

19 October 2015**Agenda Item: 04****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, EDUCATION STANDARDS AND
INCLUSION****NOTTINGHAMSHIRE'S REVIEW OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR SPECIAL
EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND)****Purpose of the Report**

1. To inform the Committee of the County Council's review of Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND), focusing on the Council's special schools and other specialist education provision made by the Council for children and young people with a SEND. The Council is legally required to conduct this review every three years.

Information and Advice**Purpose of the Review**

2. The review will consider the future need, role and strategic development of specialist places of education for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (including those with an Autistic Spectrum Disorder).
3. The review will develop a strategy which will include: the profile of pupils requiring specialist provision in Nottinghamshire, how many special school places will be required to meet the need of such pupils and where such provision will be located.
4. The review will also consider the processes surrounding the placement and monitoring of places at the Council's maintained and independent non-maintained provisions. It will also explore the role and function of some services that support this type of pupil prior to, and during, their specialist placement.

Context

5. In October 2014 there were 914 children and young people placed at one of eleven special schools maintained by the Local Authority. The total budget allocated to these schools in 2015/16 was £20.1 million. The average cost of a placement was circa £22,000. These special schools are located throughout the County, with at least one in each locality area. The schools offer provision for the following needs:
 - six of the schools are 'area' special schools, serving the needs of their local communities for pupils aged 3-19 years, catering for a broad span of needs which range from pupils with moderate to profound and multiple learning difficulties

- one primary-aged school, catering mainly for pupils with moderate/severe SEN and an Autism Spectrum Disorder
 - one secondary school, catering for pupils with moderate SEN and Autism
 - two schools cover the 3-19 years age range, with one providing for pupils who have Autism or communication/interaction difficulties and associated learning disabilities and the other providing for pupils with moderate/severe SEN
 - one special school catering for pupils with physical and complex health needs.
6. Placements in special schools have increased steadily over the past five years. At October 2014 there were 914 pupils placed within a Nottinghamshire special school (excluding independent non-maintained special schools), an 8% increase since 2011 when 847 pupils attended special schools. During this time the needs of pupils accessing special schools have become more complex, particularly in relation to pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties.
7. Advances in medical treatment, an improved survival rate in pre-term child births and longer life expectancies have led to increases in the special school population. There is also a rise in the number of pupils requiring a specialist placement because of either an Autism Spectrum Disorder or a Social Emotional or Mental Health disorder.
8. In addition to the places commissioned at Nottinghamshire special schools, the County Council also commissions places for pupils in other local authorities and the independent non-maintained (INM) sector. In the 2014/15 financial year 103 places were commissioned within other local authorities, at a cost of £1.15 million and 126 places in INM special schools costing £2.74 million.

Key Pressures

9. Key pressures are as follows:
- an increasing number of pupils requiring special school provision
 - the changing needs of pupils in special schools in relation to an increased prevalence of pupils with Autism and complex health needs
 - a lack of capacity in special schools
 - a pattern of special schools across the County which reflects a historical distribution of needs rather than the current distribution of needs
 - a recent reduction of support services for mainstream schools
 - an overall special schools budget which has failed to keep pace with an increase in severity and quantity of pupil need
 - the need to rationalise the distribution of the overall special schools budget against the context of historical pattern of funding
 - ensuring that admissions to special schools match the needs of pupils to available provision
 - the development of an integrated Children's Disability Service
 - increasing costs and use of independent non-maintained special schools
 - the increased costs of special school transport
 - transformation of local services
 - suitability of special school premises.

The Review Process

10. The review commenced in September 2015 and will conclude within 12 months. It will undertake a range of activities and will work in the following phases:

1. Establish governance and steering group:

A governance structure will be developed which will include the establishment of a Review Board. The Review Board will steer the review and report to the Children, Families and Cultural Services Leadership Team. Views will be sought from parents and pupils through representation on focus groups. It is intended that the Review Board will be chaired by Councillor John Peck, as Chair of the Children and Young People's Committee, and will include representatives from *special schools, mainstream schools, independent schools, Children's Social Care, Adult Social Care, Transformation, School Improvement, Health services, the Family Service and SEND*.

2. Analyse:

Research and data analysis for each key line of enquiry will be undertaken. This will focus on the following areas:

- places and types of current provision
- level of demand and pupils' needs (past, present, future)
- Associated Factors (assessment, support and transport)
- views of children, young people and their families
- budgets and finance
- INM and alternative provision.

3. Develop:

Options for action and models of provision will be designed, consulted upon and tested by the Review Board and partners to determine feasibility, costs and risks. Successful elements will then be developed into a strategy and plan for action. The strategy will include a longer term vision for special schools in Nottinghamshire; it will ensure that provision is sustainable, high quality and cost effective.

4. Deliver:

The approved strategy will include work streams for allocation to core services within the County Council and partners. The following outcomes are expected:

- an agreed vision and strategy for special schools
- special schools will be better able to meet the needs of pupils
- an agreed capital investment programme which will improve the premises of special schools
- an affordable special school budget forecast
- a knowledge and understanding of local needs for pupils with SEN and disability
- identified provision for pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorder
- a decrease in the use/better planned use of INM settings
- a functioning admissions protocol for special schools

- a clearly defined and consistent health offer.

Anticipated milestones and timescales

11. These are as follows:

September 2015

- review begins
- establish Review Board and governance arrangements
- an evaluation of current provision and local need
- establish focus groups

October 2015 – December 2015

- research and data collection
- funding analysis
- an evaluation of current provision and local need
- consultation events

Jan – March 2016

- develop options /models of provision
- consult

April – August 2016

- draft strategy and action plan
- leadership team/Children and Young People's Committee approval

September 2016

- implement strategy
- commission appropriate provision and services

Other Options Considered

12. A review of SEN provision is legally required, under section 315 of the Education Act 1996, to be made every three years and is now due in Nottinghamshire. Officers believe that a review of the specialist school provision is timely and will help focus resources most effectively into the future. No other options were, therefore, considered.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

13. To ensure the Council fulfils its statutory duty to review arrangements for pupils with SEND.

Statutory and Policy Implications

14. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such

implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

15. The costs associated with the administration of the review will be contained within the overall SEND Policy and Provision budget.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the County Council's review of Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND), focusing on the Council's special schools and other specialist education provision made by the Council for children and young people with a SEND, be noted.

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Constitutional Comments

16. As this report is for noting only, no Constitutional Comments are required.

Financial Comments (SS 24/09/15)

17. The financial implications of this report are contained within paragraph 15 above.

Background Papers and Published Documents

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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