

## Proposal for the Relocation and expansion of Woodfield Primary and Secondary Schools – Information for Schools and Parents/Carers

### Background

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Under Section 14 of the Education Act 1996, Coventry City Council has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places and fair appropriate access to education for all. It is the Council's role to plan, commission and organise school places in a way that raises standards, manages supply and demand and creates a diverse infrastructure.

It is the local authority's statutory duty to secure a sufficiency of appropriate education places for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

Coventry has a good range of specialist school provision and a small number of Coventry children attend schools outside of the city, a position that needs to be maintained. However, recent evidenced growth in need – specifically in the area of complex communication/autism spectrum conditions, (ASC) and social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) – has placed a level of demand on the special school system that exceeds current supply.

Whilst the recent expansion and relocation of Tiverton Special School created much needed capacity in the primary sector for children with generic learning difficulties, there is no physical capacity in the system to support SEMH growth across all age ranges; increased demand for secondary/post-16 special school places for generic learning difficulties; and ASC growth across all age ranges.

### Rationale

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An opportunity has risen to utilise the vacant education site at the former Woodlands School site and to co-locate Woodfield School in its entirety.

Woodfield School is currently split across two sites - primary and secondary. The proposed utilisation of the Woodlands site would relocate both primary and secondary onto a shared site with separate buildings. It would give access and play space providing age appropriate curriculum and resources and support the transition from primary to secondary school. Shared facilities would also reduce revenue costs and support sustainability.

In the UK, all children are entitled to participate in Physical Education lessons at school and the Council is committed to ensuring that all pupils have access to a wide range of sports provision to promote health and wellbeing benefits and to develop teamwork. The proposed move to Woodlands would help facilitate this.

This relocation and expansion would provide a future-proofed fit for purpose educational environment and a wealth of sports facilities for both existing and future pupils and the wider public - with the capacity for the provision to grow.

### Local Authority proposal

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To refurbish the former Woodlands site to provide a new location for the existing Woodfield Primary and Secondary schools and expanding the number of specialist SEMH places in both primary and secondary phases to meet the known demand.

A survey and initial feasibility report have been undertaken by architects acting on behalf of the Council and it has been confirmed that it is possible to integrate

a primary and secondary special school onto the Woodlands site.

The integration onto one site would allow both primary and secondary phases to benefit from shared working practices, more efficient and improved facilities and a purpose designed building. In addition, the refurbishment of the Woodlands site would also potentially allow a continuation and expansion of the community sporting provision that has been successfully in place on the site.

### Meeting project costs

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Significant investment is required to allow the existing Woodlands site, with Grade II statutorily listed buildings, to be used as a modern SEND school.

The educational capital budget alone cannot support the costs. It is intended that planning consent is sought on both existing Woodfield School sites for housing provision. This is required to help fund the refurbishment of the Woodlands site as a SEMH School. If successful, the proceeds from the sale of the sites will be ring-fenced and used to fund the refurbishment of the Woodlands site.

Your comments are sought on the relocation and disposal of surplus land at Woodfield. Please respond to the consultation via [letstalk.coventry.gov.uk/woodfields-school-consultation](https://letstalk.coventry.gov.uk/woodfields-school-consultation), [education.consultations@coventry.gov.uk](mailto:education.consultations@coventry.gov.uk) or via letter addressed to Education Entitlement, Coventry City Council, PO Box 15, Council House, Coventry, CV1 5RR. The consultation will close at midnight on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020