

Title of meeting: Schools Forum

Date of meeting: 19 October 2016

Subject: Portsmouth SEND Strategy: Remodelling Portsmouth specialist educational provision

Report from: Alison Jeffery, Director of Children's Services

Report by: Julia Katherine, Head of Inclusion

Wards affected: All

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Schools Forum on the progress made in implementing the Portsmouth SEND Strategy, in particular the remodelling of the specialist educational provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities.

2. Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that Schools Forum:

- (i) Note the progress made so far in implementing the SEND Strategy, including the remodelling of the specialist educational provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities.**
- (ii) Note the investment that has been made to improve and develop the specialist educational provision in Portsmouth for children with special educational needs and disabilities.**

3. Background

3.1 The Portsmouth SEND Strategy is now one of 4 priorities within the Children's Trust Plan, as set out below:

Priority 1	Stronger Futures - improving safeguarding, resilience, health, wellbeing and success of families
Priority 2	Improving educational outcomes for children and young people
Priority 3	Improving outcomes for looked after children and care leavers
Priority 4	Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Strategy: A strategy to promote inclusion and improve outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families

3.2 The SEND Strategy has been refreshed to cover the period 2016 to 2019.

3.3 The overall aim of the strategy remains the same: to promote inclusion and improve the outcomes for Portsmouth children and young people aged 0-25 years with SEND and their families.

3.4 The outcomes that this strategy is aiming to improve are: to increase the percentages of children and young people with SEND who are able to:

- Be included within their local community,
- Lead healthy lives and achieve wellbeing,
- Learn and make progress,
- Make and maintain positive relationships within their family and community
- Participate in education and training post-16 and prepare for employment

3.7 There are six strands of the SEND Strategy:

Strand A: Promote good inclusive practice to improve outcomes

Strand B: Successful implementation of the SEND reforms

Strand C: Effective joint commissioning to improve outcomes

Strand D: Co-production, embedded as a way of working with children, young people and their parents and carers

Strand E: Early identification and early support for children with SEND and their families

Strand F: Effective preparation for adulthood and smooth transitions to adult services

3.5 The detailed strategy and delivery plans under each of these strands are included in Appendix A. The governance arrangements for the SEND

Strategy are represented diagrammatically on page 15 of the strategy document.

- 3.6 The effectiveness of these arrangements is monitored closely by the SEND Board and will be externally assessed by the Local Area SEND Inspection which will take place within the next 5 years. This is a joint inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission. The local area inspection will focus on how effectively special educational needs are identified and met in order to improve outcomes.
- 3.7 This paper outlines the progress made in improving and developing the range of specialist educational provision available within Portsmouth to ensure that there is a continuum of provision available to meet children's identified needs, from mainstream to special school provision, and that these needs can be met locally wherever possible, in line with Portsmouth's stated commitment to inclusion.

4. SEND Strategy progress

- 4.1 Portsmouth is committed to promoting inclusion and improving the outcomes for children and young people aged 0-25 years with SEND and their families, as set out in the SEND Strategy 2016 - 2019.
 - 4.1.1 The aim of the special educational needs and disability (SEND) strategy is to ensure that there are in place a range of high quality support services that contribute to removing the barriers to achievement for all Portsmouth children and young people, in particular those with special educational needs and disabilities. This includes enabling children and young people to lead healthy lives and achieve wellbeing; to benefit from education or training, with support, if necessary, to ensure that they can make progress in their learning; to build and maintain positive social and family relationships; to develop emotional resilience and make successful transitions to employment, higher education and independent living.
 - 4.1.2 In order to achieve this aim, it will be important to ensure that the available resources are used effectively so that those children and young people with the most complex needs have access to the most specialist provision. Within a context of increasing demand for services and limited resources, this means that mainstream schools will need to become more inclusive over time. Some children who might historically have been placed in a specialist provision due to their 'moderate learning difficulties' for example, with the increasing expertise and resources available to mainstream schools are now appropriately placed within mainstream schools. In fact evidence shows that most children are

best able to make progress with their education when educated within mainstream settings.¹

- 4.1.3 In order to support this stated aim and strategy, it will be important to ensure that both mainstream and specialist educational settings are adequately resourced to enable them to effectively meet the needs of children with a wide range of SEND, and to enable them to make progress. This necessitates careful management of the available resources within the Dedicated Schools Grant High Needs Block.
- 4.1.4 The decision to place a child in a specialist educational placement is an important one and not to be taken without a thorough assessment of the child's needs and professional advice regarding the type of support and provision required to meet those needs. In order to place a child in a special school, there is a requirement to carry out a statutory education health and care needs assessment in order to ensure that all aspects of the child's profile are taken into account, with evidence collated from professionals from a range of disciplines and agencies before such a decision is made. This assessment process taken 20 weeks in total and is designed to ensure that any such decision is made on the basis of comprehensive evidence.
- 4.1.5 In Portsmouth, placement decisions are moderated by the Inclusion Support Panel; a multi-agency panel of professionals and trained parent representatives. The remit of the panel is advisory, but panel members are able to vote on the basis of the evidence presented to the panel and this process strongly influences the decision-making process.
- 4.1.6 All placement decisions are made in accordance with the SEN Code of practice statutory guidance.
- 4.1.7 Nationally, of those children who have special educational needs complex enough to require a statutory education health and care plan to be made for them, around 40% are placed in special schools. In Portsmouth, around 49% of children and young people with statements or education health and care plans attend special schools.
- 4.1.8 Portsmouth has a higher percentage of children with SEN (16.5% compared to 15.7%) and also a higher percentage of children with education health and care plans than the national average (3.1% compared to 2.8%). These percentages have remained fairly consistent over the past few years.

