

Grove Park School Reorganisation Consultation



Consultation document for pupils, parents/carers, staff, governors, and stakeholders

East Sussex County Council is proposing to reorganise and expand Grove Park School by lowering its age range and enlarging the Church Road premises to create an all-through school for nursery to sixth form on one school site, with effect from 1 September 2025.

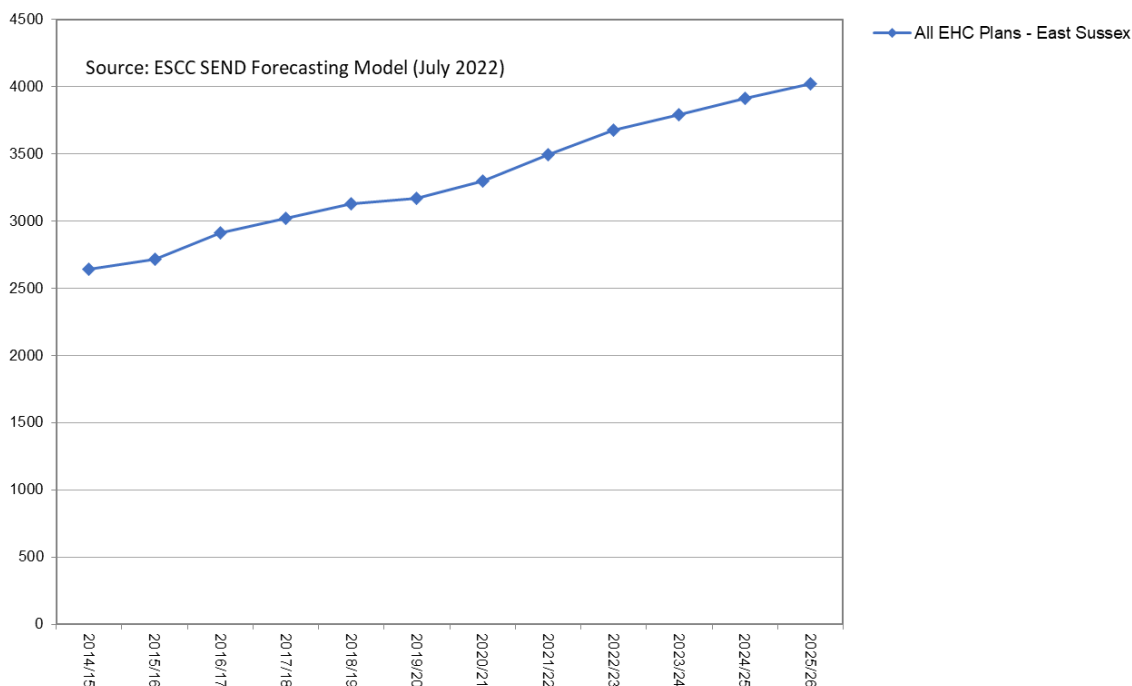
Why do we need to reorganise Grove Park School?

Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient good school places for all pupils, including for those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). East Sussex County Council (the local authority)'s SEND forecasts provide clear evidence that we will continue to see an increase in the number of pupils with SEND in the coming years.

The numbers of school aged children and young people aged 4-19 in East Sussex with an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) have been rising steeply in recent years, from 3,126 in 2018-19 to 3,494 in 2021-22, an increase of 12%. In 2021-22, there were also 400 young people aged 19-25 in East Sussex with an EHCP.

In the next four years, the local authority forecasts that overall numbers of school-aged children and young people aged 4-19 with EHCPs will grow by around 15%, to approximately 4,000.

Chart 1: Overall Numbers with EHCPs - Age 4-19 years



Linked to the rise in pupils with EHCPs with a primary need of profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), pupil numbers have increased significantly at Grove Park School. At the request of the local authority the school has also taken pupils with a broader range of need, including pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorder. As a result, pupil numbers at the school have increased by 33% since 2012/13.

Chart 2: Pupil numbers at Grove Park School in 2012/13 and 2022/23

Grove Park School	Primary age 4-11	Secondary age 11-16	Sixth form age 16-19	Total age 4-19
2012/13	30	45	25	100
2022/23	53	63	17	133

Source: January school censuses

As the only special school in the north of the county, there will continue to be significant pressure on places at Grove Park School for PMLD places as well as the other needs that the school caters for.

