



## Consultation on a proposal to open a Cognition and Learning Unit at

### The Buckingham School

#### **Proposal to open a Cognition and Learning Unit at The Buckingham School**

Buckinghamshire Council, with the support of the Governing Board of The Buckingham School, are seeking your views on our proposal to open a Cognition and Learning Unit at The Buckingham School from January 2027.

Over the last five years, the number of Special Educational Needs and Disabled (SEND) pupils with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP) has increased by 48% (1901 pupils). Current projections forecast a further 51% increase in the number of EHCP pupils over the next five years.

The number of secondary aged children with Cognition and Learning needs has risen by 30% over the last 5 years and we are expecting the numbers to increase further in the future.

As part of our SEND Education Sufficiency Strategy, the Council sought expressions of interest from Schools interested in opening a secondary age inclusion unit. The Buckingham School submitted an expression of interest to open a Unit to meet the demand for places and we are therefore proposing to open a Cognition and Learning Unit. The proposal being progressed reflects the phased approach to the delivery of new SEND Units across the County which are prioritised by the profile of need by type and geography. The Council has no secondary ARP/Unit in the north of the county resulting in a significant gap in provision for C&L students. The provision of new SEND Units are a key element of the Service's Medium Term Financial Planning programme to ensure the council meets the increased demand for SEND places, with a particular focus on inclusion within Mainstream Schools.

The proposal at The Buckingham School would be an 8 place Unit for pupils with Cognition and Learning needs as detailed in their Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP). Only children whose EHCP states they need support from a unit would be admitted and admissions will be controlled by the SEND team; parents would not be able to apply directly to the school for a place in the unit. The 8 pupils would be in addition to the school's current Published Admission Number of 210.

#### **What this proposal means for pupils and staff at the school**

A key aim of the unit is to enable pupils to access a mainstream curriculum, whilst accessing specific specialist support. Pupils attending the unit are likely to spend the majority of their time based within the new Unit. The new Unit will be self-contained with its own external courtyard for external learning and recreation. Pupils in the Unit will be able to join in with parts of the school day, where appropriate.

Specialist teachers would be employed to manage the new Unit. All staff working in the Unit will have received specialist training on supporting children with Cognition and Learning needs. The Unit will be staffed with teachers and learning support assistants; additional professionals will support the children including a speech and language therapist and occupational therapist. Additional professionals will be employed depending on the needs of the children, such as a play therapist, an art therapist etc.



### How the Unit would be funded

The new Unit would be accommodated in an existing drama room which will be refurbished to provide a dedicated classroom, an intervention room and an office. In order to compensate for the loss of the existing drama room, the old lecture theatre will be refurbished to create a new multipurpose performance/drama space. The Unit will have its own outdoor courtyard which will be refurbished as part of the planned works.

The cost of the planned works would be funded using government funding that has been made available for providing new/expanding existing SEND provision across the county.

Additional revenue funding would be provided to fund the Unit. It would therefore not have a detrimental impact on the school's existing revenue budget or impact on provision for pupils.

It is proposed that works would commence on the Unit during the summer 2026 and complete by the end of the year such that the new provision will open from January 2027.

### Opportunity to meet with us to discuss these proposals

We appreciate that this letter may raise questions for you relating to this proposal. A drop in session for parents, families and any other interested parties will be held **on Wednesday 25 March 2026 from 5:30pm to 7:00pm** at the at The Buckingham School, London Rd, Buckingham MK18 1AT

### Timetable for these proposals

The proposed timetable below, which may be subject to change, sets this timeline and next steps out:

Start Date	End Date	Description
16 March 2026	26 April 2026	Six week informal public consultation
25 March 2026 17:30 – 19:00		Drop-in session at The Buckingham School for all interested parties to view the plans and discuss the proposal with representatives from the School and Council.
27 April 2026	15 May 2026	Consultation responses assessed and decision taken by Buckinghamshire Council and the Governing Body of The Buckingham School whether to propose opening a Cognition and Learning Unit.
20 May 2026	16 June 2026	Subject to the decision above: Publication of Statutory Notice and formal 4 week representation period
17 June 2026	11 August 2026	Buckinghamshire Council and School Governing Board review the responses from the consultation. Leader of Buckinghamshire Council in consultation with Cabinet Member for Education and Children's Services takes a decision on the final outcome
September 2026		Works commence on site
January 2027		Subject to the outcome above, the Cognition and Learning Unit will open.



### How to have your say

We want to hear your views on this proposal. The views of parents, pupils and the wider community will be considered by the Governing Board and Buckinghamshire Council when determining whether to publish a Statutory Notice.

You can tell us your views in one of the following ways:

- complete the online survey at <https://yourvoicebucks.citizenspace.com/>
- complete, and return, a printed version of the survey below
- email us at:

[BuckinghamSchoolSENDunitconsultation@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:BuckinghamSchoolSENDunitconsultation@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

All documents and updates will also be available on the school website: [The Buckingham School - Home](#) Please tell us your views by 11:59pm on 26 April 2026.

