

Consultation Response Form - High Need Review and Strategic Plan for SEND

The Local Authority is proposing to make a number of changes to specialist educational provision that supports children and young people of school age who have Special Educational Needs in Telford and Wrekin.

We are seeking views about the proposed changes from parents and carers, schools and other interested stakeholders including health and care colleagues.

Please use the comment sections below if you would like to feedback about the changes proposed and submit them to SENDandInclusion@telford.gov.uk by July 23rd 2018.

Please indicate the following:

- I am a child or young person
- I am a parent
- I work in an educational setting (please specify school name)
- I work for the Local Authority (please specify your service area/team and job role)
- Other (please specify your role)
(Please tick)

Contact name **JAYNE STEVENS (PARTICIPATION CO-ORDINATOR)**

Contact details **JAYNE@PODSTELFORD.ORG**

Where relevant school name **VARIOUS – MAINSTREAM AND SPECIAL**

Additional information **PODS PARENT CARER FORUM ARE REPRESENTING VIEWS OF PARENT CARERS THROUGH FAMILY GROUPS, FOCUS GROUPS, AD HOC CONVERSATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA (x20 FAMILIES)**

FAMILIES HAVE RECEIVED INFORMATION THROUGH EBULLETINS AND SOCIAL MEDIA COVERAGE TO ENABLE TO RESPOND DIRECTLY.

Please read the high need review and strategic plan before completing this response.

Proposal 1 - To develop specialist resource base provision in mainstream schools for primary and secondary aged learners with social communication issues including Autistic Spectrum Conditions.

Your views

In considering a response to Proposal 1 and 2 the views were similar as they related to the ability of provisions to meet the needs of children and are detailed in answer on next page.

The wider considerations for Proposals 1 and 2 are around the amount of places that could be offered and consideration for the access criteria for a placement (both in and out of the provision).

How long would provision be envisaged to last and how would wider inclusion in community and mainstream schools where appropriate be managed and how will this be written into an EHCPlan.

The goals and aspirations, whether it be mainstream or specialist led need to have the same goals and aspirations for the child or young person.

There needs to be consideration across both proposals of how life skills will be developed to support the social and emotional needs of all children – whether they are on an ASC pathway or a Cognition/LD pathway (or indeed if they cross over the both)!

How is the access criteria defined for a child who may have needs in both areas – where is the decision made to what the ‘primary’ need in (nb EHCPlans can have more than one primary need listed!).

Input from Autism Education Trust model and development of the audit tools.

Proposal 2 - To develop specialist resource base provision in mainstream schools for primary and secondary aged learners with cognition and learning difficulties.

Your views

In considering a response to Proposal 1 and 2 the views were similar as they related to the ability of provisions to meet the needs of children and are detailed in answer on next page.

The wider considerations for Proposals 1 and 2 are around the amount of places that could be offered and consideration for the access criteria for a placement (both in and out of the provision).

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How is the access criteria defined for a child who may have needs in both areas – where is the decision made to what the ‘primary’ need in (nb EHCPlans can have more than one primary need listed!).

Input from specialist support for Cognition Learning and Learning Difficulties (as opposed to Learning Disabilities) – been clear here on what cohort of children are being included.

To deliver proposals 1 and 2 there are two possible options:

Option 1 – The specialist resource base is delivered by a mainstream school where the learners are on the roll of that school and the base is managed and staffed by the mainstream school.

Your views

Negatives: lack of understanding and training of staff
Attitudes to learners with additional learning needs.
Qualification of the staff teaching
Concern that specific communication methods would not be used.
Integration and how this would be seen by other peers in mainstream
Academy targets and focus on 'results'.

Positives: Making school accountable to meet needs of all children
Making schools accountable
Children and YP are part of a mainstream community

Consideration for Mainstream and Hub to work on a project together around ASC and wider needs that could be used as a model of good practice for sharing with wider schools settings (regardless of whether they have a hub or not).

Option 2 – The specialist resource base is delivered via a partnership model where the base is operated as a satellite of a special school but is located on a mainstream 'host' school site, where the pupils are on-roll at the special school and the base is managed and staffed by the special school.

