



For Immediate Release

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Consultation to launch on changes to special schools and SEND provision in Central Bedfordshire

Central Bedfordshire Council's Executive has approved the launch of a public consultation about changes to Central Bedfordshire's four special schools and additional places for Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND) within mainstream schools

This is part of Schools for the Future programme, which is a long-term plan to raise education standards and make sure Central Bedfordshire area has the right schools, in the right places, delivering the best education.

Residents will be able to have their say from February 3 on proposals to increase places from around 700 to 950 across the special schools – The Chiltern School, Ivel Valley School, Oak Bank School and Weatherfield Academy. These schools would also relocate or expand between 2023 and 2026.

For additional SEND places in mainstream schools – known as Additional Resource Provision – the proposals are to create a further 92 places between 2023 and 2025, with a greater geographical distribution across Central Bedfordshire. This would be in line with future need in Dunstable and Houghton Regis; Harlington; Sandy; Shefford and Stotfold; Biggleswade; and Leighton-Linslade.

In mainstream schools, the aim is to also include multi-use/nurture spaces, where there is space to do so.

Cllr Sue Clark, Central Bedfordshire Council's Executive Member for Families, Education and Children, said: "As part of the Schools for the Future programme we have been working on these important proposals in collaboration with

head teachers from special schools and the 14 mainstream schools with Additional Resource Provision.

“Wherever possible, we support children and young people with special educational needs or disabilities in their mainstream schools, near to where they live. For children and young people with more complex needs, we want to ensure sufficient special school places will be provided that best meet their needs. I would urge anyone with an interest to have their say when the consultation begins on February 3, 2021.”

Further information, including how to have your say will be available on the Schools for the Future website www.schoolsforthefuture.co.uk from February 3, when the consultation launches.