Current accommodation and capacity issues

Grove Park School currently has three phases: primary, secondary and sixth form on separate sites in Crowborough. The primary phase (4-11) is based at Church Road, the secondary phase (11-16) is co-located on the Beacon Academy secondary site in Beeches Road and the sixth form (post-16) is co-located with Beacon Academy's sixth form at Green Lane.

As a result of the increasing pupil numbers, Grove Park School is struggling to accommodate its current pupils, particularly its secondary and sixth form pupils co-located at Beacon Academy. Grove Park School therefore requires larger accommodation to meet the growing demand for places at the school.

What is the proposal?

The proposal is in three parts:

1. To lower the school's age range from 4-19 to 2-19 to establish nursery provision for eight full-time equivalent (fte) two and three year olds.
2. To enlarge the premises at the Church Road site to accommodate secondary and sixth form pupils currently co-located at Beacon Academy (ending that arrangement).
3. To increase the number of places for secondary and sixth form pupils. This would take the total number of places available at the school for primary, secondary and sixth form to 152.

Chart 3: Planned capacity by phase

Early Years age 2-4	Primary age 4-11	Secondary age 11-16	Sixth Form age 16-19	Total age 4-19
8fte	56	60	36	152

What will be the impact of ending the co-location with Beacon Academy?

The local authority believes ending the co-location with Beacon Academy and bringing Grove Park School's accommodation together on one site would have a number of benefits for the pupils attending the school. Currently, the three sites have a 'staggered' start time as the transport services drop off at each site, which also has an impact on the local traffic.

The intention of the co-location at Beacon Academy was to provide opportunities to integrate with the Beacon pupils. However, the increase in pupil numbers at both schools

means that integration is no longer practical. Lunch and break are at different allocated times to enable all pupils to comfortably access the dining room.

Pupils attending the secondary and sixth form provision have limited access to shared spaces, such as the sports facilities and specialist rooms. A single site for Grove Park School would afford ownership of those facilities and the flexibility to timetable spaces with the needs of the pupils at the centre of the decision making.

By bringing the Grove Park secondary and sixth form pupils to the Church Road site they would have access to outside spaces enriched with sports and sensory play equipment which would be of benefit to them.

Currently the hydrotherapy pool is located on the secondary site of Beacon Academy. Whilst this is a short walk for the secondary pupils, sixth form and primary pupils rely on minibus transportation to get there. Not only is this transition challenging for some pupils, but it is also time consuming, which equates to lost learning time.

In addition to better access to resources, the school budget can be used more effectively as services can be centralised, for example, one reception area, rather than three. Teaching, administration, and site staff would work across the whole site, leading to better utilisation and deployment of our most valuable resource.

Currently, the ability to share learning resources is limited, for example, the school has three PE storage areas with similar resources, which on a single site, could more easily be shared, leading to better utilisation of learning resources.

For regular visitors, for example therapists, being able to visit one site would reduce travel time and increase the access to therapy for those pupils that need it.

Coming together on one site would give Grove Park School pupils and their families a sense of community, belonging and identity.

Are there site plans to show how the school would be expanded?

The local authority is in the early stages of consulting on the proposals. Initial scoping of the site has shown there is sufficient space on the Church Road site for expansion. The local authority has appointed a design team to work up plans for the expansion. We will share the proposed designs with interested parties at a pre-planning consultation event at the school. All stakeholders, including local residents, will have the opportunity to view the plans, ask questions and make comments. This will enable the design team to take into consideration everyone's views before a planning application is submitted.

You would have a further opportunity to comment on the plans as part of the planning application process which is separate to this consultation.

How would the school deal with any possible increase in traffic and congestion?

A traffic and parking assessment would be undertaken as part of the design and planning process and the school's travel plan would be updated to reflect this.

Would the school need to close during building work?

No. The building works would be planned carefully, and contractors would work with the school to ensure that works are scheduled to keep disruption to a minimum. The building site would be a secure area to ensure the health and safety of the children, staff, parents and carers and visitors to the school.

How can I give my views?

The consultation period runs from 19 May to 23 June 2023.

You can give your views by:

- Completing the online survey on the ESCC [consultation hub](#)
- Emailing the local authority at: school.consultations@eastsussex.gov.uk

All comments must be received by **23 June 2023**, or they cannot be considered.

If you would like a paper copy of the consultation document, please email:
school.consultations@eastsussex.gov.uk

What happens next?

