

Report to the Executive Director of Children's Services for permission to publish a public notice

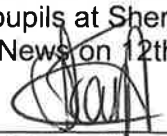
The proposal;

Increase the number of places to include 26 extra pupils with Special Education Needs (SEN) at Sheringham Woodfields School, from 1 January 2020.

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| Reason for the proposed change | This proposal will enable more pupils to benefit from the outstanding specialist education and support provided by the school. It will also increase the number of places for children with SEND in the north of the county, as part of the Local Authority SEND Transformation Plan. This proposal is in line with Norfolk County Council's SEN Sufficiency Strategy, April 2019, which shows there is a need to expand our existing special school estate to increase the numbers of places available in Norfolk special schools to meet demand and to enable children to attend a local school suitable to the special educational needs. |
| Consultation details (Appendix A - consultation document) | An informal consultation was held from 3 June – 12 July 2019, to develop the proposal to increase the number of pupil places. 268 consultation documents were distributed to parents, governors, staff at Sheringham Woodfields School and key stakeholders. Two consultation events were held on 17 June and 26 June. There were no attendees. |
| Number of responses | 40 responses received. 31 people strongly agreed (77.5%) and 7 people agreed (17.5%) 2 people neither agreed or disagreed (5%) |
| Summary of views expressed in favour of the proposal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More children should have access to the opportunities/provision at this school (14/40) • There is growing need for this provision in Norfolk (13/40) • Woodfields is well placed as an Outstanding school (Ofsted) with fantastic specialist teaching and care, to meet the demand for more places (9/40) • Specialist places are extremely valuable in the local area (2/40) • Provides more opportunities for the school to offer and develop (2/40) • Local provision is essential to prevent children travelling too far (1/40) • Proposal will support mainstream schools who struggle to meet the needs of SEN pupils in their settings (1/40) |
| Summary of views expressed against the proposal/no opinion | No responses disagreed with the proposal. |
| Commentary | The response rate was low but there is strong support for the proposal. There is one change to the proposal from the informal consultation which is to change the implementation date from 1 April 2020 to 1 January 2020 due to increased local demand. |
| Resource implications | Funding has been secured by Norfolk County Council to fund the construction costs of the new Therapy Centre and the refurbishment costs of the 2-3 classrooms that are freed up from moving provision into the new Therapy Centre. |
| Recommendation | To proceed to the Public Notice statutory proposal, to increase the number of places to include 26 extra pupils with SEN at Sheringham Woodfields School from 1 January 2020. |

I give permission for a public notice to be issued on the proposal to increase the number of places by 26 pupils at Sheringham Woodfields School, Sheringham. This will appear in the North Norfolk News on 12th September 2019.

Signed:


(Executive Director of Children's Services)

Date:


21st August 2019

Consultation on a proposal to increase the number of pupils with Special Educational Needs at Sheringham Woodfields School, Sheringham

The Proposal Summary

It is proposed that the number of places is extended to include 26 extra pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN), at Sheringham Woodfields School, from April 2020 to:

- Enable more pupils to benefit from the outstanding specialist education and support provided by school
- Increase the number of places for children with SEND in the north of the County as part of the Local Authority SEND Transformation Plan.

If the proposal is approved to proceed to the statutory stage, this will be done in two parts as legally we cannot increase the pupil numbers by 24-26 places in one go.

Why is this consultation taking place?

Before any major decision can be made about the future of a maintained school, there has to be consultation with those people likely to be affected by the change¹. The purpose of this document is to consult with parents and other stakeholders with an interest in the provision of special education provision for children in Norfolk. This document gives you background information and asks for your views.

Background information on Sheringham Woodfields School

- Sheringham Woodfields School is a complex needs school located in Sheringham. We are situated on the same campus as Sheringham High School and Sheringham Primary School.
- We currently have 111 pupils on roll, all of whom have Education, Health and Care Plans. We cater for all abilities across all ranges.
- The school educates pupils between the ages and 3 and 19, many of whom have additional sensory impairments, physical difficulties and/or medical needs.
- Our most recent Ofsted inspection (January 2019) rated the school as Outstanding in all areas.
- Sheringham Woodfields School has secured the necessary funding to build a new Therapy Centre within its grounds. This centre will improve access to high quality provision including Sensory Integration, Sensory Motor Programme, Rebound Therapy, Counselling and other supported therapies.
- In creating the new build, designated rooms within the main building of the school will become free, enabling us to create additional classes.
- Sheringham Woodfields School also provides outreach to mainstream schools within Norfolk via the School 2 School Support system.
- We have a fully functioning charity shop that operates from within the centre of Sheringham, providing many of our pupils with access to on the job skills development, access to the community and real-life work experience.

