



Consultation Report: Newquay Primary Academy Area Resource Base

Executive Summary

Newquay Primary Academy is an inclusive school serving 134 pupils and their families in Newquay. Part of Cornwall Education Learning Trust (CELT), the school is committed to the goal of providing an exceptional educational experience for every child.

Rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted in 2024, Newquay Primary Academy has the capacity to expand its provision, and the proposed plan aims to meet increasing need in the local community by creating an Area Resource Base (ARB) on its site for 25 learners between the ages of 5 and 11 with autism and/or speech, language and communication needs (SLCN).

CELT already offers an ARB at Bodmin College and works closely with the Special Partnership Trust (SPT) to deliver ARBs on the sites of two of its other schools: Mount Charles Primary School and Brannel school. This partnership also supports the development of staff in serving the needs to pupils with a range of special educational needs in all its schools.

Cornwall Council has sought applications for the expansion of SEN spaces across the county due to a shortfall in in the region. CELT approached the local authority to support an increase in SEN spaces in mid-Cornwall, and the ARB at Newquay Primary Academy forms part of that response.

In addition, CELT is also consulting on the creation of other new provisions at Newquay Tretherras, Penrice Academy, Poltair School and Pondhu Primary School. Together, these represent an extensive expansion of specialist spaces in the region and the creation of new all-through pathways for our communities.

The creation of the ARB at Newquay Primary Academy does not affect its PAN. It will provide:

- September 2026: 9 places in Years EYFS to 2 to meet immediate local need



- September 2027: A further 8 places for a total 17 places across Year EYFS to 4
- September 2028: A further 8 places for a total, final capacity of 25 places across Years EYFS to 6

This targeted investment is based on detailed analysis of local need. As part of the Mid-Cornwall sufficiency pilot, this development will also support clearer pathways between different types of provision, including smoother transition from primary to secondary school and opportunities for learners to transition into mainstream settings where appropriate.

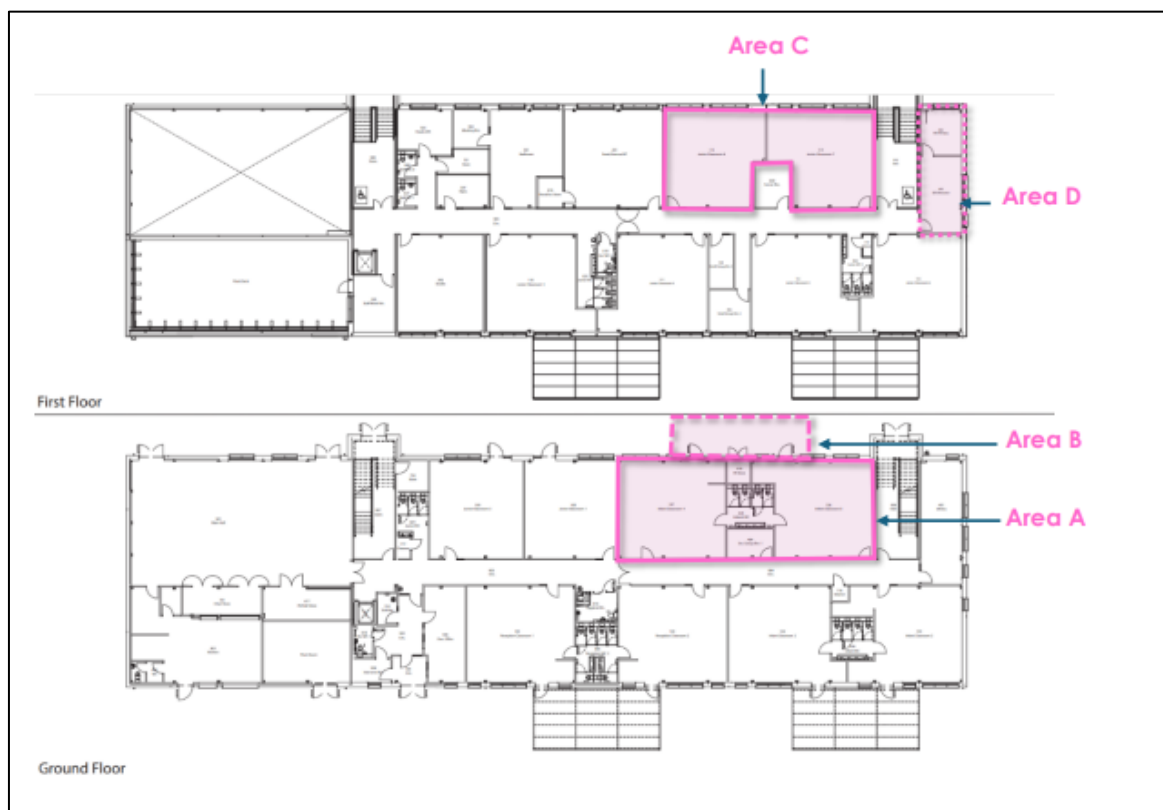
Existing space in the school has been identified that could be used for this ARB, as follows:

