



07 June 2022

Dear Consultee,

Consultation on the proposal to re-designate the Speech, Language and Communication Needs base to a Specialist Resource Provision at Longdean School, Hemel Hempstead, from September 2023.

In January 2021, the Board of Trustees consulted on the proposal to re-designate the existing speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) base at the school, as a Specialist Resource Provision (SRP) from September 2022. Due to the length of time that has elapsed since the consultation, the Board of Trustees are now consulting you again on the proposal to re-designate the SLCN base as an SRP. Please note that if approved, the SRP will now open from September 2023. The SRP will provide up to 20 places for students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) and social communication difficulties, including autism, in addition to children with severe speech disorders and developmental language disorder (DLD).

Why is this being proposed?

Children and young people with developmental language disorder and severe speech motor disorders are currently provided for by a pattern of SLCN bases attached to mainstream schools. These children and young people continue to need access to the mainstream curriculum, delivered in a linguistically modified and visually supported environment.

Officers have identified an increasing number of pupils with SLCN who have a broader and more complex level of social communication difficulties, including autism. Often these young people access education in special schools, but the creation of SRPs in mainstream schools will build on what is currently offered in SLCN bases, allowing many of these students to access a mainstream curriculum, balanced with a safe space to be in, where work can be done to support self-regulation and emotional wellbeing.

This has led to Hertfordshire County Council proposing to develop a pattern of SRPs in mainstream schools as part of the continuation of provision for children and young people with:

- developmental language disorder and/or a severe speech motor disorder (developmental verbal dyspraxia);
- social communication and social interaction difficulty, who may acquire a diagnosis of autism.

Access to the provision will be needs-led, with a robust multi-disciplinary team overseeing admissions, to ensure early intervention. Access for students with social communication difficulties will not be reliant on a medical diagnosis of autism. However, students with developmental language

Rumballs Road
Hemel Hempstead
Hertfordshire
HP3 8JB

Main School: 01442 217277
Fax: 01442 233098

Pupil Absence please call

Year 7	01442 205758
Year 8	01442 205707
Year 9	01442 205706
Year 10	01442 205703
Year 11	01442 205760
Year 12	01442 205720

Social Media

PE	@LongdeanPE
Science	@LongdeanScience
History	@LongdeanHistory
Film Stides	@LongdeanFilm



disorder and severe speech motor disorders will be identified by a speech and language therapy lead clinician, ahead of being recommended to the admissions panel.

The students with broader and more complex need have difficulties with communication, social relationships and managing a busy school environment. This often leads to anxiety and disengagement, or inappropriate coping strategies, including 'shutting down'. These students need access to a mainstream curriculum and academic challenge, balanced with a safe space to be in, where work can be done to support self-regulation, build resilience and protect emotional wellbeing.

This has led to the proposal to develop a pattern of SRPs across the county, for students with social communication difficulties, including autism, in addition to children with severe speech disorders and developmental language disorder.

Longdean Academy Trust believes the proposal to develop a Specialist Resource will create a centre of excellence for children and young people with SLCN and social communication difficulties, including autism and will:

- be an important part of Hertfordshire County Council's graduated approach to meeting needs locally;
- meet the needs of pupils within the provision, providing personalised support to enable them to make good progress in all areas of their development;
- build capacity across the School, ensuring that all staff have the skills and expertise to meet the needs of the pupils when they are accessing the wider school curriculum;
- work with other schools across the area to support meeting these types of needs and improving outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

The vision is that, through short and appropriate intervention, the self-esteem of pupils in the SRPs can be developed and they would be kept well emotionally and supported to reach their academic potential.

The proposal for Longdean School to re-designate the existing SLCN base as an SRP is fully supported by Hertfordshire County Council.

Hertfordshire County Council is developing a pattern of SRPs and is proposing to have SRPs in four secondary schools and nine primary schools, spread equitably across the county. The remain three secondary SRPs will be:

School	Town	Date
Bushey Meads School	Bushey	Approved to open from September 2022
The Priory School	Hitchin	Approved to open from September 2022
Avanti Grange Secondary School (opening in September 2022)	Bishop's Stortford	Proposed to open from September 2023

What will the SRP do?

The vision is that, through short and appropriate intervention, the self-esteem of these students can be developed. They will be supported emotionally as well as academically, to help reach their academic potential.

