

Alterations other than alterations proposed in foundation proposals which may be published by a Governing Body or Local Authority as specified in regulations 4 and 5

Published in accordance with Schedule 2 to The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013

1. Contact details

The name and contact address of the local authority or governing body publishing the proposals and the name, address and category of the school.

Proposer:

Kirklees Council, School Organisation & Planning Team, PO Box 1720, Huddersfield, HD1 9EL
school.organisation@kirklees.gov.uk

School:

Woodley School and College, a Community Special school,
Dog Kennel Bank, Huddersfield, HD5 8JE

2. Description of alteration and evidence of demand

It is proposed that:

The places available at Woodley School and College be increased to 194 pupil places gradually over time, using satellite provision, ahead of and leading up to the new school rebuild.

The proposed 194 places include 180 places in the planned new school rebuild, and up to 14 places in the existing Woodley Post-16 satellite provision based in a shop in Huddersfield town centre.

3. Objectives. The objectives of the proposal (including how the proposals would increase Educational Standards and parental choice)

The objective of this proposal is to:

Enable more children and young people with complex autism to secure places and thrive in a local educational setting. In October 2021, Kirklees Cabinet agreed an ambitious plan to rebuild two existing special schools, one of which is Woodley School and College. Not only will the plan provide modern facilities for existing pupils, but the school will also be built to accommodate more pupils to address growing demand. The agreed plan is to build a 180-place new school building on Fernside Avenue, Almondbury. It takes time to design and build a new school, so it is not expected to be complete until around Autumn 2026. Ahead of, and leading up to, the completion of a new, larger school building for Woodley School and College, the local authority, working with the Governing Body of Woodley School and College, believe there are opportunities to establish a further satellite site to enable a gradual increase in the number of pupil places.

4. The effect on other schools

The effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions in the area

The provision of sufficient specialist places within Kirklees to meet the specific needs of some learners is an essential part of the school system. This proposal will therefore have a positive impact across the school system, enabling children with complex SEND, who may not currently be having their needs fully met in their mainstream setting, to access special school places where required.

5. Project costs

Project cost and indication of how these will be met, including how long-term value for money will be achieved.

The ongoing revenue funding for additional places will be under the same formula used for the commissioning of other places at Woodley School and College from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant. Start-up costs will be supported from existing School Re-Organisation budgets. The cost of providing places at Woodley School and College is significantly lower than the average cost of places in independent special schools.

6. Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

The date on which the proposals are planned to be implemented, and if they are to be implemented in stages, a description of what is planned for each stage, and the number of stages intended and the dates of each stage.

Proposed gradual implementation, increasing numbers from March 2024.

7. Change to special educational need provision- the SEN improvement test.

In planning and commissioning SEN provision or considering a proposal for change, LAs should aim for a flexible range of provision and support that can respond to the needs of individual pupils and parental preferences. This is favourable to establishing broad categories of provision according to special educational need or disability. Decision-makers should ensure that proposals:

- (a) take account of parental preferences for particular styles of provision or education settings.
- (b) take account of any relevant local offer for children and young people with SEN and disabilities and the views expressed on it.
- (c) offer a range of provision to respond to the needs of individual children and young people, taking account of collaborative arrangements (including between special and mainstream), extended school and Children's Centre provision; regional centres (of expertise) and regional and sub-regional provision; out of LA day and residential special provision.
- (d) take full account of educational considerations, in particular the need to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum, within a learning environment where children can be healthy and stay safe.
- (e) support the LA's strategy for making schools and settings more accessible to disabled children and young people and their scheme for promoting equality of opportunity for disabled people.
- (f) provide access to appropriately trained staff and access to specialist support and advice, so that individual pupils can have the fullest possible opportunities to make progress in their learning and participate in their school and community.

(g) ensure appropriate provision for 14-19 year-olds; and

(h) ensure that appropriate full-time education will be available to all displaced pupils. Their Education, Health and Care Plan must be amended and all parental rights must be ensured. Other interested partners, such as the Health Authority should be involved. Pupils should not be placed long-term or permanently in a Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) if a special school place is what they need.

When considering any reorganisation of provision that the LA considers to be reserved for pupils with special educational needs, including that which might lead to children being displaced, proposers will need to demonstrate how the proposed alternative arrangements are likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for those children. Decision-makers should make clear how they are satisfied that this SEN improvement test has been met, including how they have taken account of parental or independent representations which question the proposer's assessment.

