**NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL – FULL PROPOSAL DOCUMENT**

**TO CLOSE SNAPE WOOD PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL (Community School)**

**ASPEN ROAD, BULWELL, NOTTINGHAM, NG6 7DS**

**Statutory Notice publication**

Notice is given, in accordance with Section 15 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 (as amended by the Education Act 2011) and the School Organisation (Establishment and Discontinuance of Schools) Regulations 2013, that Nottingham City Council proposes to close Snape Wood Primary & Nursery School, Aspen Road, Bulwell, Nottingham, NG6 7DS, with effect from 31 August 2026.

On 30 July 2025, the Council’s Executive Member for Children, Young People and Education, agreed to proceed to publishing a statutory proposal for closure as a result of the considerable decline in pupil numbers at the school and a significant surplus of school places within Snape Wood Primary School’s place planning area. This decision followed a Stage 1 pre-publication consultation on the proposals, which took place from 3 June to 6 July 2025. The full consultation report is available here for review: <https://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/SnapeWoodPrimaryandNursery>

**Pupil numbers**

Snape Wood Primary & Nursery School currently provides education for pupils between the ages of 4-11 and has capacity for 210 pupils. The number of pupils on roll on 3 June 2025 was 122, prior to commencing consultation on the proposal to close the school. The approximate number of pupils on roll on 1 September 2025 is 75.

**Reason for closure**

The Council has been working with Snape Wood Primary & Nursery School as they are under particular pressure due to a decline in pupil numbers, which is affecting the financial stability and sustainability of the school. The local context in the Bulwell area is that there has been a significant fall in pupil numbers, mainly due to lower birth rates, which are continuing to decline. If schools have a high number of unfilled surplus places, it means the school receives reduced funding from central government and therefore also has a negative impact on pupils' education.

Snape Wood Primary & Nursery School has been significantly affected by falling rolls and it has by far the highest surplus of all the schools in the Bulwell area. The school currently has 42% unfilled places across the school, expected to increase to 60% by 2028/29. There are not enough children in the local area seeking places in this school. This is expected to remain a problem in the coming years. The falling numbers are also impacting on some of the surrounding schools, although to a lesser extent. Schools receive money from central government based on the number of pupils they admit. This means that schools with a high number of unfilled places are under difficult financial pressure and have less money for staff, resources, equipment, extracurricular activities and enrichment activities for children.

Snape Wood Primary's current and forecast pupil numbers are not financially viable and staffing levels and the quality of education for pupils is likely to be compromised. This proposal is made with the interests of the children in mind, with the aim of creating stronger and more sustainable school provision. There are no alternative viable options other than proposing a Statutory Notice of closure. The LA will ensure that all existing pupils will be accommodated across the three local schools, or an alternative school if parental preference requires it, subject to the normal admissions criteria and if there are available spaces.

**Impact on the community**

We know that our schools have close ties to the local area and communities, sometimes over many generations. This makes this proposal very difficult, and not something we would choose if we felt there was a better option. This proposal is made with the interests of the children in mind, with the aim of creating stronger and more sustainable school provision. We need to collectively ensure all of our schools are fit for the future, and to protect the high-quality education they deliver to their communities. School leaders and the Council have been taking collaborative action to manage the situation, including implementing mixed age group classes and undertaking staffing restructuring at some of the local schools. But this hasn't solved the problem as pupil numbers and therefore funding continues to fall.

If the decision is made to close Snape Wood as a mainstream primary school, the LA will explore all options for retaining and repurposing the building. A current potential option would be to retain the site for an alternative specialist education provision such as for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), with potential for wider community use. Although there is insufficient demand for mainstream places, there is a significant SEND need in Bulwell, as there is across the city. The site and facilities at Snape Wood could be ideal for this, with it offering generous internal and external space.

Any decision on the future use of this site will be taken in the context of strategic priorities, particularly in relation to education and value to the local community and best use of the school estate.

The LA is currently updating and developing Phase 2 of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy to increase the provision of specialist education provision. All potentially available sites will be reviewed and considered as part of this work.

**Support for displaced pupils and families**

If the decision is made to close Snape Wood Primary & Nursery School, all affected children would be supported to find a place at an alternative local primary school, to commence in September 2026. The closest schools are Crabtree Farm Primary, Hempshill Hall Primary and Rufford Primary. The LA has been collaborating with all three schools to consider and plan for the best way to secure provision for displaced children.

By September 2026 there will be sufficient capacity across these three local schools to accommodate pupils who currently attend Snape Wood Primary & Nursery School. Parental preference would be met wherever possible, subject to the normal admissions criteria to allocate available places. Further details of the admissions arrangements will be provided and full support in managing this process is being offered for all families.

Parents/carers can apply for an alternative school place at any time. Although the LA and Snape Wood’s school leaders encourage families to keep their children at Snape Wood Primary until a decision is made and implemented in July 2026, if the closure proposal proceeds.

