



LYNGFORD PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL
BIRCHAM ROAD, TAUNTON, TA2 8EX
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Headteacher: Mr N Arnold
Safeguarding: Mrs K Barratt

Richard Huish Trust
Lyngford Park Primary School
Development of a SEND unit in partnership with Somerset Council
Consultation

Background and context

Lyngford Park Primary School (“The school”), in partnership with Somerset Council, is proposing to locate a Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Unit on its campus at Bircham Road, Taunton.

The school pupil number is currently circa 240. In 2025, the Pupil Admission Number was reduced from 39 to 30, better reflecting the level of first choice applications for Reception age children and allowing the school to maintain a level of financial resilience.

Why are we doing this?

There is currently a shortfall of specialist education places in the county. Most of the existing special schools, autism bases and SEND units are already full to capacity. As a result of this, Somerset Council approached the school with a proposal to establish a SEND unit, using a classroom block that will be surplus to requirements in the coming years. Richard Huish Trust and Lyngford Park Primary School are fully committed to working with Somerset Council to provide more opportunities for young people with SEND to access high-quality education and support from within their local communities, the establishment of a SEND unit is part of that commitment.

What is a SEND unit?

A SEND unit comprises of separate classrooms and facilities within a school setting for children that have special educational needs that cannot be met within mainstream classes.

By educating these children within a small specialist environment that has been designed to meet their needs, it is much more likely that their educational potential will be realised.

Where will the unit be?

The unit will be located in one of our existing classroom blocks. The unit will have its own classrooms, toilets, external play spaces and car parking arrangements. Works required to the internal and external spaces are being overseen by colleagues from Somerset Council who are funding the project. A proposed layout plan is provided on the following page.



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The centre will not cater for children that have Social, Emotional or Mental Health (SEMH) support needs.

How many children will attend the SEND unit, and how will places be allocated?

The unit will be able to take up to 24 children when full. We expect that the number of children will build over time, starting with a maximum of 8 children in the first year. We expect the unit to be at full occupancy within three years.

Places will be allocated by Somerset Council's Statutory SEND service in consultation with staff at the school. Children placed at the SEND unit will be local children to Taunton.

Who will run the unit?

The unit will be run by the school. The children will be included within the school's pupil numbers for funding and statistical reporting purposes. Teaching and support staff will be staff of the school.

Will the unit adversely impact other schools in the area?

It is unlikely that other state-funded schools will be negatively impacted as there are so few vacancies at special schools in the county.

Where is the money coming from to pay for the refurbishment and ongoing running costs?

Somerset Council are funding the refurbishment works in full. The ongoing running costs of the facility will be met from a mixture of DfE General Annual Grant and funding required to meet the support needs identified in EHCPs provided by Somerset Council.

When is this all going to happen?

We are hoping to start refurbishment works in the Summer Holidays, 2026 with completion of all works by the October half-term.

Getting the unit ready, from a staffing and resources perspective, will start from September 2026 to ensure we are ready to admit our first children in January 2027.



Stakeholder Consultation

What feedback is being requested in the consultation?

The School and Richard Huish Trust wish to know whether people would support the proposal, and whether stakeholders have any feedback they would wish to be considered.

Who can respond to this consultation?

Any member of the public is welcome to submit their comments.

We would particularly wish to hear from local stakeholders likely to be affected by the proposal, or anyone with an interest in education provision in the area.

Can I object to the proposal?

Yes, you can object or comment on the proposal.

What if I require additional information before providing my feedback?

Please contact the school if you require any additional information before submitting your feedback.

How long does the consultation run?

The consultation period is from Friday 24 April 2026 and runs for three weeks, finishing Friday 15 May

When is the deadline for submitting views?

The deadline is 5.00pm on Friday 15 May 2026.

Please note that any views received after this time may not be able to be taken into account.

How can I provide my views?

Please submit your views using the following MS Forms questionnaire at the following website:

[Lyngford Park Primary School: Establishment of a SEND Unit – Fill in form](#)



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Will you respond to my feedback?

Individual queries received during the consultation period will receive an acknowledgment although will not normally receive a response.

What will happen to my feedback?

All responses to this consultation will be collated and a report made available in due course.

What happens after the consultation period has ended?

The consultation forms part of a wider decision-making process. The ultimate decision will be made by the Department for Education South-West Advisory Board.

Thank you for considering our proposal, and we look forward to hearing your views.