

SPECIAL SCHOOLS PROPOSALS (19 November 2019)

APPENDIX 1:

PROPOSAL AND TIMELINE DOCUMENTS

1.1 Proposal.....	2
1) Contact details.....	2
2) Implementation.....	2
3) Reasons for closure.....	2
4) Reason for the new school	3
5) Category.....	3
6) Ethos and religious character	3
7) Pupil numbers and admissions	4
8) Admissions arrangements for the proposed new school	4
9) Displaced pupils	4
10) Impact on the community	5
11) Rural primary schools	6
12) Balance of denominational provision.....	6
13) Maintained nursery schools	6
14) Early years provision.....	6
15) Sixth form provision	7
16) Special educational needs provision	7
17) Single sex school.....	7
18) Curriculum	7
19) Relevant experience of proposers.....	9
20) Effect on standards and contribution to school improvement	9
21) Location and Costs	9
22) Travel.....	10
23) Federation	10
24) Voluntary aided schools.....	10
25) Foundation schools.....	10
26) Summary	10
27) Access to copies of the full proposals	11
28) Comments on, or objections to, the proposals	11
Statutory Notice.....	14
1.2 Timeline Document	16

1.1 Proposal

PROPOSAL FOR SPECIAL SCHOOLS IN NORTH WILTSHIRE PURSUANT TO A STATUTORY NOTICE PUBLISHED ON THE 2 SEPTEMBER 2019

A Statutory Notice regarding the closure of:

- *St Nicholas School, (Special) Malmesbury Road, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1QF*
- *Rowdeford School, (Special) 2 St Edith's Marsh, Rowde, Wiltshire. SN10 2QQ, and*
- *Larkrise School, (Special) Ashton St, Trowbridge, Wiltshire. BA14 7EB*

and the related opening of a new amalgamated special school across the three existing sites has been published on 2 September 2019 at 9am.

The proposer being Wiltshire Council, whose address is County Hall, Wiltshire Council, Bythesea Road, Trowbridge; ("the Council" in this statutory notice).

A copy of the notice is attached at the end of this proposal.

Below are the detailed, related proposals for these changes, for consideration together. **Responses to the proposals must be received by the Council by 9am on the Monday 30 September 2019.**

The headings and issues described below are those required by regulations and statutory guidance¹.

1) Contact details

Special Schools Project, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN

2) Implementation

Following the Wiltshire Council Cabinet meeting of the 22 May 2019 and the granting of the statutorily required consent by the Secretary of State, it is proposed that:

- A new maintained school is established with a single leadership team for the existing St Nicholas, Rowdeford and Larkrise schools as soon as possible, and no later than 1 September 2021.
- The closure of St Nicholas, Rowdeford and Larkrise schools, as related proposal, occurs no later than the 31 August 2021.
- St Nicholas and Larkrise stay in use on their current sites until the new provision is ready, and it is appropriate for children to transition to the new site at Rowdeford.

3) Reasons for closure

The proposed closures are put forward as part of an amalgamation. Whilst the schools will close, the sites will not. The new amalgamated school will operate across the three sites.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-organisation-maintained-schools>

The current sites of St Nicholas and Larkrise will stay in use until new provision is ready, and it is appropriate for children to transition to the new school at Rowdeford.

The opportunity exists to improve provision by closing these three schools and pooling and further developing expertise. By closing to open at a larger size of operation the new school will offer a wider range of professional skills and expertise alongside a consistent outreach and in-reach capacity to support mainstream schools.

The three schools proposed for closure have a collective in-year deficit which is projected to grow to a shared trajectory of over £1m by the end of 2021-22. By amalgamating the three schools there will be an opportunity to explore economies of scale and savings from shared back office services.

There are also wider pressures across the council budgets for the provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). Pooling expertise across a formalised and integrated governance structure will enhance the new school's ability to offer cost effective outreach and in reach services to mainstream schools, impacting their ability to deliver more cost effective yet just as impactful outcomes for their pupils with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) as well as those in receipt of SEN Support.

