

**County Hall  
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**To all Consultees**

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**My ref:** JH/PD/db  
**Your ref:**  
**Date:** 26 April 2004

Dear Consultee

**Special needs unit at Birchwood Avenue Primary School**

The purpose of this letter is to consult you about a proposal to:

**close the special needs unit for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD) at Birchwood Avenue Primary School in Hatfield with effect from 31 March 2005.**

This is being proposed as part of the County Council's work to support schools in promoting good behaviour and high achievement. It represents a shift towards a more inclusive model of support for children within their local schools.

Schools will receive help for identified children whose behaviour may affect their (and other pupils') ability to access the curriculum and their achievement potential. A variety of services will be available, including the local Education Support Centres and Behaviour Support Teams, and for some children more intensive support from staff working out of a number of new and existing primary support bases.

We have carried out a review of existing EBD unit provision in planning the move towards this new pattern of provision. We have taken the following criteria into account:

- the need to provide sufficient places
- the need to provide a pattern of support to match the geographical spread of needs, and
- the need to have clear links with other behaviour support services.

Some existing EBD units already offer the new primary support base services and others will extend their services to meet the new remit. Others have asked recently for their provision to stop or are no longer needed.

No decisions have been taken but, should the EBD unit at Birchwood Avenue Primary School close, transition arrangements will be put in place for pupils currently within the unit. Parents of those children will be contacted individually. The County Council's Redeployment Scheme would come into operation for any permanent members of staff whose job may be at risk because of the change. The Scheme seeks to ensure that staff affected would be given consideration for jobs available at other schools. Some staff may be needed to provide transition support. Our Human Resources advisers will meet with those staff during this consultation.

We would like to hear your views about the proposal to close the special needs EBD unit at Birchwood Avenue Primary School. **Please let me have your views by Monday 14 June 2004.** Return the attached form, use our on-line reply service at [www/hertsdirect.org/psb](http://www/hertsdirect.org/psb), or write to Pauline Davis at the above address. If you, or someone you know, needs information in any other form, or needs an interpreter, please contact Kate Maguire on 01992 555897.

If you have any questions about the proposal please contact either Jan Hardy on 01582 830299 or Pauline Davis on 01992 555865.

The Cabinet of the County Council will take your views into account before deciding on 12 July 2004 whether to continue with its proposal and to publish a statutory notice. If it decides to proceed notices would be published in September for a period of six weeks. Any objections received would be referred to the Hertfordshire School Organisation Committee, which would decide whether the unit should close.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

**John Harris**  
**Director of Children, Schools & Families**