Phase 1

- Area A: Ground floor specialist classrooms x 2
- Area B: Canopied outdoor learning space – shared use for 2 classrooms

Phase 2

- Area C: First floor specialist classrooms x 2
- Area D: Therapy rooms – shared use with universal provision (mainstream)





Statutory Consultation

Engagement work

As part of the Significant Change Process, the Academy undertook a public consultation which ran from 21 April to 13 May 2026. The aim of all our activities was to drive engagement in an online survey.

To support stakeholders to express their views, we provided:

- A consultation pack about the proposal, including site location and aims, with details of the public event and embedded survey
- A website page with same
- An email invitation to local councillors and MPs
- An email invitation to the local authority
- Emails to all parents of pupils at the Academy
- An online survey
- Social media posts on the school's and the trust's accounts
- A prominent post in the school's newsletter about the public event and the online survey

The aim of this consultation was to allow all members of the community and stakeholders to share their thoughts and feelings on the proposal.

The local community responded positively throughout this period and this consultation report is based on the responses we received to the online survey and public consultation events.

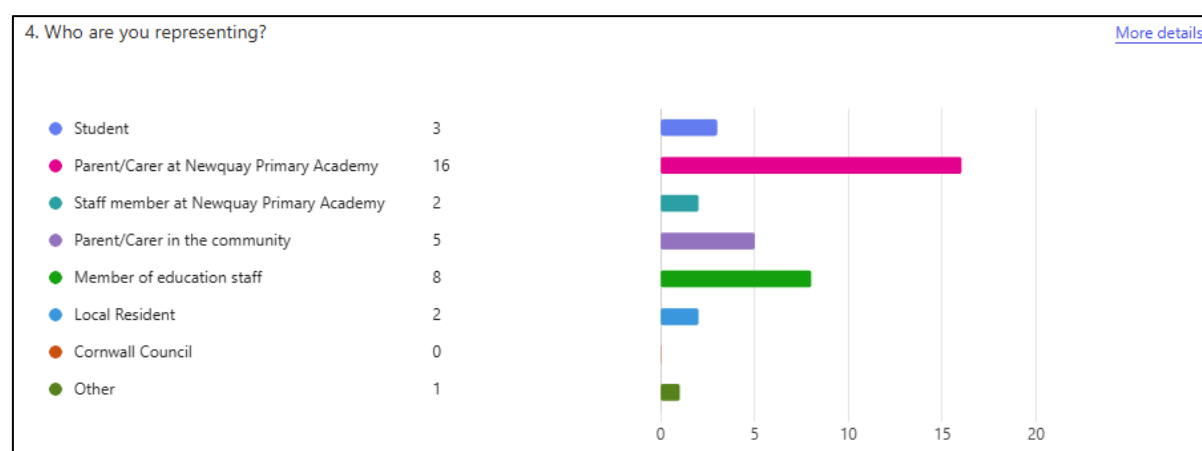


Responses

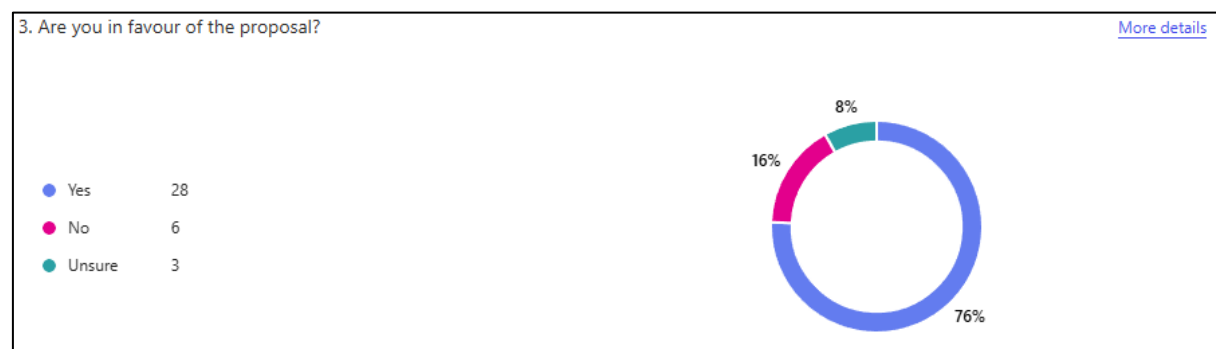
Big picture

Thirteen people attended the consultation evening. The online survey, which we communicated to all as the way to officially record their thoughts and feelings about the plans, received 37 responses.

Of the 37 respondents, 3 were students, 16 were parents or carers of children at the school, 5 were parents or carers in the wider community, 2 were members of the school's education staff, 8 were members of education staff, 2 were local residents in the wider community and 1 classed themselves as 'other'.



A large majority, 28 of them expressed support for the new provision. Three were unsure, and 6 opposed the proposal.



The engagement of a range of stakeholders, including at least two with no direct affiliation to the school, is positive. Those pupils, parents at the school and those from Newquay Primary Academy's wider community took the time to express their views about the plans is also very welcome. Thirty-six respondents made the additional time to comment. One did not comment.



Need and trust

The many positive comments focus on a number of factors. Among these the most recurrent is the need for **high-quality, local** provision. Pleasantly, a number voiced trust in **Newquay Primary Academy** and **Cornwall Education Learning Trust** to deliver it.

*"Will support inclusion for the wider community. Better training for staff and hopefully more resources. **A resource that is currently lacking in Cornwall.** Encourages a better understanding and acceptance from children at the school in regard to neurodivergent children."*

