



Meeting:	Schools Forum
Meeting date:	13 January 2017
Title of report:	Initial recommendations of the Schools Forum High Needs task and Finish Group for wider consultation
Report by:	Les Knight (Head of Additional Needs) with Group Co-chair Sara Catlow-Hawkins (Headteacher – Bishop of Hereford Bluecoat School)

Classification

Open

Key decision

This is not an executive decision.

Wards affected

Countywide

Purpose

To make initial recommendations resulting from the Schools Forum High Needs Task and Finish Group and to seek the views of the Schools Forum.

Recommendation(s)

THAT :

- a) **Determining the number of specialist places**
 - i. **The planned number of special school places by 2026 should be somewhere in the range between 324 and 343 (1.2% of the predicted overall 2-19 school population for 2021) and this should be used as the starting point for any re-modelling of the special school estate as part of the Capital Investment Strategy. Further consideration needs to be given to the designation of need type within this overall figure**
 - ii. **Further consideration needs to be given to the number of places in secondary resourced provision**

- b) The best offer in mainstream schools to reduce the need for specialist places**
- i. the high needs task group produces a shared statement for an inclusive ethos with examples;
 - ii. the termly SENCO network meeting organised by Marlbrook Teaching School identifies what further forms of SEN Network meetings would support inclusive practice;
 - iii. the termly SENCO network meeting organised by Marlbrook Teaching School identifies gaps in provision which result in additional costs to the High Needs Block in the longer term;
 - iv. a short time limited project is commissioned to enhance the Herefordshire Local Offer pages with the aim of better supporting SENCOs;
 - v. a project is commissioned which leads to recommendations for the sustainable monitoring of the quality of annual reviews and for sampling the effectiveness of the provision for those on SEN Support. The use of peer-to-peer learning should be considered;
 - vi. there is exploration of the possibility of a system of dual registration for pupils with LD along the lines of the Brookfield Intervention model which allows intensive work between special and mainstream without the presumption to it leading to a special school place;
 - vii. a minimum offer for all mainstream schools is agreed and used to challenge those schools not meeting this minimum standard; and,
 - viii. a commitment to a minimum amount of SEN experience for teacher training placements and NQTs is sought from schools through training institutions.
- c) Improving the SEND Post-16 Offer**
- i. following a time-limited project to explore the co-ordination of employment opportunities funded by the SEN Implementation Grant, consideration is given to a sustainable resource to co-ordinate education and employment opportunities in the 16-25 age-range;
 - ii. work is undertaken as part of recommendation (j) to develop 'pathways to employment' ;
 - iii. further work is undertaken (linked to the accommodation strategy being developed by the Council's Adult Well-being Directorate) to provide suitable supported housing solutions that support disabled young people to be able to access suitable education and employment opportunities;
 - iv. post-16 education and training opportunities for students with MLD are mapped and that any gaps in provision are identified as part of the continuing review of post-16 review for those with learning difficulties and disabilities; and,
 - v. following the successful implementation of the post-16 NEET project for those with SEMH, a sustainable means of non-DSG funding is identified to allow the continuation of the project.
- d) Preventing the need for high-cost residential places particularly for ASD/LD and challenging behaviour**
- i. by examining the outcomes of the existing project to explore what works to reduce the risk of high-cost residential places particularly for ASD/LD and challenging behaviour, the successful elements should be taken forward on a sustainable basis.
- e) Improving Early Years provision to prevent later underachievement (and cost)**
- i. consideration is given to designated educational psychology time for children in the Early Years (aside from providing advice for statutory assessment);
 - ii. an increased number of Child Development Centre assessment places are made available with outreach opportunities taking place in localities other than Hereford City;
 - iii. with the increasing number of diagnoses of children with ASD in the EY, the number of COSI (Communication and Social Interaction) group places is

- increased with a commensurate amount of mainstream outreach for children in EY settings being provided;
- iv. speech and language clinics overseen by speech and language therapists at Children’s Centres are developed; and,
 - v. consideration is given as to how preventative work/intervention with families who do not meet the Families First criteria can be provided – particularly in relation to children with challenging behaviour.

Alternative options

- 1 All of the recommendations potentially provide responses as part of an overall strategy to reduce the pressure on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG). It is possible to remove or modify these recommendations without it altering the core purpose of the group as determined by remit given in the terms of reference for the group.

Reasons for recommendations

- 2 The reasons for the recommendations are shown in the table A below. Further detail is provided in Appendix B to E which are the responses from the individual sub-groups.