4) Reason for the new school

The numbers of pupils in Wiltshire needing a special school place are growing and there is insufficient space for the number of pupils who need a special school place in the north of the county. Currently over 300 pupils are educated out of county because there are not enough places of the right quality in Wiltshire schools. With housing growth and military rebasing, this number will continue to grow.

There is a particular projected shortage of places for those pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and complex needs in the north of the county.

The three existing schools are currently admitting pupil numbers in excess of their published place numbers. The new school would add significant new places to the existing places available.

Building works will be taken forward at the current site of Rowdeford school to create additional places and reduce overcrowding at the St Nicholas and Larkrise sites.

5) Category

All three existing schools are coeducation local authority maintained community special day schools. Both Larkrise and St Nicholas offer provision for pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD) and SLD, including pupils who may also have Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and physical disabilities. Rowdeford also offers provision to young people with Moderate Learning Disabilities (MLD), but not currently PMLD.

It is proposed that the new school will be a coeducation local authority maintained community special day school. The focus will be on meeting the increasing demand for those pupils with PMLD and SLD also referred to as complex needs.

6) Ethos and religious character

It is not proposed that the new school will have a religious character. It is expected to be non-denominational.

Building on the ethos of the existing schools, the new school will inspire children, young people and adults to adopt and live positive human values.

There will be a continued focus on ethical and emotional intelligence, deepened relationships, social cohesion and a strong values-culture to give students the best chance in life.

7) Pupil numbers and admissions

Pupil age groups	St Nicholas	Larkrise	Rowdeford	Total
Current agreed places	78	85	130	293
Actual pupils placed aged 4 or Less	2	6	0	
Actual pupils placed aged 5 to 15	64	79	135	
Actual pupils placed aged 16 or over	14	10	0	
Total placed July 2019	80	95	135	310
Agreed places for September 2019	78	96	166	340
2023 places proposed for new school				400

The combined places for the three existing schools is currently 293. This proposal seeks to expand provision further so we can accommodate up to 400 pupils.

8) Admissions arrangements for the proposed new school

All pupils currently in the three proposed closing schools will continue to go to school at the current sites, but now under the one new amalgamated school senior leadership.

The new school will be a maintained school with foundation, key stage one, two, three and four, as well as post 16 provision.

In order to keep pace with demand for special school places for children/young people with complex needs in the north of Wiltshire, any new classrooms (and associated buildings) required, will be built at the Rowdeford site.

The proposal is for the new school to have enough places to admit 400 pupils.

All new admissions will be via the Wiltshire Council SEND panel for pupils with an EHCP. This will be a co-educational special school for children and young people aged 5 – 19 with SLD, PMLD, MLD and associated ASD (referred to as complex needs). There is no expectation that pupils currently placed in schools out of county will go to the new school unless requested by them and their parent/carer. However, the new school will reduce the number of children/young people who will need to be placed out of county in the future.

9) Displaced pupils

The schools are only being closed as part of an amalgamation where the intention is to increase capacity at the new school which will operate across all three existing sites. St

Nicholas and Larkrise stay in use on their current sites until new provision is ready, and it is appropriate for children to transition to the new school at Rowdeford. No pupils would therefore be displaced.

10) Impact on the community

Larkrise, St Nicholas and Rowdeford schools are all very popular and well loved by their communities. The proposal to keep all three sites operating under a single leadership team will make no changes to the school sites. Any future changes to the three-site model will only be made after further consultation and representation under the statutory guidance related to prescribed alterations²

The context for these proposals is a long-standing strategic review of special school places and pupil numbers across the county. Based on analysis of growth set out in 2017 due to SEND reforms, housing developments and military rebasing, the projected requirement for additional places is shown in the table below.