*"As a parent at NPA, and an Occupational Therapist and Autism specialist, I support this proposal and feel **it can add tremendous value to many neurodivergent children and their families.**"*

*"**I am in huge support of an ARB unit** both as a parent to two children who are neurodiverse as well as being an Early Years SENCo. I know first-hand the importance of offering a curriculum that is bespoke to the children of our community. Unfortunately, **the system is in crisis.** [...] **Please let this much needed provision go ahead, our children need this!**"*

*"Great idea. **Very much needed.**"*

*"It is encouraging to see **CELT leading the way with such a proactive response** to a growing challenge. This investment in local children and **families will make a meaningful.**"*

*"I think it's **a much-needed resource** that will add a lot to the Newquay community."*

*"My son has Level 2 Autism and is now 21. **He waited his whole educational life for a school like this.**"*



"As a parent of a child with ASD and ADHD, this setting has been **a long-awaited provision for the young people of Newquay and the surrounding area.**"

"My daughter is nearly 40 years old and had little to no support when she was at school. **We would've loved a school like this for her.**"

"I work with young people and their families in Newquay as a dance teacher. I know there is **a huge need for a school like this in this area** and so many children I teach have to travel a long way to the school they need."

"This provision will support so many young people and their families in this community and is **so desperately needed.**"

"This is **just what is needed in Newquay and the facilities and space at Newquay Primary are currently underused** so using them for ARB provision makes a lot of sense."

"As Headteacher of Newquay Junior Academy, I strongly support the proposal for an ARB at Newquay Primary Academy. There **is a clear and growing need for specialist provision within our local community**, particularly for children with communication, interaction and additional needs who benefit from targeted support while remaining connected to their local area. An ARB would help ensure more children can access the right provision closer to home, reducing unnecessary travel and supporting smoother transitions between settings. It would also strengthen inclusive practice across Newquay schools through shared expertise, collaboration and professional development, ultimately benefiting not only pupils within the provision itself but the wider education community."

"I understand that children with autism need specialist care and that **they would benefit greatly from a project such as the one planned.**"



"I believe the proposal should go ahead without question. Numbers of children requiring support is escalating. **The need is great.**"

"It is **an incredible opportunity.**"

"**Much needed service across for mid Cornwall.** Hopefully will benefit all the children in regards to promoting inclusivity and acceptance of others."

