



**BOWER PARK**  
ACADEMY

Consultation on the proposed establishment  
of a Special Educational Needs & Disabilities  
Unit for young people with Sensory  
Impairments

# **Consultation on the proposed establishment of a Special Educational Needs & Disabilities unit at Bower Park Academy for pupils with Sensory Impairments.**

## **Introduction**

The London Borough of Havering's vision is for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), and other additional needs, to enjoy their education in the most inclusive environment possible and be supported in participating as fully as they can in the lives of their schools and local community, throughout childhood and into adulthood.

The Council's High Needs Strategy 2017-22, set out ambitious and realistic objectives to ensure Havering's provision is the first choice for children and young people with high needs and their families. It provides details of the local offer and the changes that will be implemented to ensure that the needs of children and young people with SEND are met.

We currently have a 30 place SEND Unit for primary pupils with Hearing Impairment at Hacton Primary School, however there is no secondary SEND Unit for such pupils to transition into for Secondary Education. A number of pupils are being sent to out-borough provision which is problematic for families and costly for the authority due to lack of specialist secondary provision for pupils with Sensory Impairment.

## **Background**

One of the key changes proposed in the Havering High Needs Strategy 2017-2022 is the delivery of an on-going programme to create more SEND units in mainstream settings.

Since then, 7 of these ARPs (5 in Primary schools and 2 in secondary schools) have been established under the various phases of the schools' expansion programme.

## Rationale for the Bower Park Academy SEND Unit

Our SEND projections show that we expect the number of secondary school pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) to increase as shown in the table below:

| Academic year | Cognition and Learning | Communication and Interaction | SEMH | Physical and/or Sensory | Totals |
|---------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|------|-------------------------|--------|
| 2019/20       | 78                     | 172                           | 70   | 30                      | 350    |
| 2020/21       | 93                     | 196                           | 77   | 35                      | 401    |
| 2021/22       | 112                    | 206                           | 94   | 35                      | 446    |
| 2022/23       | 130                    | 226                           | 123  | 36                      | 515    |
| 2023/24       | 136                    | 241                           | 143  | 30                      | 549    |
| 2024/25       | 146                    | 277                           | 175  | 27                      | 624    |
| 2025/26       | 147                    | 314                           | 196  | 23                      | 680    |
| 2026/27       | 155                    | 364                           | 206  | 25                      | 749    |

As there is no secondary specialist provision for pupils with Sensory Impairments, in Havering, one is needed to ensure that young people with sensory impairment, hearing and or visual impairment can access the support they need to achieve their academic potential.

### The proposal

Bower Park Academy is proposing to establish a specialist provision for 12 pupils with sensory impairments to be implemented in September 2023, if approved.

Bower Park Academy is a good 7FE secondary school with 1050 places in years 7 to Year 11. The school caters for children with an age range of 11-16 years and is considered by the Local Authority as the most appropriate location for a SEND unit to be sited.

The SEND unit at Bower Park Academy will meet the needs of pupils with an EHCP with sensory impairments which are not severe enough to require a place at a special school but who will require spending significant proportions of their time in the SEND unit. The proposed SEND unit will enable these pupils to have their additional needs met while accessing education at a secondary academy school through a flexible approach tailored and adapted to their needs.

The establishment of a SEND unit at Bower Park will build on the good education already being delivered at this school and will further enhance the education offer, the school provides to the community. Bower Park Academy has developed expertise in supporting young people with sensory impairment, primarily with visual impairment. They have developed good working relationships with the Local Authority's specialist Sensory Impairment team and we are confident that this

relationship will grow to support a wider range of young people with Sensory Impairment.

