



WOOLGROVE SCHOOL

Special Needs Academy

Pryor Way, Letchworth, Herts, SG6 2PT

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Headteacher

Mrs Lisa Hall

Date: 17 September 2025

Dear Consultee,

Consultation on the proposal to enlarge Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy, Pryor Way, Letchworth, SG6 2PT, an academy special school for children aged 4 – 11 years old, from 125 places to 155 places from September 2026.

What is the proposal?

Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy is writing to consult on the proposal to enlarge Woolgrove School, Pryor Way, Letchworth SG6 2PT by 30 places, from September 2026. Woolgrove School is a special needs single academy for pupils aged 4 – 11 with Learning Difficulties (LD), with capacity to support a proportion of pupils with more complex needs, including Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and autism. This proposal would create an additional 30 places, increasing the school's capacity from 125 to 155 pupils through the delivery of a new modular building.

In line with the Department for Education's (DfE's) guidance, Making Significant Changes to an Academy ¹, if Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy wish to enlarge an academy special school by 10% or 20 pupils, whichever is the smaller number, Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy must follow a statutory process to do so.

As Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy is a single academy, this expansion proposal would need to be approved by the Department for Education (DfE) and we are therefore seeking the views of interested parties through this consultation to inform the DfE's decision-making process to amend the School's Funding Agreement.

Woolgrove School currently has a capacity of 125 places. This means that a statutory process is required for the school to be enlarged by 30 places.

There is an immediate need to provide additional LD and SLD places in the county as the number of pupils awaiting an appropriate placement exceeds supply. As a result, the county council are working with Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy to enlarge Woolgrove School.

¹ [Making significant changes to an academy](#)

Why is this being proposed?

In December 2020, Cabinet² approved the Special School Place Planning Strategy (“The Strategy”) 2020-2023³, which was subsequently extended in April 2024⁴. The Strategy articulates that demand for special school places has grown and continues to grow sharply. The need for specialist school places continues to exceed supply.

As many of Hertfordshire’s special schools are now at capacity, the Strategy sets out longer term priorities which will deliver the additional school places required. In the short term, however, it identifies that additional capacity will be needed to meet the immediate need for special school places (Priority 3 in the Strategy).

Hertfordshire’s existing LD and SLD schools are currently full, meaning children and young people either remain unplaced or are being placed in costly independent schools, often at a significant distance from their homes.

Why has Woolgrove School been chosen for an increase in pupil numbers?

Woolgrove School is rated as Good⁵ (November 2022) and has a strong leadership team along with skilled staff. The school provides high quality provision for pupils with LD and SLD. With the demand for local places continuing to grow, there is a need to create additional high-quality places within the sector.

The school has space onsite to deliver a new modular building to accommodate an additional 30 pupils.

What will be the impact on existing pupils?

Additional accommodation and revenue funding would be provided to support the enlargement of Woolgrove School. Pupils will be closely supported by the school in terms of managing the impact of this change.

What will be the impact on staff?

Additional staff would be employed to support this proposal. The additional school places would not be made available until sufficient staffing is in place.

How will this proposal be funded?

If a decision is made to enlarge Woolgrove School, additional accommodation would be provided by the county council and would be designed to meet the needs of the pupils. The capital cost of the enlargement would be met by the county council. The school would also receive additional revenue funding to support the enlargement.

² [Agenda for Cabinet on Monday, 14 December 2020, 2.00 pm | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

³ [SEND Special School Place Planning Strategy 2020-2023 \(hertfordshire.gov.uk\)](#)

⁴ [Agenda for Cabinet on Thursday, 18 April 2024, 2.00 pm | Hertfordshire County Council](#)

⁵ [Woolgrove School - Open - Find an Inspection Report - Ofsted](#)

Have your say.

You have until **14 October 2025** to let Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy know your views on the proposal. The easiest way you can do this is by:

- by paper: complete the attached response form and return it to the school office
- by an online survey at: [Consultation – Woolgrove School Special Needs Academy](#),
- by email to: consultation@woolgrove.herts.sch.uk
- by post to: Consultation, Pryor Way, Letchworth Garden City, Hertfordshire. SG6 2PT

Your response must be received by **14 October 2025**. Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy will not be able to acknowledge or respond individually to your comments but they will be taken into account.

Many thanks.

Yours faithfully,

Lisa Hall

Head Teacher

Woolgrove School, Special Needs Academy