Following the consultation period, a report on the outcome of the consultation will be considered by the Lead Member for Education, Inclusion and Special Educational Needs and Disability at a decision making meeting in July 2023. The Lead Member will decide whether to proceed with the proposal. If approved, a statutory notice would be published on the local authority's website, probably in August 2023, which would be followed by a representation period lasting four weeks when further comments or objections to the proposal could be submitted. The Lead Member would consider any responses received during this time before making a final decision on whether to approve the proposal at a meeting likely to be held in October 2023.

Grove Park School Reorganisation Consultation



Our proposal is:

1. To lower the school's age range from 4-19 to 2-19 to establish nursery provision for eight full-time equivalent (fte) two and three year olds on site.
2. To enlarge the premises at the Church Road site to accommodate secondary and sixth form pupils currently co-located at Beacon Academy (ending that arrangement).
3. To expand the number of places for secondary and sixth form pupils.

The local authority would welcome your views on the proposal. The consultation period finishes on **23 June 2023**. If you would prefer to complete a paper copy, please print this form, and send it to: School Consultations, Education Division, Children's Services Department, East Sussex County Council, East G, County Hall, St Anne's Crescent, Lewes BN7 1UE.

- 1. Do you support the proposal to lower Grove Park School's age range to establish nursery provision for eight full-time equivalent two and three year olds?**

Yes

No

Undecided

- 2. Do you support the proposal to enlarge the premises at the Church Road site to accommodate secondary and sixth form pupils currently co-located at Beacon Academy (ending that arrangement)?**

Yes

No

Undecided

- 3. Do you support the proposal to increase the number of places for secondary and sixth form pupils? This would take the total number of school places available at the school for primary, secondary and sixth form to 152.**

Yes

No

Undecided

4. Please provide any comments below:

5. Which of the following best describes you?

- Pupil at Grove Park School
- Parent/carer of a child/young person at Grove Park School
- Member of staff at Grove Park School
- Governor at Grove Park School
- Pupil/parent/carer from a local school
- Staff from a local school
- Governor from a local school
- Member of the local community

Other (please say)

About You: Equalities Monitoring Form

We want to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and equally and that no one gets left out. That's why we ask you these questions. Your data is important to us and we won't share the information you provide with anyone else. Your information will only be used and reported anonymously to support the activity you have completed the 'About You' survey for. You do not have to answer these questions but by doing so you are helping to ensure our services effectively meet the needs of all our service users. Full privacy notice:

<https://www.eastsussex.gov.uk/privacy/about-you>

6. What age are you?

<p>..... years</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say</p>
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7. What is your gender?

<p><input type="checkbox"/> Female</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Male</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Non-binary</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to self-describe, please write in:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say</p>
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8. Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No, write in gender identity:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say</p>

9. What is your ethnic group?

<p>White</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> English/Welsh/Scottish /Northern Irish/British</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Irish</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Gypsy / Irish Traveller</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Roma</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any other White background, write in:</p>	<p>Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White & Black Caribbean</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White & Black African</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> White & Asian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any other Mixed or Multiple background, write in:</p> <p>Asian or Asian British</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Indian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Pakistani</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Bangladeshi</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Chinese</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any other Asian background, write in:</p>	<p>Black, Black British, Caribbean or African</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Caribbean</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> African background, write in:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any other Black, Black British or Caribbean background, write in:</p> <p>Other ethnic group</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Arab</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Any other ethnic group, write in:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say</p>
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10. Which of the following best describes your sexual orientation?

<input type="checkbox"/> 'Straight' / Heterosexual
<input type="checkbox"/> Gay or Lesbian
<input type="checkbox"/> Bisexual
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer to self-describe, please write in:
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

11. What is your religion or belief?

<input type="checkbox"/> No religion	<input type="checkbox"/> Any other religion, write in:
<input type="checkbox"/> Christian (including Church of England, Catholic, Protestant and all other Christian denominations)	<input type="checkbox"/> Philosophical belief, write in
<input type="checkbox"/> Buddhist	<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say
<input type="checkbox"/> Hindu	
<input type="checkbox"/> Jewish	
<input type="checkbox"/> Muslim	
<input type="checkbox"/> Sikh	

12a. Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expected to last 12 months or more?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes (please answer part b below)
<input type="checkbox"/> No (go to the next question)
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say (go to the next question)

12b. Do any of your conditions or illnesses reduce your ability to carry out day-to-day activities?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, a lot
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, a little
<input type="checkbox"/> Not at all
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

13. Please tell us your postcode

.....
<input type="checkbox"/> Prefer not to say

Thank you: this information will help us improve our services for everyone.