

Dear parents/guardians,

We would like to share the following update to provide you with the latest information on the status of Matford Brook Academy.

You will be aware that the Matford Brook school build has encountered some significant issues with the construction programme which are further set out below. We had hoped that it might be possible to resolve this in time for the start of term, but it is now clear this is not possible. This is hugely disappointing and unsettling for all.

As a result, Ted Wragg Trust and Devon County Council have been working closely with the DfE to develop options to open the school in temporary accommodation for as many pupils as possible for September.

Below is the latest information available on how the delays to the permanent school will impact the provision that Matford Brook is able to provide for September 2023.

Nursery provision

It will not be possible to provide a solution in temporary accommodation for the nursery element of Matford Brook. There are no suitable sites available locally which could be delivered in time. Devon County Council is working with local nursery providers to confirm how many additional places can be provided including within a local provision due to open in September 2023. The Council will be having conversations about alternative nursery provision with families who were due to attend Matford Brook.

Primary students

It will not be possible to offer primary provision for the students proposed to attend Matford Brook in reception in September 2023. We are confident that there are sufficient spaces available at local established primaries and that this represents the best option for students as they start their school journey. The trust and Council will make contact with all affected families to discuss options for primary places within the area local to Matford Brook.

Secondary students

For secondary students the solution being developed is twofold. The option is being explored to open the secondary phase of the school in temporary accommodation for September 2023, using under-utilised space at an existing secondary school in the trust, St Luke's C of E School, which is approximately 5 miles from the Matford Brook site. Technical advisors are carrying out further appraisals to better understand the deliverability and options for spaces available on this site.

In combination with this, the Trust and Council are working together to establish the additional places that can be made available across the existing secondary provision within the local authority area to ensure all secondary students can be offered a place for September. The Council will be in contact with parents on the week commencing the 19th of June to discuss the options available.

The Matford Brook permanent site

We understand that you will have questions regarding the construction issues with the Matford Brook site.

In May of this year, we became aware of possible issues with the site, that could potentially affect the opening of the school in September 2023. The contractor has identified issues with its piled foundations relating to some of the site, which will require remedial works. Testing is underway to assess the extent of the issue. The outcomes of the tests will not be known until July, but it will not be possible to occupy the permanent buildings in September 2023.

We are continuing to work closely with the contractor, so that we can open the school building as soon as it is practical and safe to do so.

Ted Wragg Trust, Devon County Council and the DfE share the frustrations that you will all be feeling following this news but are working with the utmost urgency to try and secure the best possible outcome for all students affected. We will provide a further update as soon as is possible.