



The Woodlands Academy

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Headteacher: Mrs M Hockham

27 January 2022

Dear Parent/Carer/Staff/Local Authority/Member of local community

Consultation on proposed plans to increase the planned number of places at The Woodlands Academy from 110 to 163 in the age range 3-16 years.

Woodlands Academy is a special needs school for pupils aged 3-16 providing placements for children from within North Yorkshire and the East Riding of Yorkshire. It supports pupils with increasingly complex needs including Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) and Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD), Speech and Language difficulties, Autism and Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

The aim of the Academy is to provide a truly meaningful curriculum, which is accessible to all. This provision allows pupils to develop into confident individuals who through high expectation are able to achieve and become as independent as possible finding a fulfilling place within the wider world.

The Academy undertook a similar consultation exercise in 2020 resulting in the Secretary of State agreeing to increase capacity to 110 pupils. We currently have 124 students on roll and have had to turn away a large number of potential students due to capacity constraints. The governing body and leadership of the school would like to be able to meet the increasing demand for places and support as many children as is practical within the schools catchment area.

Approval to increase capacity will only be considered following a full consultation process with parents, staff, Local Authorities, other educational establishments and stakeholders. This document is part of the process and it is the Academy's intention to request an increase in the number of planned places from 110 to 163.



Reason for Expansion: Since 2014/5 there has been a 104% increase in the number of children in North Yorkshire requiring an Educational Health Care Plan, a large proportion of these would benefit from attending a special school. The increasing demand for specialist SEN provision includes children who need to transfer from mainstream settings, children moving into area and requests where the Academy is parents preferred choice.

The Academy continues to have regular discussions with North Yorkshire and East Riding County Council and an increase in places at the Academy would support both authorities in their duty to supply sufficient special school places.

Admission & Curriculum: The increase in capacity would provide additional places across all age ranges. The current admission arrangements would remain the same. These are detailed in Annex B of the Academy Funding Agreement which can be viewed in the Governance section on the Academy website www.woodlands.n-yorks.sch.uk

It is not possible to predict pupil numbers on a year on year basis however we are working with North Yorkshire County Council to meet the ever increasing demand for places. The Academy will take a phased approach to increasing student numbers based on the table below. This will help ensure the quality of education remains at a high level for all students.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Student Numbers</u>
Current	124
Sept 22	128
Sept 23	138
Sept 24	150
Sept 25	163

The Academy will arrange provision for teaching and learning to accommodate total pupil numbers whilst maintaining flexibility to respond to any fluctuations in pupil numbers.

It is not envisaged that this change will impact on the existing pupil population as funding arrangements will provide the Academy with the ability to maintain appropriate levels of support whether within small groups or through therapeutic interventions.

We are committed to improving the outcomes of all our pupils by removing barriers and providing a specialised, individualised curriculum. The Academy will continue to ensure that pupil wellbeing is integral in everything we do as a school community.

Leadership & Management: The appointment of a new Headteacher in September 2019 and a revitalised Governing Body cemented strong leadership at the top of the organisation with the ability to drive forward and deliver high expectations around teaching and learning for an increasing school population.

The Academy Leaders and Governing Body strive to deliver outstanding practice making it an everyday experience for all our pupils.

Physical Characteristics: Increasing pupil numbers will necessitate physical changes to the premises. We have been very fortunate to be selected as one of only 100 schools to receive direct government funding as part of their national schools rebuilding programme. Over the coming 24 months Woodlands will be transformed, providing a modern highly flexible environment that can meet the needs of students for years to come. The new facilities will include a significantly larger sports hall, separate dining hall, dedicated therapy and interventions rooms. The Academy has extensive outside space to accommodate increased numbers but it will also benefit from a new and much needed all weather outdoor surface (MUGA: Multi-Use Games Area)

Process of Consultation: In order to engage in meaningful and informed consultation, we will be holding a number of consultation events to engage with all stakeholders, as well as providing the opportunity for individuals and institutions to make written submissions about the proposal. All of this evidence will be collated in a consultation report which will be considered by the governing body prior to the submission to the Secretary of State.

The consultation process is set out below:

Date	Action
27 January 2022	Consultation Commences
7 February 2022 at 5pm	Meeting with Parents/Carers
10 February 2022 at 2pm	Meeting with Parents/Carers
10 February 2022 at 3.30pm	Meeting with Staff
10 February 2022 at 5pm	Community Meeting
24 February 2022 at 12 noon	Consultation Ends
24 February 2022 at 5.00pm	Governing Body meet to review feedback
25 February 2022	Submission forwarded to Secretary of State

We would encourage anyone reading this proposal document to provide your views in the following ways:

- By completing the attached response form
- By attending meetings at the school
- By email – admin@woodlands.n-yorks.sch.uk
- By letter – Addressed to The Headteacher, The Woodlands Academy, Woodlands Drive, Scarborough, YO12 6QN.

