



<u>Committee and Date</u>
Young People's Scrutiny
16 September 2015
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<u>Item</u>
<b>7</b>
<u>Public</u>

## SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS – HUB PROVISIONS

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### 1. Summary

1.1 In February 2013 Shropshire Council approved the development of “hub” provision to meet the special educational needs of children and young people in Shropshire. The focus was on enabling more access to suitable, cost effective specialist provision within, or close to their home community, for some children whose prime area of need is Social Interaction and Communication and who may have a diagnosed Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).<sup>1</sup>

1.2 This supports the Local Authority in its duty to:

‘keep under review its education provision.... made in its area for children and young people who have special educational needs or a disability.’  
(DfE. (2014). *Children and Families Act 2014 c. 6 Part 3 Section 27*)

1.3 This paper updates Scrutiny on the hub developments, and on the early evidence of impact

### 2. Recommendations

2.1 Scrutiny is asked to note the details given in the update, and the evidence of early impact both on the quality of provision and its cost-effectiveness and to comment on potential future developments.

## REPORT

### 3. Background

3.1 Data analysis undertaken by Shropshire Council's Public Health Intelligence Team in 2014 (Appendix B) projects that Speech Language and Communication Needs (SLCN) and Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are both forecast to increase significantly as a result of earlier identification and diagnosis. Forecasts also predict an increase in the number of children with Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD) and complex medical needs which is considered to be a consequence of improved medical treatment and increased survival rates.

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<sup>1</sup> Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) may also be referred to as Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

- 3.2 More generally this data demonstrates that whilst the overall numbers of children/young people with SEN are not projected to increase more intensive support will be required for those children and young people who have or will have an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP).
- 3.3 There are currently two specialist schools serving the whole of Shropshire. Severndale Specialist Academy in Shrewsbury is a 2 to 19 provision for children with severe and complex learning needs and who have a significantly low level of cognitive functioning. Woodlands School in Wem (11 -16) and the Acorns hub based at Holy Trinity School in Oswestry (9-12) is for pupils whose main area of need is Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and whose cognitive functioning falls within the average range. In addition The Tuition Behaviour Medical Support Service (TMBSS) provides some capacity for joint placements for children who may be finding it difficult to access a mainstream placement on a full time basis and whose needs are being assessed in order to determine the most appropriate future provision.
- 3.4 Historically it is recognised that prior to the development of the Kettlemere Hub, Shropshire did not have any provision for pupils with ASC whose cognitive ability falls within the average to above average range. This resulted in some children being placed inappropriately in mainstream provision without their needs being fully met, and in some cases pupils being placed in very expensive out of county independent specialist provision.
- 3.5 In September 2011 a satellite to Severndale Specialist Academy was established on the Mary Webb site. The intention was to provide a small hub for secondary aged children who would benefit from some integration with children in a mainstream setting and access to a mainstream curriculum as part of an individual learning programme supported by Severndale staff. This has been successful for Severndale pupils who demonstrate a higher level of independence than the majority of their peers as well as a small number of pupils who have attended mainstream primary settings but who would find it difficult to access a full time mainstream curriculum in a secondary setting. This provision is for children whose cognitive levels are in the below average range. Progress made by pupils as well as feedback from children and families demonstrates the effectiveness of a 'hub' model of provision. One of the strengths of the provision has been the opportunity that it has created for specialist staff to share their skills and expertise with mainstream staff and has enabled children within the mainstream setting to benefit significantly as a result of joint CPD and awareness raising.
- 3.6 The cabinet paper submitted in February 2013 (see Appendix D) sought approval for the development of three hub provisions co-located on existing mainstream sites with secondary schools being identified as the most likely locations. It was identified that Shropshire needed to develop in-county provision to accommodate the needs of a growing number of learners with ASC and to reduce the expenditure on out of county placements via the 'spend to save' initiative. This would support more appropriate and sustainable use of resources across both children's and adult services.
- 3.7 It was recommended that cabinet approve the creation of local specialised hubs located on mainstream school sites. This would ensure that Shropshire Council was able to meet one of the key objectives of *The Shropshire Children and Young People's Strategy 2012*; the council should 'enhance local provision and develop mainstream support including the development of specialist hubs'.

**3.8 Kettlemere:**

In 2013 a data mapping exercise was undertaken following the identification of a lack of suitable and cost-effective in county provision to meet the needs of a growing number of learners with ASC. The intention was to provide up to date information with regard to prevalence of ASC across the Local Authority.

3.9 It was identified that out of 298 students (academic year 2012/13) who had Statements of SEN who presented a primary need of ASC, 27 were attending out of county, specialist provision. It was estimated that the cost per annum of these placements to the LA was approximately £688, 644.

3.10 Following a tendering process Lakelands Academy was chosen to host the Kettlemere Centre as it was suitably located and had a positive reputation for supporting children with SEN, which was recognised through the Specialist Schools programme. The location of the first hub in the north of the county was supported by data that demonstrated that geographically there was a significantly higher proportion of pupils with Statements of SEN, whose difficulties related to ASC, residing in the north of the county. The Academy has a positive ethos on inclusion and provides a suitable environment to support learners with ASC.

