

July 2022



Report to the Executive Director of Children's Services for decision on a statutory change for a change in number of pupils in a special school, at Chapel Green School, Old Buckenham, Norfolk

What is the proposal?

The proposal by the Governors of Chapel Green School, Old Buckenham is to increase the number of pupil places to 160 by adding 50 places for children and young people with complex needs, at Chapel Green School, Attleborough Road, Old Buckenham, NR17 1RF. Full details of the proposal published for the Informal Consultation stage, is outlined in Appendix A1.

Public notice and representation period

A statutory public notice was issued by the Chair of Governors, Chapel Green School and published in the Eastern Daily Press on 22 June 2022. Copies were displayed at all the main entrances to Chapel Green School and on the school website. The four week representation period came to an end on 20 July 2022. See Appendix A for Public Notice and Prescribed Information, which includes the response to the informal consultation stage.

No representations were received during the statutory Public Notice period.

All statutory requirements in relation to the statutory consultation were complied with.

The decision

In coming to a decision, the Decision Maker is obliged to consider the following factors:

- Education standards and diversity of provision
- Equal opportunities issues
- Community cohesion
- Travel and accessibility
- Funding.

Education standards and diversity of provision

Chapel Green School was rated Good by Ofsted in November 2017.

This proposal supports the implementation of the Norfolk Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy and Alternative Provision Transformation Programme vision for Norfolk, to be a county where;

- all children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) reach their potential and thrive
- parents are confident in the improved local SEND and Alternative Provision offer of sufficient, affordable, good quality, local specialist provision.

The cost-effective provision of high quality educational places is central to meeting the County Council's objective of ensuring inclusion and high standards of achievement for Norfolk learners with Special Education Needs. The expansion of our existing special school estate is one aspect of our overarching strategy to increase the number of places available in Norfolk special schools and to enable children to attend a local school suitable to the special educational needs.

This proposal offers parents access to more complex needs special school places in Norfolk, reducing the travel time for children and young people living locally.

Equal opportunities issues

The County Council has considered that there are no specific discrimination issues that arise from the school organisation change being proposed.

Community cohesion

The County Council has considered that there are no specific community cohesion issues that arise from the school organisation change being proposed.

Travel and accessibility

It is not anticipated that there will be a significant increased impact on peak time traffic at the school, as the provision is already accommodated on the school site and the majority of pupils are bussed into the school.

Funding

The additional 50 places will be accommodated within the existing building. Minor alterations will take place to the internal layout to provide additional classroom accommodation to support this extra pupil intake. These changes will be funded by Norfolk County Council.

Conclusions and recommendation

In considering the proposals, the Decision Maker can decide to:

- Reject the proposal
- Approval the proposal
- Approve the proposal with a modification
- Approve the proposal subject to it meeting a specific condition.

No responses to the proposal were received during the statutory Public Notice period. During the informal consultation, of the 31 people that commented on Chapel Green's proposal;

26 respondents, 84%, strongly agreed or agreed with the proposal.

2 respondents, 6%, strongly disagreed with the proposal.

3 respondents, 10%, neither agreed or disagreed with the proposal.

This proposal supports Norfolk County Council's SEND Transformation Programme.

It is therefore **recommended** that the Director of Children's Services, in her role as Decision Maker as delegated by the Children's Services Committee, should decide in favour of the proposal to increase the number of pupil places to 160 by adding 50 places for children and young people with complex needs at Chapel Green School, Attleborough Road, Old Buckenham, Norfolk NR17 1RF.



Proposed change to Chapel Green School

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that, the Governing Body of Chapel Green School intends to make a prescribed alteration to the following school, in accordance with section 19 (3) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013, by changing the number of pupils in a special school, by increasing the number of places by 50 pupils, served by the school as indicated from 1 September 2022:-

School	June 2022 Number on roll	Present age range of pupils	Proposed age range of pupils	Annual intake		Capacity	
				Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
Chapel Green (Foundation Special) School Attleborough Road, Old Buckenham, Attleborough NR17 1RF	130	3 - 19	3 - 19	N/A	N/A	110	160

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained by emailing office@chapelgreen.norfolk.sch.uk or by writing to the School Office, Chapel Green School, Attleborough Road, Old Buckenham, Attleborough NR17 1RF

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, any person may object to, or make comments on, the proposal by sending them to Norfolk County Council, c/o School Organisation Team, Children's Services, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DL or by email to: schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk

Signed: Dr Leslie Cooper, Chair of Governors

Publication Date: 22 June 2022

Explanatory Note

Chapel Green School is a special school which currently offers up to 110 places to pupils with complex needs, all of whom have an Education, Health and Care Plan. The school was judged Good by Ofsted in November 2017.



