

TITLE	Special Education Needs (SEN) Development: Report on Proposals for SEN Provision
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee 18 September 2013
WARD	None specific
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**WOKINGHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL
CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

**Special Education Needs (SEN) Development
Report to Overseeing & Scrutiny: 18th September 2013**

Purpose of this document

This paper is to clarify outline proposals on changes to Resource Base provision to Wokingham. Because of the nature of possible changes, there will be further statutory consultation on the proposals when needed.

Background

An external SEN review of provision and funding for SEN in Wokingham undertaken in April 2012 identified a number of strengths and some excellent examples of good inclusive practice in Wokingham schools but also identified some important key issues:

- An excessive number of pupils placed in independent/non-maintained special school provision (in particular, those with autistic spectrum disorders (ASD) and social, emotional and behavioural needs (SEBD))
- A need to be clearer about the level of SEN funding available to mainstream schools and the provision that they should reasonably be expected to make themselves in line with the national drive for funding reform.
- A pattern of mainstream resource base provision which had evolved over time in a piecemeal way and which requires reshaping to provide more suitable provision for our pupils with High needs.

A key principle emerged for resource base provision. This is intended to provide a bridge between mainstream school and special school. Resource provision in Wokingham should be used to meet the needs of our children and young people with the most complex needs and who have a statement of SEN.

Dissemination of information

A meeting for Headteachers to disseminate the recommendations of the SEN review took place on 27th November 2012 at Easthampstead Park. The principles agreed at this meeting formed the basis of the SEN Strategy. These have led to the development of a number of key proposals which have now been circulated to schools for consideration. Following feedback from schools, there will be further statutory consultation as required.

Proposal 1

Bulmershe Secondary Resource Base

The proposal is to close the secondary resource base for pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD).

The Bulmershe provision is currently funded for 12 placements and there are only 7 children placed there at present. The rationale for this proposal is that it has been accepted for a period of time that the needs of children with Specific Learning Difficulties can now effectively be managed in mainstream school settings.

Proposal 2

All Saints Primary School

The proposal is to reduce the capacity of existing Physical Disability (PD) provision and re-designate it as a provision for pupils with more complex needs. Staff at the school have gained an expertise around complex needs over a number of years and the school site itself is ideally suited to accommodate pupils with complex needs.

The definition of complex needs implies both:

Breadth - multiple needs (more than one) that are interrelated or interconnected

Depth of need - severity of needs.

The Complex Needs Resource provision will cater for children with a statement of Special Educational Needs who have persistent and complex learning needs that require specialist teaching support. They may have special educational needs including physical disabilities with additional needs that may include, sensory difficulties, speech, language, and communication needs and / or complex health needs.

The proposal is that All Saints will be re-designated to take 3 pupils per year with more complex needs as defined above. This will in turn reduce the pressure on Addington Special School.

The rationale for this proposal is that All Saints is currently funded for 40 places and at present there is an underuse of this resource with only a small number out of the current resource based pupils being Wokingham residents. This, therefore, does not reflect the need of the Wokingham population and nor does it reflect the parents' wishes that their children with physical disabilities attend mainstream schools, if at all possible.

Proposal 3

Lambs Lane Primary School

The proposal is to change the current provision from one for pupils with physical disabilities to a provision for pupils with more complex needs. The Complex Needs Resource provision will cater for children with a statement of Special Educational Needs who have persistent and complex learning needs who require specialist teaching input. They may have Special educational needs, such as physical disabilities with additional needs that may include learning difficulties, sensory difficulties, speech, language, and communication needs (which might include autism) and / or complex health needs.

The rationale for this proposal is that Lambs Lane School is currently funded for 10 pupils but there is an underuse of this resource with only a small number out of the current resource based pupils being Wokingham residents. A model where they have a small resource for children with complex needs could support children with these needs in that part of the borough particularly given the plans to build a large number of family homes in the area.

The re-designated provision for pupils with more complex needs would provide an inclusive option for parents of primary aged pupils with complex needs.

Proposal 4

Highwood Primary School

The proposal is to change the function of the Speech, Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) resource to provide a unified outreach service and centre based service for pupils across the borough with speech and language difficulties.

The provision is currently funded for 24 places but at present there are only 18 children children placed there. However there are a number of children in other Wokingham schools, who have SLCN as their primary need and who do not access specialist teaching.

The rationale for this proposal is that this anomaly will be addressed by including an outreach service from Highwood School which will be able to provide a service for pupils in other Wokingham Schools.

Proposal 5

Wescott Infant School: Re-commission ASD resources

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) means a range of pervasive developmental disorders that adversely affect a pupil's functioning

ASD is characterised by an uneven developmental profile and specific difficulties:

- Around social interaction and social rules
- With communication
- Displaying restricted repetitive stereotyped patterns of behaviour, interests and activities

The resource provision at Wescott is currently funded for 8 pupils at present there are 9 pupils, 8 of whom are Wokingham Borough pupils.

The proposal is to maintain this resource provision with 8 places to meet the needs of Wokingham pupils with more complex ASD needs.

The rationale for this proposal is to provide sufficient specialist support within the authority to meet the needs of infant aged pupils with complex ASD.

Proposal 6

Westende Junior School: Re-commission ASD resources

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) means a range of pervasive developmental disorders that adversely affect a pupil's functioning.

ASD is characterised by an uneven developmental profile and specific difficulties:

- Around social interaction and social rules
- With communication
- Displaying restricted repetitive stereotyped patterns of behaviour, interests and activities

The resource provision at Westende is currently funded for 12 pupils. At present, there are 12 pupils, 10 of whom are Wokingham Borough pupils.

The proposal is to maintain this resource provision but with an increase to 16 places to meet the needs of pupils with more complex ASD needs.

The rationale for this proposal is provide sufficient specialist support within the authority to meet the needs of junior school aged pupils with complex ASD and reduce the need for out of borough placement. Analysis of historical data indicates that 4/5 key stage 2 pupils are placed in independent special schools out of borough.

Proposal 7

Commission an ASD unit for secondary aged pupils

The proposal is to commission a secondary school to host a specialist unit for pupils with complex ASD needs.

It is the intention that this resource unit will eventually provide 24 places. The development of the resource unit will start with year 7 pupils and gradually increase over time. In addition to this resource, Southfield special school is developing further

expertise in order to meet the needs of a small number of pupils with BESD who have ASD as their additional need.

The rationale for this proposal is that Wokingham currently has 37 pupils with complex needs related to their ASD in out of authority schools. The current cost for these 37 pupils—is over £2.25m. Data suggests that up to 20 of these pupils could have had their needs met in an ASD resource unit in Wokingham. A resource unit for up to 24 students provides flexibility and allows those students with the capability to remain in school into sixth form.

No pupils who are at present in Independent Special Schools will have their education disrupted by a move, but once the Secondary ASD provision is set up it will be considered if this provision can meet the needs of pupils before looking at Independent Special Schools out of the area. It is however recognised that there will always be the need for some pupils who require very specialist placements to be educated outside of the Borough.

Transition Arrangements

For each of these specific proposals there would be transition arrangements which will be discussed and agreed with the individual schools concerned. Closures or change in status will not be sudden. There will be a time when no new pupils are placed in resource bases which are being closed or changing but there will be no disruption to pupils who are placed there now.

Timescales and what happens next

This consultation with schools started on 1st September 2013 and responses are due to be returned by 27th September 2013.