

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Decision Maker:	Executive Lead Member for Children's Services
Date:	31 March 2010
Title:	Formal consultation on Specific Learning Difficulty resourced provision for the North East area of Hampshire
Reference:	1445
Report From:	Director of Children's Services

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1. Executive Summary

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to seek permission to hold a formal consultation to establish a resourced provision for pupils of secondary school age who have a specific learning difficulty (SpLD). The resourced provision is to serve the needs of the pupils currently attending schools in the north east area of Hampshire

1.2. Background:

- The requirement for a resourced provision for pupils with SpLD has come about due to the imminent closure of Oak Farm School in July 2011. Oak Farm School is the mainstream secondary that currently has the resourced provision that serves this area of Hampshire
- Wavell School Farnborough, has put forward a proposal and this is being considered with the school to establish a clear understanding of expectations and requirements
- All secondary schools in the relevant geographical area of Hampshire were invited to express an interest in submitting a bid to host the resourced provision. Four of the local schools expressed an interest, and by the deadline date one bid had been received
- It is intended that the funding for this project will comprise monies needed to refurbish existing space in the school. The existing budget for the resourced provision currently allocated to Oak Farm School will be

transferred to the school which will host the resourced provision from September 2011

- Although initially the resourced provision will have fewer pupils, as it becomes established, it is envisaged it could in time be able to take up to 20 secondary school aged pupils who have a specific learning difficulty, from the north east area of Hampshire. This is the number of pupils the resourced provision at Oak Farm was intended for, though numbers have been reducing in recent years.
- Although staff at the school have some experience and qualifications in dealing with pupils with SpLD, there will be an expectation that more training will be made available, and will reflect the recommendations of the Rose Report (<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/jimroseanddyslexia>). It is also expected that the school will recruit a specialist SpLD teacher to manage the resourced provision on a day to day basis, and to provide the intensive teaching and interventions that children with SpLD will require.
- It is envisaged that there will be a handover period whereby staff at Oak Farm School will liaise with and support staff at the school which will be hosting the provision from September 2011.
- The former teacher in charge of the resourced provision at Oak Farm School has recently retired. It is understood there are two Learning Support Assistants employed at Oak Farm School who have training in SpLD, and due consideration will need to be made to their possible redeployment at the new resourced provision.

2. Contextual information

2.1. There has been a resourced provision for pupils with SpLD in this area of the county for many years. Although numbers have fluctuated, there is a definite need for this kind of specialist provision to be maintained. Uniquely, pupils can be allocated places in a resourced provision for SpLD without a statement of special educational needs, though in practise many pupils whose needs meet the criteria for a place in a resourced provision for SpLD have had a statutory assessment, and do have a statement of special educational need. The numbers accessing the resourced provision have reduced in recent years, but it is thought this is due to the uncertainty of the future of the school currently hosting the provision. It was agreed by the SEN service that no more children would be placed in the SpLD provision at Oak Farm School after September 2009, due to the likelihood that they would not be able to complete their five years of secondary education at the school. At the last Local Assessment and Placement Advisory Group (LAPAG) meeting held in the autumn term, there were nine year 5 pupils in this area of Hampshire for consideration of a place at a resourced provision for SpLD

- 2.2. The requirement for a resourced provision for children with SpLD is exacerbated in this geographical area of the county due a lack of alternative maintained provision in the area.
- 2.3. When the possible closure of Oak Farm School was being discussed, it was made clear by The Cabinet that the education of pupils within the SpLD provision at Oak Farm School should not be compromised, and due consideration needed to be given to the future of the SpLD provision for this area of Hampshire.