By SEN Designation	Placements in Wiltshire Special Schools 2017 (5 – 16yrs)		2yrs (2019)			5yrs (2022)			9yrs (2026)		
	Places North	Places South	North	South	All new	North	South	All new	North	South	All new
ASD	111		4	9	13	24	22	46	50	40	90
SEMH³	68		2	3	5	10	9	19	21	17	38
Complex	279	82	4	8	12	23	20	43	49	37	86
Sensory			0	1	1	2	1	3	3	3	6
All	458	82	11	20	31	58	52	111	123	97	220

In addition, while Wiltshire has been able to benefit from school places in neighbouring counties, these schools are also now reaching capacity and need places for pupils from their own Local Authority. Parental choice will be maintained via continued access to all schools within the region which includes Outstanding and Good Special schools in BANES, Somerset and Swindon as well as Exeter House in the south of Wiltshire. There are also additional special schools for children and young people with ASD/SEMH (Autism and Social Emotional and Mental Health) in Devizes, Calne, Salisbury and a new school in Salisbury anticipated in 2023, all in Wiltshire.

There have been concerns that the new school would be for all pupils with SEND regardless of their particular needs. This will not be the case. We will continue to have schools for children and young people with ASD and SEMH and will also continue to expand the places available

²

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/756572/Maintained_schools_prescribed_alterations_guidance.pdf

³ Social Emotional and Mental Health

in mainstream schools. The new school will be a key development that will enhance integration, inclusion and differentiated support and opportunity across all schools in Wiltshire.

Closure of the three schools is timed for not later than 2021 and is related to the proposal to open the new school. As a change from three to one maintained school the three schools will not be legally closed until the new school is legally opening. Through this process children/young people will continue to attend school as they do at the moment.

When the majority of the building at the Rowdeford site has been completed, the Local Authority will take forward a consultation to review if the buildings at Larkrise and St Nicholas will continue to be needed based on a review of demand for places at that time.

As such the change from three to one school will have no impact on communities as in this proposal children/young people will continue to be educated on all three sites.

The community at Rowde has embraced the existing Rowdeford school and has actively supported the continuation of a special school in this rural community close to the busy town of Devizes. It is hoped the expansion of the new school at the Rowde site will support the local economy, bus services, facilities and employment. To date, Rowdeford school has not struggled to recruit staff, and welcomes the opportunity to offer greater local employment to people living in the local and wider area.

The location of the proposed new build is central to the north of Wiltshire and offers reasonable journey times to the majority of the growing number of pupils and staff.

Current staff will not be subject to TUPE⁴ regulations as they will continue to be employees of Wiltshire Council. There will need to be a re-structure of the senior leadership creating shared as well as specific responsibilities across the three sites led by the local authority and the shadow governing body. Members from across all three current governing bodies will be sought to join the shadow governing body and it is likely that this body will co-opt additional members from across Wiltshire communities to work with them to:

- Create a shared vision, ethos and strategic direction for the new school
- Structure and appoint a senior leadership team
- Set out a budget and a performance management system

11) Rural primary schools

This proposal does not relate to rural primary schools.

12) Balance of denominational provision

As all three existing schools are non-denominational and the proposed new school would also be non-denominational, there will be no impact on the balance of religious provision or the opportunity for parental choice in this area as a result of the proposed closures.

13) Maintained nursery schools

This proposal does not relate to the discontinuance of a maintained nursery school.

14) Early years provision

⁴ Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations

Early Years provision will be led by the three specialist nursery settings (District Specialist Settings) that will benefit and be part of outreach delivered by the new school. The new school working with the District Specialist Centres would also support mainstream nursery settings and child minders to ensure that every child with SEND has a good start in life. We will explore the possibilities of offering multi-agency partners, such as health visitors, space in the new provision to offer integrated support from birth onwards.

15) Sixth form provision

St Nicholas and Larkrise schools currently provide post-16 Education which will be extended and coordinated through the new school. It is proposed that post 16 education will be provided by the new school, Wiltshire College and the range of private providers across Wiltshire with whom the Council has developed strong relationships. This will involve the current buildings and other community based sites.

The aim is to increase the opportunities for preparation for adulthood in a wider range of locations, expanding on arrangements already in place and judged by Ofsted as at least “good”.

