



**Spring  
School**



Section 10

**Consultation**

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# Welcome



**We are delighted that our proposed special free school for autistic children and young people, Spring School, has progressed to the pre-opening phase.**

Ambitious about Autism, and our Schools Trust, already run two successful special schools and a specialist further education college for autistic children and young people; The Rise School, TreeHouse School and Ambitious College.

Opening in September 2023, Spring School will build on our innovative approach to autism education, the Ambitious Approach, which places a focus on the wellbeing and quality of life of each pupil.

Working in partnership with young people, parents and carers, local schools and colleges and the wider community, Spring School will create opportunities for autistic young people to develop the academic, vocational and social skills to enable them make a successful transition to adulthood.

Ahead of opening, we have launched this public consultation to gather your views and ensure we can serve the community in the best way possible.

We look forward to listening to your views.

A white handwritten signature of Jolanta Lasota on a dark blue background.

Jolanta Lasota, Chief Executive  
Ambitious about Autism





**It is an immense privilege to have been appointed the head of Spring School and to lead the development of this fantastic new provision for autistic pupils.**

I've dedicated my career to supporting autistic children and young people to reach their potential in education, previously leading on the delivery of a purpose-built autism school in west London.

Spring School is a unique opportunity to create an amazing new provision that serves the local community and is a centre of excellence in autism education. I would encourage anyone who is interested in learning more about our proposed school, or in being part of our journey, to use this public consultation to get in touch with us.

A handwritten signature in white ink, appearing to read 'Andy Nowak'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Andy Nowak  
Head of Spring School



# About us

**Spring School is a new special free school set to open on the site of the Moor Lane Centre in Chessington, Kingston in September 2023, subject to Department for Education approval.**

It is run by the Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust, a multi-academy trust that runs and supports the development of special schools for autistic children and young people. The Trust was approved to open Spring School by the Department for Education in 2019.

Spring School has been set up to address a growing need for more specialist education provision for autistic children and young people. There will be places for up to 36 pupils in the first academic year. Eventually the school will cater for up to 90 pupils aged 4-19.

The first pupils are due to be admitted in Reception through to Year 8 in September 2023 and the school will grow year on year thereafter until at capacity. In 2027 it is planned for Spring School to have a sixth form with 24 places in order to admit the first pupils from the school who have completed their GCSEs or equivalent. Further information about the school can be found on our website at [www.springschool.org.uk](http://www.springschool.org.uk).





# Our vision

**Spring School is a special school dedicated to educating autistic pupils aged 4–19.**

Our vision is to create a school where autistic children can learn, thrive, achieve and belong. We will offer a model of best practice for autistic children with social communication needs who can learn under a broadly age-related curriculum. In practice, this means:

- Pupils will obtain the best possible outcomes in terms of personal and academic development, based on their needs, aspirations and priorities and feel proud of what they learn and achieve
- Pupils will have a sense of competence and self-worth with good mental health, wellbeing and long-term life chances beyond school.
- Pupils will be directly involved in decisions about their learning and futures.
- Families will have the confidence that their children are in a safe environment and are being guided towards greater independence.
- Families will be provided with the tools they need to support their children beyond school and feel they are key members of the school community with their voices heard.

Spring School will give pupils the support and challenge they need to reach their full learning potential. The school will have social, academic, personal and independence targets to provide autistic pupils with ambitious aspirations. Pupils will work towards gaining academic and vocational qualifications, that will help them succeed in the world beyond school.

Partnership working is at the core of the school's vision. Our school model is designed to offer the best of both special and mainstream education through close collaboration with local mainstream providers, including Chessington School. We will work in partnership with parents and carers, recognising the importance of co-production in supporting pupils learning and development.





# The consultation process

In accordance with Department for Education requirements, Spring School has launched a public consultation that will run from Monday 17 October until Friday 2 December 2022.


This consultation with local stakeholders is required under Section 10 of the Academies Act 2010.

We want to listen to your comments and act on any feedback to ensure our school is the best it can be and meets the needs of the community we serve.



