

SEND REVIEW OF EDUCATION PROVISION 2018 – 2021. CAPACITY AND DESIGNATION OF SPECIAL SCHOOLS.



Introduction

The SEND Review of Education Provision 2018-21 sets out a programme of work to consider capacity and sufficiency across the city to meeting the needs of pupils with SEND. The review highlighted the need to consider the capacity and designation of special schools in Plymouth in order to ensure that we maximise the use of existing resources. This paper provides an update on this work following the outcome of a public consultation (October 2018) that outlined plans relating to:

1. Review of capital requirements
2. Review of post-16 specialist capacity
3. The designation of special schools

Review of capital requirements

A review of the condition and capacity of the special school buildings is underway. This includes work to ascertain the capacity of each school building in terms of the number of students that can be accommodated. The findings of this work will inform the SEND school capital investment programme which will be presented to the City Council Investment Board. The 'Strategic Investment and Capital Manager' is coordinating this work on behalf of the Education, Participation and Skills Department.

Review of post-16 specialist capacity

A significant number of responses to the consultation (see Appendix 1) related to post-16 provision for young people who were attending or have attended a special school. Analysis indicates that the current review of specialist post-16 provision is both timely and needed. Key priorities for respondents included:

1. An alternative to FE College provision for pupils who are not ready to make the transition from a special school. The majority of respondents described this as sixth form places in special schools that do not currently have them.
2. The design of 5 day post-16 programmes of study for all students.

In response, a task and finish group (September - November 2018) has made recommendations for pathways into employment and independence for two distinct groups of students: those with complex disability needs who will have on-going complex care needs as part of their pathway into supported independence; and those who require a supported, individualised vocational pathway into employment. The recommendations from these groups are currently being evaluated.

Plymouth Special School Designations

The proposals outlined in this document have been informed by a number of phases of activity.

Phase 1

Activity	Dates
Preliminary meeting with Head teachers	12 June 2018
Visits to individual special schools	4 June – 11 July

Phase 2

Activity	Dates
Public consultation sent out	11 September
Meetings with special school governing bodies	26 September – 18 October
Parent/carer meeting	8 October

Phase 3

Activity	Date
Deadline for public consultation responses	12 October
Response analysis	22 – 26 October
Redrafting in light of responses	29 October – 1 December

The designation of special schools

An analysis of responses to the public consultation (see Appendix 1) 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.

The following framework has been constructed as a result of feedback from the consultation process.

Special school designation principles:

1. All Plymouth children should have the opportunity to have their needs met through a range of provision. Special schools represent a cross-phase developmental perspective that aims to support, where appropriate, children's needs from the early years right up until the post-16 phase of their lives.

2. Children's needs are understood not to be static. Through the annual review process, children will be able to move through the different levels of provision in the city.
3. Special schools do not operate in isolation and are supported by multi-agency teams in each setting. Special schools also have links to mainstream schools to share good practice and to maximise opportunities for inclusion.
4. Within local authority decision making there will be individual occasions where the needs of a pupil do not present as a clear match to the designation of any one special school. Within special schools, as part of the recognition that children are all individual within their presentation, Plymouth City Council operates a banding system to provide flexibility of response according to criteria of need. This means that the needs of a particular child will not necessarily be an 'exact fit' but a 'best fit' to the designation of the special school in which they are placed.

General criteria for entry into a special school (all of the criteria below must be met)

1. The pupil's needs cannot be met within mainstream provision unless exceptional circumstances are indicated.
2. All pupils will have an education health and care plan (EHCP). Pupils will require, at all times, a fully individualised learning and development programme during the school day in order to achieve their potential.
3. It is demonstrated that the pupil will benefit from small classes and a like peer group to support all aspects of their development according to their EHCP.
4. Parents/carers have expressed a preference for a special school.
5. The special school is suitable for the pupil's age and meets the needs identified through a comprehensive education and care assessment and plan.
6. Admission to the school is not incompatible with the efficient education of others and the efficient use of resources.

Individual special school specific criteria

Cann Bridge

Pupils will have complex needs. This means that they will have co-existing conditions that overlap and interlock, creating a complex profile.

