

MAYOR AND CABINET		
Report Title	Response to Matters referred by the Children and Young People Select Committee – SEN Specialist Provision Programme	
Key Decision	No	Item No. 4
Ward	All	
Contributors	Executive Director for Children and Young People	
Class	Open	Date: 13 July 2010

1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 This report provides a response to the Children and Young People Select committee referral regarding the Specialist Provision Programme which was provided to the Mayor and Cabinet on 3 March 2010.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Mayor notes the response of the Executive Director of Children and Young People to the issues raised by the Children and Young People Select Committee on 3 March 2010.

3. Background

- 3.1 On 19 January 2010 the Children and Young People Select Committee considered an update on the Strengthening Specialist Provision Programme. The Committee considered the rise in need for primary places and were concerned to ensure that there are sufficient SEN places so that the SEN Review can be implemented as planned, particularly in light of wider places planning demands that were not foreseen when the original programme was agreed, and want the Mayor to ensure that the principles of the SEN programme are upheld in delivering the programme.
- 3.2 On 24 February a report was submitted to the Mayor and Cabinet detailing the rise in need for primary places and outlining the impact of this on SEN places. That report outlined the action we are taking to plan for the additional pressures and set out the need for Central Government resources to secure permanent expansion.
- 3.3 This report sets out a summary of the actions in hand to secure sufficient SEN places within the context of the expansion of primary places overall.

4. The Strengthening Specialist Provision Proposals to ensure there are sufficient places.

- 4.1 Officers are in active discussions with the following schools regarding the development of resource bases, so as to ensure there will be sufficient SEN places and the commissioning of feasibility studies is underway:

School	Action	Completed by	No. places
Downderry Children's Centre & Downderry Primary School	Feasibility underway for an ASD resource base	To be completed Mid June 2010	16 places
Kelvin Grove Primary School	High level Feasibility completed. Detailed feasibility to be undertaken for an ASD resource base	End of Summer 2010	16 places
Deptford Park School	Feasibility to be undertaken for an ASD resource base	End of Summer 2010	16 places
Torridon Infants and Junior Schools	Feasibility to be undertaken for an ASD resource base	End of Summer 2010	16 places

- 4.2 In addition to the development of resource bases, the SEN Programme has reshaped the Inclusion Service: bringing together the knowledge of a multi-disciplinary team to support staff in mainstream schools. In turn this is enabling a greater number of children to access the National Curriculum while remaining with their peers in mainstream education.
- 4.3 With regard to the development of the all through school for children with ASD, officers are currently developing and implementing an intake strategy to ensure that children are placed in the most suitable learning environment for them. This includes case workers liaising with parents/carers and schools to identify children with SEN who may now be better able to learn in a mainstream school environment or using the specialist facilities provided within a resource base. This will have the effect of reducing the roll of Pendragon and Meadowgate towards the intended size of the ASD school once open. However, parents will be involved in decision making about placement and will have the option to stay at the new school if that is their wish.
- 4.4 A report detailing the developments of the BSF programme with a recommendation that a further report setting out options for the future development of Brent Knoll will be brought to a forthcoming Mayor and Cabinet meeting. This will include consideration of options to maintain primary places at Brent Knoll. Retaining a primary element within Brent Knoll will assist in addressing the increase in children with SEN currently being experienced by the borough.

- 4.5 Finally, the SEN Programme continues to work closely with colleagues managing pupil places within the education development team to ensure the development of mainstream and SEN places is considered holistically, and that the requirements of all of the borough's children are appropriately met.

5. Financial implications

- 5.1 There are no financial implications arising out of this report.

6. Legal implications

- 6.1 The Human Rights Act 1998 safeguards the rights of children in the borough to educational provision which the local authority is empowered to provide in compliance with its duties under domestic legislation.
- 6.2 Section 14 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on local authorities to ensure that there are sufficient schools for providing primary and secondary school education, and requires them, in particular, to have regard to the need to ensure that special educational provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Section 315 of the Education Act 1996 requires local authorities to keep their arrangements for special educational needs provision under review.
- 6.3 Section 9 of the Education Act 1996 places a general duty on local authorities and funding authorities to have regard to the general principle that children are educated in accordance with their parents/ carers' wishes, so far as that is compatible with the provision of efficient education and training, and the avoidance of unreasonable public expenditure.
- 6.4 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 gives local authorities the responsibility for determining school reorganisation proposals in the first instance.
- 6.5 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires local authorities to consider and respond to parental representations when carrying out their planning duty to make sure that there is sufficient primary and secondary provision and suitable SEN provision in their area.
- 6.6 Departmental guidance requires that when proposals are developed for reorganising or altering special educational needs provision, local authorities and/or other proposers will need to show how they will improve standards, quality, and/or range of educational provision for children with special educational needs.
- 6.7 Current legislative provision for the establishment, discontinuance, or alteration of schools is contained in sections 7, 15 and 18 of, and Schedule 2 to, the Education and Inspections Act 2006. Those sections

stipulate that proposers shall, before publishing statutory proposals, consult such persons as seem appropriate, having regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

7. Crime and disorder

7.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

8. Equalities

8.1 Recent research indicates that greater progress can often be made by pupils with SEN if they have access to specialist teaching in a resourced unit within mainstream provision. The Strengthening SEN Provision Programme seeks to increase opportunities for pupils with SEN to access mainstream provision.

8.2 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed for the Strengthening Specialist Provision programme and approved by the corporate equalities board.

9. Environmental implications

9.1 There are no direct implications arising from this report.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Mayor and Cabinet Report dated 3rd March 2010 – Matters referred by the Children and Young People Select Committee – SEN Specialist Provision Programme.

If there are any queries on this report, please contact Christine Grice on 0208 3146300.