

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 12th February 2009

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Children and Young People

SUBJECT: Special Education Needs Review within Secondary Schools

WARDS: Borough wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT:

1.1 To provide a summary of the progress of the review of Special Educational Needs (SEN) in Secondary schools. In addition, seek permission to proceed to formal consultation leading to statutory notice if required.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That

- 2.1 Executive Board considers the report and ratifies the proposals and recommendations
- 2.2 Approval is given to proceed to formal consultation of the secondary school SEN review leading to statutory notice if appropriate

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. Views are now being sought on the location of the proposed secondary unit provision. It was agreed that resources will continue to be allocated to pupils in existing mainstream settings to ensure that their needs are met.

3.2 The review of Special Education Needs provision within Secondary School 'Units' is only one part of a broader range of provision available to young people with Special Education Needs in the Borough. The report should therefore be seen in this wider context.

3.3 The Council is committed to providing a range of SEN services that can meet the individual needs of particular children and their families. This starts with mainstream inclusive services within all schools. It is then complemented by SEN Unit provision within particular Secondary Schools. Finally, the Council has a range of Special Education Needs schools. Such a diverse range of provision means that services can cater for individual needs, and the personalization of the curriculum for individual pupils. Such a broad range of services means that the Council is in a strong position to meet new and emerging need.

3.4 The specific proposals contained in this report for SEN Units in Secondary Schools has been developed on the basis of an analysis of need. Needs change over time, which is reflected in the numbers of surplus places there are at the moment. The SEN Units Review is therefore intended to bring need into line with the provision we have within our mainstream schools.

3.5 The reasons for this review are:

- The need to be able to describe clearly the nature of Special Education Needs provision that is required for Halton pupils and the number of places required both now and in the future. This recommendation is linked to Building Schools in the Future (BSF).
- Acknowledgement that Halton currently retains a significant amount of Secondary unit provision, 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.

3.5.1 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 (See report of 28th August 2008)
- A local analysis of need
- Informal consultation on proposed provision and location of secondary mainstream resource bases

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

3.6 PROPOSALS

3.6.1 The responses to the first stage of informal stage consultation on secondary resourced provision have been received and analysed. The majority of those who responded were in full support of the change of provision proposed. However, it was suggested that the distribution of the secondary unit provision across the borough needed further consideration.

3.6.2 It was proposed that although the numbers remain the same, the unit provision for both Autism and Speech and Language is offered in both Widnes and Runcorn.

3.6.3 We are now consulting on the proposal that future provision should comprise of the following:

- 2 x 6 places to be made available for pupils with a diagnosis of this includes pupils with a diagnosis of Aspergers Syndrome. There would also be capacity within this provision for additional outreach support for 2 x 5 pupils in other high schools within the borough
- 10 x 2 places to be made available for pupils with speech and language and social communication difficulties
- 6 places to be made available for targeted provision for pupils with a Profound Hearing Impairment (PHI)

3.6.4 The schools listed below have expressed an interest in developing the following specialisms in line with the proposals:

The Grange School

Resource provision to accommodate 6 pupils with a diagnosis of Autism, this includes pupils with a diagnosis of Aspergers Syndrome. There would also be capacity within this provision for additional outreach support for 5 pupils in other high schools within the borough.

A resource provision for 10 pupils with speech and language and social communication difficulties.

Saints Peter and Paul Catholic College

Resource provision to accommodate 6 pupils with a diagnosis of Autism, this includes pupils with a diagnosis of Aspergers Syndrome. There would also be capacity within this provision for additional outreach support for 5 pupils in other high schools within the borough.

The Bankfield School

Resource provision for 10 pupils with speech and language and social communication difficulties.

Wade Deacon High

A resourced provision for 6 places to be made available for pupils with hearing impairment and this may include pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties.

The consultation closes on Monday 2nd February 2009 however as of the 22nd January the response has been positive to the proposals.

- 3.6.5 This will involve the current Secondary SEN Unit Provision being re-designed to provide flexible provision within a secondary mainstream school 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.
- 3.6.6 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.
- 3.6.7 On closure of the informal consultation period and pending no adverse feedback it is proposed that the formal consultation process commences leading to statutory notice if required.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 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

Proposals if agreed would

- Increase the choice, diversity, inclusion and high standards in the Borough
- Reduce the surplus capacity within units in Halton schools.
- Improve access to education facilities and equipment
- Improve access to specialist staff, in Education and Health through Speech and Language Services
- Develop outreach support to mainstream High Schools in the Borough.
- Extend access to suitable accommodation
- Increase supply of suitable places within a mainstream setting in the Borough
- Enable all pupils to have the opportunity to the appropriate provision to match their individual need. This will enable them to progress with their learning and ensure educational attainment remains key to the future life chances of children and young people in Halton.

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).

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 proposals for secondary SEN resourced provision must be agreed by April 2009 and implemented by September 2011, in line with plans for Building Schools for the Future.

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
Building Schools for the Future	Grosvenor House	Judith Kirk / Ann McIntyre

Appendix 1

Summary of the primary needs of pupils attending Halton's Resourced Mainstream Schools

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 and Language	20	20	0
		Total	20	20	0
KS1/2	Westfield CP	Hearing Impaired	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	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 Behavioural Difficulties	7	0	7
KS3/4	The Grange Comp	Emotional Behavioural Difficulties	14	9	5
		Total	21	9	12
KS3/4	Wade Deacon	Hearing Impaired	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