

# CONTINUUM OF PROVISION FOR CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM CONDITIONS IN HEREFORDSHIRE

Report By: SEN & Accessibility Adviser

## Wards Affected

County-wide

## Purpose

1. To consider the current provision for Children & Young People with Autistic Spectrum Conditions in Herefordshire and action plans for its further development.

## Financial Implications

2. We cannot identify all expenditure on autism directly as some children's needs are met through banded funding and some children and young people will not have autism as a single identified need but may also have other conditions, but below is information on specific 'autism' funding and general SEN funding in the financial year – 2008/09

### Autism services expenditure

Specialist Advisory Teacher - The budget identified for the provision of the Specialist Advisory Teacher is £51000.

### Allocations to schools for Additionally resourced provision:

Hampton Dene autism unit - £104,000

Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School autism unit (The Bridge) - £63,000

### Education Needs Budgets

SEN provision in school allocations: £3,237,264

Notional SEN in school budgets - 6% - £4,507,625

## Background

### Policy

3. The current policy describing the 'incidence, provision and resources related to C&YP with Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC) is based on the definition of Autistic Spectrum Conditions then referred to as Disorders (ASD) as:
4. Severe communication disorders related to a triad of impairment in the following areas-

- Difficulties in social comprehension, communication and imagination.
  - Delayed and deviant language development
  - A restricted range of activities resulting in obsession and rituals.
5. The definition also recognises that:
- 'children with ASC vary in intelligence; most have learning difficulties but some are very bright, and they vary in the degree to which they are affected by autism from mild to very severe.'
6. The survey of incidence in Hereford and Worcester in 1997 found 15 in 10,000 children to be affected by an ASC. Current information shows that figure to be 50 in 10,000. (These figures should be considered in context as not all these young people will have a formal diagnosis of Autism and it is unclear what the criteria were for inclusion in the analysis of 1997 – a direct comparison is therefore invalid)
7. A recent study by University College London (July 2006) found the prevalence based on locally identified children with ASC would have been 44 per 10 000. However their investigation of a random sample (225) of children and young people with identified ASC and SEN as possible unidentified cases of ASC, found:
- 39 per 10 000 had Autism
  - 77 per 10 000 had an Autism Spectrum Conditions
  - Giving a total prevalence of 116 per 10 000 which equates to 1% of the child population in the UK.
8. If this was reflected in Herefordshire in 2009 it would equate to approximately 190 children and young people. Census data from Herefordshire in 2009 indicated 0.5% (99 C&YP) have been identified.
9. The policy of ensuring parents of children with autism are consulted on the provision of autism services is in accordance with the general consultation policy available on the council website.
10. There is not an up to date specific policy for C&YP with autism. The current policy (attached) written in February 2001 is based on an audit of need carried out in 1997. At that time 39 children were identified with an ASC diagnosis between the ages of 5-16.
11. Autism is currently defined as a learning disability – work on criteria for accessing additional funding is underway which includes a definition based on, assessment and provision criteria.

### **Population**

12. There has been a rise in the population of Children & Young people with ASC in Herefordshire from 46 (2004) to 99 (2009) (*107% increase*)
13. This rise should be considered in the context of the development of diagnostic practice.

14. 88 children and young people are identified on the SEN database as having ASC as a primary OR secondary need. (Primary need refers to the most significant in what may be a complex mix of needs; secondary need therefore refers to the next most significant need) These C&YP would either have a statement of SEN or be in receipt of additional funding through the Banded Funding system (Table 1).