The new facility will enable young people with Hearing and or Visual Impairment to have their needs met through a flexible approach, tailored and adapted to the needs of each individual pupil. It will be for pupils who will require specialist support to enable them the access a mainstream secondary curriculum. It is proposed that the young people will split their time between the mainstream school and having bespoke support within the Unit. The SEND Unit will be staffed by a team of support staff with knowledge and experience of working with young people with sensory impairment, led by qualified teaching staff with recognised sensory impairment additional qualifications. The purpose of the unit will be to support these young people to achieve their academic potential and also to explore ways to develop skills to enable them to live the best and independent life after school. Enabling them to explore and access higher education and employment opportunities.

## **What will be the impact of the new facility on other pupils in the school?**

It is not envisaged that the new unit will impact negatively on other pupils in the school. The impact is expected to have a positive effect in that having pupils with sensory impairments in the school will provide opportunities for other pupils to see these pupils as valuable members of the school community and society as a whole. Opportunities can be provided for pupils to understand, learn and contribute to the support for pupils who are deaf and/or visually impaired. Examples of this could be the opportunities to learn basic signing. Exposure and having greater awareness will enhance the pupils understanding and can be transferred to all areas of their lives in and post education as they move into employment.

## **Admission and Pupil Numbers**

Admissions to the SEND unit will follow a different procedure from that operating for the rest of the school. Admissions into the SEND unit will be through the Havering SEND EHC panel process. This will not impact on pupils who are in the mainstream setting at the school.

Pupils attending the SEND unit would be in addition to the mainstream Planned Admission Number (PAN) of 210. There would be 12 planned places in the SEND unit increasing the total capacity of 1050 pupils to 1062.

## **Funding**

SEND units in Havering will be normally funded in accordance with a Place Led Funding approach that complies with the Government's SEND Funding Reforms which came into effect in April 2018.

For each place in the SEND unit, Bower Park Academy will receive £20,726. This is made up of £10,000 'place funding' and £10,726 (2022/23 rate) 'top-up funding'.

Due to the specific needs of the young people attending the Unit and the possible need for higher cost support for communication e.g. BSL signing support staff, individual top up funding will be provided, should the core funding prove to be insufficient.

## **Building works**

The architectural works planned for the implementation of the provision shall include the internal alterations and refurbishment of one of the existing block (Block D) to form the following areas:

- a. Heart space;
- b. Two classrooms;
- c. A group room;
- d. Two small group rooms;
- e. Toilets and an accessible toilet;

In addition to the above, some light-touch external works are planned, to provide external recreation areas, such as small canopies.

No works are planned to the fabric of the building. The proposal will be fully funded by the LA.

## What happens next?

The consultation is an opportunity for interested parties and stakeholders to express views and ask questions on the principle of establishing the SEND Unit for Sensory needs at Bower Park Academy during the consultation period.

The consultation period starts on **Tuesday 15 November 2022** and will close on **Tuesday 13 December 2022**.

Bower Park is part of Empower Learning Academy Trust, so will have to follow the process for making significant changes to an academy; as the local authority is not the decision maker for academy organisational changes. The final decision as to whether this proposal is approved for implementation will be made by the Regional Schools Commissioner on behalf of the Department for Education.

The process for making significant changes to academies can be viewed in more detail here:

[Making significant changes to an open academy \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/107114/making-significant-changes-to-an-open-academy.pdf)

## Have your say...

You can state whether you support this proposal or not by completing the consultation questionnaire via the following link:

<https://consultation.havering.gov.uk/education/bower-park-academy>

A Parents' consultation meeting on the proposal will be held at the School on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 11.15 am.

If you have any other questions regarding this proposal, please email: [office@elatschools.co.uk](mailto:office@elatschools.co.uk)

This consultation document is being sent electronically to all parents/carers, governors, school teachers and support staff who work at Bower Park Academy and the governing board & trustees of Empower Learning Academy Trust.

Electronic copies are also being sent to all Havering primary, secondary and special schools, Havering Council, ward members, MPs, Church Dioceses, all Early Years and Childcare providers, community groups, unions and other stakeholders.

The document will also be available on Havering and Empower Learning Academy Trust websites throughout the consultation period.