

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

Autumn 2009

SEN

Special
educational needs

Proposals for improving the education of 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 Peoples Plan¹. It is part of an investment programme to provide better resources for all children in Richmond borough. This consultation leaflet sets out proposals to improve the provision for children with SEN in Richmond upon Thames mainstream primary schools. A similar consultation document covering secondary and special school provision will be available shortly.

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 152 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 that we will 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.

There will be four 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.

• **Early years provision**

We are proposing to increase specialist provision in line with identified special educational needs.

Areas for consultation

General proposals

- We would like to re-name the existing units as either gathered or enhanced specialist teaching provisions, as part of a need to develop more inclusive facilities and clarify their designation.
- 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 re-designate the two moderate learning difficulties units.
- We would like to improve the provision for behavioural, emotional and social development so that it is more effective and inclusive in approach.
- We would like to increase the provision for pupils with communication and interaction needs, particularly those with autism and challenging behaviour.
- We would like to increase levels of speech and language therapy support to schools so that current levels of need can be met.

1. The CYPP is available to download at 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
- BESD behavioural, emotional and social development
- MLD moderate learning difficulties

Provision	Proposals	Education staffing arrangements	Planned places	Comments
Phase 1 – Implement September 2010				
Darell Primary School	Develop existing unit as a gathered provision for severe and complex learning difficulties at Key Stage 1	One teacher and two learning support assistants	8	Move to ground floor as part of expansion of school
The Russell Primary School	Develop existing unit as a gathered provision for severe and complex learning difficulties with ASC at Key Stage 1. Reduce places from eight to five	One teacher and 1.4 learning support assistants	5	
Oldfield House	To become the hub for enhanced specialist teaching provision – Key Stage 2 BESD	One teacher and two learning support assistants	4	
Hampton Hill Junior, Holy Trinity and East Sheen primary schools	Enhanced primary specialist provision BESD for Key Stage 2	Two learning support assistants for each school	9 (3 each school)	New teaching area at Holy Trinity to be provided as part of the school rebuild and expansion
Jigsaw (Windham)	Extend from four to five day ASC gathered provision with eight places: four am, four pm	One teacher and 1.4 learning support assistants	8 Part-time	

Provision	Proposals	Education staffing arrangements	Planned places	Comments
Phase 2 – Implement September 2011 onwards				
Stanley Infant School	Develop existing MLD unit as a 10 place (five am and five pm) foundation stage ASC gathered provision	One teacher and 1.8 learning support assistants	10 part time	Relocated to new teaching area as part of the school rebuild
Stanley Schools	Primary ASC gathered provision – additional 12 ASC places for Key Stages 1 and 2	One teacher and 2.5 learning support assistants	12	New teaching area to be provided as part of the school rebuild and expansion

Provision	Proposals	Education staffing arrangements	Planned places	Comments
No change				
Buckingham Primary School	Maintain as a gathered provision to meet severe and complex needs at Key Stage 1	No change	8	
George Tancred Centre (St James Primary School)	Maintain as ASC gathered provision at Key Stages 1 and 2	No change	10	
Heathfield Junior School	Maintain as Key Stage 2 enhanced specialist teaching provision for communication and interaction	No change	10	
Heathfield Infant School	Maintain as Key Stage 1 gathered provision for communication and interaction	No change	10	
St Mary's Primary School	Maintain as Key Stages 1 and 2 gathered provision for communication and interaction	No change	10	

The nursery places at The Croft and Stanley Infants School are part-time only. If in the future it becomes necessary to provide full time places, provision could be made at Marshgate Primary School. Alternatively, the available space could be used for a bulge class.

If additional places are needed for children with speech, language and communication needs, resourced provision could be developed at Chase Bridge Primary 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
- Over supply of Key Stage 1 unit provision for moderate learning difficulties
- Provision for pupils with more complex and challenging needs.

Between January 2005 and January 2008 there were significant increases in the total number of pupils with autistic spectrum conditions (28%), general learning difficulties (38%) and speech, language and communication needs (33%). In contrast, there were significant decreases in the number of pupils with moderate learning difficulties (15%) and severe learning difficulties (26%). This indicates that pupils' needs are changing and future provision will need to reflect these trends.

In April 2009, the number of independent placements was 152. The particular areas of need where the authority has made most use of independent placements are:

- autistic spectrum conditions;
- specific learning difficulties; (e.g. dyslexia) – secondary phase only
- 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.

If the above proposals are implemented, we do not intend to change the placement of children currently with statements, although we may look at children attending all age independent schools at the normal age of secondary transfer.

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. 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 which will underpin new and remodelled facilities.

- The main purpose of the review is to align provision more closely to need. In the primary phase, additional places are proposed for children with ASC and BESD. There will be a reduction in places attached to mainstream schools for pupils with moderate learning difficulties.

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 5 November 2009. Following the consultation period a report will be produced summarising the responses received. 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.

Open public meetings will take place at:

- 7.30pm on 13 October at Stanley Junior School, Stanley Road, Teddington TW11 8UE
- 5.00pm on 19 October at The Russell Primary School, Petersham Road, Richmond TW10 7AH
- 4.15pm on 20 October at Holy Trinity CE Primary School, Carrington Road, Richmond TW10 5AA

Staff will be available so that you can ask questions and give your views.

Alternatively you can complete and return the short response form overleaf. Please return the completed form by 5 November 2009 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

A more detailed explanation of the proposals and SEN Improvement Test are available on the Council's website at: www.richmond.gov.uk/sen_consultation They can also be requested by email using the address above or by calling **020 8891 7541**

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
Darell Primary School	Develop existing unit as a gathered provision for severe and complex learning difficulties at Key Stage 1	8		
The Russell Primary School	Develop existing unit as a gathered provision for severe and complex learning difficulties with ASC at Key Stage 1. Reduce places from eight to five	5		
Oldfield House	To become the hub for enhanced specialist teaching provision – Key Stage 2 BESD	4		
Holy Trinity Primary School	Enhanced specialist teaching provision for Key Stage 2 BESD	3		
Hampton Hill Junior School	Enhanced specialist teaching provision for Key Stage 2 BESD	3		
East Sheen Primary School	Enhanced specialist teaching provision for Key Stage 2 BESD	3		
Jigsaw (Windham)	Extend from four to five day ASC gathered provision with eight places: four am, four pm	8 Part-time		
Phase 2 – Implement September 2011 onwards				
Stanley Infant School	Develop existing MLD unit as a 10 place foundation stage ASC gathered provision	10 Part-time		
Stanley Schools	Primary ASC gathered provision – additional 12 ASC places for Key Stages 1 and 2	12		

