

18th September 2020



**SAFFRON ACADEMY TRUST
CONSULTATION ON THE PROPOSED AGE RANGE CHANGE AND
INCREASE IN CAPACITY AT THE
HELENA ROMANES SCHOOL AND SIXTH FORM CENTRE**

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Chief Executive:
Ms Caroline Derbyshire

This proposal is published in compliance with the Department for Education 'Making significant changes to an open academy and closure by mutual agreement, Departmental guidance for all types of academy trust' November 2019.

Proposal to:

- **Change the age range of the school from 11-18 to 4-18; and**
- **Increase the size of the school by 457 places**

Academy Trust and School details

The proposer is Saffron Academy Trust.

General correspondence should be electronic only, addressed to: Ms C Derbyshire (CEO) at kathleenhutchinson@saffron.academy

Consultation responses should be sent either electronically to this email address, or posted to Ms C Derbyshire (CEO), Saffron Academy Trust, c/o Saffron Walden County High School, Audley End Road, Saffron Walden, Essex CB11 4UH.

This proposal relates to The Helena Romanes School and Sixth Form Centre, Parsonage Downs, Dunmow, Essex, CM6 2AU (the 'School').

Objections and comments

Objections and comments regarding this proposal should be sent via email to: Ms C Derbyshire (CEO) at kathleenhutchinson@saffron.academy

The consultation period will end on 30th October 2020 and all responses must be received by 23:59 on 30th October 2020.

Background and reason for the proposed change

The key objective of this proposal is to support Essex County Council in its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places.

There has been long term pressure on primary school places in Great Dunmow and previous efforts to develop any new primary provision have proved unsuccessful. More recently the pressure on primary school places has become more acute as a result of both higher birth rates and inward movement within the local area. This has led to a number of local primary schools admitting beyond their Published Admission Number (PAN), with some taking additional classes in certain year groups, in order to service the shortfall.

Looking to the future, the Council's projections of the need for primary places show that the demand will continue to grow and that additional places are required urgently. Future requirement, coupled with the immediate strain on existing local primary schools, requires a robust and practical plan. In addition to this consultation, further new school provision will be needed in the future, with new schools planned on other housing sites in Dunmow.

The availability of suitable sites in Great Dunmow has long been a barrier to increasing primary provision in the area, however in partnership with the Council, Saffron Academy Trust have identified that the proposed relocation of the School to its new site at Buttleys Lane, Great Dunmow will allow for an expansion of the School to accommodate primary aged children. No other suitable sites have been identified by the Council or local providers.

Data evidencing need extracted from Essex County Council Ten Year Plan

Reception Place Forecast

| Year | 20/21 | 21/22 | 22/23 | 23/24 | 24/25 | 25/26 | 26/27 | 27/28 | 28/29 | 29/30 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| +/- | -22 | -13 | -36 | -40 | -52 | -66 | -82 | -98 | -115 | -115 |
| Dunmow St Mary's Primary, Great Dunmow Primary, Great Easton CE Primary | | | | | | | | | | |

Number on Roll (NOR)

| Year | NOR |
|-------|------|
| 20/21 | 1067 |
| 21/22 | 1103 |
| 22/23 | 1171 |
| 23/24 | 1242 |
| 24/25 | 1338 |

Consultation

Statutory requirements to consult in relation to this proposal are being complied with as per the Department for Education ‘Making significant changes to an open academy and closure by mutual agreement, Departmental guidance for all types of academy trust’ November 2019.

A list of stakeholders who have been sent consultation packs inviting them to express their views can be found in Appendix 1 (see below).

Age range

The age range of the School is currently 11 to 18 years of age. The School proposes to extend its age range to 4 to 18.

School Capacity

The capacity of the School will increase from 1,563 to 2,020.

Changes to the School's Admissions Policy

The Local Authority’s request to increase the PAN and capacity at the school in order to place a primary phase temporarily on the school’s site will require an amendment to the school’s previously published Admissions Policy for the academic year 2021 – 2022. The amended policy, along with a copy of the previously published policy, can be viewed at the link below:

[Admissions policies](#)

The amended 2021-22 Admissions Policy, which refers to the new all through school, will be formally consulted on as the proposed Admissions Policy for September 2022 for a six week period between 1st October 2020 – 31st January 2021, in accordance with the School Admissions Code (2014).

Implementation date

It is proposed that the age range and number of places provided by the School will increase during the calendar year 2021 allowing for the primary phase to open in September 2021.

Frequently asked questions

What are some of the advantages of the proposed change?

There are many advantages to be gained from this proposal, the chief being:

- The current and future need for primary provision will be alleviated by the proposed change (although there may be need for additional primary provision in the future)
- Local primary schools in the town will no longer routinely be asked to admit over PAN
- Children across all local primary schools will get a better education as a result of being in appropriately sized classes
- Children who attend the through school will benefit from an education without transition- this will support them to make excellent progress.
- As well as benefitting from accessing modern, state of the art buildings, they will also receive greater access to specialist provision (e.g. a primary science lab) and specialist teachers. This is a result of the purpose built site and the availability of specialist staff in the secondary phase.
- The new site will also provide exceptional facilities for staff and students in the secondary phase, with superb general and specialist classrooms, a theatre, and extensive sporting facilities.
- Children from the other local primary schools will be able to benefit from the new facilities, as will members of the local community.

What can I expect to see as a result of the proposed change?

- A new primary phase will initially open on the exiting school site in September 2021
- The intention is that all phases of the school will relocate to the new site in September 2022
- State of the art provision in both phases
- Improved curricular and extracurricular performance from students throughout the school
- Improved transition arrangements for students who move through the school
- More curricular and extracurricular opportunities for other primary aged children in the town
- Greater student pride in their education and their school

Would there be any changes to governance as a result of the proposed change?