Prescribed information

Statutory Proposal to change the number of pupils in a special school, by adding 50 places at Chapel Green School, Attleborough Road, Old Buckenham, Attleborough from 1 September 2022

1. School details

Name	Chapel Green School
Type	Foundation Special School
Address	Attleborough Road, Old Buckenham, Attleborough, NR17 1RF
Age Range	3-19 years
Capacity	110 pupils; Numbers on roll 1 June 2022 = 130
Ofsted	Last Ofsted; November 2017 Rating; Good

2. Local Authority details

Norfolk County Council, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich NR1 2DH

3. What changes are proposed?

It is proposed to change the number of pupils attending a special school, by adding 50 places at Chapel Green School, from 1 September 2022. This will increase our capacity to 160 places.

4. Why do we want to do this? (evidence of demand)

Norfolk's SEN Sufficiency Strategy Overview, April 2019, states that Norfolk has seen a consistent increase in children assessed as appropriate for a special school.

➤ In 2013, 1100 children attended special schools in Norfolk.

➤ From September 2018, 1340 will children attend special schools, a 22% increase of 230 places over a 4 year period, the equivalent of 2 new special schools.

The strategy makes the recommendation that;

"Existing special schools should undergo feasibility studies to explore capacity for existing space and land to deliver more places in existing state funded special schools."

At Chapel Green School, we are committed to expanding our successful provision, for the needs of our current pupils and to meet demand for future pupils. The increase of pupil places will provide much needed specialist educational capacity. These extra places mean more children and young people can attend a school near to where they live. This would also reduce the time and cost of traveling to school to access their educational needs.

This will not be 50 children in one term, but phased over several terms, so that we can gradually increase our pupil numbers.

An initial consultation was held between Monday 25 April and Friday 10 June 2022. During that period, a public meeting was held at the school on 10 May 2020. 1 person attended. 385 consultation documents were distributed and 31 responses were received.

Of the 31 people that commented on Chapel Green's proposal;
26 respondents, 84%, strongly agreed or agreed with the proposal.
2 respondents, 6%, strongly disagreed with the proposal.
3 respondents, 10%, neither agreed or disagreed with the proposal.

A copy of the consultation report including the consultation proposal, is available in Appendix A.

5. Objectives, including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice.

The Governing Body at Chapel Green School wants to:

- Enable 50 additional pupils with Special Education Needs and Disability to benefit from the good specialist education provided by Chapel Green School
- Increase more children to attend a local school suitable to their special education needs, as part of the Local Authority SEND Transformation Plan.

This proposal offers parents access to more complex needs specialist resource base places in Norfolk, reducing the travel time for children and young people living locally.

6. Will there be any effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area?

We cannot foresee any impact on any other schools, as this proposal provides additional places which removes the pressure of meeting the needs of pupils who are currently waiting for additional support.

7. Project costs and an indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved.

The additional 50 places will be accommodated within the existing building. Minor alterations will take place to the internal layout to provide additional classroom accommodation to support this extra pupil intake. These changes will be funded by Norfolk County Council.

Long term value for money will be achieved as there is greater capacity to meet the needs of children with SEND locally.

8. Will this definitely happen?

No. There is a statutory process we must follow to make this type of change to schools.

9. Implementation date and proposed stages

If the proposal is agreed by the local decision maker; the Executive Director of Children's Services, Norfolk County Council, it is intended that the significant change will be implemented from 1 September 2022.

10. Related proposals

There is no other proposal linked to this proposal.

11. How can I make my views known?

Any person may object to, express support for, or make comments on the proposals, within 4 weeks of the publication of the statutory public notice by:

- Sending an email to; schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk
- Writing to: School Organisation Team, FREEPOST, 1H 2076, County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2BR. You don't need a stamp.

12. What happens next?

The following table sets out the key dates for the consultation and decision making. At any point the proposal may be withdrawn. The dates set out below meet the Department for Education requirements for consultation on school organisation proposals.

School organisation process	Date
Public Notice published	22 June 2022
Statutory consultation (representation stage)	22 June – 20 July 2022
Decision required, no later than	31 August 2022
If approved, change in number of pupils starts	1 September 2022

Appendix A

Consultation report on proposal to increase the number of pupils with complex needs, to 160 from 1st September 2022, at Chapel Green School.

Introduction

Governors undertook a 6 week informal consultation on the proposal to increase the number of pupils with complex needs, to 160, by adding 50 places, from 1st September 2022. This consultation followed the DfE guidance as set out in 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools, October 2018.

