

**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 Sheringham Woodfields School**

**What is the proposal?**

The proposal is to increase the number of places by 26 pupils with Special Education Needs at Sheringham Woodfields School, Holt Road, Sheringham, Norfolk NR26 8ND from 1 January 2020.

**Public notice and representation period**

A statutory public notice was issued by Norfolk County Council and published in the North Norfolk News on 12 September 2019. Copies were displayed at all the main entrances to Sheringham Woodfields School. The four week representation period came to an end on 10 October 2019. See Appendix 1 for Public Notice and Prescribed Information.

No submissions 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

Sheringham Woodfields Schools was rated Outstanding by Ofsted in January 2019.

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. There is a shared access arrangement with Sheringham High School, which is kept under review between both schools, including maintenance of access.

### Funding

Funding has been secured by Norfolk County Council to build a new Therapy Centre within the grounds of Sheringham Woodfields School. This centre will improve access to high quality provision including Sensory Integration, Sensory Motor Programme, Rebound Therapy, Counselling and other supported therapies. The current rooms designated for this provision within the main building of the school, will become free, to create 2 -3 additional classrooms for the extra pupils. This refurbishment is 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.

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 places by 26 pupils with Special Education Needs at Sheringham Woodfields School, Holt Road, Sheringham, Norfolk NR26 8ND from 1 January 2020.



## Proposed change to Sheringham Woodfields School

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that, Norfolk County Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to the following school, in accordance with section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013, by increasing the number of places by 26 pupils, served by the school as indicated from 1 January 2020:-

Schools	July 2019 Number on roll	Present age range of pupils	Proposed age range of pupils	Annual intake		Capacity	
				Existing	Proposed	Existing	Proposed
Sheringham Woodfields School Holt Road, Sheringham Norfolk NR26 8ND	110	3 - 19	3 - 19	6-8	6-8	110	136

This Notice is an extract from the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be obtained by emailing [schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk) or by writing to the School Organisation Team, Children's Services Floor 8 (Bay 34), County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DL.

**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 the School Organisation Team, Children's Services Floor 8 (Bay 34), County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DL or by email to: [schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk)

Signed: Sara Tough  
Executive Director of Children's Services

Publication Date: 12 September 2019

### Explanatory Note

Sheringham Woodfields 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 Plans. The school was judged Outstanding by Ofsted in January 2019.

## **Statutory Proposal to expand the number of pupils with Special Education Needs at Sheringham Woodfields School, Sheringham from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020**

### **1. Local Authority details**

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

### **2. School details**

<b>Name</b>	Sheringham Woodfields School
<b>Type</b>	Foundation Special School
<b>Address</b>	Holt Road, Sheringham, Norfolk NR26 8ND
<b>Age Range</b>	3 – 19 years
<b>Capacity</b>	110 pupils; Numbers on roll 1 July 2019 = 110
<b>Ofsted</b>	Last Ofsted; 22 January 2019      Rating; Outstanding

### **3. What changes are proposed?**

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

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

Norfolk County Council has a statutory duty to;

- ensure a sufficient supply of school places in its area for children of school age
- promote high educational standards, diversity and parental choice
- ensure fair access to educational opportunity
- help fulfil every child's educational potential.

Following a comprehensive local needs analysis of our population of pupils with Education, Health and Care Plans and a strategic review of our Local Offer, Norfolk County Council has developed a SEND Sufficiency Strategy. From this we know;

- The total number of children with Education, Health and Care Plans, as at August 2018, was 5,880
- 860 children are in the Education, Health and Care Plan 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 Education, Health and Care Plans attending independent and non-maintained schools than regional, statistical and national benchmarks.

Our analysis shows that by 2025 a further 300 – 400 pupils will require specialist provision. As part of our Transformation Plan we are looking to expand our existing provision, build new special schools and expand the specialist resource bases within mainstream schools.

An initial consultation was held between Monday 3 June and Friday 12 July 2019. During that period, two public meetings were held at the school on 17 June and 26 June. No parents or members of the public attended. The consultation document is attached at Appendix A. 268 consultation documents were distributed and 40 responses were received. Of those 31 people strongly agreed and 7 people agreed with the proposal. 2 people neither agreed or disagreed.

The analysis of the responses received during the consultation is available at Appendix B.

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

Norfolk County Council wants to:

- Enable 26 pupils to benefit from the outstanding specialist education and support provided by Sheringham Woodfields
- Increase the number of places for children with SEND in the north of the county, as part of the Local Authority SEND Transformation Plan.

Norfolk County Council's policy is to expand schools that are rated 'Good' or 'Outstanding' by Ofsted. Sheringham Woodfields School was inspected in January 2019 and rated Outstanding.

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. 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.

**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 removes the pressure of meeting the needs of pupils in mainstream who are currently waiting for special school places.

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

Funding has been secured by Norfolk County Council to build a new Therapy Centre within the grounds of Sheringham Woodfields School. This centre will improve access to high quality provision including Sensory Integration, Sensory Motor Programme, Rebound Therapy, Counselling and other supported therapies. The current rooms designated for this provision within the main building of the school, will become free, to create 2 -3 additional classrooms for the extra pupils. This refurbishment is 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 SEN 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 change in category will be implemented from 1 January 2020.

## **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](mailto:schoolreview@norfolk.gov.uk)
- Writing to: School Organisation Team, FREEPOST, 1H 2076, Floor 8, Bay 34, 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.

<b>School organisation process</b>	<b>Date</b>
Public Notice published	12 September 2019
Statutory consultation (representation stage)	12 September – 10 October 2019
Decision required, no later than	10 December 2019
If approved, change of age starts	1 January 2020



## **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 Schools, 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 change<sup>1</sup>. 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 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

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 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019, 10am at Sheringham Woodfields School
- Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto: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.**

**Appendix B - analysis of responses received during the consultation.**  
**Report to the Executive Director of Children's Services for permission to publish a public notice**

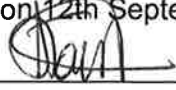
**The proposal;**

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

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	<b>40 responses</b> 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"> <li>• More children should have access to the opportunities/provision at this school (14/40)</li> <li>• There is growing need for this provision in Norfolk (13/40)</li> <li>• Woodfields is well placed as an Outstanding school (Ofsted) with fantastic specialist teaching and care, to meet the demand for more places (9/40)</li> <li>• Specialist places are extremely valuable in the local area (2/40)</li> <li>• Provides more opportunities for the school to offer and develop (2/40)</li> <li>• Local provision is essential to prevent children travelling too far (1/40)</li> <li>• Proposal will support mainstream schools who struggle to meet the needs of SEN pupils in their settings (1/40)</li> </ul>
Summary of views expressed against the proposal	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:

1st November 2019.

