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**Headteacher**  
**Ms L Shaw**

**Deputy Headteacher**  
**Mrs P Aggarwall**

28<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Dear Ms Parmar,

**Letter re Consultation on Belmont School Specialist Resourced Provision**

I am writing to express my support, and that of the school staff, for making permanent the Specialist provision at Belmont School.

The provision, which was named Stargazers and goes by its own logo, designed by pupils at the school, has been in existence for just over a year. It is already an integral and established part of the whole school. The journey from the initial idea for a specialist provision at the school, to its completion, and the admission of its 12 pupils with Education Healthcare Plans (EHCPs) naming the provision, has been an exciting and successful one to date, despite the disruption of lockdowns due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Stargazers came about through the school's recognition that an increasing number of high needs pupils were joining the school, mostly in the Nursery and Reception classes, and that the school needed to take a more creative approach to meeting these needs effectively in its mainstream classes. This resulted in the school tailoring its learning environments in Early Years, installing its own small soft and sensory rooms and taking a team approach to meeting the day to day learning needs of these pupils.

This work coincided with Harrow Council's work to develop increased specialist provision in mainstream schools, and the school put together a proposal for extending the model described above to promote continuous provision for high needs pupils as they transitioned into and through the school. The outcome of this was a feasibility study commissioned by the Council, and a collaborative design of the new dedicated provision in a remodelled section of the school building.

Following recruitment of key staff to the provision and the identification of pupils from the school and wider community who would benefit from the provision, Stargazers opened in its new dedicated space at the end of 2019. By March 2020 all 12 pupils had transitioned to the provision through a process which was developed with their parents and specialist staff.

The Stargazers team has a clear vision and purpose which embodies the school's inclusive ethos. The children in the provision have transitioned successfully, and each has a personalised curriculum and timetable which supports their learning and progress. This includes time spent with their peers in the mainstream provision. Communication and collaboration with parents has been key to this success and has

also enabled the pupils to develop confidence and resilience, even through lockdowns when the school has had periods of full and partial closure. This has been underpinned by accessible and clear assessment and planning for pupils' next steps, which parents have been able to continue at home. Weekly and often day to day contacts with families has enabled staff to talk through personalised strategies and support. Parental feedback shows how much this is valued.

The impact of this partnership working is beginning to be evident in pupil outcomes, and also played a very positive part in the successful reintegration of Stargazers pupils when schools fully re-opened in September 2021.

The school's external Improvement Partner reported on her visit to the school in Spring 2020:

"The lead is passionate about the provision and is knowledgeable about how the provision is working. He has worked with staff to articulate a vision. Children were very engaged in a range of activities including exploring play-doh, flour, ordering magnetic alphabet letters and mark making. The children were following the routines and calmly started tidying up and moving to the snack table. The staff have personalised timetables for the children and have recently introduced tray activities. The lead is using 'evidence for learning' as an assessment tool".

I hope that the school's passion and commitment to delivering the best outcomes for its pupils is evident in my letter supporting the Consultation process to make our Stargazers provision permanent.

Yours sincerely,

*Lindsey Shaw*  
Lindsey Shaw,  
**Headteacher**