### 1. Do you agree with the proposal to open a Cognition and Learning SEND Unit at The Buckingham School?

Please tick (✓) one option

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

Please tell us the reasons for your previous answer:

### 2. Do you understand why the proposal to open a Cognition and Learning SEND Unit at The Buckingham School has been made?

Please tick (✓) one option

- Yes
- No
- I don't know

If 'No' or 'I don't know', please tell us why:



**3. If you think there is anything that has not been considered when developing the proposals to open a Cognition and Learning SEND Unit at The Buckingham School, please tell us here:**

**4. If you have any other comments about the proposals to open a Cognition and Learning SEND unit at The Buckingham School, please tell us here:**

#### **About you**

We will use the information you provide here only for the purpose of this activity. We will store the information securely in line with data protection laws and will not share or publish any personal details.

**5. Which of the following describe you?**

Please tick (✓) all that apply

- I am a parent or carer of a student at The Buckingham School
- I work at The Buckingham School
- I am a Governor for The Buckingham School
- I am a student at The Buckingham School
- I live near The Buckingham School
- I work at another local school in the area
- I represent or own a business in Buckinghamshire
- I represent a community or voluntary group in Buckinghamshire
- I am an elected representative in Buckinghamshire
- I represent a Parish / Town Council or Town Committee in Buckinghamshire
- I work for Buckinghamshire Council
- Other (please give details below):



**6. How did you find out about this consultation?**

Please tick (✓) all that apply

- Letter from the school
- School staff briefing
- Local media (newspaper, radio, TV, website or newsfeed)
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram, Nextdoor or LinkedIn)
- Buckinghamshire Council website or Your Voice Bucks website
- Email or newsletter from Buckinghamshire Council
- Buckinghamshire Council staff or other professionals
- Through working at Buckinghamshire Council
- Poster or leaflet
- Friend or family member
- Local community or special interest group
- Councillor, town/parish council or community board
- Other (please give details below):

**7. Are you responding as an individual or on behalf of an organisation (e.g. a business or a voluntary group)?**

Please tick (✓) one option

- As an individual (go to question 9)
- On behalf of an organisation

**On behalf of an organisation**

**8. Please provide the following details:**

Name of organisation:

Your job title:

**End of survey if responding on behalf of an organisation**



### More about you

We want to hear from as many people as possible to understand the views and needs across Buckinghamshire. The following questions help us see if the communities we serve have had the opportunity to be heard through this activity.

We will use the information you provide here only for the purpose of this activity. We will store the information securely in line with data protection laws and will not share or publish any personal information.

All questions are optional. You can skip any questions you do not wish to answer.

### 9. What is your postcode?

We want to understand the views of people living in different areas. You don't have to provide your postcode, but it helps us plan and make considered decisions.

### 10. What is your age?

**Why we ask this:** We want to understand the experiences and views of different age groups.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Under 16
- 16 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 to 84
- Over 85
- Prefer not to say

### 11. Are you:

**Why we ask this:** We want to understand the experiences and views of different sexes.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say



**12. Do you consider yourself to have a disability / disabilities, impairment(s) or long term health condition(s)?**

**Why we ask this:** We want to understand the experiences and views of disabled people, people with impairments and people with long-term health conditions.

Please tick (✓) all that apply

- Disability / disabilities
- Impairment(s)
- Long term health condition(s)
- No
- Prefer not to say

**13. How would you describe your ethnicity?**

**Why we ask this:** We want to understand the experiences and views of different ethnicities.

Please tick (✓) one option

- Asian - British
- Asian - Bangladeshi
- Asian - Chinese
- Asian - Indian
- Asian - Pakistani
- Any other Asian background - Please give details below
  
- Black - African
- Black - British
- Black - Caribbean
- Any other Black, African or Caribbean background - Please give details below
  
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Asian
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Black African
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Black British
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - White and Black Caribbean
- Mixed or multiple ethnic groups - Mixed or Multiple Ethnic backgrounds British
- Any other Mixed or Multiple ethnic background - Please give details below
  
- White - English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British
- White - Irish



- White - Gypsy or English traveller
- White - Irish Traveller
- White - European
- Any other White background - Please give details below
- Other ethnic group - Arab
- Other ethnic group - Arab British
- Other ethnic group - Please give details below
- Prefer not to say

Please give other details here:

**End of the survey**

Your comments are important as we do not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view when considering representations made on proposals.

Please email this questionnaire to: [BuckinghamSchoolSENDunitconsultation@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:BuckinghamSchoolSENDunitconsultation@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

**Or post to:**

**The School Commissioning Team  
Buckinghamshire Council  
1<sup>st</sup> Floor Walton Street Office  
Aylesbury  
HP20 1UZ**

**before the closing date of 26 April 2026**