

# Consultation on providing specialist places for pupils with special educational needs

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Despite an increase in the number of specialist education places for children with the most complex needs since September 2021, across Suffolk there remains a shortfall. This can mean that some pupils have to be educated away from their local communities or in provision which cannot meet their needs.

We are working alongside Suffolk County Council to develop additional specialist education places which would be supported by one of our schools. Places would be offered as part of a dedicated group, within Ipswich Academy. It is envisaged that Suffolk County Council will commission a new build to accommodate the provision on the Ipswich Academy site.

The development of this provision would provide us with the opportunity to link in with the current support centre onsite at Ipswich Academy and, where deemed suitable for individual children, the mainstream provision. There would be opportunities for staff to share planning, resources and training. This new provision would also provide us with the opportunity to link with our other specialist units which cater for children with additional needs.

It is intended that Ipswich Academy will offer 24 specialist places for children in key stage 3 and key stage 4 with cognition and learning difficulties. Subject to consultation, it is envisaged that the places would be available from January 2026 onwards. Suffolk County Council is looking to commission these places on a permanent basis.

These places would be in addition to the school's current PAN (planned admission number). This means that there would not be a reduction in the number of places available in the usual admissions round. Allocation of specialist

places would follow a separate admissions process and would be for pupils with an education, health and care plan.

We are proposing this development in order to provide more pupils with education which meets their individual needs at a location in their area.

The consultation question is on the next sheet. Please return responses to Specialist Provision Consultation, Ipswich Academy, Braziers Wood Road, Ipswich, IP3 0SP or to [consultation@paradigmtrust.org](mailto:consultation@paradigmtrust.org) by Monday 10th March 2025.

*Consultation question:*

Do you support the plan to create 24 specialist places for children in key stage 3 and key stage 4 with cognition and learning difficulties at Ipswich Academy?

If not, why not - please indicate your concerns and any suggestions for overcoming these.