

Select Committee Children's Services - 27 January 2010

Report of the Director of Children's Services

Position statement on Dudley's provision for children with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Purpose of Report

1. To advise Select Committee of the ongoing progress made in respect of the July 2005 (SEN) Special Educational Needs Strategy.
2. To advise Select Committee of the future direction of Special Educational Needs services and provision in the light of changing circumstances - Building Schools for the Future, integrated working, extended schools, children's centres.

Background

3. The Special Educational Needs Strategy was approved by Council in July 2005 and consisted of a number of discrete elements which collectively form Dudley's Special Educational Needs Strategy (see Appendix 1 - Executive Summary, Giving Every Child the Opportunity to Succeed, The Dudley Strategy for Children with Special Educational Needs).
4. In the four years since the Council approved 'Giving Every Child the Opportunity to Succeed', the Special Education Implementation group (SENIG) has coordinated the work of each of the key elements.
5. A Special School Partnership was established between Children's Specialist Services and Special School Headteachers to review special school provision and recommend future options.
6. Analysis of current pupil numbers and needs has been undertaken indicating that the overall special school population will decline in the next five years whilst the complexity of need will increase. This is kept under review as it is not static and is closely related to developments in mainstream provision, demographic trends and ongoing development of new technologies and advances in health.
7. An analysis of ASD (autistic spectrum disorder) and BESD (behavioural, emotional and social disorder) trends has been undertaken which has strongly indicated the requirement for increased specialist provision within the borough.
8. A review of the inclusion unit provision – 3 units in secondary and 4 in primary has been undertaken indicating a decline in need. New models of provision were proposed for consultation in the early part of 2009 and these have now been commissioned

9. Four years on, a significant proportion of this strategy has been carried out and the outstanding elements are either in the process of implementation or are now no longer relevant in light of new developments and the Directorate's Vision 2025 for the future provision of learning within the Borough.
10. A revised Inclusion Strategy has been drafted and will be consulted on in the Spring term 2010 and an action plan to deliver the ambitions of the Inclusion Policy will be drafted against the needs analysis and trend analysis which is outlined in paragraph 15 of this report.
11. A model for the development of special schools located within the Directorate's Vision 2025 for a township and campus based model of educational provision has been incorporated with our Building Schools for the Future bid.

Summary

12. The following elements of the original Special Educational Needs strategy are now complete, or have the necessary momentum to be completed within a prescribed timescale:
 - A new operational model for PRUs (Pupil Referral Units) has been determined and has been set in the context of the Directorate's submission for Building Schools for the Future
 - Rosewood Behavioural, Emotional and Social Disorder school has been relocated on to a new site and its capacity has been significantly increased
 - Hearing impaired provision has been relocated and enhanced
 - Plans to relocate Old Park are now complete
 - The first phase of the Language Unit relocation has been completed and a site identified for the second phase within the Directorate's Primary Capital Programme
 - The Home and Hospital service has been relocated to an appropriate site.
13. The completion of the following aspects of the original Special Educational Needs strategy are in progress
 - Provision for Autistic Spectrum Disorder is being established on an incremental basis
 - Review of provision for children with physical disabilities
 - Develop outreach service for children with language and communication difficulties
 - Complete a review of special school matrix formula
14. The Directorate has agreed that the following elements of the original Special Educational Needs strategy are now redundant
 - The level and generic provision in ARCs (Additional Resource Centres)

- The township model, as defined in the strategy is no longer relevant and needs to be integrated in the overall directorate approach to integrated working in the borough

15. The following developments have been identified as being integral to the development of a flexible continuum of provision for children with special educational needs

- Based on needs analysis establish Primary and Secondary ASD specialist provision within mainstream settings
- Establish primary BESD provision
- Establish Key Stage 2 language specialist provision
- Establish Primary PD (physical disability) provision
- Maintain secondary speech and language provision in partnership with PCT
- Develop specialist 16-19 provision for pupils with PMLD (profound multiple learning difficulties)
- Review of the recharge and recoupment of SEN funding arrangements
- Complete the review of the designation of current special schools provision

16. The Directorate's ambition to fulfil the ideals of the Inclusion Policy will be integrated with other significant developments, including relevant pupil numbers trend data, BSF, extended schools and integrated working.

Financial

17. The original Strategy did not have an allocated budget for its implementation and progress to date has been funded from existing Directorate budgets and redirected funding from decommissioning of provisions.

18. The Inclusion Policy will be supported by a costed plan to ensure that the Directorate is able to implement the actions within existing resources including redirection and priority allocation from funding streams allocated to supporting the development of the Directorate's vision for learning.

19. The provision of SEN is funded from the ring fenced Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). Any savings realised as a result of changes in provision will be redirected into supporting pupils with special educational needs.

