completing this assessment, please refer to the Information Management Officer via dp@westberks.gov.uk

Directorate:	Children & Family Services
Service:	Education
Team:	Education Place Planning & Development
Lead Officer:	Neil Obbard
Title of Project/System:	Victoria Park Resource Base
Date of Assessment:	26/06/2026

Do you need to do a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)?

	Yes	No
<p>Will you be processing SENSITIVE or “special category” personal data?</p> <p><i>Note – sensitive personal data is described as “data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, or trade union membership, and the processing of genetic data, biometric data for the purpose of uniquely identifying a natural person, data concerning health or data concerning a natural person’s sex life or sexual orientation”</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will you be processing data on a large scale?</p> <p><i>Note – Large scale might apply to the number of individuals affected OR the volume of data you are processing OR both</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will your project or system have a “social media” dimension?</p> <p><i>Note – will it have an interactive element which allows users to communicate directly with one another?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>Will any decisions be automated?</p> <p><i>Note – does your system or process involve circumstances where an individual’s input is “scored” or assessed without intervention/review/checking by a human being? Will there be any “profiling” of data subjects?</i></p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Equity Impact Assessment

	Yes	No
Will your project/system involve CCTV or monitoring of an area accessible to the public?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will you be using the data you collect to match or cross-reference against another existing set of data?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Will you be using any novel, or technologically advanced systems or processes?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<small>Note – this could include biometrics, “internet of things” connectivity or anything that is currently not widely utilised</small>		

If you answer “Yes” to any of the above, you will probably need to complete [Data Protection Impact Assessment - Stage Two](#). If you are unsure, please consult with the Information Management Officer before proceeding.

APPENDIX C

Consultation Summary – Victoria Park Nursery SEND Resource Base – draft. V1

26th February 2026

Engagement Assurance

The Local Authority is satisfied that appropriate and proportionate engagement has been undertaken in relation to this proposal. A range of engagement opportunities were provided to ensure stakeholders could access information and share their views, including a public meeting and two drop-in sessions hosted at the school. An online consultation survey and hard copy version was available via post or in person via request and direct email address to present views.

These approaches enabled both structured feedback and open discussion, supporting inclusive participation and informed responses. All feedback received has been carefully considered and has informed the conclusions and next steps set out in this summary

Proposal:

Development of a Early Years Resource Base at Victoria Park Nursery

Total responses received: 85

Engagement period: January – February 2026

Purpose of the Consultation

The consultation sought views on a proposal to develop a SEND resource base at Victoria Park Nursery, Newbury. The aim of the proposal is to increase local specialist SEND capacity, introduce SEND support to early years pupils to provide them with high quality support earlier on in their education.

This document summarises the outcomes of the public consultation and engagement activity relating to the proposed expansion. It outlines the level of support expressed, key themes raised by respondents, and the actions the Local Authority proposes to take in response. The summary is intended to provide assurance and inform decision-making.

This summary also includes data from West Berkshire Council social media platform campaigns.

1. Who Responded (Profile)

- Local resident – 44.71%
- Professional working with children – 29.41%
- Parent/carer of children with SEND – 12.94%
- Other ¹ - 11.76%
- Parent of a child currently at the nursery – 9.41%
- Parent of a child formally at the nursery – 8.24%

¹ Parent of adult who went through school with SEN, West Berkshire Councillor, Ex-governor of the nursery, Parent with 2 adult children with learning disabilities, Grandparent, Headteacher of Newbury primary School, parent that uses the family hub services, qualified teacher, Governor at Victoria Park Nursery School.

Equity Impact Assessment

- Parent/ carer considering the nursery in the future – 4.71%
- Member of staff at the nursery – 3.53%
 - Strengths – wide range of respondent types
 - Risks – lack of non-professional understanding of the project

2. Awareness & Understanding of the Proposal

- 44.16% were already aware of the plan for this development
- 55.84% were not aware of the development of the nursery

- 81.82% Found the information either extremely clear or very clear
- 14.29% felt it was somewhat clear
- 3.90% felt it was not very clear
 - Strength: Clear and effective communication of the proposal.
 - Risk: A small minority still feel insufficiently informed.

3. Overall Support for the Proposal

- **57.89% strongly agreed that this nursery is suitable for a resource base**
- **30.26% agreed that this nursery is suitable for a resource base**
- **5.26% were neutral towards this nursery is suitable for a resource base**
- **3.95% were unsure that this nursery is suitable for a resource base**
- **2.64% either disagreed or strongly disagreed**

- Strength: High support with minimal opposition.
- Risks: Lack of professional understanding

4. Perceived Impact on Local Need

- 94.74% agree the proposed Resource Base would benefit children who need additional support
- 1.32% disagree.
- 3.95% Unsure
 - Strength: Clear alignment with SEND sufficiency and inclusion priorities.
 - Evidence: Respondents consistently reference real need for early years SEND support

5. Impact on Key Groups (Perceptions)

- 85.53% felt the Resource base would have a positive impact on the wider nursery community
- 11.84% were unsure
- 2.63% felt it wouldn't positively impact on wider nursery community
 - Strength: Very strong confidence in benefits for SEND families.
 - Risks: Lack of professional understanding

6. Identified Benefits (Qualitative Themes)

Equity Impact Assessment

- **Strengths of the Location**

- Central, town-centre position, making it easy to reach for many families, including those without cars.
- Excellent public transport links (bus routes, proximity to Parkway).
- Close to green spaces (e.g., Victoria Park), which support outdoor learning, wellbeing, and mindfulness.
- Walkable for many, reducing travel time and cost for families.