Consultation distribution and event

The consultation ran for 6 weeks from 25 April – 10 June 2022. 385 consultation documents (see Appendix A1) were sent to pupils, staff, governors and stakeholders. An online consultation event was offered on 11 May and one person attended.

Consultation analysis

The detailed analysis is outlined in Appendix A2. There were 31 responses, including 2 key stakeholders; Norfolk County Council and Old Buckenham Parish Council. The response rate is 8%.

26 respondents, 84%, strongly agreed or agreed with the proposal.

2 respondents, 6%, strongly disagreed with the proposal.

3 respondents, 10%, neither agreed or disagreed with the proposal.

Those that agreed with the proposal said;

- Places for SEND children are needed in Norfolk
- There are a number of children with complex needs in mainstream schools, whose needs are not being met

Those that did not agree with the proposal had;

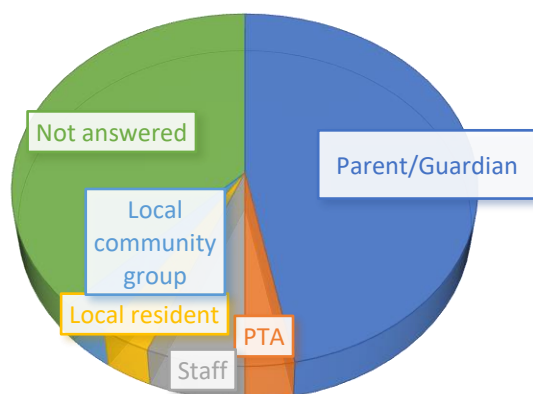
- Concerns about class sizes
- Concerns about staffing levels and recruitment.

Key stakeholders responses;

Norfolk County Council agreed with the proposal saying that the additional places at Chapel Green School 'would offer much needed additional capacity within the area'. Old Buckenham Parish Council neither agreed or disagreed with the proposal, but expressed concern about the proposed expansion for 2 reasons;

- 1) Not enough funding to allow expansion to the physical building and facilities to accommodate the 45% expansion in pupil numbers
- 2) Extra pupils, means additional staff and feel that with such high pupil staff ratios, this increase in staff will be significant. Plus issues with car parking.

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS BY TYPE



Conclusion

The consultation was undertaken in line with the DfE guidance. The outcome of the consultation shows that there is on balance support for the proposal set out in the consultation document.

The governors are asked to consider the responses to the consultation and decide to proceed to the statutory public notice stage, to increase the number of places at Chapel Green School.

Consultation on the proposal to increase the number of pupil places to 160 by adding 50 places for children and young people with complex needs at Chapel Green School, Attleborough Road, Old Buckenham, NR17 1RF

We the Governors would like to hear your views on our exciting plans at Chapel Green School, Attleborough Road, Old Buckenham, NR17 1RF.

We are proposing;

- To increase the number of pupils with complex needs, to 160 from 1st September 2022.

We are committed to expanding our successful provision, for the needs of our current pupils and to meet demand for future pupils. Currently there is an increased need to provide places for children and young people with complex needs in this area of Norfolk. This proposal will provide much needed specialist educational capacity to meet this increased need.

We are running a consultation on our proposals from Monday 25th April to Friday 10th June 2022

Why we want to add more pupil places

By creating extra places at Chapel Green School, we can offer more children and young people an opportunity to learn with us. These are children and young people who currently would have to travel long distances to school to access their educational needs or continue to struggle in their current schools, without the specialist help they require.

This will not be 50 children in one term, but phased over several terms, so that we can gradually increase our pupil numbers.

Norfolk County Council is proposing to provide additional funding for minor building alterations.

Will the school receive additional funding due to the increasing numbers of pupils?

Chapel Green School will receive additional funding based around the increase in number of pupils. This will provide the additional staffing and resources needed for the extra pupils, so that we can continue to maintain the same support to our existing children.

How do I have my say in this consultation?

This consultation is an opportunity to express your views and ask questions on our proposal to increase the pupil numbers.

You can do this by;

- completing the online questionnaire via this link:

<https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/chapel-green-school>

or

- completing the attached questionnaire and returning it to Chapel Green School, for the attention of the Headteacher's Personal Assistant, either by post or email to jcox@chapelgreenschool.org.uk

If you would like to attend the online consultation meeting, using Zoom, on Wednesday 11th May at 5.00 p.m., please email Joanne Cox at jcox@chapelgreenschool.org.uk for more details.

What happens after this consultation?

The Governors will consider all the responses to this proposal and decide whether to continue to the statutory stage, where we issue a public notice. The final decision is made by the Local Authority Decision-Maker, Sara Tough, Director of Children Services, Norfolk County Council.