You can give feedback in a number of ways:



**Complete our online consultation questionnaire** 



**Submit questions by email to [enquiries@springschool.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@springschool.org.uk) with the subject line: **CONSULTATION****



**Send us a letter**

**Spring School Consultation,**  
The Pears National Centre  
for Autism Education,  
London, N10 3BP.



**Sign up to one of our engagement events**

- **Wednesday 2 November, 5.30pm – 7pm** at Chessington School, Garrison Lane, KT9 2JS. **(in person)**
- **Monday 14 November, 1pm -2pm. (online)**
- **Friday 25 November at 11am – 3pm,** Moor Lane Centre, Chessington, KT9 2AA. **(drop-in clinic)**

If you have an accessibility requirement and would like to request this brochure or the consultation questionnaire in a different format, please email [enquiries@springschool.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@springschool.org.uk).

We will record all views that are shared with us during the formal consultation window which runs between Monday 17 October 2022 and Friday 2 December 2022.



# Our Ambitious Approach

**The Ambitious Approach is our model of education practice, which was designed to be used in our education settings to support autistic children and young people.**

The Ambitious Approach puts quality of life at the centre of all we do. It is based upon a pupil's indisputable rights to be:

- treated with dignity and compassion
- valued
- listen to
- supported to have the best quality of life possible
- empowered to make choices and decide on how they want to live their life.

We have high aspirations for our pupils. Our goal for all pupils is that when they leave our settings they will have the opportunity to access employment, further education or training and to live as part of the communities of their choice. At its heart, the approach is about improving the quality of life of autistic young people while they are in education and ensuring this quality of life continues into adulthood.

The Ambitious Approach has three areas of focus:

## 1 The curriculum

The curriculum in our settings focuses on equipping pupils with the knowledge and skills they need for quality of life. Learning is tailored to support autistic children and young people to live the life they want to lead.

## 2 Curriculum delivery

We recruit and train staff in our settings to provide high-quality teaching. This includes having a deep knowledge of the subjects they teach, specialist knowledge of how autistic children and young people learn best and creating environments that support and nurture physical and psychological needs.

## 3 Collaboration

To afford dignity, respect and compassion, young people are placed at the core of a setting so their voices are heard and so we can support them with what is important to them. Staff in the settings work closely together, sharing their expertise, to address barriers to learning and support the best possible outcomes.

# Admissions

**Spring School is due to open in September 2023. The number of pupils who attend Spring School will be built strategically over a seven-year period.**

The school is planned to reach its published admissions number (PAN) of 90 by 2028-29.

In the 2023-24 academic year, 36 pupils will be admitted, comprising of the following key stages:

| Academic year 2023-2024 |    |
|-------------------------|----|
| Total                   | 36 |
| Reception               | 6  |
| Key stage 1             | 9  |
| Key stage 2             | 9  |
| Key stage 3             | 12 |

Pupils attending Spring School will have, or be on the pathway to having, an EHC plan which names autism as their primary diagnosis. Their EHC plan will name Spring School as their designated place of learning.

Any additional diagnoses of either learning disabilities or medical conditions must be assessed on an individual basis, to determine whether the school will be able to meet the child's or young person's needs.

Local authorities will manage requests for placements at Spring School. Spring School staff will review the request, observe the young person in their current setting and talk to families and professionals, before determining whether a place can be offered.

Each application to Spring School is considered on an individual basis. In every case our admissions process evaluates the needs of the individual child or young person.

Places will usually be taken up at the start of the academic year. By arrangement with the Head, school places may be accessed at any time of the year where space is available and depending upon the application of the admissions criteria and needs of the child/young person.

Spring School's Admissions Policy and information about how to apply are available on our website [www.springschool.org.uk](http://www.springschool.org.uk).



# The site and transport

Due to the needs of pupils, there is no defined catchment area but together with the local authority, we value the importance of pupils not travelling too far to school.