16) Special educational needs provision

Of the three schools proposed for closure, two are rated by Ofsted as Good and one as Requires Improvement. The proposal will lead to improvements in the standard, quality and range of special education:

- The intended new places at the Rowdeford site will offer the opportunity to significantly reduce overcrowding in schools which currently do not comply with relevant DfE regulations, and will offer up-to-date facilities in a new build
- The one school will provide economies of scale which reduce the financial pressures faced by the existing smaller schools.
- The current schools have limited access to therapies. By building on one site a significant and growing number of pupils will have access to good shared resources such as therapy, SEAL (Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning), sensory support, Physiotherapy, Occupational Therapy, Speech and Language Therapy, Paediatricians and community/school nursing, particularly at the Rowdeford site
- Currently we are not always able to offer all children and young people a place in our local schools because of lack of space and insufficient specialist support on site. The intended new build will offer more places and higher levels of support where economies of scale can be realised.
- Currently pupils have to choose between a specialist or mainstream provision. The new approach will ensure flexibility of choice and a full range of provision to meet the spectrum of need.

17) Single sex school

The new school does not propose to admit pupils of a single sex, it will be coeducational.

18) Curriculum

The proposed new school will deliver a curriculum compliant with the general requirements of Section 78 of Education Act 2002, enabling students to benefit from a broad and balanced curriculum which will allow them to develop their skills and knowledge, preparing them for life after school. As a special school, it will place great emphasis on personalised learning, aiming to ensure that all students develop their expertise in literacy, numeracy and life skills, but in a way best suited to each individual student. There will be separate approaches for different key stages and levels of engagement and ability, including those who will potentially have dual placements with mainstream schools. The one school will bring together the vision and values of the three schools to bring the best of the strategic planning and expertise to develop skills and policies across the three sites. The new school will work proactively with mainstream schools and while being established on three sites its reach is expected to engage with and provide activity and provision across sites of mainstream schools across Wiltshire.

Broad curriculum pathways would continue to include:

- A caring, organised and happy environment in which each learner's special educational needs can be met and their achievements celebrated;
- A curriculum that covers the broad topics first introduced in the Early Years Foundation Stage;
- A Profound Education Curriculum designed for students with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, delivered by staff who go the extra mile to arrange stimulating and exciting activities and outings;
- A broad curriculum developing the learning of students with moderate learning difficulties, speech, language and communication needs and autism in all areas whilst focusing on reducing specific barriers to learning that individuals with complex needs may experience;
- High expectations and aspirations and a profound and well-justified belief that every child and young person can learn and achieve;
- Refined skill in finding and applying the most effective approaches to communicating with, relating to and teaching children and young people with special needs and challenges;
- Exceptional expertise in assessing progress and recognising the smallest steps as well as large jumps in learning, and in using assessment to guide teaching directly in highly effective and indispensable teamwork across the school workforce in which varied skills combine and best practice is readily shared;
- Strong partnerships with other professionals and providers, not least in reintegration and transition;
- The provision of ambitious and exciting opportunities through well-designed and individualised curriculum arrangements;
- Respect for individual children, young people and their parents, with the power to bring cheer and self-belief to children, and relief, optimism and support to parents;
- Unremittingly committed, inspirational and forward-looking leadership which believes that every professional challenge has a solution.

At every stage of their education, each child's strengths and needs will continue to be considered carefully and the best curriculum pathway for them chosen and reviewed regularly in the context of assessed needs and EHCP targets. The aim would continue to be that challenge is pitched at the right level for each student to make the best progress possible.

As the Senior Leadership team is brought together, further changes and developments will be shared as would be true for all schools supporting and working with their governors, parent/carers and partners.

It is anticipated that a shadow Governing body will be set up to facilitate the transition from three schools to one, which will then be established at the appropriate time as one governing body for the one school.

19) Relevant experience of proposers

The Proposer is Wiltshire Council, an experienced and long-standing responsible body for education.

The successful 2018 joint local area SEN and/or disabilities inspection in Wiltshire confirms that the Local Authority as a proposer has the relevant experience to ensure that the new school will be a place where children and young people have access to a wide range of learning opportunities which enable them to develop their personal qualities, thrive and grow.