However, this is very much a personal decision, and the LA cannot advise individual families what to choose to do for their children. However, we encourage families to keep their children at Snape Wood Primary while it remains open. This will enable better coordination and planning in managing the applications for children displaced from Snape Wood. Also, by September 2026 there will be more places available at alternative schools. Coordinated planning would also support an effective transition to the new school. School leaders at Snape Wood would work with the Head Teachers at the local schools to ensure that transition is as seamless as possible.

Snape Wood school leaders are very much committed to ensuring that the education of children continuing to attend this school is at the centre of all decisions made. A robust school improvement plan will continue to be developed which will focus on supporting children at Snape Wood attaining a good quality of education in Maths, Reading and Writing. Standards of teaching will continue to be developed and monitored by senior leaders and school improvement advisors. Other subjects will also be monitored to ensure that children continue to receive a good standard of education across the curriculum.

Future changing demographics, the potential for increased birth rate and demand could in the future mean that additional capacity is needed again. This is why closing schools should only be implemented if there are no alternative viable options, as is the case here. However, the current and predicted surplus of places is of such a level that demand would need to increase significantly to require additional physical capacity, back up to the levels seen at the peak births / demand which was 14+ years ago.

**Support for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

Children with SEND, with or without an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP), will receive additional support to ensure a smooth transition. All of the local schools provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for children with SEND. If the decision is made to implement the proposal, direct support would be provided to the families of children with an EHCP to identify another school that can meet their needs. Targeted support would also be provided to children with SEND, but without an EHCP, to ensure they can transfer to a local school where their needs can continue to be met. Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCos) will ensure successful transition for each child by sharing important information with the receiving school. At the start of the move, every child’s SENCo will meet with their link SEND professionals, to identify vulnerable children with more personalised support.

**Support for staff**

Support and guidance for affected staff is also being provided throughout this process. If Snape Wood Primary & Nursery School closed, the staff would be at risk of redundancy and redeployment opportunities would be considered. There are approximately 20 staff at Snape Wood. All redundancy and staffing reduction processes will be consistent with Council and legal requirements. They will not commence until after the final decision has been made at November 2025's Executive Board.

**Travel and accessibility**

For existing Snape Wood Primary & Nursery pupils, travel implications have been considered to ensure that the closure would not unreasonably or significantly extend journey times or increase transport costs for families.

**Furthest walking distances** from Snapewood’s catchment to closest alternative schools (**mapped from furthest catchment area point** which is Howick Drive):

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Maximum walking distance** | **Approx maximum walking times** |
| To Rufford Primary | 0.7 miles | 15 mins  |
| To Hempshill Hall Primary  | 0.9 miles | 18 mins  |
| To Crabtree Farm Primary  | 1.1 miles | 24 mins  |

**Statutory process and consultation**

The statutory process for closing an LA maintained school is set out in the 'School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 and the Establishment and Discontinuance (of schools) Regulations 2013'. During the Stage 1 consultation period, meetings were held with families, staff, governors and trade union representatives. Views were encouraged and welcomed from all those potentially affected by the proposal, as engagement and feedback is important in helping the LA to understand the views of the children, parents/carers, staff, governors and the local community. The consultation meetings were led by LA Education Officers and School Leaders and provided the opportunity for all stakeholders to hear further information about the proposal, to share views and to raise questions and concerns. The consultation presented details of the proposal and the reasons for it. The proposal set out what it means for the children, their families and the staff and what support is available for all those affected. It also set out the statutory process and expected timeline for consultation meetings and decision making.

Approximately 40 people attended one of the consultation meetings arranged for parent/carers on 10 and 12 July 2025. Attendees were engaged in discussion and many questions were asked and responded to. The key themes discussed are set out in the attached consultation report. There was a total of 14 responses to the online consultation survey, the detail of which is attached at Appendix B. 93% (equating to 13 out of 14 respondents) said that they understand the reasons for the proposal to close Snape Wood Primary & Nursery School in August 2026. 43% agree with the proposal, 43% disagree and 14% neither agree nor disagree.

**How do I respond to the Stage 2 Statutory Representation / consultation period?**

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this notice, any person or organisation may object to, support or make comments on the proposal, to be taken into account by the decision maker, by emailing: SOT@nottinghamcity.gov.uk. Or writing to the Director of Education Services, Nottingham City Council, Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham, NG2 3NG, **marked for the attention of Lucy Juby.**

Responses must be received **by midnight on Sunday 28 September 2025** when the statutory notice and the representation period are due to expire.

**Decision making**

To approve a school closure proposal, a decision must be taken by the Local Authority (LA) decision maker no later than two months after the expiry of the representation period. Therefore, Nottingham City Council’s Executive Board must make a decision on this proposal by **23 November 2025** (subject to a 5-day call-in period).

Where a decision is not made within this time frame, the LA must refer the proposal to the Department of Education's Schools Adjudicator for a decision.

If you need this document to be translated into another language, or if you need to obtain copies of this proposal, or if you have any questions about this proposal, please email: lucy.juby@nottinghamcity.gov.uk.

Council officers and Snape Wood Primary & Nursery School leaders will continue to ensure that support and guidance is provided to all those affected through any change.

Nick Lee

Director of Education Services, Nottingham City Council

Publication date:1 September 2025