"I am in favour of this proposal. Based on what was **shared at the consultation meeting**, I believe this is **a really beneficial development for the school and for children/families in the local area.**"

"**This is exactly what Newquay needs.** My daughter's EHCP is about to go to stage 3 panel after an interim ECHP review as her mainstream can no longer meet her needs and we have asked for an ARB provision to be considered for her. **If we had an ARB available in Newquay it would remove worries regarding travel** to and from an ARB outside of the area as I know my daughter would struggle immensely with this."

"I think it's important for children who require this support to be able **to attend a school that is in their local community** and not far from where they **live rather than travelling further away** to a different more specialist school. **They will overall be a lot happier.**"

"I think **the proposal will benefit a lot of young special needs children in this area** and would help the local parents from worrying how far away their children need to go for there education. [...] Thank you for letting me have this opportunity to have my say as my granddaughter has autism."



This is all very encouraging. However, half of the positive comments are qualified. Respondents raised a number of concerns that are already informing our thinking. These can be grouped into three broad categories:

- place allocation
- support and capacity
- integration

The remainder of this response looks at these in turn, and how we are mitigating risks.

Place allocation

Who is it for?

One respondent asked:

“Will it always remain that students are SLCN / ASC?”

At present, our published proposal states:

“To be considered for a place in an ARB, the learner **must have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP)** with their **primary area of need identified as SLCN and/or autism requiring specialist support.**”

This focus is in response to current and forecast local need. Should those forecasts change, it will be possible to adapt this provision to meet it, but only in agreement with Cornwall Council and the Department for Education.

Who else will benefit?

A number of the respondents wanted to know whether children already on roll at Newquay Primary Academy would be prioritised for these spaces.

“What about the children currently waiting for a diagnosis already in the school?”

“It does highlight some unknowns for **children already attending NPA with an EHCP.** Presumably **you would expect these children to be placed in the ARB for some of the time?**”



*"I feel that it is important **that existing students at Newquay Primary Academy who require additional speech, language and autism-related support are also prioritised** for access to the new resources/specialists based at the school."*

*"I think this is a good proposal particularly if **some of the children that are already based at the Academy can have access to the extra resources** that will be available to the new children joining the school."*

For pupils currently attending Newquay Primary Academy who are awaiting assessment, diagnosis or EHCP outcomes, the school will continue to provide support through its graduated response and SEND support processes.

A diagnosis alone would not automatically determine access to the ARB; placements are based on identified need and whether specialist provision is required through an EHCP.

Importantly, one of the significant benefits of having an ARB on site is the increased specialist expertise, training and inclusive practice that can positively influence provision across the whole school, not solely within the ARB itself.

The specialist staff, strategies, approaches and professional development linked to the ARB will strengthen the school's wider inclusive practice and support all learners, including those with emerging or additional needs already attending the academy.

Another respondent was concerned about support for those with or without EHCPs for other special educational needs:

*"How will this space support and be accessible to pupils with **SEMH and sensory integration needs who are not autistic**, and will its use be guided by **input from relevant professionals such as occupational therapists**? What is the **expected timeline** and **measurable outcomes** for this provision—how will we know it is working for individual children?"*

The creation of the ARB will be backed by investment in staffing and work with allied professionals. Our published proposal states:



*"The ARB will offer personalised communication-focused learning, **integrated speech and language therapy practice**, sensory-friendly environments, and structured mainstream inclusion."*

We will work hard to ensure this additional expertise results in better provision for all our learners who need it, regardless of their EHCP status.

In response to the other concerns raised here: the timeline is included in the original proposal document, and again above here in the executive summary.

Measurable outcomes for individual learners in the ARB will be determined by their EHCPs and their individualised curriculum.

What about everyone else?

By far the biggest concern about place allocation related to class sizes at Newquay Primary Academy.

The school was initially meant to be a two-form entry, but this wasn't viable given excess capacity in the town.

Children at Newquay Primary Academy are in classes of up to 30, and a number of stakeholders worry that the ARB will result in larger class sizes – at least during those times when its pupils are in mainstream classes.

