

Chairman's Announcements

Subject:	Statutory Consultation opens on vision for special schools
Web contact:	specialschools@wiltshire.gov.uk

Wiltshire Council is welcoming the views of parents, carers, pupils, staff and the public on its vision to transform special needs education.

The statutory consultation into the future vision for special schools in Wiltshire is now online. People are encouraged to send in their views on the council vision to transform special needs education.

The council proposes to invest £20m in a new centre of excellence for pupils with special needs and disabilities. It will be developed at Rowdeford near Devizes to match the excellent facilities at Exeter House, Salisbury.

The vision means that the schools at Larkrise, Trowbridge, and St Nicholas, Chippenham and Rowdeford will close in 2023.

It is proposed that the three schools will be closed and replaced by a new special school which will be developed and established in accordance with Department for Education (DfE) Guidance "Opening and closing maintained schools: statutory guidance for proposers and decision-makers" (November 2018). All capital costs will be met by Wiltshire Council.

Consultation responses are invited until 1 March 2019, comments are invited via:

- [The Council's Consultation website](#)
- Email to specialschools@wiltshire.gov.uk
- At information surgeries in the schools
- At open meetings for parents/carers run by Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC) which will be advertised on their [website](#)

The purpose-built and amply-equipped school will address the need for an additional 220 SEND places for Wiltshire while providing:

- Great teaching from well-trained, caring specialist dedicated staff
- The right facilities and support – hydro-pools, sensory rooms, physio, open outdoor space, speech and language therapy and family care
- Strong community links with cafes, community gardens and public playing Fields
- Closer links between SEND schools, and greater support for all mainstream Schools
- Links with specialist nurseries offering children with special needs seamless attention from very small to teenage years
- Good road routes to both sites which are central to the home locations of children and young people with SEND with space to expand

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The final decision on the vision for SEND will be made at Wiltshire Council's cabinet meeting in March after completion of the consultation.