Table A		
<i>Area</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Reason(s)</i>
(a) Determining the number of specialist places	i. The planned number of special school places by 2026 should be somewhere in the range between 324 and 343 (1.2% of the predicted overall 2-19 school population for 2021) and this should be used as the starting point for any re-modelling of the special school estate as part of the Capital Investment Strategy. Further consideration needs to be given to the designation of need type within this overall figure	This is the proportion of the population placed into special schools nationally. There is no reason why Herefordshire should differ greatly from the national incidence of need that requires a specialist response. In the October pupil census Herefordshire had 339 special school places which also includes any dual registrations.
	ii. Further consideration needs to be given to the number of places in secondary resourced provision	The national benchmarking data suggests that Herefordshire has fewer secondary resourced provision places. It would be useful to discuss the merits of increasing the number to the national level.
(b) The best offer in mainstream schools to	i. the high needs task group produces a shared statement for an inclusive	In order to reduce the pressure on specialist places, all mainstream need to take a shared responsibility

reduce the need for specialist places	ethos with examples;	in successfully meeting the needs of as wide a range of pupils as possible
	ii. the termly SENCO network meeting organised by Marlbrook Teaching School identifies what further forms of SEN Network meetings would support inclusive practice	Only by sharing successful practice will the whole of the Herefordshire Learning Community become better equipped to address the widest range of SEND
	iii. the termly SENCO network meeting organised by Marlbrook Teaching School identifies gaps in provision which result in additional costs to the High Needs Block in the longer term	This will provide an opportunity to gather views from those working directly with SEND in schools
	iv. a short time limited project is commissioned to enhance the Herefordshire Local Offer pages with the aim of better supporting SENCOs	The ongoing capacity to address this centrally within the LA is no longer available. A specific and time-limited focus on this would be helpful.
	v. a project is commissioned which leads to recommendations for the sustainable monitoring of the quality of annual reviews and for sampling the effectiveness of the provision for those on SEN Support. The use of peer-to-peer learning should be considered.	All attendees at reviews need to challenge whether everything possible is being done to offer an appropriate offer to those with SEND. It is not possible for the LA to attend every review. The previous arrangements for the monitoring of annual reviews were not sustainable. Monitoring of the progress and provision for children at SEN Support is also an expectation as made clear in the SEND Inspection. By using peer review, learning and reflection about practice is more likely to occur.
	vi. there is exploration of the possibility of a system of dual registration for pupils with LD along the lines of the Brookfield Intervention model which allows intensive work between special and mainstream without the presumption to it leading to a special school place	The intervention model used by Brookfield works well for some pupils because of the intensive nature of the placement plus intensive work back into the pupil's host school as outreach.
	vii. a minimum offer for all mainstream schools is agreed and used to challenge those schools not	The LA should publish what all mainstream schools are expected to offer as part of the Local Offer in order that 'What is 'additional to and

	meeting this minimum standard	different from' can be established. This is a statutory requirement.
	viii. a commitment to a minimum amount of SEN experience for teacher training placements and NQTs is sought from schools through training institutions	Initial teacher training can only devote a limited amount of time to SEND. This would be a local arrangement to boost this.
(c) Improving the SEND Post-16 Offer	i. following a time-limited project to explore the co-ordination of employment opportunities funded by the SEN Implementation Grant, consideration is given to a sustainable resource to co-ordinate education and employment opportunities in the 16-25 age-range;	A need has been identified for county-wide co-ordination of education and employment opportunities. The current one off grant being co-ordinated through Barrs Court Hub will allow exploration of the employment opportunities. There will be an on-going need for this co-ordination.
	ii. work is undertaken as part of recommendation (j) to develop 'pathways to employment' ;	It is important that there is a route, which is clear to all, by which YP can access supported employment
	iii. further work is undertaken (linked to the accommodation strategy being developed by the Council's Adult Well-being Directorate) to provide suitable supported housing solutions that support disabled young people to be able to access suitable education and employment opportunities;	Young people often need appropriate and bespoke housing solutions if they are to gain the maximum benefit from their employment opportunities
	iv. post-16 education and training opportunities for students with MLD are mapped and that any gaps in provision are identified as part of the continuing review of post-16 review for those with learning difficulties and disabilities; and,	This has been recognised as an area of work that has not yet been tackled by the Post-16 Review of educational provision. Successful work has led to an improvement in the offer for those with more severe learning difficulties. This was identified in the Local Area SEND Inspection.
	v. following the successful implementation of the post-16 NEET project for those with SEMH, a sustainable means of non-DSG funding is identified to allow the continuation of the project.	SF has supported this in 2016-17 but has indicated that it cannot do so in the future. The model has proved highly successful and therefore alternative funding needs to be sought.
(d) Preventing the need for high-	i. by examining the outcomes of the existing project to	Schools Forum granted funding in 2016-17 to explore ways in which