The closing date for all responses is 12 noon on Friday 10th June 2022.

Appendix A2

Summary analysis of responses									
Total number of responses = 31									
Method of response									
Online		Letter				Email			
31		0				0			
Respondent									
Pupil	Parent/ Guardian	Member PTA	Staff	Governor	Local resident	Local business	Local sports group	Local community group	Not answered
0	15 (46%)	1 (3%)	2 (6%)	0	1 (3%)	0	0	1 (3%)	12 (37%)
Response Analysis – insert question									
*please note respondents could tick all categories that apply									
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know			
Total	20 (65%)	6 (19%)	3 (10%)	0	2 (6%)				
Pupil									
Parent/Guardian	8	3	2		2				
Member of the PTA	1								
Member of Staff		1	1						
Governor									
Local resident	1								
Local business									
Local sports group									
Local community group	1								
Not answered	9	2	1						
Summary of views supporting the proposals – 26 respondents									
Places for children with SEND are needed in Norfolk						19			
There are a number of children with complex needs in mainstream schools, whose needs are not being met						5			
Confidence in governors/staff expanding this successful school which has a suitable building to increase their capacity						4			
Cannot speak highly enough of staff and their care for children						2			
Summary of views against the proposals – 2 respondents									
Whole objective of sending my child to SEN school was to have smaller classes and a small school where he would be supported						2			
Concerns about staffing, recruitment, can't see how more children will improve this						1			
Specialist classrooms are being used for new places, but concerned about the loss of the specialist provision or where they will be provided						1			
Car park is not big enough to cope with the increase of places, no structure in place						1			
Other comments or suggestions made to help with this decision or planning for future provision of the children – 17 respondents									
Hope governors make the right decision for SEND children						1			
The positive impact on local schools of these additional places is immeasurable						3			

50 places could fill quickly, wonderful if CGS could grow to meet demand in the local area	1
Excellent school with outstanding provision and increase will have been carefully planned	2
School need to consider impact on class sizes and staffing	2
More funding needed in school to meet the needs of the pupils	2
Allows SEND children to attend school closer to their home	1
Concerned about the loss of specialist facilities to use as classrooms	1
Mainstream schools need more staff SEN training	2
Feel there would be no benefit to current pupils and have a negative effect	1
Not enough funding currently being proposed by NCC for this project	1

There were responses from 2 key stakeholders;

Norfolk County Council	<p>Agree</p> <p>I am responding to this consultation on behalf of Norfolk County Council in my capacity as Partnership Adviser to schools in Kings Lynn, West Norfolk and Breckland.</p> <p>The provision of additional places at Chapel Green School would offer a much needed additional capacity within the area, that fits well within the broader provision arrangements being organised under Norfolk County Council's SEND Transformation Strategy.</p>
Old Buckenham Parish Council	<p>Neither agree or disagree</p> <p>The Parish Council were concerned about the proposed expansion for two key reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whilst there would be a 45% expansion to pupil numbers, there is not enough funding to allow expansion to the physical building and facilities to accommodate them. The current proposed funding would only allow conversion of existing specialist resources and facilities into general classrooms. This would result in a significant decrease to the currently high standard of education and support. These young, vulnerable children require specialist additional facilities to help develop their independence, confidence and personal skills in order to help them function within society. The school was only recently built with these complex needs in mind, and removing them so soon after construction will be doing the current and future pupils a huge dis-service. 2. Extra pupils attending, would also mean extra staff. With such high pupil to staff ratios, this increase in staff would be significant. The car park at the school is already at full capacity so where are the new staff expected to park? There is already a significant parking problem within the village due to an additional two schools and it can not cope with any more parking on streets. The Parish Council were concerned about the proposed expansion for two key reasons: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Whilst there would be a 45% expansion to pupil numbers, there is not enough funding to allow expansion to the physical building and facilities to accommodate them. The

	<p>current proposed funding would only allow conversion of existing specialist resources and facilities into general classrooms. This would result in a significant decrease to the currently high standard of education and support. These young, vulnerable children require specialist additional facilities to help develop their independence, confidence and personal skills in order to help them function within society. The school was only recently built with these complex needs in mind, and removing them so soon after construction will be doing the current and future pupils a huge dis-service.</p> <p>2. Extra pupils attending, would also mean extra staff. With such high pupil to staff ratios, this increase in staff would be significant. The car park at the school is already at full capacity so where are the new staff expected to park? There is already a significant parking problem within the village due to an additional two schools and it can not cope with any more parking on streets.</p>
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