

Paddock Formal Consultation - Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools, January 2023

Introduction

In Wandsworth it is our ambition for our local area to be the best place to grow up for all children, including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). To achieve this, it is important that we ensure that the needs of children with SEND are met locally keeping them closer to their families and friends.

Wandsworth Council is proposing to make the difficult decision to close Broadwater Primary School, a mainstream provision, at the end of the summer term 2023, to allow for the site to be repurposed as a SEND provision for a relocated and expanded Paddock secondary and 6th form school. These proposals will deliver a circa. £20m, high-quality, 192-place provision that will not only better meet the needs of Paddock pupils, parents and staff but also create further places. Our aim is for the repurposed school site to be open for Paddock pupils by academic year 2025/26. The proposal will also address the financial challenges faced by school leaders associated with falling pupil rolls in the primary mainstream sector, ensuring a sustainable school system.

A decision was made in December 2022 by the Director of Children's Services and the Lead Cabinet member to proceed to the formal stage of the statutorily regulated processes for the 'prescribed alterations' to Paddock School regarding relocation and expansion onto the Broadwater site, and the discontinuance (closure) of Broadwater Primary School. Both consultations will last 4 weeks and run concurrently from Thursday 5th January 2023 to midnight on Thursday 2nd February 2023. The Broadwater School consultation can be found at:

<https://haveyoursay.citizenspace.com/wandsworthcsd/broadwater-23>

Why are we proposing this change?

This proposal is primarily driven by our aspirations for our Wandsworth children with SEND to have their needs met locally, keeping them close to their families and friends and the need to retain a sustainable school system.

The need for additional specialist SEND provision is increasing, but pupil numbers in mainstream primary schools has seen a steady decline. The increase in demand for specialist places and a lack of local provision means we are having to commission places outside of Wandsworth, often in independent schools. As a result, many of our young people with SEND have to travel long distances to attend schools away from their communities. This has a significant impact on children, their families and brings with it a significant financial cost, as we are having to spend £11 million a year on independent placements, which places additional budgetary pressures on the overall school system.

Schools for pupils with Severe Learning Disabilities (SLD) is where we need more local provision, with demand for over 24 places a year. Paddock Special School is an OFSTED 'Outstanding' local provision that currently meets the needs of approximately 215 pupils, of which the majority are SLD, but it is now at capacity. We are placing children with SLD in the independent sector, with the difference in cost between local and independent provision at £30,000 on average.

The Council has previously made capital investment in Paddock School, however, further reconfiguration and improvement works and the need for increased capacity, are not feasible at the two sites across which the school operates.

Broadwater Primary School has been particularly impacted by the decline in mainstream pupil numbers. Given the size of Broadwater Primary School's site footprint, repurposing the site would

deliver both the internal and external space needed to accommodate the build of a high-quality, fit for purpose, specialist provision to meet the needs of a large cohort of SEND pupils with SLD/complex needs. The building work will be funded through Wandsworth’s High Needs capital allocation awarded by the Department of Education.

Our consultation approach

The local authority will consult with pupils, parents and carers, staff, the governing board, other local schools and trade unions. We are also consulting with other groups as well as the wider local community. We are committed through this consultation to be clear and transparent, to listen to and act on the views and concerns of those affected, and to provide reassurance.

While these are exciting plans for Paddock’s future in the medium-term, we appreciate these proposals may still give rise to some uncertainty and create questions for the Paddock School community. We are working closely with the school leadership team to ensure staff, pupils and families, and the wider community are supported throughout this process on an ongoing basis, and to ensure any change is handled efficiently and sensitively. We will provide a number of other opportunities to share views and to shape plans, if the proposals are progressed.

How to share your views

It is important that we hear your views and we have arranged a number of opportunities to do so, as detailed in the statutory notice, below. All responses received during the consultation process will be considered before a decision is made on whether to proceed with this proposal.