3.11 There was a high level of consultation throughout the project and to ensure its successful completion a working group was established and included representatives from all the stakeholder groups, namely:

- Local Authority (Education, Health, Planning, Finance)
- Lakelands Academy
- Parents/carers

As well as the input from parents/carers into the working group, there was also a series of consultation events that were well attended by representatives from the voluntary sector, parents and professionals.

3.12 The Kettlemere Centre has been designed to accommodate 24 of secondary age when at full capacity. From September 2015 there are 16 pupils on roll covering all 5 year groups. Each pupil is given an individualised timetable to suit their specific needs with varying degrees of access to mainstream lessons. Specialist subject and intervention programmes are delivered within the centre either individually or in small groups (Sometimes incorporating SEN pupils from the mainstream). There are currently 7 teaching assistants who support pupils accessing mainstream, with the specialist teaching within the centre being delivered by 2 Higher Level Teaching Assistants (HLTA) and the Lead teacher. With numbers constantly changing and the changing needs of each individual being difficult to predict there are 2 temporary, part-time teachers working within the centre from September 2015. This is to be reviewed during the first term.

3.13 There is close collaboration between the centre and the academy to ensure a consistency of approach with regular meetings being held between members of the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to discuss development opportunities and issues. There is close liaison between the centre and the Academy's SEN department to share resources, provide shared training opportunities and to disseminate good practice. The Head of Hubs attends Academy SLT and governor meetings.

3.14 In the short period of time the Kettlemere Centre has been open there has been very positive feedback received from parents/carers through the review process. Pupils are demonstrating greater independence and are making good progress across all subject areas. There has been significant improvement with attendance from their previous settings with a number of pupils achieving 100% attendance since starting at the Kettlemere Centre.

- 3.15 A case study of one of the current pupils attending the hub demonstrates the positive impact that the Kettlemere Centre has had both for the pupil and their family. (See Appendix C).
- 3.16 Developing in-county provision in the form of the Kettlemere Centre has provided positive financial implications for the local authority (para 5.1).
- 3.17 In addition to the Kettlemere Hub there have been recent developments to existing provisions to support the council's policy of providing more localised specialist provision to include a younger age range.
- 3.18 **Oakmeadow:**  
This is linked to the Tuition Behaviour and Medical Support Service (TMBSS) and aims to provide children without a host school to have the experience of a mainstream setting during an assessment period with TMBSS. This provision has the capacity to accommodate up to four pupils in any one academic year. This provision facilitates more effective transition to the secondary phase with local providers.
- 3.19 **The Meadows:**  
This is a provision linked to TMBSS that opened during the academic year 2014/15. It serves the North of the region and aims to provide children with a host school with a dual placement whilst undertaking assessment through TMBSS. This provision has the capacity to accommodate up to eight pupils in any one academic year. This has meant that pupils have been able to access more local and appropriate provision which has resulted in a saving with regard to transportation.
- 3.20 **Acorns:**  
This is a cross phase provision (Year 5 to 7) linked to the Woodlands School. It was set up in January 2015 in response to an increase in identified need amongst this younger age group. It provides exclusive provision for children with a statement of SEN or an EHCP who present with a primary need in the area of Social Emotional or Mental Health (SEMH). The aim is both to provide specialist support for younger children and to enable successful transition either to a mainstream secondary provision or to the Woodlands School. This provides more cost effective alternatives to the private sector as well as supporting longer term planning for pupils with Social Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties whose behaviour prevents them from accessing mainstream provision.
- 3.21 In 2014 a further provision mapping exercise was undertaken (see Appendix A and Appendix E), which reviewed current capacity commissioned at all the LA's existing specialist provisions as well as their potential to expand. All statemented and non-statemented children with an identified SEN were mapped geographically according to where they reside in the county. This data analysis exercise has allowed the LA to identify where the most prevalent needs currently are, thus helping to identify current gaps in provision across all areas of SEN.
- 3.22 One of the outcomes of this exercise was confirmation of the previously identified need for a further ASC hub provision attached to a secondary school in the south of the county. This will complement the newly established Kettlemere hub situated in the north. The project group responsible for developing this piece of work then put together the project brief and invited secondary schools within the target area to express an interest in being considered for this development.

The local authority received a number of proposals; these have now been evaluated and a final decision will be made public by the end of September 2015.

- 3.23 In April 2015 Shropshire Council developed its own Educational Psychology Service (EPS). This had previously been a joint arrangement with Telford & Wrekin. As a core Shropshire Council service working closely with the SEN Team it can be more responsive to the needs of children and young people. Shropshire EPS will support and inform the council in decision making around all aspects of SEND and place planning through the joint assessment pathway. They will provide cost effective provision for children/young people who may need to access therapeutic services. In addition they will deliver a substantial non-core traded service to both mainstream schools and other educational settings.
- 3.24 It is important to ensure that the Local Authority is able to make the best decisions possible about efficient education for children and young people with SEN. The Specialist Placement Panel (SPP) has been formed to provide a forum for discussion and decision-making between the Local Authority as commissioner and its specialist providers.
- 3.25 The Inclusion Officer chairs the panel and membership consists of headteachers (or their representatives) of all LA specialist provisions and headteachers from mainstream provisions who attend on a rotating basis. There is also representation from EPS, Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and appropriate LA casework officers (SEND). In addition, by invitation as/when necessary, there will be representation from Health and Social Care.
- 3.26 There is a published terms of reference to support the decision making process.