<p>cost residential places particularly for ASD/LD and challenging behaviour</p>	<p>explore what works to reduce the risk of high-cost residential places particularly for ASD/LD and challenging behaviour, the successful elements should be taken forward on a sustainable basis.</p>	<p>children with a high risk of needing out-of-county residential provision can have their needs addressed locally. 3/7ths of the cost of multi-agency residential provision comes from DSG.</p> <p>This work is underway but will take the duration of 2017-18 to reveal what works.</p>
<p>(e) Improving Early Years provision to prevent later underachievement (and cost)</p>	<p>i. consideration is given to designated educational psychology time for children in the Early Years (aside from providing advice for statutory assessment);</p>	<p>It would be preferable to intervene early with psychological support, rather than waiting for the situation to be exacerbated</p>
	<p>ii. an increased number of Child Development Centre assessment places are made available with outreach opportunities taking place in localities other than Hereford City. This can be achieved by re-organising existing groups;</p>	<p>The priority should be to assess as many EY children at an early stage. This proposal would increase assessment places at CDC from current 10 per term to 22 per term. It would also allow a wider range of needs to be assessed. The use of outreach assessment is important because some families cannot travel into Hereford regularly for assessment visits.</p>
	<p>iii. with the increasing number of diagnoses of children with ASD in the EY, the number of COSI (Communication and Social Interaction) group places is increased with a commensurate amount of mainstream outreach for children in EY settings being provided;</p>	<p>The COSI group has provided high quality support for families and children with severe social communication needs including the nationally recognised 'Early Bird' parenting programme. The increase in the number of diagnoses, many as young as 3 years old, requires additional resource in order to offer the programme to all before they reach reception age and transfer to school. Research evidence has shown that diagnosis and early intervention is cost-effective. Outreach work with the child's EY setting and as the children transfer to school is an integral part of the programme. The numbers are such that previous attempts to manage a waiting list are no longer possible.</p>
	<p>iv. speech and language clinics overseen by speech and language therapists (SALT) at Children's Centres are developed</p>	<p>A previously successful programme of work delivered by SALT assistants overseen by qualified therapists demonstrated the value of this work. These advice clinics give parents earlier access to a SaLT –</p>

		usually within 4-8 weeks. Appropriate ideas and strategies for intervention are also given. Formal referrals to SALT are more appropriate as a result. (therefore fewer inappropriate referrals increasing the waiting list) This was identified in the Local Area SEND Inspection.
	v. consideration is given as to how preventative work/intervention with families who do not meet the Families First criteria can be provided – particularly in relation to children with challenging behaviour	Concerns have been raised by EY settings about attachment /behaviour and lack of support for children and families unless at high risk. There are an increasing numbers of SPORT referrals through health for children with SEMH difficulties – often rejected as not seen as ‘medical’.

Key considerations

- iii. As part of a five year funding strategy to ensure that Herefordshire Schools Forum and the council pro-actively manage future funding pressures in the Dedicated Schools Grant, Schools Forum agreed to set up four task and finish groups. One of these was the High Needs Task and Finish Group (HNTFG). The full terms of reference (TOR) are provided in Appendix A. The TOR included the issues to be addressed by the group. These issues can be summarised as concern for the rising cost of high needs in Herefordshire and in particular the rising number/cost of specialist places. In order to tackle the breadth of the High Needs agenda, the HNTFG set up sub-groups to deal with the different strands as follows:
- i. **How many special places do we need? (Rec. (a))** Note: Work subsequently added to by Sue Woodrow working as a consultant to the Capital Investment Strategy
 - ii. **What should mainstream schools do to provide the best offer for those with learning difficulties? (Rec (b))**
 - iii. **How do we improve the offer for young people with SEND post-16 (both MLD and SLD/PMLD includes post-19)? (Rec (c))**
 - iv. **How could we prevent high cost residential placements, particularly for ASD/LD and challenging behaviour? (Rec (d))**
 - v. **How could we improve Early Years provision to prevent later underachievement (and cost)? (Rec (e))**
 - vi. **Review of High Needs Matrix** Note: this work was added to the work of the group to save a duplication but was not within the TOR.

Each sub-group reported back to the HNTFG (Appendix B to E) and the recommendations from all of the sub-groups are included in this paper.