- **Strengths of the Nursery Itself**

- Strong reputation for high-quality care and support, especially for children with additional needs.
- History of collaboration with SEND services, special schools, and transition teams.
- Experienced, skilled staff with a long-standing ethos of putting children first.
- Existing specialist facilities, resources, and expertise already in place.
- Considered a valued community asset with a long positive history and excellent outcomes.

- **Practical Advantages**

- The former family hub site already exists, is set up, and is ready for adaptation.
- Space and accessibility reported as good by several respondents.
- Seen as an efficient and logical use of existing resources to create an inclusive provision.

7. Concerns Raised

- Possible difficulties with drop-off, especially for children who may struggle near busy roads.
- Parking costs in town may be a barrier for some families.
- Some concerns about whether the site has enough space for the number of children using it.
- A small number of respondents said they aren't familiar with the area or building.

- **Overall Sentiment**

Most feedback is strongly positive, highlighting:

- The nursery's excellent reputation, its long-term commitment to inclusive and SEND-focused practice, and its ideal central location for accessibility.

8. Impact on your child or family

- **31.08%** felt that the proposal would positively impact on their child/ family
- **0%** felt that it would negatively impact their child/ family
- 4.05% felt there would be positive and negative impacts on their child/ family
- **56%** felt their would be no impact
- **8.11%** unsure.

Interpretation: Most respondents do not have nursery-aged children, so the proposal would not affect them directly, but many still support it because they believe it benefits the wider community, especially children with SEND. A small number expressed concerns about inclusivity or the impact on other children, while one family said it would directly help their granddaughter who needs appropriate nursery provision. Overall, even without personal impact, most want the best support available for local children.

Equity Impact Assessment

9. Overall Assessment

Key Strengths

- Very high levels of support and understanding
- Strong SEND family endorsement
- Clear alignment with local need and inclusion
- Minimal principled opposition

Key Risks / Mitigations

- Ensure funding, staffing, and training are explicit
- Address building standards (BB104 / BB93) in design stage
- Maintain strong integration with the mainstream school
- Communicate clearly on costs and long-term value

10. Conclusion

The consultation demonstrates strong support for the development of the resource base at Victoria Park Nursey, with concerns largely focused on delivery quality rather than direction. The evidence strongly supports progression to decision, subject to clear mitigation of implementation risks.

11. Engagement and Communications Reach (Social Media & Direct Communications)

In addition to the formal consultation responses (85 completed surveys), the proposal was supported by a wide-reaching communications campaign across social media platforms and direct resident communications, demonstrating strong awareness and visibility across West Berkshire.

12. Community Panel

Direct e-mail

- Sent to 2,577 residents

Overall Engagement Assessment

- The consultation achieved strong digital reach, significantly exceeding the number of formal survey responses.
- Engagement data indicates:
 - High awareness
 - Active interaction (comments, reactions, shares)
 - Effective signposting to consultation materials
- Social media performance compares favourably with previous education consultations, particularly on Facebook.

Conclusion on Engagement

The combination of:

- High survey response quality
- Strong social media reach
- Effective direct resident communications

Equity Impact Assessment

provides confidence that the consultation was widely promoted, accessible, and visible, supporting the robustness of the consultation process and the validity of the feedback received.

Appendix

We asked / You said / We will do
<p>We asked: Whether stakeholders support the proposal to develop a SEND Resource Base at the Victoria Park Nursery and what benefits or concerns they identified.</p>
<p>You said:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong support for the proposal (93% support), with clear recognition of the need for more local specialist SEND places.• The expansion would improve inclusion, reduce travel, and provide continuity of provision through the early years and ongoing education.• Most respondents raised no concerns.• Where concerns were identified, these focused on:<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Funding and value for money○ Staffing, training, and maintaining quality○ Building design, space, acoustics, and site logistics○ Ensuring the Resource Unit remains well integrated with the mainstream school
<p>We will do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Proceed to the next decision stage, reflecting the overwhelmingly positive consultation outcome.• Ensure funding, staffing, and training plans are clearly defined and quality assured.• Apply relevant DfE building standards (including space and acoustics) during design and delivery.• Maintain strong integration with the mainstream school to support inclusion.• Continue to communicate clearly with families, staff, and the local community as the proposal progresses.