Wiltshire Council is well placed to ensure there will be a strong culture of communication, collaboration and operation between home and school and the new school will enjoy getting to know all of the learners and their families over their time there.

20) Effect on standards and contribution to school improvement

The new one school will build upon the recognised good practice of the existing three schools and, therefore, will not have a detrimental impact. This will enable a comprehensive, viable school fit for the future which will support not only the pupils who attend the school but also the wider population of pupils with SEND in Wiltshire, using curriculum approaches and expertise described above to support pupils and staff in schools across the county.

21) Location and Costs

The school will serve the northern, middle and north eastern and western parts of the county of Wiltshire.

For the intended new build places:

- The land utilised will include space available in the grounds of Rowdeford School and potentially additional current farm land that will be re-designated, also owned by Wiltshire Council;
- The cost is estimated at £32m and will be met by Wiltshire Council (agreed 22.5.19 Cabinet);
- Planning permission will be required;

Pre-consultation raised some concerns that the rural Rowdeford site could segregate and isolate children and young people with SEND. This has not been evidenced by the current school, which has a strong and proactive relationship with the community. The new school will build strong links with all schools across Wiltshire, offering opportunities for both staff and pupils to engage in both in and out reach education. This remains the most suitable and viable location for expansion. However, as mentioned above a year before the intended new building is complete and when a significant proportion of the new accommodation is available for pupils, the Council is committed to taking forward consultation to consider the longer-term future use of the sites in Chippenham and

Trowbridge. This will be based on demand for additional places at the time of the consultation.

22) Travel

This proposal will have no immediate impact on travel, as all pupils will continue to attend school at their current site.

New travel arrangements will only be put in place at the point at which the new build is ready and the Senior leadership team in consultation with Governors and the Council agrees its transition plan and the forward use of all buildings.

Should the decision be made later, not to use all three locations then new travel arrangements will be introduced. Current assessments suggest that an overall reduction in travel times could be achieved for the majority of students if only the Rowdeford site were in use. If all three sites are continued to be used at this time the school will need to work with the Council to ensure that travel times are maintained or improved for the majority.

The new build is proposed to happen on the Rowde site as it has good access routes, is close to Julia's House and Canon's House respite facilities, and has quick access from local ambulance stations and onwards to major hospitals if needed. It will also offer Virgin Care (our current community health provider) consulting, office and therapy rooms. This will mean that there can be full time nursing provision as well as other therapeutic support, reducing the need for hospitalisation journeys and parents to travel to the school to support medical concerns.

23) Federation

It is not proposed that the new school be a federated school.

24) Voluntary aided schools

It is not proposed that the new school be a voluntary aided school.

25) Foundation schools

It is not proposed that the new school be a foundation school.

26) Summary

As part of these proposals, the local authority has taken forward a series of Equality Impact Assessments. The impact assessment suggests that mitigating actions can reduce, but not eliminate all concerns. There are over 3500 pupils with an EHCP in Wiltshire and many more on SEN support in mainstream schools. It is essential that the proposals support both the individual and majority needs. This approach to bring together the expertise of the three schools at the earliest possible opportunity allows the best of the three schools to the benefit of students across the northern parts of Wiltshire.

Overall, the proposals will have an overwhelmingly positive impact for children and young people with SEND both in the school and supported through the in and outreach provision in terms of:

- Wellbeing
- Progress
- Attainment
- Health
- Community opportunities
- Inclusion and integration
- Preparation for adulthood and independent living

However, it is recognised that some students and parent/carers:

- May experience a level of anxiety as these changes take place;
- May have worries during the development of the project about what school will be like in the future.

We hope this will be mitigated by:

- Many opportunities for engagement in the development of the school and centres of excellence including input to and with an online 3D model and visualisation for the site.
- Good sharing of plans and support with staff and families.
- Good planning and communication through the continued progress of the project.
- Drawing together the senior leadership teams at the earliest possible opportunities to ensure shared and strong leadership.

