

Proposal to Expand Rowan Park (Rowan High School (Special Academy))

Consultation and Statutory Notice Document

1. Introduction

Sefton Council, working in partnership with Mersey View Learning Trust, is proposing to expand Rowan High School which is part of the Rowan Schools, a special academy located in Litherland.

This document serves two purposes:

- To provide full consultation information in line with Department for Education (DfE) guidance on making significant changes to academies
- To publish a Statutory Notice in accordance with Section 19(1) of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

This proposal is subject to both:

- The DfE significant change approval process (via the Regions Group), and
- The statutory prescribed alteration process applicable to special academies

Final approval will be dependent on both processes being satisfied.

2. The Proposal

It is proposed to:

- Increase the capacity of the Rowan Schools (Rowan High School) from 317 to 425 places (an increase of 108 places)
- Establish provision on an additional site located at the former Litherland Moss Primary School
- Expand the school's physical capacity to meet increasing demand for specialist provision

This expansion includes the establishment of a satellite site, which constitutes a significant change under DfE guidance.

The proposal will take effect:

From 1 January 2028, or sooner if completed, subject to all necessary approvals

3. Background and Rationale

Sefton Council has a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places, including specialist provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).

There is:

- A sustained increase in demand for special school places

- Pressure on existing provision at Rowan High School
- A need to expand local capacity and reduce reliance on independent and out-of-area placements

The proposal will:

- Increase the availability of local specialist places
- Improve outcomes by enabling pupils to be educated closer to home
- Support more efficient use of public resources

Special School Capacity and Pressure

- Rowan High School (part of the Rowan Schools) is operating at 100% capacity
- There is limited flexibility to accommodate additional pupils' mid-year
- Increasing numbers of pupils require specialist secondary placements each year

Out-of-Area and Independent Placements

- A growing number of pupils are placed in independent or out-of-borough provision
- These placements are typically:
 - Higher cost
 - Further from pupils' homes
 - Less connected to local services

Impact of Not Expanding

Without additional capacity:

- The shortfall in specialist places will continue to increase
- More pupils will require out-of-area placements
- Travel distances and transport costs will rise
- Opportunities for local inclusion and continuity of care will be reduced

Strategic Response

The proposed expansion of Rowan High School will:

- Deliver an additional 108 specialist places
- Reduce reliance on external provision
- Support improved outcomes through localised education
- Contribute to the long-term sustainability of High Needs funding

This proposal forms a key part of Sefton's wider SEND strategy and ensures the Local Authority can meet its statutory duty to secure sufficient suitable education provision.

4. The School

Rowan Schools are:

- A special academy
- Providing education for pupils aged 3 to 18 years
- Currently operating from its main site in Litherland and one in Seaforth

The school caters for pupils with a range of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), as set out in its designation.

5. Site Proposal

The expansion will be delivered through:

- The repurposing of the former Litherland Moss Primary School site
- Establishment of this site as a satellite provision of Rowan High School

Addresses:

- **Main site: The Rowan School**, Sterrix Lane, Bootle, Liverpool L21 0DB
- **Additional site:** Former Litherland Moss Primary School, Moss Lane Litherland

A slight change is proposed to:

- Include a class for Years 5 and 6 within the school's age range the rest of the cohort will be secondary age

No change to the SEND designation

No change is proposed to:

- The school's age range
- The nature of its SEND designation

6. Impact of the Proposal

The proposal is expected to:

- Increase the availability of specialist school places in Sefton
- Reduce travel distances for pupils with SEND
- Improve transition and continuity of education
- Provide high-quality, fit-for-purpose accommodation

6a. Impact on Other Schools

The Local Authority does not anticipate a detrimental impact on other local schools. The proposal is intended to meet clearly identified unmet demand for specialist provision.

7. Consultation (DfE Significant Change Requirements)

In line with DfE expectations, a fair and open consultation is being undertaken prior to submission.

- **Start date:** 24 June 2026
- **End date:** 22 July 2026

Stakeholders include parents, staff, local schools, partners and the wider community.

8. Statutory Notice (Prescribed Alteration)

Proposal:

Increase places from **317 to 425** and establish a satellite site.

Implementation:

From **1 January 2028**, or sooner if completed.

9. Representation Period

- **24 June 2026 – 22 July 2026**

10. How to Respond

School.Organisation@sefton.gov.uk

Deadline: **4:00pm, 22 July 2026**

11. Decision-Making Process

Decisions will be taken by:

- Sefton Council (statutory process)
- DfE Regions Group (significant change approval)

12. Implementation

Delivered in partnership with:

- Mersey View Learning Trust
- Sefton Council

13. Publication Details

Published by: Sefton Council

Signed:



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