Their concerns are about the quality of provision for:

- those mainstream pupils who are thriving and could see the quality of teaching reduce
- those mainstream pupils who are still in the process of having their needs identified and could see the process slow down further
- the ARB's pupils, may get places but not the quality of provision required to support them to thrive

"My key concern is the class size when ARB pupils join the mainstream pupils. From my point of view the capacity of 30 pupils should never be exceeded. I feel it's already a challenge now to give each student the time and attention they need, especially for kids that might already need a bit of extra help. Adding more pupils to the classroom does not appear beneficial for anyone - not the mainstream pupils nor the ARB pupils that will require extra help and attention."



"I don't feel there is space with **the current 30 students to add more in at this point to Reception class**. That's for educational needs and for H&S/fire risk needs. **Will the proposed students themselves benefit in this environment?**"

"I am concerned that **the proposal does not fully address the impact this may have on existing pupils, teachers, classroom sizes and already stretched resources**. The consultation states that current learners "may notice the small increase" and that staff will "generally" be unaffected, but from a parent's perspective **this feels too limited an assessment of the real pressures already being experienced in classrooms.**"

"Does [this proposal] **impact on the yearly number of children able to attend NPA**, as currently it's 30 but **will that now reduce to 26?**"

"I feel that it is important to review progress regularly **to ensure that the increased class numbers do not have a detrimental impact on the existing pupils** (although with additional members of staff, this should there should be a suitable ratio of staff to children)."

"System and processes: with regards to ARB students attending 50% of the time in mainstream (**in a class of 30 already?**), will the ARB staff be with them? **There are currently 3 adults (1 teacher and 2 TAs). This feels like a lot in one space.**"

"**Will classes become too big** with too many children? **What is the cut off?**"

"That the students will be within the class 50% of the time is a concern in **an already large class with numerous friends of our daughter being told that they are behind.**"

A key principle of the proposed ARB is that integration into mainstream classes would always be carefully planned, personalised and reviewed based on the individual needs of each child. The reference to pupils accessing mainstream learning for up to 50% of the time is not a fixed expectation for every child.



Decisions about when, how and for how long a pupil accesses mainstream provision would be based on what is appropriate, successful and beneficial for both the individual child and the wider class environment.

This would include careful consideration of:

- the child's readiness, regulation and learning needs;
- the size and dynamics of the class;
- the nature of the lesson or activity;
- the physical learning environment and available space;
- staffing ratios and adult support available at that time;
- the impact on all learners within the classroom.

Where pupils from the ARB access mainstream classes, this would be supported by specialist staff when appropriate. The intention is not to place additional pressure on existing classrooms, but to ensure integration is meaningful, well-supported and successful. The ARB would bring additional staffing, expertise and resources into the school, which would strengthen support for inclusion more widely.

Importantly, the PAN (Published Admission Number) for mainstream admissions remains unchanged. The ARB places are separate specialist placements agreed through the EHCP consultation process with the local authority and do not reduce the number of mainstream places available at the school.

The school will continue to operate within statutory health and safety requirements, including fire safety and safe occupancy expectations for classrooms and shared spaces. Any implementation would need to demonstrate that environments remain safe, appropriate and conducive to learning for all pupils.

At the heart of this proposal is the development of a truly inclusive school community. Inclusive schools help children learn how to understand, support and value difference from an early age. The aim is not simply for children to share the same site, but to create a culture of belonging where all learners are recognised as part of the school community and able to participate meaningfully at the right level for them.

Research and experience consistently show that inclusive environments can benefit all children through the development of empathy, communication, confidence, relationships and wider social understanding.



The ambition is therefore not only to create specialist provision for children with higher levels of need, but also to strengthen the school's overall inclusive practice so that all pupils benefit from increased expertise, adaptive teaching approaches and a wider understanding of individual needs.

We also recognise the importance of ongoing review. The impact of the provision on pupils, staffing, classroom organisation and learning environments would be regularly monitored by school and trust leaders, alongside the local authority, to ensure that provision remains effective and that standards for all pupils remain high.

The overall aim is to ensure that Newquay Primary Academy remains a positive, ambitious and inclusive environment where every child feels safe, supported, valued and able to thrive.

Support, funding and capacity

More diverse classrooms

Just like one of the previous respondents, others noted positively that the proposal will unlock additional support and resource for Newquay Primary Academy.

