

**Helston Community College**  
Part of Truro and Penwith Academy Trust

Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March

Dear Parent/Carer/Stakeholder,

**Consultation on the Establishment of a Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Area Resource Base.**

Helston Community College, part of Truro and Penwith Academy Trust, working in close partnership with Cornwall Council, is seeking your views on a proposed significant change to the academy: the establishment of a new Area Resource Base (ARB) specialising in Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

This consultation is being undertaken in accordance with the Department for Education's guidance on significant changes to academies.

Cornwall Council has identified a clear and growing need for additional SEMH provision across the local area as part of its statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places, including SEND provision. In response, we are proposing to develop an ARB on our site that would ultimately accommodate 36 pupils with SEMH as their primary need.

To ensure high-quality provision and carefully managed growth, the ARB would open in phases:

- Year 1: up to 14 pupils (Years 7 and 8)
- Year 2: up to 21 pupils
- Year 3: up to 28 pupils
- Year 4: full capacity of 36 pupils

As this proposal involves the creation of specialist provision and an increase of more than 20 places, it meets the threshold for a significant change and therefore requires consultation and a formal application to the Department for Education.

The purpose of the ARB is to enhance the availability of high-quality SEMH provision locally, enabling children and young people to be educated closer to home with access to tailored therapeutic support, specialist staff and appropriate interventions. This approach aligns with national expectations that changes to SEND provision should improve the quality, breadth and accessibility of specialist support for pupils.

The ARB will also support inclusive practice within Helston Community College by enabling pupils to access mainstream opportunities where appropriate.

Funding and planning for the ARB have been developed in partnership with Cornwall Council, which commissions and funds high-needs places in line with DSG regulations and the school's budget, as required for any change to specialist provision. All necessary due diligence relating to funding requirements, site use and feasibility is being undertaken in line with Department for Education expectations. The proposal does not involve any reduction to mainstream capacity at Helston Community College.

We anticipate that the impact of this proposal on the school and wider community will be positive. Pupils with SEMH needs will benefit from a purpose-designed environment with specialist support, while the wider school community will gain from strengthened expertise in supporting SEMH needs. The ARB will also help relieve pressure on existing specialist placements and support Cornwall Council's wider strategic SEND planning, including alignment with Local Area Inclusion Plans.

No negative impact on neighbouring schools or local providers is expected. The Local Authority will provide the required written response for inclusion in the formal application to the Department for Education.

### **Consultation Period**

This consultation will run from **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> March to Friday 27<sup>th</sup> March**.

Responses can be submitted by email to: [tpatconsultation@tpacademytrust.org](mailto:tpatconsultation@tpacademytrust.org). All responses will be carefully considered. A consultation report will be published and submitted to the Department for Education as part of the significant change application.

Following the close of the consultation, the Trust will review all feedback and prepare a Tier 1 significant change application, including the Local Authority's formal response. The final decision on whether the ARB can proceed rests with the Department for Education, which determines applications in line with the processes set out in the guidance.

Thank you for taking the time to engage with this consultation. We believe that the phased development of a dedicated SEMH ARB at Helston Community College represents an important step in improving local specialist provision and supporting children and young people across our community.

Yours faithfully,



Mr A Lingard  
Headteacher  
Helston Community College



Dr Jennifer Blunden OBE  
Chief Executive Officer  
Truro and Penwith Academy Trust