3. Finance

- 3.1. Ideally the provision will be housed within current school accommodation, though it is recognized that some consideration will need to be given to the extent of any modifications that may be necessary which could be funded from the targeted capital funding programme. The targeted capital funding (special educational needs) allocation for 2010/11 has the SpLD resourced provision identified, although the actual amount allocated has yet to be decided and will depend on its location being confirmed.
- 3.2. Revenue funding will be through the school's budget and at current (09/10) costs will be £7600 per place, giving a minimum of £76,000 for 10 places initially, not including the age weighted pupil unit of funding. For 2010/11 the SpLD resourced provision funding is estimated to be £7,843 per place per annum, giving a total of £78, 430 for ten pupils. This could increase through the annual place number review process to reflect the number of pupils taking up places in the resourced provision, not exceeding 20 places, as the unit becomes established.
- 3.3. Specific costs for any refurbishment that may be needed will be identified following a site visit to the school so that the most cost effective ways of ensuring a suitable environment for the SpLD resourced provision can be explored.
- 3.4. It is envisaged that some of the specialist equipment currently used by the SpLD resourced provision at Oak Farm School will be transferred to the new provision, but in addition to this there is likely to be some initial expenditure, including some personal computers and laptops for the pupils with SpLD who will be accessing the resourced provision. Some of these costs will be met from monies which will be made available through the standard setting up rate payable for new resourced provisions.
- 3.5. Any refurbishment or new building work that needs to be carried out will have due regard to the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 to increase the accessibility of schools for disabled people and to prepare accessibility strategies in line with the school's disability equality scheme.
- 3.6. The school that is currently being considered as a possible venue for the SpLD resourced provision is 3.4 miles away from Oak Farm School, so there would be negligible impact on the transport costs for pupils accessing the provision from the north east area of Hampshire

4. Performance

- 4.1. The pupils allocated places at the resourced provision will have their performance tracked to ensure they are achieving good outcomes, and that the specialist interventions made available for these pupils can be evidenced through measurable gains.

5. Other key issues

- 5.1. Hampshire has 6 resourced provisions for children of secondary school age with an identified specific learning difficulty.(SpLD) :

School:	Eggar's	Applemore	Fort Hill	Oak Farm	Crestwood	Cowplain
Area served:	Alton area	West Hampshire	Basingstoke	North East Hampshire	West Hampshire	South Hampshire
Number of pupils in the resourced provision	18	18	20	3	21	30

- 5.2. The number of places being accessed at the Oak Farm School resourced provision has reduced over the last few years, partly in line with the number on roll in the school, and additionally the local authority has not placed children in the resourced provision once the decision was made for the school to close.
- 5.3. There is a necessity to have a SpLD resourced provision in a well regarded secondary school in the north east area of the county so that we are able to offer high quality provision in the maintained sector.
- 5.4. Pupils who have a specific learning difficulty and who are due for secondary transfer are identified during year 5, so that careful transition plans can be put in place, including consideration being given to which of these pupils will need a place in one of the local authority's resourced provisions for pupils with a specific learning difficulty. Each year a panel meets to discuss these pupils, and decisions are made as to which children require a place according to published criteria. In the autumn term 2009, 28 year 5 pupils were brought to this panel seeking places in the resourced provisions, of which 23 were allocated a place.
- 5.5. The SpLD resourced provision will ensure that pupils in the north east area of the county will be enabled to attend a school with skilled staff able to provide high quality specialised teaching and a personalised curriculum differentiated according to their specific needs which enables them to learn and make measurable progress

6. Recommendation(s)

- 6.1. That a formal consultation is undertaken with relevant stakeholders in relation to the proposal to establish a resourced provision for pupils of secondary school age who have a specific learning difficulty (SpLD) in the north east of Hampshire.

CORPORATE OR LEGAL INFORMATION:**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Maximising well-being:	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
Enhancing our quality of place:	Yes
Corporate Improvement plan link number (if appropriate):	
OR	
This proposal does not link to the Corporate Strategy but, nevertheless, requires a decision because:	
<i>NB: Only complete this section if you have not completed any of the Corporate Strategy tick boxes above. If it is not applicable, please delete.</i>	

NB: If the 'Other significant links' section below is not applicable, please delete it.

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u> Oak Farm Paper	<u>Reference</u> 631	<u>Date</u> 24.04.2009
Direct links to specific legislation or Government Directives		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Date</u>	

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equalities Impact Assessment:

- 1.1. Increased opportunity for access to high quality provision for children with special educational needs

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

- 2.1.

3. Climate Change:

- a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

- b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?