

# News

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## **Morgan Sindall wins £18.8 million Essex school expansion to boost number of SEND school places**

The number of special education needs and disabilities (SEND) school places in Colchester, Essex, is set to increase as work on the £18.8 million expansion to Lexden Springs School gets underway.

The major relocation and expansion project on behalf of Essex County Council will increase Lexden Springs' capacity from 120 to 200 pupils.

Essex County Council has appointed Morgan Sindall to deliver the major programme, which is expected to complete in September 2019.

Currently located on Halstead Road in Colchester, Lexden Springs School will relocate to a new state-of-the-art campus on the former Heath School site, in Winstree Road, Stanway. Existing buildings on the site will be demolished to make room for the new school.

Thirty boarding places will be made available for pupils and Morgan Sindall's project team will also deliver extensive car parking and landscaping works to the new school.

The new building will have two separate entrances, with one specifically designed for use by minibuses and taxis to drop off and collect pupils.

Lexden Springs' expansion is part of the authority's plans to spend up to £115 million on creating more than 400 new SEND places across Essex.

The record investment, which includes £42 million from the Essex Schools Forum, comes after an increase in the number of children in the county being diagnosed with autism and a surge in the demand for SEND school places.

Saul Humphrey, managing director of Morgan Sindall's East region, said: "We're so pleased to be working alongside Essex County Council once again as we deliver this exciting expansion for Lexden Springs School.

"Essex County Council's record investment in developing the region's special education needs facilities is a testament to the council's commitment to transforming the teaching provisions that are currently in place for children with SEND learning requirements.

"The new facilities will have a great impact on Lexden Springs, creating an inspiring and modern place for children to learn and enjoy their educational journey. The additional space will be a great boost to the school, allowing even more children across the region to benefit from the school's outstanding teaching."

Cllr Ray Gooding, Essex County Council's Cabinet member for Education, said: "We are making great progress in our commitment to ensuring all pupils in Essex receive the best possible education and that there is enough capacity within the county's schools to meet every child's individual needs.

"Plans to relocate Lexden Springs School have been in the pipeline for a long time and I am very pleased we are working with Morgan Sindall to deliver this project. The expansion of the school will

help meet the increased demand for special school places in the area and reduce the need for children to be educated at independent schools or outside of Essex.

“We look forward to welcoming even more pupils to their new, state-of-the-art school in September 2019 and I hope they enjoy learning in what will be an exciting and stimulating environment.”

Morgan Sindall’s project partners include consultancy practice Pick Everard, Curl La Tourelle Head Architecture, Rossi Long Consulting and JSH Ipswich.

Morgan Sindall is currently on site and major schemes across the East. In Lowestoft, the company has been appointed to deliver the new headquarters for world-leading UK marine science agency CEFAS (The Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science). The development will provide the organisation with a purpose-built, sustainable building and refurbish their existing laboratories to bring them up to date, enabling Cefas to continue to build on its 115-year-old globally-recognised marine science heritage.

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