

Schools Forum
5th Of September 2017

Projecting Demand for Special School Places

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Schools Forum on the work being undertaken to understand future demand for special school places.

Main Considerations

Background

1. Schools Forum previously received a report (Analysis of Independent Provision Spend, March 9th 2017) which outlined reasons for placing children with SEN/D in the independent sector. These reasons included;
 - No locally available places
 - Tribunal loses, including those for reasons of 'distance to travel'
 - No appropriate places commissioned (notably for KS1 & KS2 ASD/ SEMH provision).
2. This report concluded by advising Schools Forum that the local authority was continuing to work with special schools to address these, and other 'demand and supply' issues through the WASSPP¹ group, and that a report would be available in May.
3. This report, drafted by an independent consultant, was ratified by the WASSPP group in September 2017. The report covers a wide range of issues, and makes recommendations for addressing short term issues of policy and practice ('Getting our house in order'), medium term issues including making the most of what we have ('Sweating the Assets') and longer term issues, including securing new provision. The report makes a central judgement;

'The current number, location and designation of special school places are not aligned to either current or future needs. Existing provision needs to be reconfigured to meet current demand, and new provision is required to meet future demand.' WASSPP report, May 2017

4. Taking the work begun in the report, the local authority has undertaken detailed demand analysis work. This report updates Schools Forum on the findings.

Demand Analysis

5. There are three key factors which are increasing the number of children and young people in Wiltshire who have Special Educational Needs (SEN)
 - The impact of reforms - the 2014 Children and Families Act and overall changes in education policy
 - Military re-basing
 - Growth in population – which can be measured by birth-rate and housing growth

¹ Made up of special school representatives, local authority officers and members, Schools Forum Chair and representation from the Parent Carer Council.

6. Since the introduction of the Children and Families Act 2014 Wiltshire has seen a steady rise in the number of EHCPs across the county. Wiltshire is now just above the national average (2.8%) of EHCPs.

Wiltshire	Percentage of children and young people with an EHCP
2014	2.5%
2015	2.6%
2016	2.7%
January 2017	2.83%
September 2017	2.9%

7. Assuming continued cumulative growth at 0.2% it is predicted that, in the 5 – 16 age range, an additional 213 children and young people will benefit from an EHCP by 2026.
- This is in addition to the 2276 who currently have an EHCP aged 5 – 16.
 - Growth for the 16 – 19 and then 19 to 25 is harder to predict as we lack the trend data to show the full impact of the 2014 legislation and the new school finishing age of 18.
8. As a result of Military re-basing, Wiltshire is anticipating that between 30 and 40 children and young people (5-16 years) from re-based families may need an EHCP.
9. Population Growth - The main growth in the Wiltshire population is due to the provision of new housing.
- 25,481 houses are expected to be built between 2017 and 2026
 - Based on the Wiltshire January rate of 2.83% and then using the same 0.2% cumulative growth identified for the existing population, it is projected that an additional 448 children and young people (5-16 years) will benefit from an EHCP by 2026.
10. Projected increase in EHCPs (for 5-16 year olds) by 2026 is estimated at 661 (on top of current 2276)
11. From this, it is estimated that 220 (5-16 year olds) will require a special school place by 2026 (on top of current ~600 in area available places).
12. Based on similar growth trends seen in recent years, the following breakdown is projected for future places;

By SEN Designation	Current placements in Wiltshire Special schools (5 – 16yrs)		2yrs (2019)			5yrs (2022)			9yrs (2026)		
	Current places North	Current places South	North	South	All new	North	South	All new	North	South	All new
(5 – 16yrs)											
ASD	111		4	9	13	24	22	46	50	40	90
SEMH	68		2	3	5	10	9	19	21	17	38
Complex	279	82	4	8	12	23	20	43	48	36	85
Sensory			0	1	1	2	2	4	3	3	6
All	458	82	10	21	31	59	53	112	123	96	220

13. A further 88 pupils are projected to need a specialist 16 – 25 educational provision either at a 6th form in a special school or with place support in a College.
14. In Early Years, it is projected that a further 59 specialist nursery places are likely to be required.
15. In addition, it is expected that amongst those children and young people with an EHCP, but not requiring a special school provision (441), that 156 are likely to need a Resource Base or Enhanced Learning Provision (ELP) in a mainstream school and 284 will require support with a Named Pupil Allowance (NPA) in a mainstream school.

Conclusion

16. The local authority has a statutory responsibility to commission and secure the right education provision to meet the needs of children and young people with SEN/D, and will be taking a paper to the November Cabinet seeking permission to go to consultation on proposals to address both the issue of demand, and securing a better geographical distribution of provision, in relation to in area special school places.
17. Special Schools have been invited to submit proposals, which address these issues, for inclusion in the consultation.

Proposals

1. Schools Forum is asked to note this report.
2. A further report will be brought to the December meeting detailing the consultation proposals.

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