

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Subject:	SEND Review and Framework for Education Provision 2018-21 to include Capacity and Re-designation of special schools in Plymouth Consultation
Committee:	Cabinet
Date:	15 January 2019
Cabinet Member:	Cllr Taylor, Cabinet Member for Education, Skills and Transformation
CMT Member:	Alison Botham, Director of Children's Services
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Ref:	JAH.JS (CAB)
Key Decision:	No
Part:	I

Purpose of the report:

This report seeks Members' approval of the following key milestones within Plymouth's Strategy for Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND):

- Re-designation of all the Plymouth Special Schools, having considered carefully all the responses received to a statutory consultation on the proposal held between 17 September and 19 October 2018 with all interested parties.
- Proceeding with the SEND Review and Framework for Education Provision 2018-21 and the associated implementation plan. The work of the special school designation and capacity falls within the remit of this review.

The introduction to this report sets out the context of this work and the range of documents being considered.

The Council Corporate Plan 2016/19:

Growing

- Provides sufficient education facilities for the growing number of young people in Plymouth to improve their education and employment opportunities.
- Provides the appropriate support for young people with SEND as an integral part of the city's top performing education system.

Caring

- Provides improved facilities that ensure children and young people are safe and confident in their communities, narrowing the gap in equality of access, helping them take control of their lives and communities.

Plymouth Plan

- Supports the growth and development of the city by ensuring we have sufficient school places available in the City.

Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications, Including finance, human, IT and land:

School funding is allocated in accordance with the school funding formula from the ring-fenced Dedicated Schools Grant. The budgets/staffing for the schools will not be affected by the change in designation as all schools are funded on the number of places currently purchased by the authority and these places have been agreed for the next three years.

Other Implications e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:

Equality and Diversity:

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? Yes

Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:

It is recommended that Cabinet approves the following formal proposals:

- (a) To re-designate all special schools to 'complex needs'. In addition to this, each school is described through a general and a specific criterion. Each of the specific criteria reflects the current designation of each special school, but provides description to support work to match pupils to the most appropriate special school. It is recommended that this change takes effect from 1 September 2019, which would give sufficient time for the new criteria to be promoted and discussed with parents of children with special educational needs.
- b) To proceed with the SEND Review of education provision 2018-21 and the associated implementation plan for 2018-2021. This includes a planned review of capacity within Special Schools as identified. The pressure of demand on special school places is understood and we have considered this from a wider education system perspective and the ongoing work to promote inclusion in all settings, including sufficient post 16 specialist provision. Notwithstanding this, benchmarking data demonstrates that there is a need to plan for additional places within our local special schools.
- c) The capital plan projects for SEND to be presented to City Council Investment Board when feasibility studies have been completed.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

To take no action has been considered and rejected on the basis that the schools have already developed and specialise in the aspects of SEND captured by the proposed redesignations and the local authority's ability to undertake accurate place planning for Special Schools will be hindered. We would have insufficient capacity across our special school estate. We need to invest in the estate to provide good learning environments, which will support the pupils and parents in the future.

Published work / information:**Background papers:**

Title	Part I	Part II	Exemption Paragraph Number						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7
SEND Review and Framework for education provision 2018-21 and implementation plan	✓								
SEND Review of education provision 2018-21: Special School Designation & Capacity	✓								
Plymouth's Strategy for SEND: priorities for 2018-21	✓								
Equalities Impact Assessment for SEND Review of education provision 2018-21	✓								

Sign off:

Fin	djn.l 8.19. 170	Leg	lt/3l 814/ 030l	Mon Off		HR	N/A	Assets	N /A	IT	N/A	Strat Proc	N/A
Originating SMT Member: Judith Harwood													
Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the content of the report? Yes													

Introduction

The Children and Families Act 2014 introduced a signification reform programme for the way in which support is given to children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in England. The reform programme is far reaching. Co-production with families and joint commissioning lies at the heart of the reforms. Successful implementation will require changes across health, education and care to be achieved.

In Plymouth, the SEND Strategic Group work as a partnership to oversee the local work required to achieve successful implementation for children and young people in Plymouth. The Group's current work plan is described in Plymouth's Strategy for SEND: priorities for 2018-21 (A1). One strand of this work addresses the education provision for children and young people with SEND and the detail of this work is described in the SEND Review and Framework for education provision 2018-21 (A2).

SEND Review and Framework for education provision 2018-21 (A2, A2.1, A2.2, A2.3, A2.4)

In order to prepare the SEND Review of education provision 2018-21, we have considered the progress achieved against the 2015-18 SEND Review and Framework for education provision. As a result of this consultation work, review of the needs analysis data and consideration of benchmarking information, a range of emerging themes for further work have been identified.

The aim of this plan is to ensure that we have the appropriate range of SEND education provision locally, the right number of specialist education places for pupils commissioned and that the arrangements are improving outcomes for children and young people with SEND, with specific reference to their educational achievement.

