

Halcyon Way – Specialist Provision

Decision Maker: Chief Executive

Service Area: Education and Early Years

Directorate: Children's Services

Report Author: Jason Hudson

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Date of Decision:

1. Power to make the decision

The decision is being taken under the authorisation contained in Section 9C – Delegations to Specific Officers of Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council Constitution for the Chief Executive to take any emergency decisions in respect of the Council's executive functions which cannot be delayed until the next Cabinet meeting.

2. Decision Sought

This report seeks approval to allocate capital funding of £380,600 which will be funded from the Basic Need/HNPCA grants and resource funding of £419,000 from the High Needs Block.

3. Reason for urgency

The decision is required urgently to enable the planned expansion of specialist provision at Halcyon Way Primary School to progress in time for 20 additional places to be available from January 2027. Halcyon Way is expected to reach its planned capacity of 140 pupils by September 2026, and demand for specialist placements continues to increase. Any delay in confirming the capital and associated revenue funding will risk the modular accommodation not being delivered in time, reducing the Local Authority's ability to meet local demand for children and young people with SEND who require specialist provision.

4. Risk(s) of not taking the decision

Failure to approve the proposal now will prevent the creation of 20 additional specialist places at Halcyon Way School, reducing the Local Authority's ability to meet growing demand for specialist provision. This would place further pressure on existing local capacity and may lead to increased reliance on higher-cost independent and out-of-borough placements. Any delay in approving the funding risks the modular accommodation not being delivered in time for January 2027,

resulting in a missed opportunity to increase local specialist capacity and support delivery of the SEND and Inclusion Strategy and Local SEND Reform Plan.

5. Financial impact if decision not taken forward

Failure to proceed with the proposal is likely to result in continued or increased expenditure on higher-cost independent and out-of-borough placements where children and young people cannot be accommodated within local specialist provision. This would reduce the Local Authority's ability to manage demand within existing High Needs Block resources and may result in higher overall costs than investing in additional local capacity. The proposal also supports the creation of 20 additional specialist places within Oldham, helping to reduce future pressure on specialist placement budgets.

6. Statutory Officer clearances

a. Section 151 Officer

Name Lee Walsh
Date 4 August 2026
Comments

This report seeks approval to allocate capital funding of £381k to create additional within borough capacity for specialist school places. This capital expenditure will be funded from the Basic Need and High Needs Provision Capital allocation the Council has received from Central Government.

The works will be commissioned directly by the school and funding paid annually over 5 years to the school as part of a Grant Funding Agreement

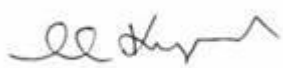
The report also seeks approval to allocate the associated resource funding of £419k. from the High Needs Block to fund the additional 20 places within the specialist provision.

The proposal to expand the specialist provision operated by Kingfisher Learning Trust at Halcyon Way School by 20 places would result in an additional £419k of required funding per annum from the High Needs Block. It is expected that this additional funding will be offset, in part, by savings in other areas of the High Needs Block where the pupils attending may be currently accessing funding.

b. Monitoring Officer

Name Alan Evans (Deputy Monitoring Officer)
Date 4 August 2026
Comments

The exercise of emergency powers should be undertaken in consultation with the Leader or Deputy Leader of the Council. However the Council has not yet appointed a Leader or Deputy Leader for the current municipal year so it is not possible to consult them. In addition, there is no certainty about when a Leader or Deputy Leader will be appointed, as the Council has failed at three successive meetings to do so. For the reasons given in the report an urgent decision relating to the report is required and it cannot await the appointment of a Leader and Deputy Leader at some undetermined future date.

Approved by the Chief Executive following consultation with the political group leaders. Decision made under the authorisation contained in Section 9C – Delegations to Specific Officers of Part 3 (Responsibility for Functions) of the Council Constitution for the Chief Executive to take any emergency decisions in respect of the Council's executive functions.	
Signed:  Shelley Kipling, Chief Executive	Dated: 8 th September 2026
Date of Group Leaders meeting	7 th September 2026