- (a) Kirklees wants to build on the existing provision at Woodley School and College, which is very successfully meeting children's needs and enabling positive outcomes. This view is supported by families whose children attend Woodley School and College, along with families of other children with complex needs, as evidenced by the overwhelmingly positive response to the non-statutory consultation on this proposal.
- (b) The LA carried out a non-statutory consultation with parent/carers and other key stakeholders between 29 September and 27 October 2023. The views they expressed have been taken into account and published on 13 November 2023 in an outcome report for decision-makers: 'Proposals to expand Woodley School and College', which is available at www.kirklees.gov.uk/schoolorganisation. In summary, there was very good level of support from a large majority of respondents for the proposal to expand the number of special school places at Woodley School and College ahead of, and leading up to, the completion of a new, larger school building. Respondents commented that the introduction of more special school places was a positive step and that suitable for provision for children whose needs cannot be met in mainstream settings was very important.
- (c) Special school places are one type of provision on the continuum of provision available to support children with SEND. Children with complex autism would continue to be offered a range of services to meet their needs as part of their Education, Health and Care Plan. The proposal aims to ensure that the overall offer of SEND provision in Kirklees maintains flexibility and offers a broad range of provision and support, thereby contributing to the planned strategy of enabling more children and young people to secure places and thrive in local education settings.
- (d) Many children and young people with SEND can make better, more sustained progress when they attend an appropriate specialist setting with access to specialist teaching and support staff and resources. Satellite opportunities, like the one proposed, in addition to Additionally Resourced Provisions and special school rebuild projects, are intended to increase provision for some areas of need and improve the geographical spread of specialist places across Kirklees, ensuring the needs of more children and young people with SEND across the whole of Kirklees can be met. Building on existing good quality provision helps ensure a broad and balanced curriculum, within a learning environment where children can be healthy and stay safe
- (e) This proposal relates to children with complex autism. The proposed satellite provision will offer accommodation and an environment that is adapted to support the learning, behaviour and social and emotional needs of each pupil. A satellite provision is not suitable for every child, and the school would work in partnership with families to establish the students who would benefit most from this provision.

It is vital to ensure young people and their families have confidence in the planning and delivery of the educational provision required in their journey from childhood into adulthood. The importance of managing a successful transition with bespoke plans for individual needs is a key focus of this. This is a very important factor not only for this provision, but when the school moves premises to a new purpose-built school site. The council and school will work closely together to manage this carefully.

- (f) Woodley School and College is a Kirklees Local Authority aspirational, inclusive and outward looking special school in Huddersfield for children aged 5-19 with complex autism. The school is rated as 'Good' by Ofsted (March 2023), holds Advanced Autism Accreditation and is the Autism Education Trust licensed training provider for Kirklees schools and Post-16. This recognises the highest standards of autism expertise and practice and underpins the school's important role as a schools training hub.
- (g) The proposed 194 places include 180 places in the planned new school rebuild, and up to 14 places in the existing Woodley Post-16 satellite provision based in a shop in Huddersfield town centre. The proposed new satellite provision will not include post-16 provision but appropriate provision will be taken into account in the design of the new school building.
- (h) There would be no pupils displaced by this proposal.

8. Travel and accessibility

Decision-makers should satisfy themselves that accessibility planning has been properly taken into account and the proposed changes should not adversely impact on disadvantaged groups.

The decision-maker should bear in mind that a proposal should not unreasonably extend journey times, increase transport costs or result in too many children being prevented from travelling sustainably due to unsuitable walking or cycling routes.

A proposal should also be considered on the basis of how it will support and contribute to the LA's duty to promote the use of sustainable travel and transport to school.

The need for additional specialist places across Kirklees is recognised. Not being able to attend an appropriate school locally has significant impact on some learners in terms of travelling time and emotional regulatory status on arrival at, or on leaving, school. The aspiration for the SEND Transformation Plan is that fewer young people will leave or travel outside of Kirklees. Having services more local and accessible to where people live can have a positive impact on their mode of travel and in doing so, will contribute to the Council's net zero ambition. Providing suitable school places nearer to where families live not only supports place-based working and outcomes for children, but it can also save families' time and money because they can travel smaller distances to school events such as parents' evenings.

9. Objections and comments

Any person may send objections or comments in relation to any proposals to the local authority with four weeks from the date of publication. Objections and comments must be received by 8 February 2024. Copies of the proposals can be found on the Kirklees website at www.kirklees.gov.uk/schoolorganisation or obtained from Kirklees Council School, Organisation and Planning Team, PO Box 1720, Huddersfield, HD1 9EL.

The address of the authority to which objections or comments should be sent:

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this proposal, (i.e., by 8 February 2024) any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to Tom Brailsford, Strategic Director for Children's Services, Kirklees Council, c/o School Organisation & Planning Team, PO Box 1720, Huddersfield, HD1 9EL or by email to school.organisation@kirklees.gov.uk.