27) Access to copies of the full proposals

Background papers can be found on the Wiltshire Council website in the meeting agenda for the Cabinet meeting of 22 May 2019⁵. Paper copies of these proposals can also be obtained upon request by emailing SpecialSchools@wiltshire.gov.uk or by writing to Special School Project, Education Directorate, Wiltshire Council, Bythesea Rd, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA1 8JN

28) Comments on, or objections to, the proposals

Any person or organisation may object to, support or comment on the above related proposals by:

- Writing to Special Schools Project, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN
- Complete a short consultation reply form on: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council-democracy-consultations> along with supporting documents
- And/or attending one of the arranged meetings.

If you cannot access these methods you can email specialschools@wiltshire.gov.uk or write to the address above to request a paper copy of the survey. Comments/objections will not be collected via the email.

Meetings are being arranged for staff and governors at the three schools concerned.

There are meetings being arranged at the schools for parent/carers of pupils and additional meetings in the north and south of Wiltshire are being extended to parent/carers. Letters will be sent via schools to parent/carers and WPCC will advertise dates on their website http://www.wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk/en/Home_Page .

The Wiltshire Council site also has a series of videos available where Stuart Hall, Strategic Director, Wiltshire Parent Carer Council, was able to have a conversation with Cllr Laura

⁵ <https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=141&MId=12498&Ver=4>

Mayes about the proposals. <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council-democracy-consultations> . This may be particularly helpful way to understand a little more about the proposals.

All responses, comments, objections supporting statements and replies should be sent and completed by 9am on Monday 30 September 2019.

Signed:

**Ian Gibbons
Solicitor to the Council**

Date: 12 August 2019

The Process

Stage 1	Publication	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The proposal will be published on the websites of Rowdeford, St Nicholas and Larkrise Schools and that of Wiltshire Council from the 2 September 2019 for 4 term time weeks.• The proposal will also be shared with all schools and settings in Wiltshire via the Rightchoice website and to Local Area Boards for forward engagement of town and parish councils as appropriate.• For the three schools concerned, we will share the proposal with the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• the registered parents of registered pupils at the school;• the local district or parish council where the school that is the subject of the proposal is situated;• any local authority which maintains an EHC plan or statement of special educational needs in respect of a registered pupil at the school;• the governing body (as appropriate);• pupils at the school;• the trustees of the school (if any);• teachers and other staff at the school;• any local authority likely to be affected by the proposal, in particular neighbouring authorities where there may be significant cross-border movement of pupils;• the governing bodies, teachers and other staff of any other school that may be affected;• parents of any pupils at other schools who may be affected by the proposal including where appropriate families of pupils at feeder primary schools;• any trade unions who represent staff at the school; and representatives of any trade union of staff at other schools who may be affected by the proposal;• MPs whose constituencies include the school that is the subject of the proposal or whose constituents are likely to be affected by the proposal; and

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any other interested organisation / person that the Council thinks is appropriate. • Responses can be made via the online survey http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council-democracy-consultations • To obtain a paper copy of the proposal and response survey, email SpecialSchools@wiltshire.gov.uk, or write to Special Schools Consultation, Commissioning Team, Wiltshire Council, Bythesea Rd, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN. • Comments must be received by 9am on the Monday 30 September 2019 to be considered in the decision making.
Stage 2	Representation (Formal consultation and representation 4 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The period of consultation will be the four weeks Monday 2 September to Monday 30 September 2019. • Surgeries will be arranged in this time, led by the Wiltshire Council Project lead in each of the Schools for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff and Governors 2. Parents/carers • In addition, wider Question and Answer surgeries will be held particularly for parent/carers of children not currently at these special schools by Wiltshire Council in the north and south of the County. • Dates will be advertised and invitations sent via schools, Wiltshire Council and Wiltshire Parent Carer Council (WPCC).
Stage 3	Decision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following the representation period of consultation, the Council through its Cabinet will consider the comments and feedback received. Subject to Cabinet approval the proposal will be submitted to the Schools Adjudicator. The Schools Adjudicator is the decision maker for the opening of the amalgamated new maintained school, and the related proposal to close all three existing maintained special schools. • All the views submitted during the representation, including all support for, objections to, and comments on the proposal will be submitted to the Schools Adjudicator. • The proposal can be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Approved ○ Rejected ○ Approved with modifications. ○ Approve with/without modifications, subject to certain criteria • The Schools Adjudicator's decision will be published within one week of the decision and; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published on the same sites as the proposal • Sent to parent/carers of every registered pupil • Sent to the Governing bodies. • There is no right of appeal against determinations made by the Schools Adjudicator. Adjudicator decisions can be challenged only by Judicial Review in the Courts.