Next Steps

The following timeline is dependent on a decision being made to proceed with the proposals for both Broadwater and Paddock, and has been informed by statutory requirements:

Activity	Timeline
4-week statutory representations ('formal consultation') .	Consultation period: Thursday 5th January 2023 (first day of Spring Term) to Thursday 2nd February 2023
Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive Committee – making decisions on the proposals for Paddock and Broadwater following the formal consultation/s.	OSC – 6th March 2023 Executive 7th March 2023
Closure of Broadwater (if agreed)	31 August 2023
Building programme - commence repurposing of Broadwater site for SEN provision	September 2023
Completion of building programme	Academic Year 2025/26 (estimated)
Decant of Paddock - Middle School (Yr 7 and 8) and Upper School (Yr 9-14) pupils decanted to repurposed school building	Academic Year 2025/26 (estimated)

Statutory notice

LONDON BOROUGH OF WANDSWORTH

Expansion of Paddock Special School and transfer of secondary and post-16 provision to a new site

Notice is hereby given in accordance with Section 19 (1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 that the London Borough of Wandsworth is proposing to expand Paddock School, Priory Lane, London, SW15 5RT (URN 101102) by a minimum of 64 additional secondary and Post-16 places to a capacity of at least 292 places and to transfer secondary and post-16 provision at the school to a new site at Broadwater Road, London, SW17 0DZ (currently the Broadwater Primary School site) with effect from 1 September 2025.

Paddock School is currently organised to give provision for 216 pupils in the age range 4 to 19. The proposal is to increase the capacity of the school to approximately 292 pupils. This would allow the school to increase secondary and post-16 provision from 2 forms of entry per year group (from Year 7 to Year 14 - currently 128 places) to 3 forms of entry with a total of 192 secondary and post-16 places from September 2025. These places would be provided at Broadwater Road SW17 0DZ.

If the proposals are approved, the school will cease to operate at the Priory Lane site, but Paddock Primary school will continue to be sited at St Margaret's Crescent SW15 6HL.

The London Borough of Wandsworth will implement the proposals.

This notice is an extract of the complete proposal. Copies of the complete proposal can be viewed at <https://haveyoursay.citizenspace.com/wandsworthcsd/paddock-23>

Alternatively you can request a printed copy of the complete proposal from the address below, by email at consult@wandsworth.gov.uk, or by telephone: 020 8871 7316 (please note that callers should opt for the Admissions and Transfers option and refer to 'Paddock Formal Consultation' when they get through to an Officer).

Within four weeks from the date of publication of these proposals, any person may object to, or make comment upon the proposals, by sending their representations to:

Ref: Paddock Formal Consultation
Wandsworth Local Authority
Commissioning Team
5th Floor
Wandsworth Town Hall
Wandsworth High Street
London
SW18 2PU

Or by email to: consult@wandsworth.gov.uk – please use the reference 'Paddock Formal Consultation'.

Explanatory Notes

Paddock School is a special school for children and young people aged 4 to 19 with special educational needs including moderate, severe and complex learning difficulties, autistic spectrum conditions and speech, language and communication needs. The school is a split site school with the lower and middle school provision at St Margaret's Crescent, SW15 6HL and Upper School and Sixth Form at Priory Lane, SW15 5RT. The Council has published proposals to discontinue Broadwater Primary School. If those proposals are approved, it is proposed that the Secondary School and Sixth Form provision (years 7 to 14) will move to new premises at the Broadwater Primary School site and the capacity for these year groups increased.

Supplementary information

Description of alteration

The proposal is to implement prescribed alterations to Paddock School, Priory Lane, London, SW15 5RT a community special school maintained by the London Borough of Wandsworth.

Wandsworth Council proposes to increase the number of pupils for whom the school is organised to make provision by 64 additional secondary and post-16 places to a total of 280 places: 88 primary aged places and 192 secondary and post-16 places. Provision for primary aged pupils will continue to be made at the school's current site at St Margaret's Crescent, SW15 6HL. Secondary and post-16 provision (national curriculum years 7 to 14) would transfer to a new site at Broadwater Road, London, SW17 0DZ (currently the Broadwater Primary School site) with effect from 1 September 2025 (estimated). The school will cease to use the Priory Lane site.

