

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

2011-2012

This document sets out Wiltshire Council's priorities for special educational needs developments in 2011 and 2012. Its purpose is to provide a transparent summary that enables parents and carers, educational settings and a range of agencies to work together for the benefit of vulnerable children and young people in our county.

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The context of Special Educational Needs developments:

The vision of Wiltshire's Children and Young People's Trust Board is: 'To improve outcomes for children and young people in Wiltshire and to promote and support resilient individuals, families and communities.' Wiltshire Council's Department for Children and Education (DCE) both leads, and works with others, to realise this vision for **all** our children and young people.

Actions implemented in relation to children and young people with special educational needs (SEN) that support this vision are set in the context of a legal and national policy framework which includes: The Education Act (1996), The SEN and Disability Act (2001), The Children Act (2004), Removing Barriers to Achievement (2004).

The key areas for development have been informed by Wiltshire's 2010 Review of Special Educational Provision and the broad consultation undertaken between February and May 2010.

<http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/schoolseducationandlearning/specialeducationalneeds/seninfoforparents/senconsultations.htm>

The pattern of future SEN developments will be flexible to enable Wiltshire Council to respond to any new legislation that may follow the publication by national government of a Green Paper on Special Educational Needs and Disability in spring 2011 and any changes which will result from the establishment of Academies.

Key areas of development:

i. Mainstream special educational needs (SEN) funding

Money that can be used flexibly within mainstream schools' budgets is known as delegated funds. Increasing how much of the funding for SEN is delegated in mainstream schools' budgets is beneficial in a number of ways. It enables schools to plan longer term more effectively e.g. retaining staff with expertise. Schools are able to be more responsive to the needs pupils have e.g. shifting support to increase early intervention. And, increasing the level of delegated funds also leads to a reduction in bureaucracy e.g. less teacher time spent in making applications for funding for individual pupils.

The 2010 SEN Review supported consideration of increased delegation. Work was therefore undertaken by staff from schools and Wiltshire Council to consider what level of funding for SEN should go direct to mainstream schools' budgets, and, how it should be distributed between schools. From April 2011 across Wiltshire mainstream schools: primary schools will have delegated funding equivalent up to the first 10 hours of SEN provision for all types of SEN and secondary schools will have delegated funding equivalent up to the first 15 hours of SEN provision.

Having clarity in funding systems supports better understanding of SEN arrangements. Greater financial transparency enables clearer communication between parents/carers, schools and settings, and Wiltshire Council about how pupils' needs can be met. One part of this is confirming the proportion of general school delegated funding has always been available to mainstream schools to put some aspects of SEN provision in place. To support greater transparency Wiltshire Council wishes to provide SEN finance information for individual schools which is straightforward to understand and also intends to publish summary SEN finance information about all Wiltshire schools.

We will know we have been successful when:

- The total amount of money delegated for SEN has increased
- Schools receive the new level of delegated funding
- New funding statements are issued to individual schools
- A summary list of all schools and their SEN funding is available on the Wiltshire Council website.

ii. Inclusion Service

To be responsive to meeting the SEN of children and young people across Wiltshire it is important to build the capacity of schools and settings. Wiltshire Council has a key role in providing advice to primary and secondary schools on SEN system issues and how to meet higher level SEN needs. This is particularly important for primary schools so that all schools can provide the same level of inclusion. The 2010 SEN Review supported drawing together expertise from a number of the current services for SEN to establish a county wide SEN Inclusion Service.

We will know we have been successful when:

- The SEN Inclusion Service is established in two teams - one for North and East Wiltshire, and, one for the West and South
- Information is available to schools and parents/carers about how the service is accessed and the support available.

iii. Specialist Learning Centres

Specialist learning centres are a valuable part of the continuum of SEN provision in Wiltshire. Hosted by mainstream schools across Wiltshire they make provision that is more specialist than the SEN arrangements generally available in mainstream schools. The 2010 SEN Review considered the number, capacity and role of specialist learning centres. As a result of the consultation on the SEN Review some changes are to be implemented to the pattern of centres across the county and how they operate.

The specialist learning centre provision made by some schools will close from the end of August 2011 enabling resources previously allocated for unused provision to be re-directed to the benefit of other children and young people with SEN. The remaining specialist learning centres will become known as Resource Bases from September 2011. For a full list of Resource Base provision in Wiltshire showing which schools make this provision, the type of SEN catered for, and the number of pupils who can access it please see [Special Educational Needs Information for Parents](#)

Service level agreements will be established with each school hosting a Resource Base and revised funding arrangements will be put in place to reflect the number of pupils catered for and the complexity of their needs.

We will know we have been successful when:

- Example Wiltshire Resource Base Service Level Agreement documents are available on the Wiltshire Council website
- New funding arrangements for Resource Bases are in place
- There is a published programme of opportunities for mainstream schools to access the expertise of Resource Bases.

iv. Special Schools and Post 16 provision

The SEN Review considered the designation of Wiltshire's six special schools however it was decided from the outset not to undertake significant consideration of this important, specialist provision during 2010 because of the challenging timescale required by other aspects of the review. With regard to post-16 SEN provision Wiltshire Council, along with other local authorities, was due to take over responsibility for post-16 strategic planning from the Learning and Skills Council on 1 April 2010. The Children's Services Select Committee of Wiltshire Council in November 2010 established a task group to examine what special school and post-16 SEN provision is needed in Wiltshire and how it could be provided.

We will know we have been successful when:

- The Task Group have engaged with special schools and Wiltshire College and spoken with parents, children and young people, staff and governors
- The Task Group has explored 'best practice' arrangements in other local authorities
- The Task Group has reported to Children's Service Select Committee and the findings and principles established inform the next review of Wiltshire's SEN provision in 2012.

v. Working with parents and carers

Working in partnership with parents and carers is essential to support positive outcomes for children and young people. In Wiltshire the SEN Parents' Forum has been in operation since 2006, this has provided positive and mutually respectful opportunities to discuss aspects of SEN. It is now timely for the Parent Partnership Service and Wiltshire Council to work together to develop the model of constructive engagement further with new consultative arrangements coming into place during 2011.

We will know we have been successful when:

- Information setting out how parents and carers can engage in the new consultative arrangements are published on the websites of both the Parent Partnership Service and Wiltshire Council
- The first face to face meeting has taken place and terms of reference have been agreed.