It is proposed that the SRP will provide up to 20 places. The students will be on the roll of Longdean School and will form part of any statutory returns required from maintained schools, including key stage results. The provision will form part of any Ofsted inspection.

The SRP will be a centre of excellence for students with social communication difficulties, including autism, in addition to children with severe speech disorders and developmental language disorder. The SRP will:

- be an important part of Hertfordshire County Council's graduated approach to meeting needs locally;
- meet the needs of students within the provision, providing personalised support to enable them to make good progress in all areas of their development;
- build capacity across the school, ensuring that all staff have the skills and expertise to meet the needs of the students when they are accessing the wider school curriculum;
- work with other schools across the St Albans and Dacorum area to support meeting these types of needs and improving outcomes for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

Why the Board of Trustees of Longdean School have an interest in developing an SRP at the school -

The Board of Trustees of Longdean School have an interest in developing the SRP because it believes very strongly that the SRP ethos and vision aligns with the school's aims and ethos. Longdean School has always prided itself on being a fully inclusive school that caters for the needs of all students through appropriate support and challenge to facilitate student success. This is reiterated in the aims of the school: <http://www.longdeanschool.co.uk/index.php/about-us/what-we-do.html>

- Longdean School achieved Communication Friendly Status for the period (2020 - 2023) and currently provides a county provision for Speech and Language. Currently there are 8 students on roll at the SLCN base and a further 45 across the school who have an EHCP. Many of these EHCPs are related to social communication difficulties, including autism.
- Meeting the needs of children with social communication difficulties, including autism, is already at the heart of what the school does to support the integration, progress and wellbeing of these students.

- The school already meets the needs of the students in the existing SLCN provision well. Should the SLCN provision be re-designated as an SRP, the school will introduce innovative approaches to meet the needs of an additional group of students with social communication difficulties, including autism, whose needs are not currently being met in mainstream schools in Hertfordshire.

What does this mean for students currently attending the SLCN base at the school?

Going forward, the needs of children currently in the SLCN base will be reviewed as part of their annual review.

All children who meet the guidance for the current SLCN provision will continue to have their needs met via the admissions guidance for the SRP.

The SRPs will have clear admission and exit guidance. To be admitted to the SRP, a child must have an EHCP and will have social communication difficulties, including autism. They will have needs greater than, or additional to, the needs that can normally be met through full time attendance at a mainstream school. The school will be named in the child's EHCP. Admission to the SRP will be distinct from the school's general admissions process.

How would an SRP impact on other students at Longdean School?

From time to time students based in the SRP would join sessions in the main school with their age group peers. Typically, these students would be supported by specialist staff from the SRP.

Other students at the school who are not in the SRP, but who have social communication difficulties, including autism, would benefit from main school staff working alongside specialist colleagues. However, access to SRP staff and resources would only be through admission to the SRP.

What would be the impact on staff?

All existing staff in the SLCN base are employed on a Longdean School contract of employment. There will be no redundancies as a result of this proposal. The school will be recruiting additional staff for the SRP.

The Headteacher will keep a strategic overview of the SRP, including staff recruitment, training and retention. It is expected that the Headteacher or other senior leader will be the line manager for the SRP Leader.

The county council have developed a full staff training and development programme to ensure consistency of offer across the four secondary schools who are developing SRP provision.

Have your say

All comments must be sent to Longdean School by **4 July 2022**, either via;

Email: srpconsultation@longdean.herts.sch.uk

Or

Post:

Longdean School
Rumballs Road
Hemel Hempstead
HP3 8JB

Should you wish to request a hard copy of the response form or need help understanding this information you can email: srpconsultation@longdean.herts.sch.uk or alternatively please call us on 01442 217 277.

How the decision will be taken

This is a consultation and no decision has been made yet. As Longdean School is an academy, the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) will be the final decision maker.

The following timetable outlines the decision-making process. Although it will not be possible to inform everyone individually of the decisions made, you will be able to access this information throughout the process at: [Home - Longdean School](#)

Public consultation	7 June – 4 July 2022
Board of Trustees to consider the consultation responses and decide on whether to progress to the next stage of the process	11 July 2022
Longdean School as an Academy to submit a business case to the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC)	31 July 2022
RSC decision	Anticipated by January 2023

Yours faithfully,



Mr Charlie Barling
Acting Chair of Trustees
Longdean School