<b>Table 1</b>	
Total number Children & Young People Identified with Autistic Spectrum Condition known to SEN Team*	
Number	Type of Provision
14	Mainstream High School (Herefordshire)
11	Mainstream Primary School (Herefordshire)
2	Other Authority High School
4	Independent School (1 primary)
5	Brookfield BESD Special
32	SLD/PMLD (15 primary)
9	Primary Additionally Resourced Provision
3	Secondary Additionally Resourced Provision
2	Educated otherwise than at school
4	Out County Residential Special School
1	Other Authority Additionally Resourced Provision
88	Total
*C&YP Known to the SEN Team would either have a statement of SEN or be in receipt of additional funding through the Banded Funding system	

<b>Table 2</b>	
<b>Number of Students With ASC (Known to SEN Team)</b>	<b>National Curriculum Year Group</b>
1	Nursery
2	Reception
4	1
5	2
3	3
5	4
10	5
9	6
10	7
7	8
7	9
9	10
5	11
6	12
4	13
1	14
88	Total

15. The fact that diagnosis of ASC is not usual in very young children is reflected in the spread of C&YP identified with ASC across National curriculum year groups (Table 3).
16. This table should also be considered in the context of the development of diagnostic practice.
17. The policy statement on identification and assessment is for:  
'Early diagnosis carried out whenever possible by a multi disciplinary team. There is no medical test for Autism and diagnosis depends on behavioural and developmental criteria.'
18. The current diagnostic situation is that children are diagnosed by local paediatricians and psychologists working in CAMHS and also by external centres of excellence such as Birmingham Children's Hospital. New criteria relating to educational support for children with needs relating to Autism are being considered as part of the revision of Banded Funding criteria.
19. Table 3 shows a comparison between the percentage of children identified nationally and locally as a proportion of the school population.

20. It is important to note that this does not imply that 7.6% of all children have a diagnosis of ASC but that they have been identified as being ASC by their school in the Annual Spring Census

<b>Table 3. Numbers of Children &amp; Young People Identified with ASC as % of School Age Population National and Local Comparison from Statistical Release June 2008</b>										
	Primary Schools		Secondary Schools		Maintained Special Schools		Non Maintained Special Schools		Total	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%		
National	19,920	6.3	15,890	5.9	14,370	17.0	860	19.4	51,030	7.6
Herefordshire	37	0.3	25	0.28	37	16.74	N/A	N/A	99	0.45

**Provision**

21. 99 children and young people with SEN identified in the School Spring Census (January 09) are described as having ASC as a primary need. Not all these C&YP will have a formal diagnosis of ASC but may have been identified informally by the school as having 'autistic tendencies'.
22. This figure compares with 46 in 2004 and is reflected by the rise in the number of young people with ASC in mainstream schools from 35 in 2004 – 62 in 2009. (Table 4). 12 of those currently in mainstream schools are placed in additionally resourced provision. 25 of the remaining 50 C&YP placed in mainstream schools identified with ASC in the spring school census do not have additional funding through the banded funding system or a statement of SEN.
23. The proportion of children & young people with Autism combined with severe learning difficulties has continued to be approximately one third (33Jan '09). These children & young people are placed in one of the 3 special schools for children with severe learning difficulties. Within these schools they will have access to specialist teaching including the structured TEACCH approach.

<b>Table 4</b>			
Children & Young People Identified with Autism Spectrum Condition in Herefordshire schools January 2009			
	Primary phase	Secondary phase	Total
Additionally Resourced Provision	Hampton Dene <b>9</b>	The Bridge <b>3</b>	<b>12</b>
Mainstream	<b>28</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50</b>
Special	<b>37</b>		<b>37</b>
Total Number Children & Young People Identified with Autism Spectrum Condition			<b>99</b>

24. There are 2 additionally resourced units for C&YP with Autism attached to mainstream schools. A primary phase at Hampton Dene and secondary phase provision at the Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat School known as The Bridge. These centres are funded by the Local Authority and provide up to 18 places with access to specialist teaching and support staff. Entry to the additionally resourced provision is dependent on a medical diagnosis of autism.
25. Support for young people placed in mainstream schools is provided through outreach from these provisions and our special schools when appropriate or other advisory services including Educational Psychologists.