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Les Knight (Head of Additional Needs) on Tel (01432) 261724

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- iv. The sub-groups were asked to provide as many solutions that would address the issues raised in the TOR. This paper is the collation of the proposals and the aim is to gain broader consultation responses. The HNTFG were made aware that there could be no presumption that the ideas would necessarily be adopted.
- v. The contributing sub-groups were also asked to ensure that their proposals had an evidence base that would ensure that this was not just a 'resource and hope' approach but rather one which was likely to ensure improved outcomes for children and young people.
- vi. Some of the work described within the recommendations has been commenced already as there was felt to be an imperative to do this or because there is a crossover with the work of other groups or strategies. These recommendations are included here for the sake of completeness.

Community impact

- 7 There are particular links to the children with disabilities, Early Help and Early Years strategies governed by the children and young people's partnership.

Equality duty

- 8 All of the proposals are intended to have a positive impact on children with SEND.

Financial implications

- 9 The financial implications are shown in the table below:

<i>Area</i>	<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Cost/resource</i>	<i>Risks</i>
(a) Determining the number of specialist places	i. The planned number of special school places by 2026 should be somewhere in the range between 324 and 343 (1.2% of the predicted overall 2-19 school population for 2021) and this should be used as the starting point for any re-modelling of the special school estate as part of the Capital Investment Strategy. Further consideration needs to be given to the designation of need type within	Revenue – minimal as the upper range is 343 and the current number of special school places is 339. Capital Investment Strategy is a self-contained piece of work with its own financial arrangements.	There is a risk that the number of special school places continues to grow. Mitigation is that all concerned need to ensure that assessment is specific enough to ensure that all children placed meet the criteria for specialist places.

	this overall figure		
(b) The best offer in mainstream schools to reduce the need for specialist places	i. the high needs task group produces a shared statement for an inclusive ethos with examples;	Time for task group	Lack of engagement from schools and settings caused by pressures of finance and performance. Mitigation: Leaders need to promote this in their respective Forums
	ii. the termly SENCO network meeting organised by Marlbrook Teaching School identifies what further forms of SEN Network meetings would support inclusive practice	Agenda time at SENCO network meeting and the attendance time at any other network meetings	Not all schools engaged in forums Mitigation: See (b) i
	iii. the termly SENCO network meeting organised by Marlbrook Teaching School identifies gaps in provision which result in additional costs to the High Needs Block in the longer term	Agenda time at SENCO network meeting	Not all schools engaged in forums Mitigation: See (b) i
	iv. a short time limited project is commissioned to enhance the Herefordshire Local Offer pages with the aim of better supporting SENCOs	6 weeks of officer time to meet with SENCOs, to prepare materials and to put on web.	Offer becomes static after 6 week period Mitigation: SENCO network time could be used once per year to update offer
	v. a project is commissioned which leads to recommendations for the sustainable monitoring of the quality of annual reviews and for sampling the effectiveness of the provision for those on SEN Support. The use of peer-to-peer learning should be considered.	No new resource required as project already planned - Project Officer or Consultant time – 1 day per wk for 6 months plus peer-to-peer release or cover time (should be seen as CPD). £10k consultant plus peer-to-peer release time This is to be funded through some limited project time in	There is a risk that: i) The resulting AR monitoring system is not realistic and therefore sustainable. Mitigation: Project Officer needs to work very closely with schools and SEN team to ensure that system is workable.

		centrally held DSG budget.	There is a risk that by not doing this we do not fulfil our duties under the SEND COP.
	vi. there is exploration of the possibility of a system of dual registration for pupils with LD along the lines of the Brookfield Intervention model which allows intensive work between special and mainstream without the presumption to it leading to a special school place	Meeting time to discuss. Two Options to fund this: (i) Brookfield Intervention model is school self-funded from existing pupil-led resource (ii) DSG allocation to specials to establish this work as in-reach/outreach	There is a risk that dual registration encourages pupils to seek a special school place. Mitigation: There would need to be a very clear contract with host school that this about supporting the school intensively for a block of time to develop the curriculum for the pupil in the host school
	vii. a minimum offer for all mainstream schools is agreed and used to challenge those schools not meeting this minimum standard	LA Officer time and SENCO release time – Work in final draft stage.	There is a risk that the offer described is not specific enough and therefore does not provide the clarity required.
	viii. a commitment to a minimum amount of SEN experience for teacher training placements and NQTs is sought from schools through training institutions	Meeting time for teaching schools to set it up.	There is a risk that ITT establishments do not see this as a priority.
(c) Improving the SEND Post-16 Offer	i. following a time-limited project to explore the co-ordination of employment opportunities funded by the SEN Implementation Grant, consideration is given to a sustainable resource to co-ordinate education	Current resource is £30k for co-ordination role	Without this post, there is no central co-ordination of this work which carries the risk that families seek expensive out-of-county provision for young people with LD