Spring School is situated adjacent to the existing Moor Lane Centre, to the north of Moor Lane in Chessington, Kingston. The site is currently occupied by a Respite Care Centre (in the northwest corner), in addition to the Moor Lane Centre building itself, and two disused buildings to the east including an old swimming pool which was hazardous and has been dismantled to make way for the new school building.



Vehicle access to Spring School is gained from Moor Lane and Bridge Road to the south via the existing mini roundabout, and through the existing Moor Lane Centre car park. The access leads into a drop off and collection area, and a small parking space for cars, transport busses and disabled parking bays. To encourage green transport the parking space also includes cycle storage facilities.

We expect pupils to come to school in a number of ways, on public transport, walking, cycling and parent or carer drop-off. Spring School will encourage pupils, staff and visitors to consider the environmental impact of their journey to school.

The car space at the front of the school incorporates a one-way system, to ease the flow of traffic. Pedestrian access is likewise gained via the Moor Lane Centre, through the existing pedestrian gate into the site.

The entire layout has been landscaped carefully to retain the majority of existing trees across the site and add additional planting.

The new school building will be a modular construction which delivers a number of sustainability benefits and will include the following spaces:

- zoned areas for the different school stages
- classrooms with outdoor access
- an enclosed outdoor courtyard on the first floor
- music classroom
- art and Design & Technology space
- food technology classrooms
- soft play space
- library
- sports and dining hall
- small group spaces
- therapy spaces

The site lies within a predominantly residential context and Spring School will be proactive about how parking, school access and noise impacts the local residential community.



# How will the local community benefit from Spring School?

Due to the size and quality of facilities, we hope that Spring School will be a good site for exploring opportunities to host vibrant sports and community access events outside of the school day. The site will also be wheelchair friendly and offer accessible toilets and a changing places facility. There will be a community access agreement in place.

As a host borough of an Ambitious about Autism school, we are offering free CPD-Certified courses to all schools and

colleges in Kingston-upon-Thames. In partnership with the Autism Education Trust, our evidence-based professional development programme is developed by leading autism education researchers and specialists. We want to work with our local education community to improve the outcomes and lives of all autistic pupils in the borough. Spring School will be a setting of autism excellence.





# Get involved in the consultation

Thank you for reading our consultation brochure.

To respond to this consultation please take part in [our online survey](#). This will take less than 5 minutes to complete.

You can also [sign up](#) to attend one of our engagement events



## In person event

Wednesday 2 November,  
5.30pm – 7pm  
at Chessington School,  
Garrison Lane, KT9 2JS.



## Online event

Monday 14 November,  
1pm – 2pm.



## Drop-in clinic

Friday 25 November,  
11am – 3pm  
at the Moor Lane Centre,  
Moor Lane, KT9 2AA.



## Submit questions

By email to [enquiries@springschool.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@springschool.org.uk),  
subject line: CONSULTATION  
or send us a letter at **Spring School Consultation,**  
**The Pears National Centre for Autism Education,**  
**London, N10 3BP.**

We look forward to hearing from you.





**Ambitious about Autism** is the national charity for children and young people with autism. We provide services, raise awareness and understanding, and campaign for change. Through Spring School, TreeHouse School, The Rise School and Ambitious College we offer specialist education and support.

Our mission is to make the ordinary possible for children and young people with autism.

## Contact us

### Spring School

Moor Lane, Chessington KT9 2AA

☎ 020 8099 0644

✉ [enquiries@springschool.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@springschool.org.uk)

🌐 [springschool.org.uk](http://springschool.org.uk)

## Follow us

🐦 @ambitiousautism

📘 ambitiousaboutautism

📷 ambitiousaboutautism

## How to find us

### Public transport

The school is still in the construction phase, so please do not expect to find us on site yet. Once the school is open in 2023, you can find us in the following ways:

### Travelling by car

Visitors may park on our premises if there is space available. Cars should be parked in designated spaces only.



**Ambitious about Autism Schools Trust** is an exempt charity in England and Wales and a registered company 08335297

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