The consultation will run from 27 January 2022 to 24 February 2022 with the results published on the Academy website.

Yours faithfully,

Michelle Hockham
Head Teacher



Equality Impact Assessment **January 2022**

Question	Response
Summary of aims and objectives	The Woodlands Academy is requesting approval to increase capacity from 110 pupils to 163 pupils to meet the needs of children within the school's catchment area
What involvement and consultation has been done in relation to this proposal?	A consultation process will begin on 27 January 2022 and end on 24 February 2022. The consultation process will involve staff, parents / carers, North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Authorities, local educational establishments and the local MP.
Who is affected by this proposal	Staff, existing pupils, prospective pupils, families and schools in the Scarborough and wider catchment area
What are the arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the outcome of this consultation	The consultation findings will be reviewed at a Full Governing Board meeting to be held on 24 February 2022. The EIA will be considered in conjunction with the consultation findings

How will the proposal affect people with protected characteristics?				
Protected Characteristic Group	No impact	Make things better	Make things worse	Why will it have this effect? Is there any action that can be taken to address the negative impact?
Disability		✓		Woodlands Academy is a special needs school that caters for children with Autism, Speech and language difficulties, SEMH, moderate and severe learning difficulties. According to recent government data ¹ these areas represent the highest demand for children with Educational Health Care Plans
Gender reassignment	✓			No identifiable effect as this characteristic is not a factor in determining young people attending special schools
Marriage or civil partnership	✓			No identifiable effect as this characteristic is not a factor in determining young people attending special schools
Pregnancy and maternity	✓			No identifiable effect as this characteristic is not a factor in determining young people attending special schools
Race	✓			No identifiable effect as this characteristic is not a factor in determining young people attending special schools
Religion or belief	✓			No identifiable effect as this characteristic is not a factor in determining young people attending special schools
Sexual orientation	✓			No identifiable effect as this characteristic is not a factor in determining young people attending special schools
Sex (gender)	✓			No identifiable effect as this characteristic is not a factor in determining young people attending special schools
Age		✓		The proportion of young people attending special schools in North Yorkshire is higher among boys, proportionally more boys may be positively affected than girls.

¹Special Educational Needs in England: January 2021.

<https://explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk/find-statistics/special-educational-needs-in-england>

Evaluation

Is it possible the proposed increase in capacity could discriminate or unfairly disadvantage people?

It is believed that approval would have a positive impact on pupils with SEN and support their families as it will provide an increase in much needed specialist SEN provision. It will create much needed provision for students who are currently not accessing the specialist education they need or are having to travel long distances to out of county schools at significant expense to the Local Authority.

Any new pupil will come with dedicated funding therefore it is not envisaged that an increase in the number of pupils will adversely affect existing pupils in the school

Next steps to address the anticipated impact. Select one of the following options and explain why this has been chosen	Tick Chosen Option
<p>1. No adverse impact - no major change needed to the proposal. There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified. The proposal to increase capacity proceeds.</p>	✓
<p>2. Adverse impact - adjust the proposal The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We will change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or we will achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people</p>	
<p>3. Adverse impact - continue the proposal The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We cannot change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, nor can we achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people. (There must be compelling reasons for continuing with proposals which will have the most adverse impacts.)</p>	
<p>4. Actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and remove the proposal The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It must be stopped</p>	

Explain why you have chosen this option

No adverse impacts have been identified from the EIA affecting one or more protected characteristic

We believe implementing the proposal will have a positive impact on one or more protected characteristic. This reasoning is explained below:

Mainstream schools are struggling to meet the educational needs of children who require specialist SEN provision. If approval is not given then these children will continue to suffer and society will not do all it can to prepare these children to live as independently as possible.

The impact will not be restricted to the children but also their families and other pupils within mainstream schools where they are currently educated.

If the proposal is to be implemented how will you find out how it is really affecting people with protected characteristics?

This proposal has been prepared after consultation with both North Yorkshire and East Riding Local Authority who have informed us of the increased need for specialist SEN places. An increase in pupil numbers will confirm our belief that the proposal will have a positive impact on children with SEN and their associated families.

We will monitor the boy / girl split to see whether either sex is more positively impacted. This information will be submitted as part of our annual census data

Sign Off

This EIA was completed by:

Name: Maurice Dobie
Position: School Business Manager
Completed: 24/01/22
Authorised by: Michelle Hockham (Headteacher)
Wendy Holton (Chair of Governors)
Date: 24/01/22