

Outcome of Post 16 Consultation.

In December 2022, Heathlands School began the consultation process to extend the age range to 18 years to enable education within KS5.

Heathlands proposed to create and maintain a post 16 department offering A Levels to students who learn and communicate through the Total Communication approach. The post 16 offer at this stage, does not include residential overnight stays and will therefore only be available to day pupils. Governors and Leadership plan to fundraise to enable a Post 16 residential block in the near future.

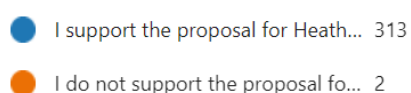
There was an overwhelming response to the consultation. In total 316 responses were received with 313 of the responses in support of the proposal. A range of parents, students, staff, professionals and Deaf organisations registered their support and below is a snapshot of the positive comments received,

"There is a lack of provision for signing deaf children who wish to study A levels both locally and nationally."

"Currently there is a significant gap in education provision for deaf students in post-16 placements. Many Heathlands students and their parents have started the process of looking for college provisions in year 10 and 11 and have found this very difficult. Students may go to a mainstream college with a communication support worker and feel isolated or not experience a fully deaf aware environment."

"There is no adequate provision for deaf BSL users after 16."

"I have two deaf children, I want them to stay in Heathlands School until they're 18 they can study A Level. When I was young, I went to college I was struggle with a levels coz there are not enough support for deaf people I want the best for my children future so Heathlands have a chance to support deaf children for their future"



On receiving the consultation document Hertfordshire County Council arranged a meeting with the Co-Headteachers and Governors to discuss the proposal. Hertfordshire County Council requested further information from the school and recognised the December consultation as a pre consultation.

Heathlands Governors and Leadership will now respond to Hertfordshire County Council's follow up questions and then publish a formal consultation as HCC have requested. This will give time for Hertfordshire County Council to complete their reports with the aim for the proposal to extend Heathlands age range will be presented at the Education, Libraries and Lifelong Learning Panel on 11th May. Heathlands will then receive a cabinet decision on 15th May 2023.

We would like to thank our hugely supportive community of students, staff, parents, governors, and everyone who responded to the consultation. We continue to persevere for what we know is the best provision for our Deaf students.