Evidence of demand

Wandsworth has seen a 44% increase in local demand for SEND places over the last 5 years. As of 2022, Wandsworth is above London and national rates for pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) who require SEND provision. Conversely, overall pupil numbers in Wandsworth schools are declining. This is putting significant financial pressure on all primary schools. Broadwater Primary School has been particularly impacted by this.

SLD is the area of need where local provision is most insufficient. Paddock Special School currently has 215 pupils of which the majority are SLD, however, it is now at capacity. There is demand for over 24 places a year for this type of provision.

The increase in demand for specialist places means that there is no longer sufficient capacity within our own existing special school provision, and we are having to commission places outside of Wandsworth, often in independent schools. As a result, many of our young people with SEND have to travel long distances to attend schools away from their communities. This has a significant impact on children, their families and brings with it a significant financial cost, which places additional budgetary pressures on the overall school system.

Objectives (including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice)

- To assist Wandsworth Council in fulfilling its statutory responsibility and provide sufficient school places for the growing number of children with complex needs.
- Delivering a new SEND provision which better meets the needs of children with complex needs.
- Delivering improved facilities to support high quality learning and teaching

- Increasing parental choice by delivering additional placement capacity at Paddock, which is an Ofsted ‘Outstanding’ school
- Improved sustainability of the mainstream school system in Tooting area
- Improved parental and local community access and engagement with the new facility
- Enabling more children to be educated locally and so avoid long travelling times to out of borough provisions

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

Paddock school provides for pupils with Severe Learning Difficulties(SLD) including Autism Spectrum Disorder. There are no other schools in the area with this designation so the repurposing of Broadwater would not impact negatively on any local maintained educational institutions. As illustrated for the figures provided above, there is a high demand compared to supply of SEN places. By increasing the capacity of Paddock it would enable more students to be placed locally so would impact positively on local educational institutions where there were children with SLD who needed changes of placement.

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

The project is expected to cost between £22 million and £26 million. This includes around £5 million contingency for inflation and possible cost overrun.

The project will be funded from DFE provided High Needs Capital Grant allocations to Wandsworth Council. These will all have been received by the end of financial year (FY) 2024-25. £22 million is already part of the capital scheme up to FY 2023-24 with another £10 million (approximate at this stage) expected in FY 2024-25.

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

The proposal for Paddock Special School to move their secondary and 6th form provision to the Broadwater Primary School site can only proceed if the council approves proposals in March 2023 to close Broadwater Primary School.

Subject to this approval the project works will begin in Spring 2023. Between September 2022 and December 2023, the final technical, planning permission and procurement work will need to be completed. Construction will take place from January 2024 to July/August 2025. An expanded provision would open on 1 September 2025.

Description	Timescale
Final design / feasibility	Feb-23 to Jun-23
Planning applications and procurement activity	Jun-22 to Dec-23
Construction and mobilisation of new provision	Jan-24 to August-25

A statement explaining the procedure for responses: support; objections and comments

Responses should be provided within four weeks of the publication date of this proposal, by Thursday 2nd February 2022, as follows:

- Online survey: <https://haveyoursay.citizenspace.com/wandsworthcsd/paddock-23>

Official

- Email comments to consult@wandsworth.gov.uk – please use the reference ‘Paddock Formal Consultation’.
- Send comments by post to the following address:

Ref: Paddock Formal Consultation
Wandsworth Local Authority
Commissioning Team
5th Floor
Wandsworth Town Hall
Wandsworth High Street
London
SW18 2PU

- Hard copies of consultation documents are available on request by writing to the address above, emailing consult@wandsworth.gov.uk or telephone at 020 8871 7316 (please note that callers should opt for the Admissions and Transfers option and refer to ‘Paddock Formal Consultation’ when they get through to an Officer).
- Attending the public consultation event at Paddock Upper School, Priory Lane, on Wednesday 18th January, from 5.30-7pm.