26. We currently have a vacancy for a Specialist Advisory Teacher for C&YP with Social and communication difficulties including ASC. There is also a vacancy being filled on a temporary basis from September at The Bridge. Recruitment of suitably qualified personnel is currently a significant issue in Herefordshire in this field.
30. The Autism Resource Centre (ARC) at the primary phase additionally resourced unit holds a lending library of resources and provides informal training opportunities through twilight sessions open to parents, staff in schools and other agencies, contributed to by local professionals and visiting speakers from groups such as Autism West Midlands.
31. There is a Specialist Occupational Therapist and Speech & Language Therapist jointly funded by C&YPD and the PCT.
32. There is also a specialist Teacher at the Child Development Centre who contributes to multi disciplinary assessments, delivers the Early Bird Programme and supports transition into reception classes or Early Years settings.
33. Continual professional development for teachers in mainstream and specialist settings, related to ASC, is available through courses delivered by a range of professionals within the CYPD & PCT. Recent examples are:
- A series of 6 sessions for teaching staff and TAs delivered by multi agency team of including the specialist Occupational Therapist, Speech & Language Therapist and specialist teachers.
  - Delivery of the Elklan Programme to Early Years and School staff.
  - Autism Resource Centre – Half termly meetings as described above
  - Training for individual staff e.g. use of symbol soft ware, social stories, usually through outreach or Advisory teachers.
  - Training coordinated through 'Autism Training Framework Group' using West Midland Regional Partnership Training Framework until Vacancy of Specialist advisory Teacher.
34. The latest Inclusion Development Programme (IDP) release will be launched at the SENCO conference on July 1st. The programme is designed to raise awareness and skill level of all class teachers of a range of needs. The most recent element is focused on ASC. All SEMCO's will receive an overview of the ASC module and the refinements made to the Dyslexia and SLCN modules since the initial launch of the programme. SENCOs will be given the latest CD Rom (ASC) at the meeting to use alongside the online version with their staff at school. Access and Improvement Coordinators have already raised awareness of the programme with the Intervention Coordinators (IPCOs) and will support individual SENCOs and cluster meetings. Schools who are part of the IDP pilot who have already carried out most of their action plan regarding the existing modules of the IDP will be supported in launching the ASC module.



35. A small number of children with ASC are placed in out-county provisions.
36. The average cost of Out of County placement in 2008/09 was £119,765. The average cost of placement for C&YP with ASC was £118,376 (with range from £17,000 to £200,451 per annum).

<b>Table 4</b>		
<b>Out County Placements for ASC as</b>		
<b>2001 - 2009</b>		
	<b>ASC</b>	<b>Total Number of out-county placements</b>
2001-02	<b>4</b>	<b>22</b>
2002-03	<b>6</b>	<b>28</b>
2003-04	<b>7</b>	<b>28</b>
2004-05	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>
2005-06	<b>5</b>	<b>23</b>
2006-07	<b>5</b>	<b>29</b>
2007-08	<b>3</b>	<b>22</b>
2008-09	<b>5</b>	<b>21</b>

#### **Future Provision**

37. We are in the early stages of discussion with local high schools regarding the development of a secondary phase centre of excellence in provision for young people with Asperger's Syndrome that would act as a hub offering outreach to other high schools.
38. This would link with the provision in The Bridge and the Specialist Advisory Teacher to provide additional resources and specialist teaching for young people with high levels of ability and difficulties associated social communication and ASC.
39. The accommodation at the Language and Communication Centre at Hampton Dene is currently under review including identifying funding streams for its improvement to bring it in to line with the quality of accommodation at The Bridge (Bishop of Hereford's Bluecoat school).
40. Consideration is also being given to establishing effective multi-agency assessment protocols that would ensure appropriate diagnosis of ASC.

## RECOMMENDATION

### THAT:

- (a) The information within the report be noted.
- (b) A new policy for Additional Needs to be developed during 2009-2010 which will incorporate ASC.

### BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Autism – Incidence, Provision and Resources in Herefordshire
- Policy Document on Children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) February 2001