

BRIEFING NOTE

Agenda Item

no. 9

TO: Scrutiny Panel

DATE: 26 January 2012

RE: Update on Theme 2 – Services supporting special educational needs and the inclusion framework in Walsall schools and with families in the Borough

Purpose

To update the Scrutiny Panel on work undertaken in supporting children with special educational needs through the inclusion framework and also about government proposals currently under consideration in respect of this agenda.

1 Background

- 1.1 The majority of children with an identified special educational need are educated in mainstream settings, placed at either the School Action or School Action Plus levels of the SEN Code of Practice. There are in addition some children with more severe special needs for whom a statement is appropriate. Some of these are placed in mainstream settings whilst others are in special schools.
- 1.2 The Inclusion Framework's strategic purpose is to build capacity in mainstream schools to meet a range of SEN. This is supported by the work of the SEN support services.

2 SEN Support Services

- 2.1 As the Panel was informed in July 2011, the SEN Support Services are now organised on a part traded, part core basis. The teams consist of:
 - SEN Advisory Teachers – fully traded
 - Early Years SEN Teachers and Learning Support Practitioners – core plus part traded
 - Sensory Advisory Support from Teachers of the Deaf, Qualified Teachers of the Visually Impaired and Specialist Learning Support Practitioners – core plus part traded
 - Educational Psychology Team – core plus part traded
- 2.2 There is in addition the SEN Assessment Team, responsible for drafting statements and liaison with parents.
- 2.3 Each of these teams is fully committed for the current academic year, with targets for traded elements being met. They have continued to cover statutory work as well as respond to requests from schools for additional support.

- 2.4 Specialist provision for Special Educational Needs in Walsall continues to be provided in seven special schools and 11 Additionally Resourced Bases (ARPs) in mainstream schools (7 primary and 4 secondary). The quality of specialist provision in Walsall is seen as high, with three of the special schools currently judged 'outstanding' by Ofsted and the remaining four 'good' with outstanding features.

3 Trends in statutory assessment requests and statements

- 3.1 There has continued to be an increase in the number of statements of special educational need requested and issued over the last year compared with 2010. In 2010 there were 126 requests from schools and 53 from parents, whilst in 2011 these figures were 157 and 46 respectively.
- 3.2 In 2011 there were 149 new statements issued compared with 115 in 2010. All statements issued in the last year were completed within the national 26 week target, meaning that Walsall continues to be one of a small number of authorities nationally to achieve this target.
- 3.3 There is a continuing emphasis on collaborative processes to support the SEN and Inclusion framework, resulting in a low number of tribunal appeals. All parents who wish to appeal against decisions are offered a comprehensive conciliation and/or mediation process to resolve differences without recourse to tribunal. Indeed only one case went to Tribunal in 2011.
- 3.4 The number of pupils with statements in mainstream settings has remained about the same over the two years, with 492 (46%) in 2010 and 490 (45%) in 2011. However there has been an increase in the number of new statements naming mainstream settings, with 72 (63% of total) in 2010 increasing to 97 (65%) in 2011.
- 3.5 Pupil achievement

The table below compares the progress of groups of pupils with special needs in English and mathematics over the last two years. In general 2011 shows improved progress at both the end of KS2 and KS4, apart from that for pupils with statements at KS4.

KS1 - KS2 Progress		
English % 2LP	2010	2011
School Action	79.4	81
School Action Plus	69.8	72.3
Statemented	47.6	53.9
Maths % 2LP		
School Action	67	70.3
School Action Plus	64.3	66
Statemented	47.6	55.1

KS2 - KS4 Progress		
English % 3LP		
School Action	40.1	49.3
School Action Plus	26.5	36.5
Statemented	28.6	27.2
Maths % 3LP		
School Action	27.8	30.9
School Action Plus	15.9	18.8
Statemented	19.3	15.5

- 3.6 Data for attainment at the end of KS2 over the last three years shows a steady decrease in the gap between children with special needs and those without.