Your views

Negatives: Less willingness towards inclusion
Stigma
Mainstream holder school may only do the minimum
Child may be held back to a certain level commensurate with a majority, where child may be in a minority with specific skills

Positives: Specially trained staff
Expertise
Positive Ethos and Can-Do/Will-Do
Staff ratio (to cover absence) will mean that any staff are trained to same level
There's an element of protection and 'ethos' of been looked after
Appropriate to meet educational ability

Proposal 3 - Developing a specialist resource base provision at a designated site for primary aged (KS2) learners with social, emotional, mental health needs that is delivered as a satellite of either a special school or a pupil referral unit and is located at a designated site, where the pupils are on-roll at the special school or pupil referral unit and the base is managed and staffed by the special school or pupil referral unit.

Your views

Positives: fills a gap for younger children at Junior age – could they be supported appropriate enough to be able to access mainstream schools?

SEMH – where does this fit in with wider ASC and Behaviour provision – thinking about Linden Centre, AFC Telford etc?

Staff are trained with experience and expertise around these areas of need with higher staff ratios to support children and cover for staff absences will be to same level to meet need.

Negatives: Re-integration into mainstream schools and stigma attached
Wider consideration for acceptance amongst peers and community when accessing social care opportunities.
Specialist SEMH based therapies to be made available to support??

Where do children go before they reach Proposal 3?

Gap for accessing services other than school (eg Social care) and consideration needs to be given around Child in Need criteria!

Proposal 4 - Developing highly specialist provision to cater for our most complex children with SEND which is delivered via highly specialist resource hub provision within existing local special schools or via free school (dependent on successful application and likely to require regional collaboration) or via existing external providers via regional commissioning and procurement framework.

Your views

This proposal is welcomed as a means of bringing children and young people closer to home in a suitable environment that meets their needs.

Expertise within this proposal are welcomed and an understanding of what those 'specialisms' are when bringing a cohort of children together.

Consideration for wider social care and health needs and the challenges around tri-partate funding and joint commissioning opportunities needs to be explored much further.

No age range is mentioned here?

Important for families that it is not a profit-making organisation.

Additional questions

Do you agree with the identified gaps in provision?

Your comments

From reading the accompanying documentation we agree that the gaps have been identified appropriately but concern that there isn't enough funding to meet all of these needs in Telford & Wrekin as more children are highlighted as needing a specialist provision. Whilst there is provision in place there is concern that mainstream schools won't meet their statutory obligations under the graduated approach framework and this will need to continue to be monitored to ensure that EHCP not used as a route out of school and into a hub...

Call for a cohesive approach with the hubs – through wider community partners and everyone to have high aspirations and a wish to pursue goals.

Clarity on diagnosis is needed.

Do you think there are other gaps not identified?

Your comments

A gap that has not been highlighted necessarily is around girls on the ASC spectrum and how they are identified and how their needs can be addressed alongside boys.

Consideration for children and young people who are school phobic or have anxieties and how are they supported as needs may present differently depending on learning environment.

What are your views on the identified opportunities?

Your comments

Comments all shared in above proposals, etc

Accommodation needs to be suitable and consideration for environmental factors and access arrangements.

Needs of children in hubs needs to be strategically managed – from the top so there is an awareness of levels of needs of children in hubs so when conversations are happening at higher levels with the council there is a full understanding.

Are there further opportunities to better support and develop inclusion in mainstream settings?

Your comments

Further opportunities from our families, to be considered please:
Increased offer of an outreach service from special schools and specialist settings into mainstream schools to offer expertise including at key transition points (moving between years and moving from primary to secondary and certainly moving from secondary into further education).
LSAT Team funding to be made available from High Needs block so that every school can access specific training to support the behaviour of children in school.

Autism Education Trust work – embed this right from the top of schools and education settings – from senior leader management, through to supporters, lunchtime supervisors and also Governors.

Staff training – needs to be embedded across all schools and a rolling programme of specific offers around key and evidence based practices and in consideration of wider report and highlighted areas of need.. ie more information and training around Moderate Learning Difficulties for children in mainstream schools.

Ensuring that staff in the hubs are trained appropriately – we want to know what their specific skills will be – a newly qualified teacher vs an experienced special needs teacher?

Work around inclusion in community – thinking about social care opportunities and buddy schemes linked via schools – so that hubs do not become isolated.

Wider links with key teams across Policing, Community, Social Care, Parish and Town Councils.

Links with mainstream sites and a robust planning structure for dual-site learning, offering split placements to support inclusion.

Support for families is always welcomed – needs to be appropriate and timely and provided by the right team. Pastoral teams in schools work really well where they are available.

Interventions – whilst may be high cost in earlier years – this will save monies going forwards into longer-term placements – so a young person may be ready to leave education at 18, rather than in their 20's.... Consider how and why college models work so well and replicate in school years!