

ASHTON WEST END PRIMARY ACADEMY

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Principal: Miss K Pizuti, BA (Hons), MSc

Consultation for a Resource Base at Ashton West End Primary Academy

Reason for consultation: The opening of a Resource Base at Ashton West End Primary Academy

Consultation period: Friday 23rd January 2026 to Friday 13th February 2026

Ashton West End Primary Academy is running a public consultation on the proposed creation of a 20-place resource base for children in EYFS, KS1 and KS2 with communication and interaction needs.

To facilitate this, a new purpose made SEN unit will be installed on the school grounds for 10 pupils to attend. The other 10 pupils will use our current Learnasaurus building.

Summary of current academy provision

Ashton West End Primary Academy is a 'Good' school situated to the west of Ashton-under-Lyne, an area of high deprivation in the of St Peter's Ward of Tameside. The school is above average size with 433 pupils on roll and close to double the average of children eligible for free school meals. Whilst overall numbers of children with SEND are lower than average, the number of children with an EHCP is close to double the average number nationally. Around 90% of the school population are from non-white backgrounds and speak languages other than English home. The number of children achieving a Good Level of Development at the end of EYFS is broadly in line with national figures. This is replicated in the number of children passing the phonics screening check in Key Stage 1. The school is recognised locally as an inclusive school and receives frequent requests to take children with additional needs often on recommendation.

In addition to our fully integrated support for SEND and some with EHCPs within mainstream classes, the school currently operates a small specialist class in our Learnasaurus building to accommodate the needs of our most complex children, all of whom have EHCPs. (N.B. Not all children with EHCPs are taught in this specialist class.)

Our Learnasaurus provision currently caters for children with complex Communication & Interaction needs and all have additional sensory and Autistic Spectrum Condition needs. This proposal will build on our experience and expertise in working with these children over the last two years. The current Learnasaurus provision is compromised both in its size (being only

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able to accommodate 10 children) and the range of ages and needs within the class (there are currently children from Reception to Year 4).

Impact of current provision

As a result of our Learnasaurus Provision, we have been highly successful in meeting the needs of a range of children with significant communication and interaction needs. Our personalized interventions delivered by specialist staff, flexible groupings and the small class size enable us to adapt the curriculum to children's individual needs and as a result the children make good progress towards their personal targets. This in turn means that we can quickly identify those children who will need long-term, high-level support and have been successful in securing EHCPs for these children.

Over the last three years however, securing a place for children in primary special has been challenging, due to the current lack of special school place in the borough and therefore the academy can no longer rely on successful EHCPs leading to special school places and must fulfil the requirements of Section F of the EHCP ourselves.

As a result of our Learnasaurus provision, these children have made huge leaps in progress in terms of reducing the amount of time that they are in a highly dysregulated state and in terms of their progress towards their Speech and Language targets. All these children are now accessing a personalized curriculum, in a calm setting that meets their needs. High adult ratios mean that we can better assess abilities and needs and ensure that the curriculum is appropriately ambitious. The children access the school's large physical outdoor play areas, both as a small group and alongside their mainstream peers.

Parents' responses to the Learnasaurus provision have been very positive. Some parents who were previously seeking special school places are now happy that we can meet their child's needs according to their EHCP. We receive requests from parents of children, often in Early Years Settings, for a place, and we are receiving more and more consultations from the local authority for places for children with EHCPs whose parents want them to move to Ashton West End Primary Academy or as part of the EHCP process. We give full consideration to each one to determine if we can meet need without a detrimental impact on the quality of education for other children. This exponential increase is also replicated across the borough and nationally. We are seeking to support the local authority to create additional places in cost-effective SEND provision for the youngest children in the borough.

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Detail of the proposal

To place a pre-fabricated building to the rear of the school on an area of grass. This will require ground works and the fitting out of the building.

The provision will operate alongside our existing Learnasaurus provision allowing us to offer specialist resource base provision for children from Reception to Year 6. The provision will provide 20 funded places.

The SEND provision will offer places for children with Communication and Interaction needs.

Tameside Council Vision

Tameside Council is committed to ensuring that every child and young person with SEND can access the right support in their local community.

School place planning is a statutory duty of the local authority. Tameside's SEND Sufficiency Strategy (2025-28) has outlined the need to develop additional specialist places to meet the needs of young people with Education Health and Care Plans (EHCP's).

Tameside currently maintains 3900 Education Health and Care Plans. The number of plans has been rising steadily since 2017 from a low baseline at the time of the SEND reforms of 2014. The number of EHCP's in Tameside has almost doubled since 2020, when the local authority maintained 1981 plans.

The SEND Sufficiency Strategy identifies that the Council will begin to commission a new targeted mainstream provision model with a greater emphasis on highly supported SEN Unit or resource-based provision for a small number of children.

This will:

- Be related to the level and type of need in different neighbourhoods across the borough.
- Be small group focused provision attached to mainstream schools for both boys and girls.
- Be provided for primary and secondary pupils.
- Include a higher level of specialist staffing to meet need, linked with social care and health provision where appropriate.

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- Prioritise the two most significant areas of need: Communication and Interaction (including autism) and SEMH.

In order to build Specialist Resource Provision capacity and create additional specialist places, the LA completed an Expression of Interest exercise in September 2025 for phase 2. Twenty-seven schools expressed interest in hosting Specialist Resource Provisions in phase 1 of this work which focused on schools with immediate space, requiring minimal capital expenditure to adapt existing building. An additional 118 places were created at 8 schools for September 2025. Phase 2 focuses on expanding the capacity at existing schools with Specialist Resource Provisions and focusing on localities with high levels of need.

Timeline and process

The proposed timeframe for the project is summarised below:

- Public consultation: Friday 23rd January 2026 to Friday 13th February 2026
- Ground works on site to begin: July 2026
- Resource Base open to pupils: September 2026

Placements at the new resource base will be determined by the LA through the agreed EHCP placement process and does not impact on the normal or in-year admissions for Ashton West End Primary Academy Primary Academy.

Please complete this consultation form: <https://forms.office.com/e/FApeq7Bpii>

Alternatively, feedback can be sent via email to:
admin@awepa.org.uk titled '2026 Ashton West End Primary Academy Resource Base consultation'