	2009	2010	2011
English & Maths Combined L4+ gap	61.7%	58.2%	53.8%

4 The Government Green Paper - Support and aspiration: A new approach to special educational needs and disability

- 4.1 The Panel has previously received a summary of this Government Green Paper, issued in March 2011. In this paper the government set out proposals to fundamentally reform the SEN system to address a range of issues which have been perceived nationally as significant short comings within a highly regulated policy framework.
- 4.2 Although the consultation on this closed in June 2011, there has to date been no further formal communications from the Government regarding any legislative changes. A number of authorities nationally are acting as pathfinders, trialling new approaches, covering aspects such as:
- personal funding
 - pooled and aligned budgets
 - focus on outcomes in a single plan
 - transferability of social care support across area boundaries
 - mediation for parents

Roll out from these pathfinders is scheduled for April 2013.

5 Recommendations

- 5.1 That take up of services and trends in Statementing continue to be monitored during the remainder of the 2011-2012 academic year.
- 5.2 That any implications of the Government's Green Paper and the associated pathfinder trials are reported to the Panel when announced.

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**Update on Theme 2 – Services
supporting special educational
needs and the inclusion framework
in Walsall schools and with families
in the Borough**

Presented by Frank Barnes

26 January 2012



SEN Support Teams

- SEN Advisory Teachers – fully traded
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- Educational Psychology Team – core plus part traded



Special school provision

Seven special schools:

- 3 –SLD (Old Hall, Oakwood, Mary Elliot)
- 2 –MLD (Jane Lane, Castle)
- 2 –EBD (Phoenix, Elmwood)

Eleven ARPs:

- Autistic Spectrum Disorders
- Specialised Learning Needs (Dyslexia)
- Physical disabilities
- Sensory needs (visual and/or hearing impairments)
- Nurture group for KS1 children who have emotional difficulties



Numbers of statements

2010

- 115 issued
- 1068 total
- 492 mainstream
- 72 new mainstream

2011

- 149 issued
- 1097 total
- 490 mainstream
- 97 new mainstream

Key Stages 1 to 2

English % 2LP	2010	2011
School Action	79.4	81
School Action Plus	69.8	72.3
Statemented	47.6	53.9
Maths % 2LP		
School Action	67	70.3
School Action Plus	64.3	66
Statemented	47.6	55.1

Key Stages 2 to 4

KS2 - KS4 Progress

English % 3LP

2010

2011

School Action

40.1

49.3

School Action Plus

26.5

36.5

Statemented

28.6

27.2

Maths % 3LP

School Action

27.8

30.9

School Action Plus

15.9

18.8

Statemented

19.3

15.5



End of KS 2 Gap

English & Maths Combined gap	2009	2010	2011
	61.7%	58.2%	53.8%



Pathfinders

DfE and DH have appointed 20 pathfinders with three objectives:

- To develop a new birth to 25 assessment process and single plan incorporating education, health and social care assessments
- To explore how the voluntary and community sector could improve access to specialist expertise and to introduce more independence to the process
- To ensure the full engagement of children, young people, and their parents and families.



Pathfinder activity

All pathfinders will work within existing statutory frameworks to test core elements, including:

- A multi-agency approach, with clear lines of accountability
- Links between support planning and strategic commissioning, particularly through health and well-being boards
- Use of personal funding,
- Pooled and aligned budgets
- Focus on outcomes in a single plan
- Transferability of social care support across area boundaries
- VFM and cost
- Mediation for parents



Pathfinder status

- Pathfinders have been set up to test how to reform the system including statements and statutory framework – but DfE is not suspending any part of the existing framework in pathfinder areas during this period of testing
- DfE are encouraging pathfinders to work in partnership with parents, schools, voluntary sector partners, etc to find new and better ways to meet the needs of disabled children and those with SEN – but parents retain right to request an assessment and the LA will retain their duties in relation to assessments and statements
- Government amendment to the Education Bill to enable the pathfinders to test use of direct payments within the existing statutory framework