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Headteacher: Mrs K Flowerdew

4th July 2025

Dear Parents and Carers

I am very pleased to announce that from September we will be leasing part of the main building, and a small part of our school grounds, to a charity that provides high-quality early years education for children aged 0–5 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

The charity's provision would run independently of Spurcroft Primary School, but be based on our site. They will have around 10 pupils attending morning and afternoon sessions.

Key elements of the plan include:

- **Repurposing of 2 classrooms, a small group room and a set of toilets:** The classrooms will be the current Art room and one of the year 2 classrooms.
- **Separate access and secure facilities**: The leased area would be self-contained and physically separated from the main school to ensure safety, privacy, and operational independence.
- **Designated entrance**: The charity will use the footpath by the staff car park, along the edge of Mapledurham Hall, which would be designated for their sole use.
- **Designated parking area**: The needs of the pupils at the provision means that their parents need on site parking, with minimal walking to get to the site. They will be having sole use of the small school car park
- **Outdoor area**: The portion of the top of the East Playground will be fenced off to provide a dedicated outdoor play area for the SEND provision.

Why is this happening?

A recent falling birth rate has meant a drop in the number of primary-aged children living in Thatcham. Consequently, Spurcroft Primary School has seen a gradual reduction in pupil numbers. While we are still a thriving and vibrant school, we currently have 402 pupils on roll — well below our capacity of 520.

This has left some areas of our school underused. In response, we have been working with the Local Authority to explore opportunities that would make more effective use of these spaces, while supporting wider community and educational needs.

What are the benefits?

We believe this arrangement will bring several benefits to Spurcroft and the wider community:

- **Enhanced Use of Space**: Making productive use of areas that are currently unused.
- **Shared Expertise**: Potential for professional knowledge exchange between our staff and those working at the SEND provision.
- **Financial Support**: The lease agreement would bring in some additional income to the school, helping us maintain and improve our school.
- **Community Impact**: Supporting vulnerable young children within our community by helping meet local demand for early years SEND provision.

What impact will this have?

Governors and I have carefully considered the changes this will have for our school and community:

- **Playground Space**: A section of the East Playground will be fenced off for use by the new facility. However, we want to reassure parents that the remaining play areas are still more than sufficient for our current and foreseeable pupil numbers. The netball court will need to be re-drawn, lower down the playground.
- **Parking**: Staff car parking will be reduced slightly to accommodate the changes.
- **Access Routes**: Spurcroft parents will continue to use the main front gate and the back gate as usual. The access along the hall wall from the car park to the East playground will be for the sole use of the SEND provision. Spurcroft parents wanting to go to the East Playground for the Y2 or Early Years classes, will need to walk through the West playground to get to the other side of the site or use the alleys around the school to get to the back gate.

The SEND provision has different school timings to us, so most of our families will have left the school site, before theirs arrive in the morning. Families leaving and arriving around lunchtime will have minimal affect on the school, and at the end of the day, their pick up time will be earlier than ours.

I am really excited about this plan, and very much looking forward to working alongside the charity to support our community. I believe this opportunity will allow us to continue to grow as a school, support the needs of the wider community, and ensure that Spurcroft remains a vibrant and forward-looking place of learning.

I would like to hear you views, and answer questions you have. To help with this we have set up a form here: https://forms.office.com/e/vxCaUag2y6

This will be open until Friday 11th July. After which, I will send out a further letter to you all with notes about the feedback and answers to the questions raised.

Kind regards

KFlowerdew

Mrs Flowerdew, Headteacher