Norfolk's SEN Sufficiency strategy

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 SEN. NCC is clear about what that provision is intended to achieve for children with SEN:

- Access to the most appropriate provision and placement, informed by ongoing and accurate assessment of need and consideration of parental/young person choice in line with the legal test;
- Children and young people attend good or outstanding provision wherever they are educated;
- Improved progress and achievement overall, narrowing the gap with peers;
- Strong relationships and partnerships and a collaborative approach that results in effective multi-agency support underpinned by collective agreement on what constitutes good outcomes for children and young people with SEND;
- Joint commissioning of provision across education, health and social care to achieve holistic outcomes for cohorts of and individual pupils.

Following a comprehensive local needs analysis of our population of pupils with EHCPs and strategic review of our Local Offer, we have developed a SEND Sufficiency Strategy. A summary of the Sufficiency Strategy can be found on Norfolk's Local Offer.

From this we know that:

- By 2025 the Norfolk 0-25 population is forecasted to grow by 2.5% bringing the total to 278,600;
- The total number of children with EHC plans in Norfolk, as at August 2018, was 5,880;
- 860 children are in the EHCP assessment pathway, as at August 2018;
- There is significant pressure on the SEND Transport budget due to children travelling long distances to attend a school which meets their needs;
- Norfolk has double the number of children with EHCPs attending independent and non-maintained schools than regional, statistical and national benchmarks;
- There is significant need for additional provision in Norwich with further "pinch points" throughout Norfolk.

Our analysis shows that by 2025:

- a further 300-400 pupils will require specialist provision;
- Norfolk will need for 4 new special schools alongside an expansion of resourced provision within mainstream schools.

Norfolk has 9 state funded special schools needs with approximately 1300 places which cater for children with complex learning needs. All schools are judged good or outstanding by Ofsted, including residential components.

Norfolk has seen a consistent increase in children assessed that their special educational needs are suitable for a special school.

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

These additional 230 pupils have been subsumed into the existing building accommodation of the schools who have routinely reviewed their accommodation and now, except for the newly rebuilt Chapel Green school, have reached their absolute maximum capacity. Adding

Appendix A

further places into the existing footprint brings significant risk to the quality of teaching and learning.

The greatest pressure for additional places is in Norwich but there are “pinch points” across all areas of Norfolk. Greatest demand for places is at KS2; transition points (i.e. Year 3, Year 7 are particularly acute) but there is also demand at year 5 as parents seek their expression early to secure a place for their child in readiness for secondary. There is an increased need for places at early years and KS1 to support successful mainstream reintegration as children will make more rapid progress earlier and can re-join their peers in local mainstream settings.

The expansion of our existing special school estate is one aspect of our overarching strategy to increase the numbers of places available in Norfolk special schools and to enable children to attend a local school suitable to the special educational needs.

What we are proposing

Following discussions with the school it was felt that one of the ways Sheringham Woodfields School could contribute to meeting the changes in need, would be to extend the number of SEN pupils who can attend the school.

However, in agreement with the school this would be based upon:

- No pupil currently attending the school being displaced by this proposal. All pupils currently at the school would continue their education at the school.
- Pupils with Special Educational Needs for whom a complex needs special school has been identified as the most suitable provision could join the school as places become available from 1 April 2020 onwards.
The school will continue to be a Complex Needs Special school and will continue to cater for the needs of its current pupils now and into the future.