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	and employment opportunities in the 16-25 age-range;		
	ii. work is undertaken as part of recommendation (j) to develop 'pathways to employment' ;	Included in (c) i.	The risk of not having this would be a lack of clarity for YP and families
	iii. further work is undertaken (linked to the accommodation strategy being developed by the Council's Adult Well-being Directorate) to provide suitable supported housing solutions that support disabled young people to be able to access suitable education and employment opportunities;	No new resource	The risk of not doing this is that we would develop a good education and employment offer that YP would not be able to take up because of where they are living.
	iv. post-16 education and training opportunities for students with MLD are mapped and that any gaps in provision are identified as part of the continuing review of post-16 review for those with learning difficulties and disabilities	Professionals time to meet in 2 nd round of Post-16 review	There is a risk that as a result of not having suitable MLD provision post-16, places will be sought at providers for SLD resulting in a further growth in numbers. There is also a risk that post-16 providers will not engage with this work.
	v. following the successful implementation of the post-16 NEET project for those with SEMH, a sustainable means of non-DSG funding is identified to allow the continuation of the project.	Cost £30k	There is a risk that the successful work in developing this project will be lost with the result that more of those with SEMH needs are NEET. Mitigation: Identify other funding sources
(d) Preventing the need for high-cost	i. by examining the outcomes of the existing project to	No new resource in 2017-18	The risk of doing nothing is that we will continue to have

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<p><i>residential places particularly for ASD/LD and challenging behaviour</i></p>	<p>explore what works to reduce the risk of high-cost residential places particularly for ASD/LD and challenging behaviour, the successful elements should be taken forward on a sustainable basis.</p>		<p>significant expenditure on multi-agency placements out-of-county where monitoring of students is more difficult.</p> <p>The risk with this project is that successful strategies are identified in the existing project but the young people concerned are so individual that the strategies are not transferrable. However, by adopting an approach that requires every possible strategy to have been considered before we place in an out-of-county setting, it is more likely to produce creative answers.</p>
<p>(e) <i>Improving Early Years provision to prevent later underachievement (and cost)</i></p>	<p>i. consideration is given to designated educational psychology time for children in the Early Years (aside from providing advice for statutory assessment);</p>	<p>£12k</p>	<p>There is a risk that by not doing this, needs are not addressed early enough.</p> <p>If this is implemented, the risk would be one of excess demand and some sort of priority list would be needed to mitigate this.</p>
	<p>ii. an increased number of Child Development Centre assessment places are made available with outreach opportunities taking place in localities other than Hereford City. This can be achieved by re-organising existing groups;</p>	<p>No new resource – re-arrangement of the existing resource</p>	<p>The risk of not doing this is that children with potentially more severe needs are not assessed early enough (or at all if family cannot get into Hereford).</p> <p>The risk of rearranging the resource is that a group that caters for lower level needs</p>

			will be removed.
	<p>iii. with the increasing number of diagnoses of children with ASD in the EY, the number of COSI (Communication and Social Interaction) group places is increased with a commensurate amount of mainstream outreach for children in EY settings being provided;</p>	<p>5 additional COSI places to be made available (2x half day sessions)</p> <p>Specialist outreach into mainstream settings for those not accessing a COSI place(1x half day)</p> <p>Minimum 0.3 fte specialist teacher= £15k</p>	<p>The risk of not making this provision is that there will be children entering school with severe complex communication needs where early intervention is not possible.</p> <p>There is a potential risk of continued growth in demand as more early diagnoses are made.</p>
	<p>iv. speech and language clinics overseen by speech and language therapists (SALT) at Children's Centres are developed</p>	<p>0.4 FTE SALT Assistant = £13.5k</p> <p>Could be built into SALT costing provided for EY Task and Finish group</p>	<p>If this is not offered, there is a risk of continuing high levels of potentially inappropriate referral to SALT which would result in significant delays in referrals being accepted.</p>
	<p>v. consideration is given as to how preventative work/intervention with families who do not meet the Families First criteria can be provided – particularly in relation to children with challenging behaviour</p>	<p>Costed into EY task and finish group - no new resource required</p>	<p>Risk to be outlined in EY Task and finish papers</p>

Legal implications

10 A legal viewpoint is not required at this stage of consultation

Risk management

11 Table B above includes risks and mitigation.

Consultees

12 None

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Appendices

Appendix A – Terms of reference for Task and Finish Groups

Appendix B – Sub-group composition

Appendix C – Place Planning Briefing

Appendix D – Report from the Best Offer in Mainstream Sub-group

Appendix E – Report from the Improving the Post-16 Offer Sub-Group

Appendix F – Report from the Improving EY Provision Sub-Group

Background papers

- None identified.