

**Review of Special Educational Needs (SEN) Provision – Update on
Implementation**

Purpose of Report

1. To present an update of progress in establishing individual pupil plans for those pupils affected by the proposed closure of some Specialist Learning Centres (SLCs).
2. Action required of the Committee.
To note the report on the progress made with establishing individual plans for each pupil who is affected by the changes to Specialist Learning Centres (SLCs).

Background

3. On 28 January 2010, Children's Services Select Committee considered proposals for SEN service development in relation to mainstream primary schools, Specialist Learning Centres (SLCs), special schools and SEN Support services. A full public consultation on the proposals was undertaken (closing on 24 May 2010), with opportunities for written responses and attendance at public meetings.
4. On 8 June 2010, the Children's Services Select Committee resolved to undertake a rapid scrutiny exercise looking at the Review of Special Educational Needs (SEN) provision, as follows:
 - a. Rapid scrutiny of the Review of Special Educational Needs (SEN) Provision consultation process
 - b. Rapid scrutiny of the Review of Special Educational Needs (SEN) Provision consultation results
5. The Rapid Scrutiny Exercise was held on 15 July 2010. Its final report was then considered by the Select Committee on 22 July 2010, alongside the report to Cabinet presenting the outcomes of the Review and proposals for service development. The Select Committee endorsed all of the Rapid Scrutiny recommendations without amendment or addition.
6. Outcomes from the consultation were presented to Cabinet on 27 July 2010 and all the recommendations were agreed. This was reported to Children's Services Select Committee on 23 September 2010 where it was agreed that the Committee would be updated on progress. The Rapid Scrutiny Group had requested an update in November 2010 on how the individual transition plans for those young people affected are being progressed.

7. The outcomes of the Review of SEN Provision are subject to confirmation following the completion of the statutory notice period on 22 October 2010. In order that the processes to ensure an orderly transition for pupils could be completed in good time, the planning process has had to anticipate the confirmation of the statutory notices to close or change school provision in the SLCs affected. The changes to the designation of special schools will not involve the need to put in place transitional arrangements for individual pupils outside of normal school admission or statement review processes.

Progress with Individual Arrangements.

8. Progress has been good in making arrangements for individual children. Schools have taken the lead in many cases and agreed the way forward with parents without the need for LA staff to be involved. Where necessary the attendance of LA staff has been identified and meetings set up with parents and the school.
9. The position as at 13 October 2010 in relation to meetings where LA staff attendance has been thought appropriate is set out in the table below. The information has been taken from summary sheets established for each affected school. The meetings have been attended by an Education Officer and other staff such as an Educational Psychologist, member of Learning Support Service or the Early Years Team.

Position at 13 October 2010 re the transition arrangements for SLC pupils

Planning Meetings with SLCs affected by Review

	Number of Meetings
Meetings taken place LA officer attendance	14
Meetings planned but still to take place	6
Meetings still to be set	0
Total number of Centres	20

Progress on planning for pupils

Pupils where placement issues already resolved in relation to the SLC proposals	141
Pupils where a plan/process is already in place that should lead to a resolution of placement issues	81
Pupils where a way forward not yet confirmed	7
Total number of pupils affected	229

10. Where the placement issues have been resolved this is because:
- The pupils are in year 6 so this was dealt with through the normal secondary transfer arrangements.
 - The pupils already have a statement and are remaining at the SLC so any necessary amendment to the Statement can be dealt with through the Annual Review of Statement process.
 - Previously agreed staged plans, as part of the SLC's normal planning process, are being implemented.
 - A school initiated planning meeting with parents has already taken place as part of the normal liaison with parents.

11. Where a plan or process to resolve pupil issues has been organised but is yet to take place this is because:
 - A School Action Plus meeting at the school has been planned with identified options for discussion.
 - A School Action Plus review has taken place and a plan agreed.
 - An Annual Review of the Statement has been planned with options identified for discussion.
 - Pupils who have had a Statutory Assessment started as a result of meetings to date will require further meetings at conclusion of assessment.
12. For some pupils who currently receive outreach from the SLC, the School Action Plus review has still to be arranged with the home school and the Learning Support Service. As it is unlikely that an assessment or change of placement will be required for these pupils it will not be necessary to plan so far in advance.
13. The progress of the processes for ensuring that appropriate arrangements for individual pupils will be monitored by officers from the Central SEN Team and further actions taken as necessary. Where appropriate, Statutory Assessments are being started for pupils who would meet the criteria. This may lead to a Statement of Special Educational Needs being issued in some cases.

Environmental Impact of the Proposal

14. The Environmental Impact of the proposal was set out in the report to Cabinet on 27 July and considered by the Select Committee prior to that.

Risk Assessment

15. The progress made by the schools concerned in resolving many of the pupils' positions for September 2011 has meant that officers have been able to concentrate on those cases where more intensive work is necessary. As there are only a small number of meetings with SLCs still to take place and only a small number of pupils where a way forward is yet to be confirmed, this is a good position to have been established early in the process.

Some cases cannot be fully resolved until the completion of a Statutory Assessment in Spring 2011 but it is important that the requirement for the process to be initiated has been identified at this stage so that the Statutory Assessment can be completed in good time to resolve any resulting resourcing or placement issues.

Financial Implications

16. The cost of transitional arrangements for April 2011 – April 2013 at some of the SLCs to be closed is estimated at £35,200 in the first year. It is anticipated that this will be met from the savings released from the closure of the centres. Funding models for the new Resource Bases have yet to be finalised. Models are being developed and the final proposals and cost implications will be taken to Schools Forum in December. Funding for this provision is within the overall delegated budget to schools and any cost implications will need to be contained within the overall level of Dedicated Schools Grant.

Legal Implications

17. Following the publication of Statutory Notices the decisions of Cabinet will need to be confirmed by either:
- The Executive Member for Children's Services where there is no recorded statutory objection.
 - The Cabinet where there is a recorded statutory objection.

Conclusion

18. The implementation process for the Review of SEN Provision has been effectively managed to date and a process established to deliver effective transitional arrangements.

Action

19. Members are asked to note the report on the progress made with establishing individual plans for each pupil who is affected by changes to Specialist Learning Centres (SLCs).

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Background Papers: The following unpublished documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report – None.