



Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2006

Report from the Director of Children and Families

For Information

Wards Affected:
ALL

Report Title: Provision for children and young people with Special Educational Needs (SEN)

Forward Plan Ref:

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an overview for members on key issues relating to the education of Brent children and young people with special educational needs. The report will also provide a progress update on the implementation of the recent SEN review.

2.0 Context

Approximately 23% of children and young people in Brent were identified in January 2006 as having special educational needs. For some of these children, difficulties will be temporary. However, others will have substantial and long-term needs. The government has set out a framework through the SEN Code of Practice and more recently the Disability Discrimination Act within which all schools and local authorities must operate.

- 2.2 The vast majority of children with SEN will have their needs met at their local mainstream school through appropriate school-based interventions, drawing where necessary on the involvement of support services. For children with the most severe and complex needs, a statutory assessment may be undertaken by the local authority and a statement of special educational needs may be drawn up. This is a legal document which determines the provision to be made for the child. This may take the form of additional support in the current school or placement in specialist provision. There are currently 1,280 Brent children (approximately 2% of the school age population) with statements.

- 2.3 Brent's provision and arrangements for SEN are subject to inspection. The most recent inspection through the Joint Area Review found that schools are given

effective support and this is 'helping schools to meet the needs of a broad range of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities'.

3.0 Implementation of the SEN review in Brent

3.1 A wide ranging review of SEN provision in Brent was undertaken during 2004 and 2005, with extensive consultation. A copy of a consultation document 'Improving SEN provision in Brent' is attached as Appendix 1. A report was taken to the Council's Executive in October 2005 and the following main recommendations were approved:

- i. There should continue to be 5 special schools in Brent although some re-designation of schools is required to reflect more closely the current profile of needs met by special schools.
- ii. A third Pupil Referral Unit should be established for pupils with high level support needs at Key Stages 3 and 4.
- iii. Resourced mainstream provision for children with physical disabilities should be developed in designated primary and secondary schools across the Borough.
- iv. There should be greater collaboration between special schools and mainstream schools and a specialist outreach service should be developed to support schools in including children with a complex range of needs.
- v. Discrete 16-19 provision should be developed for pupils at Grove Park, Hay Lane and Woodfield Schools.
- vi. Major capital investment is required through the 2005/8 capital investment plan in order to secure the necessary improvements for specialist SEN provision in the borough.

3.2 The following table provides an update on the implementation of the SEN Review.

Recommendation	Position in October 2006
i) Re-designation of special schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manor School has been re-designated as a primary aged school for severe learning difficulties and autism Admission criteria at Grove Park School have been broadened so that the school now caters for pupils with a wider range of learning difficulties Woodfield School now caters for a greater number of pupils with autism
ii) A third Pupil Referral Unit should be established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A site has been identified and funding is available through the capital programme The contract is soon to be awarded and it is anticipated that the new PRU will be completed by September 2007 Interim arrangements have been established to provide education for 20 young people excluded from school who are not suitable for current KS3 or KS4 PRU provision.

iii) Resourced mainstream provision for children with physical disabilities should be developed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Queens Park Community School has full disability access and a new lift is being installed. • The new Wembley Primary School will be fully accessible • 15 schools in Brent have a high level of accessibility
iv) Greater collaboration between mainstream and special schools and development of a specialist outreach service.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mapping exercise undertaken to identify specialist services which can be offered by schools • Further consultation planned with mainstream and special schools to develop an 'outreach' model for Brent.
v) Discrete 16-19 provision should be developed for pupils at Grove Park, Hay Lane and Woodfield Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 16-19 provision at Woodfield School is under development • Plans for joint 16-19 provision at Grove Park and Hay Lane are ready to be submitted
vi) Major capital investment for specialist SEN provision in Brent.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • £7.7 million allocated in 2005-8 capital programme • In addition to new 16-19 provision and new PRU provision, major improvements to accommodation at Hay Lane school are planned.

- 3.3 The aim of the improvements outlined above is to strengthen local specialist provision in Brent and reduce reliance on expensive out-Borough placements and associated transport costs.

4. Other developments

- 4.1 Brent's SEN policy was drawn up and approved in 2000. Work is now being undertaken to review and update Brent's strategy to bring it in line with Brent Children and Young People's Plan and to extend the remit to children with SEN and/or a disability. An early draft of a revised strategy, which has not yet been consulted upon, is attached as Appendix 2 for information.
- 4.2 There are a small number of looked after children with high level emotional and behavioural needs who are currently placed in expensive residential placements. Work is being undertaken across social care and education to identify in-house specialist provision which would be required in order to meet the needs of these children locally. The outcome of this work will be reported separately to Members as part of a project report on children's placements.

Background Papers

Appendix 1 Special Education Needs Brochure

Appendix 2 Draft Strategy for Children and Young People with Special Educational Needs and/or Disability

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