

# **PROPOSAL TO CREATE SATELLITE PROVISION OF MEADOWFIELD (FOUNDATION SPECIAL) SCHOOL, SWANSTREE AVENUE, SITTINGBOURNE, KENT ME10 4NL**

## **Introduction**

The proposal to make a prescribed alteration to Meadowfield (Foundation) Special School, Swanstree Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 4NL for 1 September 2024 are being published by Kent County Council.

Contact Name and Address: Marisa White, Assistant Director Education (East Kent), Children, Young People and Education, Education Planning and Access, Brook House, Reeves Way, Whitstable, CT5 3SS Tel: 03000 418794

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## **School details**

Meadowfield (Foundation) Special School is a day provision for boys and girls aged 3 to 19 with Profound, Severe and Complex Needs (PSCN), including Autism. In addition to the main building at Swanstree Avenue Sittingbourne, the school also operates a 6th form provision at Ufton Lane Sittingbourne and a Primary School satellite at Sunny Bank Primary School which was established in September 2022. The satellite at Fulston Manor Secondary School will provide students with opportunities for integration in a mainstream secondary school and will provide an onward pathway from the established satellite at Sunny Bank Primary School, as well as additional opportunities and choice for Meadowfield pupils.

Meadowfield Special School was judged "Outstanding" by Ofsted in March 2019.

## **Description of alteration and evidence of demand**

In accordance with section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 Kent County Council intends to make the following prescribed alterations to Meadowfield Special School:

- Create a satellite provision for 20 Secondary aged pupils at Fulston Manor Secondary School.
- Increase the designated number from 366 to 386.

Meadowfield Special School is unable to expand any further on its main school site and demand for PSCN Special school places in Swale district is increasing. The establishment of satellite provisions on mainstream education sites provides additional capacity whilst also enabling the school's expertise to be shared with the host school and provide Meadowfield students the opportunity to integrate, (where appropriate) with their mainstream peers.

As Meadowfield Special school cannot be expanded any further on their main school site, options to open a satellite on a secondary school in Sittingbourne were investigated. Fulston Manor Secondary School was identified as a possible site for a satellite due to already established working relationships between the two schools, the support of the academy trust for the proposal and having an area on the school site that was under development and could be adapted to accommodate a satellite provision alongside the planned additional facilities the school is investing in.

The satellite provision at Fulston Secondary School will support pupils with complex learning difficulties including Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) rather than the full range of profound, severe and complex needs (PSCN).

The pupils attending the satellite would continue to have access to all the support they require and would be on the roll of Meadowfield Special School. Their Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCP) would name Meadowfield as their school. Significant benefits have been identified as the proposal will develop and strengthen partnership between the schools and enable staff skills and expertise to be developed through joint training, curriculum development and the sharing of good practice. Pupils will benefit from being included, where appropriate, in both the educational and social life of the school alongside their mainstream peers. A specialist assessment of the children's needs will identify their suitability for the mainstream school satellite. The headteachers of the schools will discuss who is most appropriate and should be admitted, subject to parental support.

The increasing demand for special school places in Swale district, particularly for pupils with complex learning difficulties including ASD, has led to Meadowfield taking additional children. Meadowfield is unable to expand on its main school site in Sittingbourne. To meet the increasing demand the establishment of satellite provisions on mainstream school sites creates the additional required capacity, enables the school's expertise to be shared with the host provisions and also provides Meadowfield students with the opportunity to integrate, where appropriate, with their mainstream peers.

The Kent Commissioning Plan is available at this link: [www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision](http://www.kent.gov.uk/educationprovision)

### **Objectives**

As the strategic commissioner of school provision, the Local Authority has a duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places for the residents of Kent, including sufficient special educational needs places.

- Ensure there are sufficient special school place available for children in Swale district.
- Ensure that there is sufficient local provision through satellites at mainstream school sites.
- Children with complex needs and ASD will be able to attend satellite provision in mainstream primary and secondary schools.

### **The effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area**

It is not envisaged that this proposal will impact on other schools. The nearest Special School provision for children with PSCN is in Canterbury district.

### **Project costs and indication of how these will be met, including how long term value for money will be achieved:**

Fulston Manor has identified an area where the new satellite will be built together with additional accommodation they were already planning to deliver for the school. The project will ensure the satellite has its own dedicated accommodation of 2 classrooms and additional intervention and office spaces. The capital costs and total budget for the new accommodation at Fulston Manor Secondary School will be £1.6m. The satellite will be funded through the High Needs Budget.

### **Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation**

Should the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills agree that the proposals can go ahead, the establishment of the satellite provisions will be implemented September 2024.

### **Special educational needs (SEN) provision**

The overarching aim of Kent's SEND strategy is to improve the health, well-being, attainment and progress, and the quality of provision, for children and young people with special education needs and/or disabilities. The SEND Strategy can be obtained from the following link: [SEND Strategy - Kent County Council](#)

## **Travel**

Meadowfield site has adequate parking and a drop off facility for the taxis and minibuses that transport the children to the school. Fulston Manor school also has adequate parking and drop off facilities. Transport services will take the pupils direct to the satellite at Fulston Manor School.

## **Consultation**

All applicable statutory requirements to consult in relation to these proposals have been complied with. A public consultation was carried out by the Local Authority between 21 June to 19 July 2023. Consultation documents were produced for Meadowfield School and Fulston Manor Secondary School and copies of these documents together with a copy of the Equality Impact Assessment can be obtained from KCC's website:

[www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

The consultation documents were distributed to statutory stakeholders, including but not limited to the following groups:

- The staff, governors and parents/carers of students attending Meadowfield School and Fulston Manor
- The Dioceses of Canterbury and Southwark
- Chief Executive and Leader of Swale District Council
- Kent County Council elected members
- Local MP
- NHS Canterbury & Coastal Clinical Commissioning Group
- Schools in Swale
- Special schools in East Kent
- Local authorities maintaining an ECHP in respect of a registered pupils at Meadowfield School
- All stakeholders were able to access copies of these documents on the KCC website and the school's websites.

The outcome of the consultation was reported to the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills who agreed that a public notice should be published on the proposals.

## **The procedure for responses: support; objections and comments**

A public notice was published in a local newspaper on 08 November 2023. Each parent/carer of a child at Meadowfield School has been provided with a copy. The notice is displayed at all main entrances to the schools. It is also available on KCC's website:

[www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations](http://www.kent.gov.uk/schoolconsultations)

Within four weeks from the date of publication, any person may send in a response supporting, objecting or commenting on the proposal to Marisa White, Assistant Director Education (East Kent), Brook House, Reeves Way, Whitstable, Kent, CT5 3SS. Tel: 03000 418794; or email [school.consultations@kent.gov.uk](mailto:school.consultations@kent.gov.uk) The final date for sending in written representations is 6 December 2023.