Stage 4	Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The implementation date is set as the start of the school year 2021 subject to appropriate processes and timetables. • The Secretary of State will be informed by updating the Department for Education's Register of Educational Establishments. • If the proposal is accepted an implementation plan will be agreed with the schools involved beginning with the creation of a shadow governing body.
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Statutory Notice

Wiltshire Council Statutory Notice: Intention to Discontinue the following maintained Special Schools:

- **St Nicholas School (Special), Malmesbury Road, Chippenham, Wiltshire, SN15 1QF**
- **Rowdeford School (Special), Rowde, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 2QQ**
- **Larkrise School (Special), Ashton St, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 7EB**

And to open one new maintained community special school across the three existing sites.

Notice is hereby given in accordance with section 15(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and Regulation 12(1) of the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 that Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8JN intends to discontinue the above three schools with effect from 31 August 2021 at the latest.

Notice is hereby also given in accordance with section 10(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and Regulation 10(1) of the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013 that Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Trowbridge, Wiltshire, BA14 8JN intends to establish a new maintained community special school with effect from 1 September 2021 at the latest.

All costs will be met by Wiltshire Council.

Reason for Closure and opening

The proposed closures and opening are put forward as part of the council's overall strategy to create new special school places in the north of the County for children with special educational needs. The proposed new school will be established as a centre of excellence, building upon the recognised good practice of the existing three schools and providing high quality support not only for the pupils who attend the school but also for the wider population of pupils with special educational needs in Wiltshire.

This notice provides the requisite statutory notice regarding closure of the above three schools and the related proposal of the opening of a new maintained special school.

The full proposal, along with supporting documents and a short consultation reply form may be found on: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/council-democracy-consultations>

Any person or organisation may respond to the proposals by:

- Completing the online survey. <https://wiltshire.objective.co.uk/portal/>
- Paper copies can be requested from Special Schools Project, Wiltshire Council, County Hall, Trowbridge, BA14 8JN or by sending an email to SpecialSchools@wiltshire.gov.uk . This email address will only be used to request paper copies of the proposal to be sent out.
- And/or attending one of the arranged meetings.

Questions can be raised at meetings being arranged at each of the above schools for parent/carers of pupils and for all stakeholders at meetings arranged in the north and south of the county. Details of the meetings will be sent by letter via schools to parent/carers, and WPCC and Wiltshire Council will advertise all dates on their websites:

- http://www.wiltshireparentcarercouncil.co.uk/en/Home_Page
- <https://wiltshire.objective.co.uk/portal/>

Responses to the proposal must be received by the Council by 9am on Monday 30 September 2019.

Signed:

**Ian Gibbons
Solicitor to the Council**

12 August 2019

1.2 Timeline Document

Timeline for northern Wiltshire special schools

The plan

- Bring Larkrise, St Nicholas and Rowdeford schools under one school leadership team by 2021
- Build a new £32 million school on the Rowdeford site by 2023
- At a later date, consult on options regarding bringing all pupils from the three sites onto the Rowdeford site

Why we are making these changes?

- We need 100 new places and to reduce overcrowding
- To improve standards with a unified leadership team
- Drive high quality inclusive education across all schools and settings
- Enhance SEND staff professional development and knowledge sharing
- Increase access to health and care support in schools
- Provide more resource base places in local schools
- Invest in post-16 special education and transition to independent living

What happens now?