One of the areas of need indicated in pupils' EHCPs will be cognition and learning. The level of need for pupils with regard to their cognition and learning will be consistent with a severe learning difficulty. Complex communication and interaction needs, including those identified as part of an ASD profile may also be indicated on pupils' EHCPs.

The co-occurring and compounding nature of pupils' complex needs will require a personalised learning pathway that recognises their unique and changing learning patterns.

Mill Ford

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The co-occurring and compounding nature of pupils' complex needs will require a personalised learning pathway that recognises their unique and changing learning patterns.

Courtlands

Pupils will have complex needs and be primary aged. They will have co-existing conditions that overlap and interlock, creating a complex profile.

Cognition and learning will be indicated as a need on pupils' EHCPs. The level of need for pupils with regard to their cognition and learning will be consistent with a moderate learning difficulty.

Social emotional and mental health will be indicated as a need on pupils' EHCPs. This may co-occur, for example, with autism and/or a speech and language need.

The co-occurring and compounding nature of pupils' complex needs will require a personalised learning pathway that recognises their unique and changing learning patterns.

Brook Green Centre for Learning

Pupils will have complex needs and be secondary aged. They will have co-existing conditions that overlap and interlock, creating a complex profile.

Cognition and learning will be indicated as a need on pupils' EHCPs. The level of need for pupils with regard to their cognition and learning will be consistent with a moderate learning difficulty.

Social emotional and mental health will be indicated as a need on the pupils' EHCPs. This may co-occur, for example, with autism and/or a speech and language need.

The co-occurring and compounding nature of pupils' complex needs will require a personalised learning pathway that recognises their unique and changing learning patterns.

Longcause

Pupils will have complex needs. This means that they will have co-existing conditions that overlap and interlock, creating a complex profile.

Complex communication and interaction needs, including those identified as part of an ASD profile, will be indicated on pupils' EHCPs. Some pupils will have an SEMH need/or a speech and language need which will be associated with their diagnosis of autism.

Cognition and learning will be indicated as a need on pupils' EHC plans. The level of need of pupils with regard to their cognition and learning will be consistent with a moderate learning difficulty.

The co-occurring and compounding nature of pupils' complex needs will require a personalised learning pathway that recognises their unique and changing learning patterns.

Mount Tamar

Pupils will have complex needs. This means that they will have co-existing conditions that overlap and interlock, creating a complex profile.

Social, emotional and mental health needs will be indicated as the most significant need in the pupils' EHCPs. These needs may have arisen as a consequence of overwhelming life events which may be historical and/or ongoing.

It is expected that pupils' social, emotional and mental health needs are likely to have acted as a major barrier to learning and they may therefore be achieving below or well below age related expectations in some areas. However, their assessment profile and developmental history will not show pupils as experiencing an ongoing global developmental delay with overall learning difficulties at a severe or moderate level.

The co-occurring and compounding nature of a pupils' complex needs will require a personalised learning pathway that recognises their unique and changing learning patterns.

Social, emotional and mental health needs may co-occur, for example, with autism and/or a speech and language need.

Woodlands

Pupils will have complex needs. This means that they will have co-existing conditions that overlap and interlock, creating a complex profile.

Physical and sensory will be indicated as the most significant need on pupils' EHC plans. This will be a multi-sensory impairment and/or a physical disability and/or the impact of long-term illness. The Pupils' complex disabilities will mean that they will require specialist care for a range of medical needs, for example, gastrostomies and tracheostomies.

Cognition and learning will be indicated as a need on pupils' EHCPs.

The co-occurring and compounding nature of pupils' complex needs will require a personalised learning pathway that recognises their unique and changing learning patterns.

Pupils' multi-sensory impairments may co-occur with a communication and interaction need, such as autism.

Recommendations:

1. Consideration of proposals by the Portfolio Holder and agreement to proceed.
2. Publish findings from the consultation along with the implementation plan to all relevant parties.
3. To continue to with phases 2 and 3 as outlined in the consultation document.

Appendix

SEND Capacity and Designation Consultation Response Analysis.