

ROCHDALE BOROUGH COUNCIL INCREASE IN CAPACITY AT REDWOOD SPECIAL SCHOOL

Notice is given in accordance with statutory requirements that Rochdale Borough Council, Children's Services, Number One Riverside, Smith Street, Rochdale, OL16 1XU, intends to open a satellite site and increase capacity in Redwood Special School.

1. The name and contact address of the local authority or governing body publishing the Proposals:

Local Authority: *Rochdale Borough Council*

Address: *School Organisation and Development Team, Early Help & Schools, Rochdale Borough Council, Number One Riverside, Smith Street, Rochdale, OL16 1XU*

Date of Publication of Proposals for Consultation: *21st November 2025.*

2. The name, address and category of the school that is proposed to be altered:

Address: Redwood Special School, Hudsons Walk, Rochdale, OL11 5EW

Category of school: Community Special School

3. The date in which the proposed changes will take effect in terms of both the buildings and additional place provisions:

1st September 2028.

4. The place to which representations can be made, and by when:

Any person can make representations on the proposal by using the following link to the council consultation website at: <https://consultations.rochdale.gov.uk/childrens-services/65f54eab/> or by sending them by 19th December 2025 to: Fay Davies, by e-mail at fay.davies@rochdale.gov.uk or in writing to this address: School Admissions, School Organisation & Development Team, Early Help and Schools, Rochdale Borough Council, Number One Riverside, Smith Street, Rochdale, OL16 1XU.

5. What is proposed?

The proposal is to permanently increase capacity at Redwood Special School, by creation of a new satellite site off Heywood Old Road, Middleton. This will increase school capacity by 64 places from 1st September 2028 (the opening of the school building may be within the 2027/28 academic year, but the first full cohort is likely to be 1st September 2028).

6. School capacity and places- current pupil numbers and admissions- (distinguishing between compulsory and non-compulsory school age pupils), age range, sex, and special educational needs (distinguishing between boarding and day pupils) for whom provision is currently made:

Redwood Special school had 341 pupils on roll from Year 7 to Year 14 in the May 2025 school census. The current age range of the children is 11 to 19 years. The school is a general special school and admits children with education, health and care plans (EHCPs) for the whole spectrum of needs and disabilities where significant learning needs are present.

| ROCHDALE MAY 2025 CENSUS | Year 7 NOR | Year 8 NOR | Year 9 NOR | Year 10 NOR | Year 11 NOR | Year 12 NOR | Year 13 NOR | Year 14 NOR | Total NOR |
|---|------------|------------|------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| Redwood Special School | 45 | 49 | 52 | 41 | 54 | 37 | 36 | 27 | 341 |

The local authority has a statutory duty to deliver sufficient places for children living in the borough through the standard Reception to year 11 age range and has an additional statutory duty of care for children with Special Educational needs and disabilities (SEND) aged 0 to 25 years.

7. Why do we want to make the change(s)?

Reasons for the increase of places and choice of a larger satellite site:

7.1 Rochdale Council has a statutory duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996, to ensure there is a sufficiency of school places available to meet the needs of all children and young people living within our authority. This includes having regard to the need to secure provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

7.2 Rochdale Borough Council has a duty to provide sufficient places for children living in the borough and this includes children who move into the borough after the normal start in Reception class and in higher year groups; termed in-year applications.

7.3 The council has a duty of care to manage school places effectively by working in partnership with schools and academy trusts so that schools can adequately staff their schools and so that additional classroom accommodation is provided in a timely manner.

7.4 The special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years is statutory guidance for organisations which work with and support children and young people who have special educational needs or disabilities. The guidance states that all children and young people are entitled to an appropriate education, one that is appropriate to their needs, promotes high standards and the fulfilment of potential. This should enable them to:

- achieve their best
- become confident individuals living fulfilling lives, and
- make a successful transition into adulthood, whether into employment, further or higher education or training

7.5 Since 2014 the number of children with EHCPs has increased and additional capacity is now needed in Rochdale in order to manage those larger cohorts.

7.6 Redwood Special school main site is a PFI owned building co-located with a mainstream secondary school, a leisure centre and a community theatre. Expansion of the main site is therefore not an option.

7.7 Redwood have opened 3 additional small satellite bases; 2 in mainstream schools and one for sixth form pupils in a civic centre building. The complexity of running multiple small sites means that this type of expansion is at its limit.

7.8 Redwood schools current offer of accommodation is not ideal for children and young people with complex autism where the outside space and gardens offered at a new satellite site will give additional education options needed for this type of need.

Quality of Provision

7.6 The current OfSTED report for Redwood School was published in June 2022 and the school was judged as continuing to be "Good" in the short inspection. In the full inspection in 2016, Redwood was "outstanding" for Personal development, behaviour and welfare.

7.7 The advantages to the school and the children will be:

- Greater curriculum offer for children with complex autism
- Additional capacity for Redwood to manage the ongoing growth in children with EHCPs at Secondary and Tertiary level.

7.8 The Governing Body of Redwood School is committed to upholding the standards and ethos of the school. Through the Leadership and Management Team and alongside the Governing Body, the school aspires to provide an 'Outstanding' education to all of the children in its community.

8. The need for an increase in places - a statement and supporting evidence about the need for reducing school places in the area including whether there is sufficient capacity to accommodate additional pupils in the current schools:

8.1 In January 2025 the council's Cabinet allocated funding for a new satellite special school. A link to the Cabinet report for Tuesday, 21st January, 2025, item 145, is here:-
(<https://democracy.rochdale.gov.uk/documents/s113038/HighNeedsCapitalandInvestment2025v3.pdf>)

A previous detailed review of SEND places is also contained in the council's the [Education Sufficiency Strategy](#) which detailed the need for the additional secondary special school capacity that will be provided by this new satellite school.

Information and feedback on this consultation can be found in the link below:

<https://consultations.rochdale.gov.uk/childrens-services/65f54eab/>

9. Implementation of the Proposals

Rochdale Borough Council as promoter has responsibility for implementing the proposals which must conform to the School Admissions and SEND Code.