These themes inform the three-year plan of work described in the implementation plan. The themes remain within the original framework for educational provision's key principles:

- achieve the best possible outcomes for children and young people with SEND and their families
- involve and engage children and young people with SEND and their families
- ensure the highest possible quality of provision and services through effective procurement and joint commissioning arrangements

The themes comprise:

- Parent/ carer and CYP confidence and engagement
- Local Offer
- Data management
- Partnership working and effective communication
- The quality of Education, Health and Care plans
- Early Years
- Specialist provision
- High quality teaching and SEN support provision
- SEND funding
- Social, emotional and mental health
- Preparing for adulthood

Progress against the implementation plan will be reported to the SEND Strategic Group for monitoring. In addition, this group will be monitoring that the work is aligned to the other strands of Plymouth's Strategy for SEND.

With regard to specialist provision, the 2015-18 SEND Review of educational provision recommended that a review of the special school designations and capacity was undertaken. This work has been completed and the recommendations arising from this work are incorporated in the 2018-21 SEND Review (Special School Designation and Capacity document attached).

Special School Designation and Capacity (A3 and A3.1)

The current official designations of Plymouth's Special Schools are out-of-date and inappropriate. They no longer reflect the complex range of special educational needs for which these schools now cater. Gradually, over recent years, pupils with a range of special needs have been allocated places in accordance with the more specialist provision that the schools have each been developing.

The initial proposal for re-designating Plymouth Special schools was set out in the SEND Review 2015-2018, which formed the basis of the formal consultation.

To change the designation of a special school in accordance with the law requires us to undertake the full school reorganisation procedure – public consultation, formal notices, etc. – despite these schools already having developed and specialising in the aspects of SEND captured by the proposed changes, which relate directly to the SEND Code of Practice.

In addition the pressure of demand on special school places is understood and we have considered this from a wider education system perspective and the ongoing work to promote inclusion in all settings. Notwithstanding this, benchmarking data demonstrates that there is a need to plan for additional places within our local special schools.

A capital plan for a range of SEND education improvements is required in order to ensure that our school estate is able to safely and appropriately meet the needs of children with SEND attending. The changes in complexity of need, and the increase in pupils requiring such provision locally creates a need to address this issue. If we take account of previously mentioned statistical evidence, the growth in demand is not going to ease. Larger cohorts of SEND pupils entering, as opposed to leaving, the education system means we will see additional pressure in future years on an already stretched system. Within the Special School Review, the recommendation is that by 2022 the capital programme for the special school estate is completed.

Consultations were undertaken to ascertain the views of all interested parties on the proposals to re-designate all Plymouth Special Schools, between 17 September and 19 October 2018. The following individuals and organisations were consulted:

- Schools involved in Special School Re-designation consultation Headteachers, Staff, Governors, Parents and Pupils including ACE MAT CEO
- All other schools include Multi Academy Trust CEO's
- Local residents (via schools)
- Local pre-schools and nurseries
- Church Diocesan Boards of Education
- All City Councillors
- Plymouth Members of Parliament

- Health Agencies
- Police
- All Children First - Plymouth Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership
- System Design Group
- Plymouth Association of Primary Heads (PAPH)
- Plymouth Learning Trust (PLT)
- Special School Heads in Plymouth (SHAP)
- Plymouth Association of Governors (PAG)
- Plymouth Learning Partnership (PLP)
- Local Authorities that maintain a child with a Statement at any of the schools
- Trade Unions
- Further and Higher Education Institutions
- Plymouth Parent Carer Voice
- Youth Ascends

An analysis of consultation responses (see A3.1) to the public consultation identified three main stakeholders: special schools (governing bodies and staff), the families of pupils who attend special schools and professionals engaged with special schools who work for the local authority. The responses of each group described an interlinking set of priorities; however, the priorities identified by each group cannot not be considered to be the same.

Priorities for families included:

1. The likely impact on pupils currently in schools.
2. Sufficiency of funding to meet the complex needs outlined in each school description.
3. Sufficiency of places.

Priorities for special schools included:

1. The match between the proposed description of the school and the needs of pupils currently attending the school.
2. That designations were not based around a pupil's level of learning.

Priorities for professionals included:

1. That designations supported a fair and transparent process for entry into special schools in light of local authority processes.

The following set of principles and special school designations are designed in recognition of the need to capture these priorities in practice.

At the same time, mainstream schools, with the Council's support, will continue to develop and improve their provision for pupils with SEND. The priorities for work are set out in the Implementation Plan for the SEND Review and Framework for education provision 2018-21

Statutory Procedures required for the re-designation of special schools

Following Executive Decision approval by the Portfolio Holder, the consultation is a formal staged process with some statutory timescales.

Stage 1

Publication of the statutory proposal/notice

Stage 2

Representation/formal consultation. This is a minimum of 4 weeks and ideally should not include holiday periods.

Stage 3

Decision making should take place within 2 months of the closing of Stage 2 by the LA

Stage 4

Implement changes. The implementation should take place within the published timeframe with any alterations following consultation which is 2 months.