



5 October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Formal Consultation on the Proposed Opening of an ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition) Base on the St Dunstan's School Site for 1st January 2021

I am writing to inform you that St Dunstan's School is currently undergoing a six week consultation period on the proposed opening of an ASC (Autistic Spectrum Condition) Resource Base for twelve pupils in the year 7 to year 11 age range for 1st January 2021. This is an existing provision, managed currently by Somerset Local Authority at a base in Frome. Going forward, we expect the Local Authority to fund and build a new facility to house the ASC Resource Base on the St Dunstan's School site. The consultation period is from Monday 5 October to midday on Wednesday 25 November 2020. A copy of the proposed Admissions policy can be accessed on the school website via this link:

<https://www.midsomernortonschoolspartnership.com/uploads/files/draft-admissions-policy-for-asc-base-2020.pdf>

St Dunstan's School is an inclusive school that prepares all of its learners for the world of work and independent living. The Resource Base further develops St Dunstan's School as an inclusive school and aligns well with the vision of the Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership (MNSP). In addition, this proposal has the full support of the Somerset County Council Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) Service and the MNSP Trust.

The Resource Base will ensure that students with Autistic Spectrum Condition are able to access mainstream education, but also receive the specialist support they need to be successful. Students on-roll in the Resource Base, will be taught by specialist staff who can support youngsters to learn in a non-threatening environment. The partnership between St Dunstan's School and the Resource Base will allow youngsters to develop independence, greater confidence and become competent learners. The Resource Base will also allow children that have been previously taught away from a mainstream setting, to contribute to and benefit from, the school and wider community.

The Resource Base will provide bespoke education for twelve students initially and rising to twenty students when the new facility is constructed. Pupils will all be of secondary school age. Those on-roll at the Resource Base are likely to have an Education Health Care Plan which stipulates the additional support they should receive.

For St Dunstan's, the benefits are clear. Firstly, our own children will also benefit from expert teachers and other staff employed by the Resource Base. Like all mainstream schools, we have a number of children who need additional support to be successful. The Resource Base will provide a welcome boost to our provision. The Resource Base will also be available as a facility for wider school use, again something we welcome for the students of St Dunstan's.

The Consultation will end at midday on Wednesday 25 November 2020. Representations must be received by that time or cannot be considered. We welcome all comments and representations and would like to invite any representations in writing, marked for the attention of the Governors by email to stucker@stdunstansschool.com. We will respond in writing to those representations and will put anonymous copies of the representations and responses on the school website.

Yours sincerely

Mr Keith Howard
Headteacher

Mrs Katy Quinn
Chair of Governors