

Public consultation – April 2025

Proposal: St. John's CE Primary Kidderminster School
Specialist SEN Unit

This document contains information that will help you understand the issues surrounding this proposed change.



Dear Stakeholders

Re: Consultation on proposed introduction of a SEN unit St. John's CE Primary School, Kidderminster.

This document explains:

- Why The Spire Trust and St. John's CE Primary School feel it is appropriate to consider adding this provision to the school
- The timescale for the consultation
- Who is being consulted
- What happens at the end of the consultation period
- How to have your say.

It is important that all those involved have a say. A copy of the consultation document and link to the response form is available at:

<https://www.stjohns.worcs.sch.uk/key-information/st-johns-ce-primary-sen-unit-public-consultation>

Alternatively, a hard copy can be obtained from the school office at St. John's CE Primary School, Blakebrook, Kidderminster, Worcs DY11 6AP

Consultation responses must be received by noon on Friday 2nd May 2025.

Background information:

The Spire Trust and St. John's CE Primary propose a change to school provision by the addition of specialist SEN unit. This is considered a significant change and as such requires public consultation followed by an application to the Department of Education.

St. John's CE Primary School is currently designated a primary school with capacity for 420 pupils and it has no designation for special classes. To view the official school details please visit: Get Information About Schools <https://get-information-schools.service.gov.uk/>

The Proposal:

It is proposed that St. John's CE Primary School change designation to include special classes. The additional provision would be in the form of a SEN unit. We propose that this change takes effect from 1st September 2025.

This additional provision will allow the school to operate bespoke, focused provision for pupils, between the ages of 4-7, with Education Health Care Plans specifically identifying communication and interaction or cognition and learning as a specialist need.

Evidence of Demand:

The school currently has 9 pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan specifically identifying communication and interaction or cognition and learning as a specialist need. Consultation with SEN officers at Worcestershire County Council has confirmed that there are pupils in other settings or without a specialist place that would benefit from a bespoke, focused cognition and learning provision. The school would work in partnership with the Local Authority to identify and commission additional high needs places for pupils to join the unit.

The SEN2 January 2024 reported that:

- In Worcestershire, 1,936 primary-age pupils had an EHCP. There has been an almost 60% increase in the number of primary-age pupils with an EHCP since 2020, when there were 1,214.
- In Wyre Forest District, 365 primary-age pupils had an EHCP in January 2024.

- The three most common primary SEN needs for primary-age pupils with an EHCP in Wyre Forest were – speech, language and communication needs (129 pupils), autistic spectrum disorder (73 pupils), mild learning difficulties (51 pupils).

In their Specialist SEND Sufficiency Report 2024, Worcestershire County Council states that:

The percentage of children identified with special educational need and disabilities has increased over the last 10 years in Worcestershire. This is likely to continue to increase year-on-year as a percentage of the total population, following continual advancement in identification and diagnoses., Research is continuously being undertaken into ways to support children with various needs to remain within mainstream settings, alongside their peers, in their local communities.

There is a significant need in our area for additional specialist places for children with speech, language and communication needs.

Accommodation required:

St. John's CE Primary School would utilise existing free space to create the SEN unit. The space will also have access to an external learning environment. The location of the SEN unit will also allow opportunities for integration and inclusion with mainstream classes when appropriate.

How the decision will be made:

At the conclusion of this consultation period, the Trustees will consider any issues that have been raised before deciding whether to make a formal proposal to the Department for Education. The Spire Trust will share evidence gathered from various sources with the Local Authority to allow them to consider the evidence in order to reach a considered view on the merits of the proposal. In particular the following factors will be considered:

- The response to the public consultation
- The quality of education provision at the school
- The ability of the school to manage the proposed change to support the continued improvements at the school
- Demand for places in the local area

Who is being consulted?

This document will be made available to:

- Parents and carers of pupils attending the nursery/school
- Staff and Governors of other local schools
- Local District and County Councillors
- The Local Education Authority
- Immediate neighbours
- Local Member of Parliament
- Cabinet Member Responsible for Education
- Any other local stakeholder

What happens next?

Consultation Phase – Monday 7th April – Friday 2nd May

During the consultation phase, anyone with an interest can express their views on the options expressed in this document. This document and the meeting detailed on the cover form part of the consultation.

Submission of formal proposal to Local Authority – Tuesday 6th May

The Trustees will take note of issues raised during the consultation. At the conclusion of the consultation period, a decision will be made whether to submit a formal proposal to the Local Authority, requesting their support to formally propose the change.

If a formal proposal is made, the school and local authority officers will then prepare a report for the Cabinet Members with Responsibility for Education detailing the arguments for and against the proposal and the capital allocation that would be required to deliver the required accommodation. The responses of the public consultation will be shared with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility along with the Governors' comments on the issues raised.

Cabinet Member Decision – TBC

If the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education decides to support the proposal, the County Council will publish the statutory proposal and Public Notice of the proposal. You will then have a final opportunity to comment or object within a four-week timescale laid down in law. Notices are published in the local press and displayed outside the school. At the end of the four weeks, any objections will be reported to the Lead Councillor for Children's Services for a final decision. It is important that all those involved have a say. A copy of the consultation document and link to the response form is available at:

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