

My ref:  
Your ref:  
  
Date: 13 July 2023

Contact: Fran Cox  
Direct dial:  
E Mail: [education.feedback@cambridgeshire.gov.uk](mailto:education.feedback@cambridgeshire.gov.uk)



**Children Education and Families Directorate**

Executive Director: Martin Purbrick  
Cambridgeshire County Council  
New Shire Hall  
Alconbury Weald Civic Hub  
Emery Crescent  
Alconbury Weald  
Huntingdon  
PE28 4YE

Dear Parent/Carer,

As the summer term draws to a close, we wanted to write to you as a parent and/or carer of a child in specialist provision in Cambridgeshire to firstly update you on the plans we have within our SEND Strategy to provide additional school places, and to also seek some feedback from you in terms of your child's placement.

New specialist provision

As those who attended the recent SEND Parent conference will have heard, we know that we do not have sufficient specialist SEND school places in Cambridgeshire, and we are working closely with the Department for Education to plan, build and open new provision. We are actively working to deliver the following new schools and extra places over the next 3 years;

Special School Places

- New area special school in the town of March (210 places)
- New Secondary Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) school in Gamlingay (60 places)
- Additional area special school places at Highfields Special School in Littleport
- Additional area school places at Meadowgate Special School in Wisbech
- New area special school in Alconbury Weald (150 places)
- Additional area school places at Martin Bacon Special School – a satellite provision based at Swavesey Village College
- Additional area school places at Samuel Pepys Special School
- New Secondary Social Emotional and Mental Health School in Wisbech

Enhanced Resource Bases

Currently Cambridgeshire does not have SEMH Enhanced Resource Bases (ERBs) and so we are seeking to open new provision geographically spread across the county.

There are Autism ERBs at various secondary schools and at Gamlingay Primary School. Additional autism ERBs are being sought, primarily in Fenland and East Cambs, to address a current geographical gap in this provision type.

Whilst some of our work involves building new schools and will inevitably take some time, the new provision will start to become available from September 23 and then periodically over the next 3 years.

### Your child's placement

We understand that our lack of special school places means your child may have a long journey to travel to school on education transport.

When new placements are ready to open in Cambridgeshire this might give you more choice to find a special school closer to home.

Before we offer new placements to other parents and carers we would like you have an opportunity to talk to us about a placement closer to home.

It is important to note here that despite accessing a school some distance from where you live, your child may be very settled at their school and this may be something that would not be appropriate to explore for you or your child. I reassure you there is no obligation to move your child whatsoever as this is your parental choice.

Your current transport entitlement to the school your child attends now would remain given the circumstances despite there being closer suitable provision to your home address.

In some instances, however, particularly at a point of natural transfer, you may wish to explore with someone what a move to a school closer to your home may look like. If you are interested in a conversation at this very early stage, or would just like to learn more about what options may be available please click [here](#).

Yours sincerely,



Fran Cox  
Assistant Director: Education, Planning and Inclusion