Why we feel the changes are needed

The Governors of Sheringham Woodfields School and Norfolk County Council believe the changes would benefit children and young people because it would:

- Enable pupils with special education needs to benefit from the high-quality education and support at Sheringham Woodfields School, with potentially shorter travel times for local pupils.
- Enable Sheringham Woodfields School to develop provision for more children and young people with SEN.
- Enable more Norfolk children and young people with SEN to attend a school in Norfolk.
- Reduce the pressures on budgets created by expensive out of county placements thus enabling spend to benefit the development of Norfolk provision for Norfolk pupils.
- The changes will also enable us to redevelop our car parking facilities to provide increased parking spaces for both cars and buses.

What is the likely impact of the proposal

For pupils:

- Pupils currently placed at the school will continue to receive a high quality education at Sheringham Woodfields School.
- New pupils with SEN will be able to attend the school, giving more locations and choice of provision for families.
- More pupils will get access to a range of appropriate and relevant learning; work related learning, physical therapies and qualifications.
- Pupils will continue to receive an outstanding education and support which is being continuously developed
- Growth of the school will provide opportunities for improved provision and opportunities for pupils

Appendix A

For the school:

- An opportunity to develop and consolidate education provision
- Greater financial security with higher level funding for top-ups and further enabling the school to continue to adapt, develop and evolve to meet the ever changing needs of children within Norfolk.
- Improve our financial efficiency through greater economies of scale.
- No negative impacts on staff numbers with opportunities to offer new posts and training.
- The opportunity to develop its workforce with new positions and additional leadership responsibilities.

For other schools:

- To remove the pressure of meeting the needs of pupils in mainstream who are currently waiting for special school places.

For Independent Special Schools:

- There should be some reduction in how many children are sent to these schools when parental preference is for a local school. However, with higher level need still increasing there may be no significant loss.

For the Local Authority:

- Greater capacity to meet the needs of children with SEN locally.
- Broadening the expertise and provision available in Norfolk's Special Schools.
- A potential reduction in expenditure when travel and independent special school fees are less used.
- Improved capacity to meet educational needs of pupils with SEND

The earliest the change could happen is 1 April 2020.

We will be holding drop-in events where you can come and find out more about these proposals, by attending any of the dates below:

- Monday 17th June 2019, 10am at Sheringham Woodfields School
- Wednesday 26th June 2019, 2pm at Sheringham Woodfields School

Sheringham Woodfields School, Holt Road, Sheringham, Norfolk, NR26 8ND
Tel: 01263 820520

If you are unable to attend these events but would like to comment on our proposal please:

- complete the attached form and hand it to the school office
- or write to School Organisation Team, FREEPOST IH 2076, Floor 8 (Bay 29), County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2BR,
- or email schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk
- or access our online survey: <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/sheringham-woodfields>

We need all responses by 12 July 2019.



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Appendix A

We would like to hear from many different people as your views help us to decide whether or not we make these changes. We will also use any personal information to understand how different groups of people feel about our proposal to increase the number of pupils at Sheringham Woodfields School.

We will process any personal information we receive from you in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) (Regulation (EU) 2016/679), the Data Protection Act 2018 and Norfolk County Council's data protection policy and guidelines. This means that Norfolk County Council will hold your personal data and only use it for the purpose for which it was collected, being this consultation.

We won't identify individuals when reporting back our findings and under our record management policy we will keep this information for five years. We will also, under normal circumstances, not pass your personal data on to anyone else. However, we may be asked under access to information laws to publish or disclose some, or all, of the information you provide in response to this consultation, including any personal information. We will only do this where such disclosure will comply with such relevant information laws which include the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

Please tell us who you are, (tick all that apply):

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|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pupil | <input type="checkbox"/> School governor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Parent / Guardian | <input type="checkbox"/> Local resident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Parent Teacher Association | <input type="checkbox"/> Local business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Member of staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Local sports group |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Local community group |

Other (please specify): _____

At which school? _____

What is your postcode? _____

Your views will help us decide if this proposal goes ahead. You can tell us your views by returning this completed form to:

- Your school office
- Posting it to Sheringham Woodfields School Organisation Consultation, FREEPOST IH2076, County Hall (Floor 8 / Bay 34), Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2BR. **You don't need a stamp.**
- emailing schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk
- accessing our online survey: <https://norfolk.citizenspace.com/childrens-services/sheringham-woodfields>

This consultation ends on 12 July 2019