

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 6 November 2008

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Children and Young People

SUBJECT: Special Education Needs Review

WARDS: Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT:

1.1 To complete the review of Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision in Halton.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

2.1 Consultation on the provision for SEN units within secondary mainstream schools commences.

2.2 Consultation on the provision for SEN units within primary mainstream schools commences.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

3.1 Background

Members will be aware that the Local Authority has been undertaking a review of Special Educational Needs provision within the Borough.

3.1.1 The reasons for this review are:

- The need to be able to describe clearly the nature of Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision that is required for Halton pupils and the number of places required both now and in the future. This is linked both to Building Schools for the Future (BSF) and the Primary Capital Programme (PCP);
- Acknowledgement that Halton currently retains a significant amount of unit provision, with some of these units carrying a number of unfilled places;
- Concern that the current range and scope of Special Educational Needs Unit provision may not be appropriate, and
- As a result of (1), (2) and (3) the Local Authority is potentially not fully securing value for money in its SEN provision.

3.1.2 A number of stages to this review have taken place. This has included:

- 2005 Review of SEN Unit Provision
- Strategic Review of Autistic Spectrum Disorder Provision in Halton (28th August 2008)
- A local analysis of need

3.1.3 The present provision of units in Primary and Secondary mainstream schools is shown in Appendix 1.

3.2 **PROPOSALS:**

3.2.1 Halton's aim is to ensure that 'Pathways' for learning for SEN pupils will be personalised to meet individual and family needs.

3.2.2 This will involve the current SEN Unit Provision across all key stages to be re-designed to provide flexible provision within a mainstream school, or early years setting, that enables the learner to spend as much time as possible in the mainstream part of the school, depending on the needs of the individual pupil.

3.2.3 When it has been shown, through assessment, that the pupil's needs cannot be met in a mainstream school alternative provision will be sought. Prior to this decision there will be an expectation that 'reasonable adjustments' (i.e. the application of the Disability Discrimination Act) using the totality of resources made available to the mainstream school.

3.2.4 For secondary schools it is proposed that consultation considers the following:

- A resource base to accommodate 12 pupils with a diagnosis of Autism. These pupils would be higher achieving / with less challenging behaviour including pupils with a diagnosis of Asperger Syndrome. Within this provision there would be capacity for an additional 10 places for outreach support to Local Authority (L.A.) mainstream secondary schools and L.A residential respite provision. This support may include advice and training;
- 20 places to be made available for pupils with Speech and Language and Social Communication Difficulties;
- 6 places to be made available for pupils with Hearing Impairment and this may include pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties.

3.2.5 For primary schools it is proposed that a consultation takes place considering the following areas:

In Key Stage 1:

- 18 places to be made available within Infant Assessment Units.

In Key Stage 2:

- 12 places to be made available for pupils through Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) unit provision;
- 36 places to be made available for pupils through Complex Learning and Language Needs.

Combined Key Stage 1 and 2 provision:

- Two resource bases for 7 pupils in each base to accommodate the assessment of pupils with more complex needs
- Two resource bases for 7 pupils in each base to accommodate pupils with Social and Emotional Behavioural Difficulties.
- A resource base to accommodate 14 pupils with Speech and Language difficulties and 6 pupils with more profound Hearing Impairment
- A resource base to accommodate 7 pupils with more complex ASD and Asperger Syndrome

3.2.6 Within both secondary and primary provision joint working with all areas of Children's Services including health will provide a wrap around provision for children and families.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 These will be contained within the Capital Programme. There may be some additional costs incurred through the application of the Transport Policy.

4.2 The current model represents a potentially inefficient use of resources and this review will create a more efficient use of funding for unit provision.

5.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

5.1 The Council's 'Strategy for the Inclusion of Pupils with SEN' provides the policy content and framework by which Halton intends to meet the Special Educational Needs of young people in the Borough.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES

6.1 Children and Young People in Halton

- Increase choice, diversity, inclusion and high standards and reduce the surplus capacity within units in Halton schools.
- Educational attainment is key to the future life chances of children and young people in Halton. All pupils should have the opportunity to the appropriate provision to match their individual need.

6.2 Employment, Learning and Skills in Halton

Educational attainment of children and young people will have a significant impact on future employment, learning and skills of Halton's children and young people.

6.3 A Healthy Halton

All pupils will have access to appropriately aligned health provision within education.

6.4 A Safer Halton

Not applicable.

6.5 Halton's Urban Renewal

Not applicable.

7.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 7.1 Provision for SEN within mainstream units does not match the needs of the Borough and young people. The present provision for units within schools does not provide value for money due to the number of surplus places.

8.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 8.1 Educational attainment is central to reducing inequalities and ensuring the best outcomes for all children and young people in Halton with a particular focus on vulnerable groups.
Review of Unit provision must be inclusive and consider the contribution of all schools. The review aims to increase diversity, access and choice, address under performance and provide more integrated local services for every child and family.

9.0 REASON(S) FOR DECISION

- 9.1 At present, there are surplus places within mainstream units.
- 9.2 Mainstream SEN units are not matching the present and future requirements of the Borough.

9.3 As part of the developing Building Schools for the Future (BSF) programme and the Primary Capital Programme (PCP) a review of SEN unit provision needs to be undertaken

10.0 **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

10.1 To leave provision as it is. This would potentially leave the Council vulnerable to challenge.

11.0 **IMPLEMENTATION DATE**

11.1 The Secondary SEN unit provision review must be agreed by December 2008 and implemented during the development of the BSF programme.

11.2 The Primary SEN unit provision review will be agreed February 2009 and implemented by September 2010

12.0 **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
OFSTED Inspection of LEA – January 2004	Grosvenor House	Judith Kirk
Strategy for the Inclusion of Pupils with SEN – 2006/7	Grosvenor House	Judith Kirk

Appendix 1

Summary of the number of pupils attending Halton's Resourced Mainstream Schools

September-08

KEY STAGE	SCHOOL	SEN UNIT TYPE	NO OF FUNDED PLACES	No of Pupils attending	Surplus Places
KS1	Oakfield CP	Infant Assessment	12	2	10
KS1	Simms Cross CP	Infant Assessment	12	7	5
KS1	Weston CP	Infant Assessment	12	2	10
		Total	36	11	25
KS1/2	The Brow CP	Speech & Language	20	20	0
		Total	20	20	0
KS1/2	Westfield CP	Hearing Impairment	8	4	4
		Total	8	4	4
KS2	Weston Point CP	Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties	7	5	2
KS2	Woodside CP	Emotional, Behavioural Difficulties	7	7	0
		Total	14	12	2
KS2	Moore CP***	Moderate Learning Difficulties/Autistic Spectrum Disorder	12	2	10
KS2	Oakfield CP	Moderate Learning Difficulties	24	13	11
KS2	Palacefields CP	Moderate Learning Difficulties (24)	12	4	8
KS2	Simms Cross CP	Moderate Learning Difficulties	12	5	7
KS2	The Grange Jnr	Moderate Learning Difficulties (24)	12	10	2
KS2	Weston CP	Moderate Learning Difficulties	12	3	9
		Total	84	37	47
KS3/4	Halton High	Emotional Learning Difficulties	7	0	7
KS3/4	The Grange Comp	Emotional Learning Difficulties	14	9	5
		Total	21	9	12
KS3/4	Wade Deacon	Hearing Impairment	8	3	5
		Total	8	3	5
Grand Total			191	96	95

*Wade Deacon HI Unit - 1 Other LEA pupil - funding to be recouped

***Moore Primary - All placements taken for September 2008-11 - agreed temporary primary ASD provision, to be reviewed in line with PCP