

## **Consultation on a proposal to close the Physical Disability (PD) Additional Resource Provision (ARP) at The Chalfonts Community College, Narcot Lane, Chalfont St Peter, Buckinghamshire SL9 8TP**

1. The Chalfonts Community College, with the support of our Governing Board and Buckinghamshire Council, is seeking your views on the change of designation of our Physical Disabilities Additional Resource Provision (PD ARP). We are proposing to change the PD ARP into a Unit for Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, in particular for students who are experiencing Emotionally Based School Non-Attendance (EBSNA).
  
2. **A PD ARP is no longer needed**
  - 2.1. Over the last five years, the number of Special Educational Needs and Disabled (SEND) students with an Education and Health Care Plan (EHCP) has increased by 64% in Buckinghamshire. Current projections forecast a further increase in the number of EHCP pupils over the next five years.
  
  - 2.2. However, the number of students with EHCPs for Physical Disabilities (PD) has reduced. The Chalfonts PD ARP originally opened with space for 8 students, but as demand has decreased, so have our numbers. Last year, we had 2 PD ARP students, both in the sixth form, and this year we have none. The students in our ARP spend all of their time in mainstream classes, only attending the ARP for individual support (e.g. occupational therapy), whereas students in Units across Buckinghamshire typically spend the majority of their time in the Unit.
  
  - 2.3. Children with a physical disability are increasingly able to access their local school, with all the benefits of being part of their local school community. With the delivery of new schools across the county and adaptations being made to the buildings of existing schools, most children with physical disabilities are now able to be educated in their local school. This has therefore reduced the number of children who have needed to be placed in a PD ARP across the county.
  
  - 2.4. Having reviewed demand for places and the Council's ongoing work to make sure it can offer the right provision for children with a range of special educational needs and disabilities, the Local Authority believe that a Physical Disability ARP is no longer required at The Chalfonts Community College.
  
  - 2.5. We are therefore proposing that we redesignate the PD ARP at The Chalfonts Community College and establish an SEMH Unit.

### **3. There is now a need for increased SEMH ARP provision**

- 3.1. As mentioned above, the number of SEND students with an EHCP has increased by 64% in Buckinghamshire. Current projections forecast a further increase in the number of EHCP pupils over the next five years. The number of children with EHCPs for SEMH needs have more than doubled in the last 5 years, and demand is forecast to rise further.
- 3.2. Furthermore, the number of students experiencing EBSNA is a growing concern in Buckinghamshire and nationally. It is estimated that EBSNA leads to missed schooling in approximately 1 to 5 percent of students in the school population (Elliot & Place, 2019). In fact, the number is likely to be much higher, especially given that some children will likely experience emotional distress at school but continue to attend despite these difficulties.
- 3.3. It is proposed that the redesignation will take effect from the Autumn Term 2025, when the SEMH Unit will open at the school, initially with up to 8 pupils. The pupils will be accommodated within a self-contained space within the school, which will be repurposed to provide fit-for-purpose accommodation on a temporary basis whilst proposals are progressed to build a new purpose-built facility within the school grounds. The Unit will not be able to open to its full capacity of 18 until such time as a new building has been provided – currently estimated to be by September 2027. Planning consent will be required for the new building, and it is anticipated that a planning application will be submitted later this year/early 2026. Should planning consent not be granted, then the new Unit will remain at 8 places and will not be able to expand to 18 places.

### **4. What would this mean for students currently in the PD ARP**

- 4.1. There are currently no students attached to the PD ARP.
- 4.2. The Chalfonts Community College would continue to offer places to students who have physical disabilities, where they meet our published admissions criteria. They would be educated throughout the school, as all of our PD students have been for many years now. Pupils would still receive individual support (e.g. occupational therapy) as required.

### **5. Opportunities to meet with us to discuss these proposals**

- 5.1. We appreciate that this letter may raise questions for you relating to this proposal. A consultation briefing for parents, families and any other interested parties will be held on **Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 17:30-18:30 at the at The Chalfonts Community College, Narcot Lane, Chalfont St Peter, Buckinghamshire SL9 8TP** where questions can be raised and discussed. The Local Authority will send a representative to this briefing.

### **6. Who are we consulting with?**

- 6.1. We are following the Department for Education (DfE)'s guidance. Copies of the consultation document have been sent to parents, carers, students, staff, unions, trustees, local councillors, Buckinghamshire Council and the DfE.

## 7. Who makes the decision?

7.1. The DfE Regional Director, Dame Kate Dethridge, with the support of a Headteacher Board.

## 8. Timetable for these proposals

Start date	End date	Description
25 June 2025	22 July 2025	Four-week public consultation.
9 July 2025 5.30pm – 6.30pm		Consultation briefing with the school and local authority for any interested parties
August 2025		Subject to the outcome of the consultation, The Chalfonts Community College will submit a business case to the Department for Education seeking approval to redesignate the PD ARP to an SEMH Unit. As The Chalfonts Community College is an Academy, the final decision will sit with the Department for Education.
September 2025		8-place SEMH Unit to open.
October 2025	August 2027	Plans to be drawn up, planning consent applied for and subject to the outcome of planning works, to commence on site, completing in August 2027.
September 2027		Subject to the outcome above, the 18-Place Unit will open.

## How to have your say

We want to hear your views on this proposal.

You can tell us your views in the following ways:

- Complete an online survey at <https://forms.gle/UhCk8Shtz3XYkGkq5>
- Complete and return a printed version of the survey below
- Email us at [arp@chalfonts.org](mailto:arp@chalfonts.org)
- All documents and updates will also be available on the school website

**Please tell us your views by midnight on Tuesday, 22 July 2025**

**Survey on the closure of the Chalfonts Community College Physical Disabilities ARP**

1. Do you agree with the proposal to close the Chalfonts Community College PD ARP?

Please tick one option:

Yes

No

I don't know

Please tell us the reason for your answer:

## About You

We will use this information only for the purposes of this activity. We will store the information securely in line with Data Protection laws and will not share or publish any personal details.

### 2. Which of the following describes you?

Please tick all that apply:

- I am a parent or carer of a student/s at The Chalfonts Community College
- I work at The Chalfonts Community College
- I am a Governor for The Chalfonts Community College
- I am a student at The Chalfonts Community College
- I live near The Chalfonts Community College
- I work at another school in the local area
- I represent or own a business in Buckinghamshire
- I represent a community or voluntary group in Buckinghamshire
- I am an elected representative in Buckinghamshire
- I represent a Parish/Town council or Town Committee in Buckinghamshire
- Other (please give details below):