#### **4. Risk Assessments and Opportunities Appraisal**

##### **4.1 Opportunities:**

The development of local specialist education provision will increase the opportunity for children and young people to be educated within their local communities; it is anticipated that this will have an ongoing benefit of delivering localised provision as children/young people transition into adulthood.

- 4.2 Potential savings on Independent Specialist Provision (ISP) as local mainstream settings are better supported to provide appropriate support and intervention. For those children/young people who are unable to maintain a mainstream placement, there will be access to local specialist provision within a hub.

- 4.3 Developing provision which is personalised and that will enable access to a mainstream curriculum taught by subject specialists will help to narrow the achievement gap for children/young people with SEND. This will support the LA in meeting one of the key outcomes within the *Shropshire Children, Young People and Families Plan 2014* to narrow 'the achievement gap in education and in work'.

- 4.4 There will be opportunity to utilise the knowledge and skills of staff employed within the hub to provide support to mainstream settings in order to maintain placements where appropriate.

##### **4.5 Risks:**

A lack of localised and suitable provision will increase risk of a tribunal directing the LA to name an ISP within an EHCP. This could result in the necessity of accessing expensive independent specialist provision that may not be in the child/young person's best interest. For some families this will increase anxieties as the child/young person will need to reside away from their family home.

## **5. Financial Implications**

- 5.1 The establishment of hub provision has enabled more efficient use of financial resources. The annual cost of a pupil placed at the Kettlemere Centre is £14,393. This includes both staff and running costs. The average approximate cost for a secondary aged ASD pupil attending (on a day placement) an Independent Specialist Provision (ISP) is £52,655. However, individual placement costs can exceed £90,000 p.a. This represents an annual saving of up to £40K per pupil. For Kettlemere alone, this represents a total annual saving of up to £960K when at full capacity.
- 5.2 For all students, funding ultimately comes from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). When students attend out-of-county provision, a proportion of the DSG goes out with that child to their placement. With costs of out-of-county placements continuing to rise this means a greater proportion of the DSG is taken out of the county each year. Educating these young people within maintained provision ensures that the DSG funding stays within Shropshire schools.

## **6. Additional Information**

- 6.1 Potential areas for development:  
Provision mapping demonstrates that there is a gap in local provision for pre-school aged children who present with severe and complex learning needs. The only specialist provision for this group of children is at Severndale Specialist Academy and for some children this may mean travelling time of over two hours per day. The estimated annual transport cost for infant and nursery pupils attending Severndale and who reside outside of Shrewsbury is approximately £630K.
- 6.2 Provision mapping also demonstrates that there are gaps in post 16 provision across the authority. Following the implementation of The Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND 0 to 25 remit means that further work will need to be undertaken in this area.

## **7. Conclusions**

- 7.1 Recent changes to legislation has provided Shropshire with the opportunity to work with a range of stakeholders to review current education provision for children and young people who have special educational needs. The work completed to date includes a full review of current need which has then been mapped to available provision across the LA. Data analysis undertaken by both Shropshire Council's Public Health Intelligence Team in 2014 and by the SEN team has been used to inform this process. One of the conclusions reached from this process is that ASC is a growing area of need which Shropshire has historically had very little capacity to meet through appropriate specialist provision.
- 7.2 This has meant that some groups of children/young people have underachieved as outcomes have not reflected academic potential. For others the LA has been able to provide appropriate provision but this has been at a very high cost both in terms of monetary value and social impact when moving children away from their families and local communities.
- 7.3 The development of in-county specialist provision for pupils with ASD will have positive financial implications for the local authority, by reducing the reliance on expensive independent provision and ensuring that DSG funding stays within maintained Shropshire schools and academies.
- 7.4 The satellite provision for Severndale at Mary Web School has provided a model for hub developments and has demonstrated the effectiveness of specialist settings and mainstream provisions working in partnership to deliver high quality learning experiences

for children in Shropshire. This has been further developed more recently at Kettlemere with much joint working/shared CPD and mainstream children accessing some of the facilities within the Kettlemere Centre.

- 7.5 In the process of continuing to review provision for children and young people with SEND gaps have been identified in post 16 provision to support preparation for adulthood, specialist early years provision and ASC provision for primary aged pupils.

**List of Background Papers (This MUST be completed for all reports, but does not include items containing exempt or confidential information)**

Shropshire Council. (2014). *Shropshire Children, Young People and Families Plan*.

Department for Education (2014). *Children and Families Act 2014*.

**Cabinet Member (Portfolio Holder)**

Ann Hartley

**Local Member**

All Members

**Appendices**

Appendix A – Special Educational Provision in Shropshire: Provision Mapping

Appendix B – Needs Analysis by Public Health Intelligence Team

Appendix C – Case Study: Kettlemere

Appendix D – Cabinet Paper February 2013 – Specialist Hubs