



Sally Banfield

Headteacher

7<sup>th</sup> November 2025

Combe Pafford School wishes to consult on:

**The change of designation of Combe Pafford School from moderate learning difficulties (MLD) to autistic spectrum condition (ASC)**

This change will see Combe Pafford keep its existing MLD cohort whilst accepting new students, on a cohort-by-cohort basis, with a primary area of need of ASC moving forward. A period of dual designation will apply until September 2030 when a single designation of ASC will apply.

The Local Authority (LA) would like for Combe Pafford to become a designated school for ASC to support the growing demands of young people across Torbay. ASC is the fastest growing area of need for secondary aged pupils in our area, and the LA recognise the expertise, facilities and vocational offer that Combe Pafford has, and can provide the ASC school to meet the continuing SEND demand in the bay.

The need for specialist school ASC places is important and increasing, and the LA require these new places for September 2026. To support this fast-paced change, Combe Pafford will be working with the Special Partnership Trust (SPT) to facilitate the change and management process required. SPT will provide support and guidance for Combe Pafford to welcome the new cohort for ASC young people. SPT work will focus on curriculum development, CPD for staff, facilities enhancement and cohort transition support.

SPT is an equitable partnership of schools and specialist provision, with schools in Devon and Cornwall. The Trust are ambitious for excellence in learning and support, constantly seeking to improve the offer to SEN young people and their families through collaboration, challenge and cooperation across the partnership and other schools through a wide professional network and

outreach capacity. Combe Pafford is keen to work collaboratively with SPT to ensure the changing needs of the young people in Torbay are met for the new Year 7 cohort.

The LA and DfE have made a commitment to ensure that all existing MLD students, currently placed at Combe Pafford, will remain at the school until the end of their respective Year 11 studies. If they wish to stay on for a place in the 6<sup>th</sup> form this will also be considered through the existing post 16 transition process.

The proposed start date for the integration of the ASC year group cohorts is September 2026 starting with Year 7. The LA is committed to commissioned places, one additional year group thereafter. The planned implementation of new ASC year groups is as follows:

- September 2026: Year 7
- September 2027: Year 7 and 8
- September 2028: Year 7, 8 and 9
- September 2029: Year 7,8,9 and 10
- September 2030: Year 7-11 ASC cohorts

The school will ensure that for the period of dual designation, the curriculum offer remains the same for the MLD students and adapts and changes to meet the needs of its new ASC students.

We wish to consult parents, carers and members of the wider community about the proposed school redesignation to an ASC school. The consultation period will start on the 07/11/2025 and end at 5:00pm on the 04/12/2025.

As part of the consultation there will be the opportunity for parents and members of the community to meet and ask the leadership and LA representatives about the proposals for the school. They are on teams and in person. Dates for these are as follows:

**12<sup>th</sup> November 2025 from 5.00pm-6.30pm:** Representatives from school leadership, LA and SPT on Teams

**20<sup>th</sup> November 2025 from 5.00-6.30pm:** School leadership on Teams

**25<sup>th</sup> November 2025 from 9.00am-10.00am:** In person at Combe Pafford School with representatives from school leadership and the LA.

We have created a dedicated page on our website to provide information throughout the period of consultation and have also prepared some Frequently Asked Questions for you to read online at <https://www.combepaffordschool.co.uk/page/?title=Consultation&pid=455>

alongside further consultation documentation. These will be updated as the consultation progresses.

Questions, comments and responses regarding the consultation can be submitted as follows:

E-mail: [enquiriescps@combepafford.torbay.sch.uk](mailto:enquiriescps@combepafford.torbay.sch.uk)

Letters: Marked 'Private and Confidential – Combe Pafford Redesignation' and handed or posted to: Combe Pafford School; Steps Lane, Torquay, Devon, TQ2 8NL

Please do not hesitate to contact the Headteacher at Combe Pafford School should you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S Banfield', written in a cursive style.

**Sally Banfield**  
**Headteacher**

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jane Hallwood', written in a cursive style.

**Chair of Trustees**  
**Combe Pafford School**