¹ ¹ Inclusive education and students without special educational needs: (Nienke M. Ruijs, Ineke Van der Veen & Thea T.D. Peetsma, 2010

- 4.1.9 With advances in healthcare and improving survival rates for premature babies, there is an increase in the percentage of children with more complex special educational needs nationally.
 - 4.1.10 One consequence of the above changes is that the children being placed in Portsmouth special schools are those with increasingly complex needs and mainstream schools are also educating children with a wider range of special educational needs.
- 4.2 A number of educational changes have been implemented, as outlined below, as part of the SEND Strategy in order to ensure that we have the right range of good quality specialist educational provision available within Portsmouth to meet children's identified needs locally wherever possible, in line with Portsmouth's stated commitment to inclusion. These include:
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- 4.2.1 Rolling out the new statutory multi-agency education, health and care needs assessment process for those children and young people with the most complex needs who require the highest level of additional support over and above what is 'ordinarily available'. Around 1,000 0-25 year olds will require a 'transfer' from a statement of special educational needs or learning disability assessment to an education health and care plan by 2018. To date over 400 statements and learning disability assessments have been converted to education health and care plans. In addition, over 200 new assessments are requested each year. We have had external validation of the quality of our education health and care plans, and the vast majority (87%) are now being completed within the statutory 20-week timescale.
 - 4.2.2 Increasing the provision for children with a sensory impairment, including opening a new secondary Inclusion Centre (additionally resourced provision) at St Edmunds School, in place from 2015.
 - 4.2.3 Increasing the provision for children with autism spectrum conditions within the city, in particular developing a new secondary Inclusion Centre (additionally resourced provision) for children with autism, at Trafalgar School, in place from September 2016.
 - 4.2.4 Remodelling the SEND provision within the early years and foundation stage, in particular transforming the Development and Assessment Unit provision into two new primary Inclusion Centres (additionally resourced provision) for children with communication and Interaction difficulties, at Devonshire Infant School and Portsdown Primary School, which will be in place from September 2017.
 - 4.2.5 Reviewing post -16 provision at local colleges to ensure there is sufficient, good quality provision to meet the progression needs of young people with SEND. Current provision includes a specialist

LDD centre at Portsmouth College and a Foundations Programme at Highbury College. Developing a Supported Internships Programme at local colleges for young people with an EHCP.

- 4.2.6 Reviewing and remodelling the provision for children with social emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH), in particular the SEN and Alternative Provision at The Harbour School to ensure a continuum of provision is in place to meet identified need. To ensure that the Council meets its statutory duties in terms of school places and provision of places for special education needs, the Council's approved capital programme also includes £2.5m due to the urgent need to relocate:
- The Harbour School provision at the **Fratton** site due to the very poor condition of the building but also on the grounds of suitability and sufficiency; and
 - The Harbour School provision at the **Milton** site due to the fact that school will have to vacate the building to make way for housing.

The **Vanguard Centre** has been identified as a solution which can accommodate both the Harbour School provision at Fratton and Milton.

- 4.2.7 A new service specification for The Harbour School educational provision is in place from September 2016 and work is underway to work in partnership with mainstream schools to further define the Alternative Provision offered by The Harbour School.
- 4.2.8 Securing significant investment, including £2 million from the Dedicated Schools Grant carry-forward, in order to enable the remodelling of the buildings and accommodation at Cliffdale and Redwood Park special schools to ensure that these schools are adequately equipped to meet the needs of the increasingly complex children requiring placement in these schools. The remodelling will address both suitability and condition issues due to the age of the buildings and their layouts. There are a number of advantages of enabling these schools to take pupils with more complex needs, including:
- Enabling more pupils to be educated near to home within the city. There are currently approximately 70 Portsmouth pupils educated out of the city (including in maintained, non-maintained and independent special schools)
 - Making best use of the specialist high needs provision within the city; and
 - Reducing the use of high cost out of city placements and the related financial pressure on the dedicated schools grant.

4.2.9 The remodelling will also benefit the 245 pupils who currently attend Cliffdale and Redwood Park Schools.

5. Equality impact assessment

5.1 A preliminary EIA has been completed with regards to the special school remodelling. A full EIA is not required. The remodelling of educational provision in Portsmouth which has begun as part of the SEND Strategy will not have a negative impact on any of the equality groups. The remodelling will improve access to education for all equality groups, particularly with special educational needs and disabilities.

6. Legal implications

6.1 The aims of the report are consistent with promoting and complying with the Statutory Guidance contained in: Special Education Needs and Disability Code of Practice 0-25 years March 2015 and also within the context of sec 19 of the Children and Families Act 2014 in that the report seeks to address and re-align the current service provision/offer for existing users and focus delivery for users requiring support in the future.

7. Director of Finance's comments

7.1 As this is an information only paper, there are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix A - SEND Strategy (2016-2019)

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Supply of school places and special school infrastructure report 24 th Feb 2016	http://democracy.portsmouth.gov.uk

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: