

Proposals for improving the
education of secondary age children
with special educational needs
in the London Borough of
Richmond upon Thames

Spring Term 2010

SEN

Special
educational needs

Proposals for improving the education of secondary age children with special educational needs in the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames

Improving the education of children with special educational needs (SEN) is a key priority in the new Children and Young People's Plan¹. It is part of an investment programme to provide better resources for all children in the Richmond Borough. This consultation leaflet sets out proposals to improve the provision for SEN in Richmond upon Thames mainstream secondary schools. A similar consultation document covering provision for primary age children was published in the autumn term.

SEN provision in the borough has developed over a number of years, but it currently does not fully meet the needs of all our pupils. An indicator of this is that we have 149 pupils placed in the independent sector. The relatively high cost of these places reduces the funding available for Richmond Borough schools and because of the distances travelled, there is increased spending on school transport.

Guiding principles

In carrying out the review, the authority has been guided by four principles.

- Children with SEN will have their needs met in mainstream schools whenever possible.
- Richmond Borough special schools should be maintained and valued as resources of expertise, supporting mainstream schools where possible.
- If provision in a special setting is necessary, it should be as local as possible.
- There should be as much choice for parents as possible.

We are proposing to provide more specialist help for those children with the greatest special needs and build on the existing expertise of teachers in Richmond upon Thames' mainstream schools, current units and special schools.

For secondary age children there will be three types of provision that will deliver the improved service.

• Enhanced specialist teaching provision

This would be a specially designated resource area in a mainstream school with additional specialist teachers, support staff and therapists. **The children would spend most of their time in mainstream classes with additional support, but there would be the facility to withdraw to the area for intensive work.** The specialist staff would provide mainstream teachers with on-site support and advice.

• Gathered provision

This would be a resource base in a mainstream school with its own staffing (specialist teaching, teaching assistants and therapists) and specialist teaching facilities. **Children would spend a significant proportion of their time in the base, but would be included in mainstream lessons as much as possible.**

• Special schools

We are proposing to make use of expertise from the special schools to support mainstream schools and enhance their provision for pupils with additional autistic spectrum conditions.

There will be further consultation on enhancing special school provision in the borough.

Areas for consultation

General proposals

- Wherever possible we would like to make changes that result in a more even spread of provision across the authority, north and south of the river, providing greater choice and diversity to meet future needs.
- We would like to improve the provision for behavioural, emotional and social development so that it is more effective and inclusive in approach.
- At secondary level, we would like to develop specific learning difficulties provision to reduce requests for out-of-borough placements.
- We would like to increase levels of speech and language therapy support to schools so that current levels of need can be met.
- We would like to establish secondary-based resourced provision for speech, language and communication needs, including autistic spectrum conditions.

1. The CYPP is available to download www.richmond.gov.uk/children_and_young_peoples_plan

Proposals for individual schools and units

The proposals, as they affect individual schools, are set out in the table below. The following abbreviations are used:

- ASC autistic spectrum conditions
- SpLD specific learning difficulties (for example dyslexia)
- BESD behavioural, emotional and social development
- SLCN speech, language and communication

Provision	Proposals	Education staffing arrangements	Planned places	Comments
Phase 1 – Implement September 2010				
Orleans Park School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement, specific learning difficulties. Establish six SpLD places to reduce reliance on independent sector	One teacher and one learning support assistant	6	New teaching area to be provided
Grey Court School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for speech language and communication needs. Establish eight SLCN places to reduce reliance on independent sector	One teacher and two learning support assistant	8	New teaching area to be provided
Specialist Unit at Hampton Community College – Richmond House	To be re-designated to become a learning and multi-agency centre as part of a broader service to support children with BESD	To be determined	12	
The Gateway – ASC	Remain as an ASC gathered provision for Key Stages 3 and 4. Transfer responsibility to Clarendon School	No change	20	

Provision	Proposals	Education staffing arrangements	Planned places	Comments
Phase 2 – Implement September 2011 onwards				
Hampton Academy	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for speech language and communication needs – ASC focus. Establish six SLCN/ASC places to reduce reliance on independent sector	One teacher and one learning support assistant	6	Accommodation to be identified within the remodelled school
Shene Academy	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for speech language and communication needs – ASC focus. Establish six SLCN/ASC places to reduce reliance on independent sector	One teacher and one learning support assistant	6	Accommodation to be identified within the remodelled school
Waldegrave School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for speech language and communication needs – ASC focus (Girls only). Establish six SLCN/ASC places to reduce reliance on independent sector	One teacher and one learning support assistant	6	New teaching area to be provided
Christ's School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for specific learning difficulties. Establish six SpLD places to reduce reliance on independent sector	One teacher and one learning support assistant	6	New teaching area to be provided
Teddington School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for specific learning difficulties. Establish six SpLD places to reduce reliance on independent sector	One teacher and one learning support assistant	6	Accommodation to be identified within the remodelled school

Reasoning behind the proposals

Currently, the authority meets the needs of 67% of children with statements from within the borough. Twelve percent are in out-of-borough placements, whilst 21% are in independent placements or educated elsewhere.

An analysis of current SEN arrangements in the authority has identified the need to address the following areas.

- Autistic spectrum condition provision, particularly for pupils with challenging behaviours.

- The co-ordination and quality of provision for emotional, behavioural and social development.
- Speech and language therapy provision for schools.
- Specific learning difficulties provision at secondary level.
- Provision for pupils with more complex and challenging needs.

Between January 2005 and January 2009, in all phases, there were significant increases in the number of pupils with autistic spectrum conditions (37%), general learning difficulties (38%) and speech, language and

communication needs (36%). In contrast, there were significant decreases in the number of pupils with moderate learning difficulties (10%) and severe learning difficulties (36%). This indicates that pupils' needs are changing and future provision will need to reflect these trends.

In January 2010, the number of independent placements was 149. The particular areas of need where the authority has made most use of independent placements are:

- autistic spectrum conditions;
- specific learning difficulties (for example, dyslexia);
- behavioural, emotional and social development;
- speech, language and communication; and
- moderate learning difficulties.

This suggests there is a need to increase provision within the borough, or make arrangements with neighbouring boroughs, to reduce the reliance on independent placements. However, it is recognised that the authority will need to continue placing some pupils in the independent sector.

Specialist Unit at Hampton Community College – Richmond House

Richmond House is an off-site unit attached to Hampton Community College for pupils with statements of special educational needs for behavioural, emotional and social development difficulties. An aim of Richmond House has been to encourage and prepare pupils to return to mainstream education. Through inclusion, pupils at Richmond House have had the opportunity to achieve at a high level throughout their secondary education, culminating in GCSE exams at the end of key stage 4. The authority and headteachers of secondary schools in the borough wish to build on this success.

On 1 September 2010, Hampton Community College is to become Hampton Academy. On this date it is proposed that Richmond House will change its status from a unit designated for children with statements of special educational needs to become part of a broader service for children with BESD, operating on a number of sites. It will provide or facilitate an enhanced alternative curriculum drawing on the expertise of

schools, the further education sector and alternative providers. The service will benefit from an integrated multi-agency staff team providing support from a range of specialist agencies. Children who would previously have received a statement naming Richmond House will normally be statemented to their existing school, with a high level of support and have access to the new service which includes the Richmond House facility.

The new service for children with BESD will be managed by the authority. A management committee will be established to advise the authority on its activities and effectiveness.

During the spring term 2010, parents of Richmond House pupils currently in Years 7 to 10 will be invited to meet with a senior officer from the authority's SEN Team to discuss the most appropriate placement for their child from September 2010. It is likely that the majority of children will be placed on a mainstream school roll and continue to access the Richmond House centre as part of the new integrated service.

Whitton Gateway Centre

The Gateway Centre caters for up to 20 pupils and provides an environment where students who have a statement of special educational needs for an autistic spectrum condition are taught a curriculum appropriate to their needs and supported in all areas of learning. In September 2010, Whitton School will change its status and become the Twickenham Academy. It is proposed that Gateway will remain on the academy site, but come under the management of the headteacher and governing body of Clarendon School. Clarendon has extensive experience of working with children with autistic spectrum conditions.

A service level agreement will be drawn up with Twickenham Academy to formalise the current arrangement, where there are regular opportunities for students to be included in the main school classes to enhance their learning and develop their social interaction with peers.

Responsibility for the the centre budget would transfer to the headteacher and governing body of Clarendon School. Staffing levels should not be affected by the transfer. Speech and language and occupational therapy would be provided as now.

SEN improvement test

When considering any reorganisation of SEN provision, the Department for Children, Schools and Families guidance recommends that authorities apply the SEN improvement test. This states that the proposals should bring about:

- improved access to education and associated services including: the curriculum, wider school activities, facilities and equipment, with reference to the local authority's accessibility strategy;
- improved access to specialist staff, both education and other professionals, including any external support or outreach services;
- improved access to suitable accommodation; and
- improved supply of suitable places.