- No. Governance structures will continue in accordance with the Saffron Academy Trust's Scheme of Delegation

Who would be the headteacher of the primary phase of the school?

- A lead of the primary phase of the school will be appointed ahead of September 2021

How will staffing be changed to reflect the change in age range?

- As the primary phase grows, staffing will be increased to reflect the growing number of students in the school.

Would there be any changes to the size of the school and the accommodation?

- The school's secondary PAN will not change.
- However, the change in age range would see an additional two forms of entry from YR to Y6.
- It is planned that the school would move to a new site within the town (see above).

What would the admission arrangements be for the primary school?

- Primary admissions will be administered through Essex County Council (apart from the September 2021 intake, which will be administered by the school). The PAN for the primary phase is 60.
- Students at the end of Y6 would automatically be offered a place in the secondary phase of the school.

Appendix 1

Consultation Documents have been made widely available to:

| Organisation | Job Title/Department (where applicable) |
|--|---|
| Anglican Diocese | Education Department |
| Catholic Education Service: Diocese of Brentwood | Director for Education |
| Great Dunmow Town Council | Clerk |
| Uttlesford District Council | Leader |
| Saffron Walden | Member of Parliament |
| Unite (TGWU) | |
| Voice Union | Regional officer - East Anglia |
| Unison | |
| National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) | |
| NASUWT (Eastern Regional Centre) | |
| NASUWT | Essex Federation Secretary |
| ATL | ATL Regional Official Essex, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock |
| VOICE (previously PAT) | |
| Association of School and College Leaders (ASCL) | Regional Officer - East of England |
| GMB Union | Senior Organiser |
| NUT | General Secretary |
| ASHE Essex Executive Members | ASHE Professional Officer |
| Essex Primary Headteachers Association | Chair |
| Essex Special Schools Education Trust | Chair |
| Young Essex Assembly | |
| South West Essex PCT | Interim Chief Executive |
| Essex County Councillor | Heddingham ED Member |
| Essex County Councillor | Stansted ED Member |
| Essex County Councillor | Saffron Walden ED Member |
| Essex County Councillor | Thaxted ED Member |
| Essex County Councillor | Dunmow ED Member |
| Essex County Council | Business Support Administrator |
| Essex County Council | Passenger Transport |
| Essex County Council | Passenger Transport |
| Essex County Council | Systems Support Officer |

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| Essex County Council | Employer Liaison Manager |
| Essex County Council | Infrastructure Delivery |
| Essex County Council | Executive Director for People Operations |
| Essex County Council | Business Systems |
| Essex County Council | Passenger Transport Strategy Manager |
| Essex County Council | Education Transport and Awards Team Manager |
| Essex County Council | SEN Commissioning monitoring assistant |
| Essex County Council | Senior Social Care Workforce Officer |
| Essex County Council | Business Development Officer |
| Essex County Council | Information Officer Commissioning and Procurement |
| Essex County Council | School Places Data & Intelligence Manager |
| Essex County Council | Head of School Admissions |
| Essex County Council | SEND Quadrant Manager |
| Essex County Council | Senior Contributions Analyst |
| Essex County Council | Policy and Project Development Manager |
| Essex County Council | Performance Assistant - SCF Performance team |
| Essex County Council | Team Manager, Children's support service |
| Essex County Council | Assistant Director Education North East |
| Essex County Council | Senior Contracts & Processing Office |
| Essex County Council | Head of Projects |
| Essex County Council | EIBS Team |
| Essex County Council | Pupil Place Planning Support Officer |
| Essex County Council | Pupil Place Planning Support Officer |
| Essex County Council | Assistant Director of Education |
| Essex County Council | Data and intelligence Officer |
| Essex County Council | Head of Strategy Planning and Performance |
| Essex County Council | Head of Specialist Education Services |
| Essex County Council | School Effectiveness Partner |
| Essex County Council | School Effectiveness Partner |
| Essex County Council | SEND Quadrant Manager |
| Essex County Council | SEND Quadrant Manager |
| Essex County Council | SEND Quadrant Manager |
| Essex County Council | Assistant Director of Education |
| Essex County Council | Director for Education and Lifelong Learning |
| Essex County Council | Central Payments |
| Essex County Council | Area Improvement Adviser |
| Essex County Council | Customer Relationship Manager |

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| Essex County Council | Quadrant Commissioner |
| Essex County Council | Head of Primary Improvement |
| Essex County Council | Finance Business Partner |
| Barnston Parish Council | Clerk |
| Broxted Parish Council | Clerk |
| Felsted Parish Council | Clerk |
| Flitch Green Parish Council | Clerk |
| Great Easton and Tilty Parish Council | Clerk |
| High Roding Parish Council | Clerk |
| Leaden Roding Parish Council | Clerk |
| Lindsell Parish Council | Clerk |
| Little Dunmow Parish Council | Clerk |
| Little Easton Parish Council | Clerk |
| Stebbing Parish Council | Clerk |
| Thaxted Parish Council | Clerk |
| Dunmow St Mary's Primary | Headteacher |
| Felsted Primary | Headteacher |
| Flitch Green Academy, The | Headteacher |
| Great Dunmow Primary | Headteacher |
| Great Easton CE Primary | Headteacher |
| Stebbing Primary | Headteacher |
| NW ASHE (Association of Secondary Headteachers in Essex) | Headteachers in NW ASHE |
| Helena Romanes School & Sixth Form Centre | All Parents & Carers |
| Helena Romanes School & Sixth Form Centre | Website |
| Saffron Academy Trust | Website |