Legal

20. The main provision relation to Special Education Needs are contained in the Education Act 1996 and the statutory guidance in the code of practice relating to children with special Educational Needs.

Human Resources

21. There will be a need for consultation with staff and unions if significant changes are made to existing provision, in as much as it affects staff conditions of service.

Equality & Diversity, Safety and Community Implications

22. The development of SEN provision 'fit for purpose in the future' is crucial in ensuring that the needs of some of the most vulnerable and 'needy' children in Dudley are met within the Every Child Matters Agenda

Safety

23. The underlying intent of this report is to ensure that Dudley's children who have special educational needs all have appropriate educational provision. Whilst not in appropriate education these children have less access to the normal safeguarding processes provided by schools, and particularly our most vulnerable children will be more susceptible to becoming victims of crime and to becoming engaged in criminal activity.

Risk

24. The risk attached to the Directorate not making appropriate provision for its children and young people with Special Educational Needs could mean that it is likely to fail to meet its legislative requirements.
25. In addition the Directorate would lack the flexibility and ability to respond to schools and localities needs.

Community

26. The effective educational engagement of pupils with Special Educational Needs and their reintegration wherever possible, back into their mainstream school will enable them to be ready for employment and ultimately live independently in decent homes and sustainable communities (ECM, outcome 5)

Recommendations

27. That Select Committee notes the contents of the report and current position of the Special Educational Needs Strategy.



.....
Mark Wyatt
Director of Children's Services

Contact Officer: **Pauline Sharratt**,
Assistant Director, Children's Services
Telephone: 01384 815803 Email: Pauline.sharratt@dudley.gov.uk

Appendix 1

..

Executive Summary – revised 23 March 2005

Giving Every Child the Opportunity to Succeed

The Dudley Strategy for Children with Special Educational Needs

Background

- ❑ This strategy follows 3 major public consultations
- ❑ This strategy takes into account all of the responses

We wish to

- ❑ Continue to aim for campus model as resources allow
- ❑ Maintain and develop high quality settings with well trained staff
- ❑ Use the resources wisely
- ❑ Facilitate local provision so that 'All children can be educated in their local community with their peers unless their special needs make this impossible'.
- ❑ Increase the specialist provision based locally
- ❑ Ensure provision is matched to meet the continuum of need

Retention of Special schools and Refurbishment and relocation of some special schools

(Whole Borough) by September 2007.

Children with Learning Difficulties

We will retain the current special school provision in Dudley but rebuild Old Park School for children with PMLD/SLD or complex needs on a new site (yet to be identified).

We will refurbish Halesbury School for pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties on its existing site.

Children with Emotional Behaviour and Social Difficulties

We will extend and enhance provision for children with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties through:

- ❑ Expansion of secondary age pupil numbers at Rosewood School
- ❑ Making provision for statemented pupils at Key Stage 2
- ❑ Enhancing the early intervention model of Pupil Referral Units in consultation with schools

Locally based Township provision

- ❑ Additional Resource Centres (ARCs) will be identified at primary and secondary level in each Township integrated into mainstream schools catering for pupils with learning difficulties who need support but can be educated within their locality.

- ❑ New secondary provision for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) will be developed in each Township, we will also enhance the Autism outreach team
- ❑ In time, other specialist services will be re-organised into 5 Township areas.

Other Needs

- ❑ Children with physical disabilities may attend their local school. In addition we will formalise the current provision at the Thorns Community College
- ❑ The language units will be reorganised to provide similar support but in new centres, one in the north and one in the south of the Borough.
- ❑ For children with hearing impairments we will ensure smooth transition from primary to secondary specialist provision
- ❑ For children with visual impairments we shall continue to provide for children within their local mainstream schools with peripatetic support

We will make sure that children's education is not disrupted by the changes as they happen.

We will:

- ❖ Consult with parents who will be affected by specific changes on an individual basis
- ❖ Provide a comprehensive support process for ALL staff throughout the changes
- ❖ Enhance our multi-agency work through the Children Act 2004
- ❖ Provide ongoing updates on the implementation of the strategy to all interested parties
- ❖ Ensure any legal changes will be subject to the statutory consultation process within the required timescales
- ❖ Provide an ongoing training and development programme for all schools

Managing Change

This Strategy makes clear the way forward for 2007. There is a lot of practical work and planning to do, such as:

- reviewing all SEN funding mechanisms
- supporting the change process with staff
- supporting the change process with parents and children
- developing further expertise
- adaptation to existing buildings/new buildings

A detailed action plan to implement the strategy is being prepared and regular progress reports will be given to schools and parents.



John Freeman
23 March 2005