Having carefully considered the four criteria within the improvement test, it can be demonstrated that they all will be met.

- Enhanced specialist teaching and gathered provisions will increase the extent to which children with disabilities and learning difficulties can access the whole curriculum and extended school activities. Pupils with behavioural, emotional and social development needs will benefit from access to a mainstream school curriculum, where appropriate, whilst at the same time be able to participate in specially designed learning activities and multi-agency programmes at Richmond House. Where necessary, new or remodelled bases, sometimes linked to major building projects, will be provided so that high quality facilities are available. In establishing any new provision, help will be given to schools to make sure that written information distributed to parents can be understood by those with disabilities.
- Staff attached to enhanced specialist teaching and gathered provisions will be suitably trained and experienced. Whole school training will also be made available to facilitate integration in mainstream classes. The authority is discussing with the primary care trust (PCT) the levels of speech and language therapy, occupational therapy and physiotherapy that need to be provided to make sure that children's needs are met in all phases.
- In reviewing provision, account will be taken of DCSF Building Bulletin 102, 'Designing for disabled children and children with special educational needs' published in January 2009. The guidance sets out inclusive design principles, that will underpin new and remodelled facilities.
- The main purpose of the review is to align provision more closely to need. Improved provision is proposed for children with ASC, SpLD, BESD and SLCN.

Home to school travel policy

A copy of the authority's Home to School Travel Policy, which includes the provision of transport for children with statements of special educational needs, can be found on the Borough's website www.richmond.gov.uk/home_to_school_travel_policy.pdf

Alternatively it can be requested by email SENConsultation@richmond.gov.uk or by calling **020 8891 7541**.

What happens next?

The consultation process ends on **31 March 2010**. Following the consultation period a report will be produced summarising the responses received together with recommendations. A decision will then be made on which proposals to progress and, where necessary, statutory notices will be published providing a further opportunity for representations before final decisions are made.

If you wish to respond, please complete and return the short form overleaf. Please return it by **31 March 2010** to:

SEN Consultation
London Borough of Richmond upon Thames
42 York Street, Twickenham, Middlesex, TW1 3BW

Email responses should be addressed to

SENConsultation@richmond.gov.uk

The following drop-in sessions have been arranged when any parent, governor, member of staff or other interested party is welcome to turn up, without an appointment, to seek clarification on the proposals from a senior officer and give their views. Children affected by the changes are also welcome.

- 10.00am to 5.00pm on Wednesday 17 March at Children's Services and Culture, Specialist Children's Services, 42 York Street, Twickenham, TW1 3BW.
- 5.00 to 8.30pm on Tuesday 23 March at Children's Services and Culture, Regal House, London Road, Twickenham, TW1 3QB.

A more detailed version of the SEN Improvement Test is available on the Council's website at:

www.richmond.gov.uk/sen_consultation

It can also be requested by email using the address above or by calling **020 8891 7541**. The Council's website also provides a link enabling the consultation document to be completed on line.

Response form

Consultation on review of SEN provision

Name _____

Address (Including postcode) _____

The school, if any, that your child attends or you are involved with _____

Please circle one of the following to indicate your interest in the consultation:

- Governor
- school staff member
- parent
- neighbouring authority
- PCT
- the voluntary sector
- trade union
- diocesan body
- other interested body (please state) _____

Do you agree with the proposal to invest further in SEN in Richmond Borough schools?

YES NO

Reasons

Do you support the specific proposals for schools?				
Phase 1 – Implement September 2010		Planned places	Yes	No
Orleans Park School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement – specific learning difficulties	6		
Grey Court School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement – speech language and communication needs	8		
Richmond House	To change its status to become a learning and multi agency centre to support children with BESD, who are statemented to mainstream schools	12		
The Gateway – ASC	Remain as an ASC gathered provision for Key Stages 3 and 4. Transfer responsibility to Clarendon School when Whitton becomes the Twickenham Academy	20		
Phase 2 – Implement September 2011 onwards				
Shene School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for speech language and communication needs – ASC focus	6		
Waldegrave	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for speech language and communication needs – ASC focus	6		
Hampton Academy	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for speech language and communication needs – ASC focus	6		
Christ's School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for specific learning difficulties	6		
Teddington School	Enhanced secondary specialist teaching arrangement for specific learning difficulties	6		

