

## **Schools Forum**

### **Monday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022 Specialist Provision Review Group Update**

#### **Purpose of report**

To give an update on the progress of two work streams within Specialist Provision Review Group remit.

#### **Recommendations**

Members to note content of report.

#### **Background**

The work of the special provision review group aims to improve current processes and reorganise current provision to support better outcomes for children and young people (CYP) with SEND in Walsall. The work within this action plan aims to offer short, medium and long-term solutions. The expectation is that this work encompasses all sectors; education, health and social care and is co-produced with CYP and families working to the '*better together*' principle.

The action plan is divided into clear themes that all interweave and have equal importance to the overall vision of improving outcomes for CYP with SEND.

Each of these key strands of work can be grouped into two themes - the protocols to support inclusive practice and the review of specialist settings.

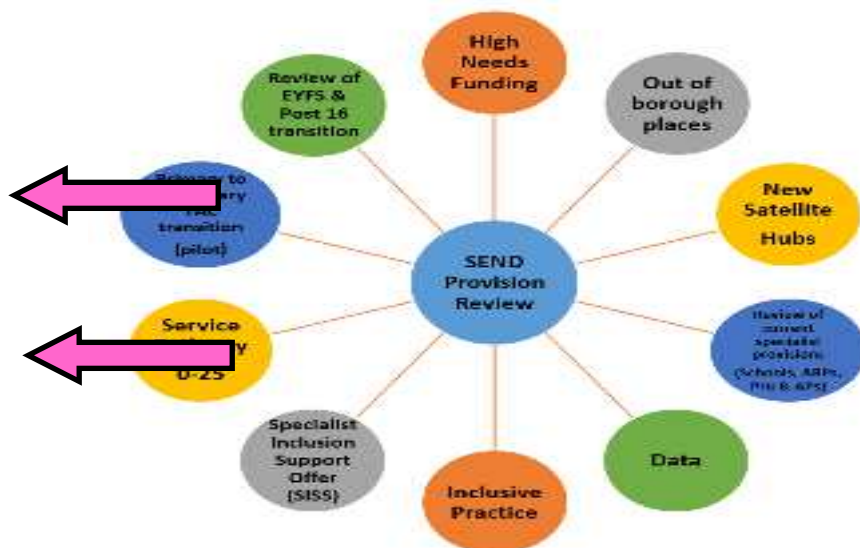
#### **Inclusive Practice:**

The equity of inclusive practice across the Borough is the highest priority. This is essential for the whole of the education sector from EYFS to Post 16 to ensure we are preparing our CYP adequately for adulthood. Much of this work will involve reinforcing the SEND Code of Practice (CoP) and establishing clear protocols, support, and pathways for all partners, including health and social care to support mainstream settings with the full inclusion of CYP with SEND. Working collaboratively with partners will allow greater opportunities to work in a more coordinated and efficient way.

#### **Review of Specialist Settings:**

Whilst our inclusive vision and the legal presumption is that all children including those with SEND have a right to mainstream education, we must ensure that children with significant and complex SEND have the opportunity to attend a specialist setting in a timely way. A review of current specialist places (special schools and resourced provisions) will focus on the immediate and future needs. An accurate picture of the data will enable provision to support the needs of CYP in the short, medium and long term. This will also include a full review of out of borough places that are used for SEND placements.

The Specialist Provision Review Group, reformed in December 2021, identified the following priorities:



This update focuses on the work streams indicated.

### Update 1. Specialist Places

The aim of this report is to provide an overview of the current position and short-, medium- and long-term options to support the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) specialist provision planning within the Local Authority. The creation of these additional provisions will enable Walsall Children and Young People (CYP) to be fully supported within their home local authority.

#### What we know:

The Specialist Provision Review Group has focused on:

- Reviewing current gap in designation, including age ranges
- Exploring Satellite models
- Exploring SEND Hubs and Specialist Resourced Provisions (SRPs)
- Exploring how to reduce out of borough placements over time
- Commissioned numbers – 5-year plan
- Ensuring equity across localities

Whilst the inclusive vision and the legal presumption is that all children, including those with SEND, have a right to mainstream education, we must ensure that children with significant and complex SEND could attend a specialist setting in a timely way.

The predicted number of special school places needed for new plans issued in year is approximately 782 over the next five years.

**Our response to date:**

The requirement for an additional 782 SEND places, cannot presently be accommodated within Walsall's current special school provisions. There have been various options created that could support the goal to provide sufficient school places for the Local Authority.

**Short Term Solutions:**

Currently, to address the short time shortfall of SEN places, an additional 107 places have been created. Discussions regarding the immediate need for September 2022 have taken place with individual schools and commissioned numbers have been agreed for 2022-2023:

The creation of these 107 places, reduces the total additionally requires places in Walsall from 782 to 675

**Medium Term Solutions:**

Since April 2022, work with mainstream schools has been undertaken to capture the interest of those aspiring to become a Specialist Resourced Provision (SRP) or a specialist Hub alongside one of our existing specialist provisions.

The schools expressing an interest have been carefully considered and have received quality assurance visits to ensure the highest quality of teaching and learning for our most vulnerable children - this included an appraisal of the site capacity and future potential.

2 Total Potential Places available = 78 from September 2023

Some of the mainstream school based SRPs can be up and running from September 2023 following successful recruitment and capital works. Other options have been considered, but would require more significant capital investment. More visits to settings remain to be done.

Once the new SRPs/Hubs have been established and the good practice, including high quality training and networking shared with other schools in the authority, further expressions of interest will be considered in a timely way to fulfil the mainstream presumption for SEND pupils in an enhanced way.

The creation of these 78 places, reduces the total additionally required places in Walsall from 675 to 597.

**Long Term Solutions**

To address the long-term solutions for developing additional place provision for SEND pupils, multiple options are being explored. These may be larger capital projects. Further updates to follow.

**Update 2. Specialist Inclusion Support Service**

**BRICS – an inclusion support service.**

BRICS aims to work in partnership with children, school staff, parents/carers and other professionals to encourage positive learning communities which meet each child's needs. The overarching aims will fit within the aims and priorities of the original B.R.I.C.S. Project. This will be achieved through a flexible, collaborative, empathetic and child-centred approach rooted in responsive, innovative and inclusive solutions. BRICS is proposed as a de-delegated service available to all maintained schools, and accessible as a traded service for academies, special schools, maintained nursery schools and PRUs.

Using proactive and creative approaches, we are committed to working with schools to create an excellent climate for learning, grounded in nurture, through:

- Improving outcomes for children and young people with complex social and emotional needs
- Promoting inclusive practice and supporting staff at all levels to meet the needs of every pupil

The service provides targeted support, intervention and training through a tiered approach, in order to facilitate purposeful change and sustainability throughout school.

BRICS will encourage schools to use the service to develop in-house expertise and embed a consistent whole school ethos that enables effective support at all levels.

The proposal for de-delegation will be brought to Schools' Forum at the October meeting, having gone through consultation with maintained settings.

**Cathy Draper**  
**Executive Headteacher**  
**Short Heath Federation**

23.09.22