However, concerns remain about staff capacity to manage more diverse classrooms, regardless of whether they will be larger.

"[...] Classroom disruption: Concerns that children with higher support needs may struggle with **behaviour regulation**, potentially **affecting lesson flow**.

Reduced teacher attention: Fear that staff time will be disproportionately **focused on pupils with additional needs**.

Academic standards: Worry that **teaching pace or curriculum difficulty could be lowered** to accommodate a wider range of needs."

"Are teachers properly trained in autism-specific strategies, or is the change more symbolic than practical?"



“Worry about risk if children with challenging behaviours are not adequately supported. Will each class have a TA and a child with high needs have 1:1 support? To have a diagnosis and EHCP prior reception would indicate the child has highly complex needs.”

“We are worried [our son’s] education is going to suffer as time will be focused more on the students with additional needs. We are interested to know how this will be managed and ensure it doesn’t affect the students without these needs.”

“I would like to raise concerns about how changes in classroom composition may impact the quality of learning for all pupils. While I understand the importance of supporting children with a range of needs, it is essential that this is managed in a way that does not reduce the level of attention, challenge, and progress for other children. My child is currently thriving, and I want to ensure that high standards are maintained.”

“Will all NPA staff and current learners receive ongoing education (as appropriate) around how best to understand, support, and include the additional cohort of children and their families?”

“My main concern is how you ensure the current children in the class are not affected by behaviours which may distract them and/or affect their learning. And if the children are in their classroom will there be extra teaching assistants if they need 1-2-1?”

Because all of the ARB pupils will have EHCPs, their individual level of support throughout their time at Newquay Primary Academy will be determined by this, and it will be funded accordingly.

As to delivering that support, given the known shortage of specialist staff both regionally and nationally, not least in terms of educational psychologists and speech and language therapists, our community’s concerns are well-founded.

We are mindful of this, which is one of the reasons the proposal is for a staggered build-up of ARB students as we increase our capacity.

For more about staffing and workforce development, see below.



Long-term commitment

Another set of concerns regarding support and capacity relates to the authorities' commitment to the project:

*"My first concern is whether this is being **done for the right reasons** and **with the right level of commitment**? I'd hate to see it become something that feels like **a funding exercise** rather than **a genuinely well thought through provision built around children's needs**."*

The same respondent was also concerned about timeframes:

*"Reading it, I **initially assumed this was something further down the line**, maybe September 2027, so I was a bit **surprised to see they want the first places running from September 2026**. That really isn't far away."*

In terms of **intentions**, inclusion is at the heart of our values, at Newquay Tretherras and at Cornwall Education Trust alike. We know this only means something to our stakeholders when we prove it in their schools, and we believe our work on our Learning Chronicles, Adaptive Teaching Toolkit and Student Support Plans demonstrates our ambition in practice.

We have submitted this proposal because we won't stand by while a growing number of children and families in our communities are unable to access the education they deserve.

Its approval would be an opportunity to take our inclusive practices to a new level but, either way, we will continue to demonstrate our commitment to an exceptional educational experience for all.

Meanwhile, no one understands the tight **timelines** involved better than the many CELT staff who are preparing to implement this proposal, at school and trust level.

We are helped in this by our existing ARB and by our close relationship with experts including the Special Partnership Trust.

With multiple proposals under consultation across Mid-Cornwall, we are:

- working with external specialists to develop curriculum and more
- hiring and developing our own specialist staff
- working on giving our Centre of Excellence's extensive and sector-leading programme of staff development an increasing focus on inclusion and SEND



If we receive Department for Education approval, we will remain in contact with our families to explain key milestones.

One parent said:

*"It feels that **this is being rushed through** and, given barely a week to make arrangements with work, **a deliberate attempt for parents/carers to not have the opportunity to attend the consultation [meeting].**"*

We can only apologise to anyone who was left feeling like this. The truth is that the proposal is in response to an emergency situation, though not one of the school's or the trust's making.

In everything we do, we have the best interests of our community at heart. Hearing your ideas and concerns is a vital part of making sure we get that right.

As to **finance**, Cornwall Council, who are funding the initial ARB setup, take the view that this will ultimately save them and their residents money through reductions in expensive appeals, out-of-area placements, private placements and in ongoing school support.

Meanwhile, the Department for Education is committed to increasing inclusion in mainstream schools, and ARBs are a key plank of their policy.

While central government will not fund the ARB directly, we are already seeing a shift in resources to support schools to much better meet need.

CELT is driven by a sense of service to its communities. We pride ourselves on being an ethical, responsible and sound custodian of our communities' schools.

Our aim is to distribute resource equitably between our schools and different pupil groups to ensure everyone is given the opportunity to thrive and to belong through an exceptional educational experience.

Other concerns

Some concerns could not be categorised with those above. We are pleased to respond to them here:

*"While I feel the internal structure of the school and the layout/neutral classrooms is supportive of auditory and visual sensory needs, **the playground and lack of equipment is a concern in terms of meeting needs for holistic childhood development.** It would be*



valuable to understand whether funding would consider these needs.”

We recognise that creating an inclusive environment for all extends beyond the classroom and includes wider aspects of school life such as outdoor spaces, play opportunities, sensory regulation and social development.

Developing environments that support all children's needs is something we are continually working on as part of our wider commitment to inclusion and belonging across the school.

As part of the proposed provision, consideration would be given to how both indoor and outdoor environments can best support children's holistic development, including opportunities for play, regulation, communication and social interaction.

The introduction of an ARB would bring additional resources into the school, and we would continue to review how funding and future developments can enhance provision and environments for all learners across the academy.

*“Will the **parking/drop-off/pick-up zones** be considered as part of planning?”*

As part of the implementation process, the school and trust would continue to review site logistics, traffic flow and safe access arrangements to ensure they remain manageable and safe for all pupils, families and staff.

*“We are concerned that **NPA [...] is still ‘a work in progress’**. The existing provision and funding for the current children needs to be addressed before more changes and expansion is introduced [...]. **The [...] ARB should be considered further in the future when the school is established.** The oldest children in the school are already **disadvantaged** and experience **uncertainty** and **constant unsettling change**. **More changes to the school would mean further disruption to both the children and the current staff** (who are already under pressure to establish and deliver a curriculum for a new year group each year).”*



We recognise that Newquay Primary Academy is continuing to grow and develop as a school community, and we understand the importance of ensuring that any future developments are carefully planned and managed in a way that maintains stability and positive experiences for children, families and staff.

The school is part of wider trust-led curriculum and school improvement work, with teachers and leaders actively involved in developing a curriculum that is ambitious, inclusive and adapted to the context of the school and the needs of its children and community.

This ongoing development work will continue regardless of the proposed ARB and remains a key priority for school and trust leaders.

The intention of the ARB proposal is not to disrupt or detract from the school's wider development, but to strengthen the school's inclusive capacity and specialist expertise over time.

Any implementation would be carefully phased in and planned to minimise disruption and ensure that existing pupils continue to access high-quality teaching, support and opportunities.

The trust and school leadership teams are committed to ensuring that the development of the ARB complements the school's ongoing journey and enhances provision for all learners, rather than creating additional instability or uncertainty.

Conclusion and next steps

We are confident that the proposed Area Resource Base at Newquay Primary Academy will deliver a number of benefits for the school's community, not least in supporting us to provide an exceptional educational experience for learners with autism and/or speech, language and communication needs.

The proposal is fully supported by Cornwall Council in its efforts to meet growing needs across the county and drive down expensive and difficult out-of-area placements.

Pending funding for the minor adaptations required to make the Area Resource Base a physical reality, the school and its academy trust have drawn up planning applications.



Across the trust, we have also developed the systems and networks to hire and develop staff with the necessary skills and expertise to deliver an innovative, bespoke curriculum for the learners who will attend it.

In sum, we are confident that, if approved, the ARB will be ready to open at the start of the autumn term, and that we have the backing of our pupils, families and the wider community to make this important addition to our provision in Newquay.

However, we are also mindful of the reasonable concerns of our community. We will continue to communicate our developments in terms of place allocation, curriculum, staffing, resources and more, and we will sound community opinion ongoingly to ensure we are alleviating these and rapidly aware of new ones as they arise.

We are grateful to all the stakeholders who took part in this consultation, and we look forward to continuing to work closely with them to ensure the provision meets everyone's needs.