

SCHOOLS FORUM – 21ST JANUARY 2009

BRIEFING PAPER ON SPECIAL SCHOOL / BASE PROVISION IN WIRRAL AND OUT OF AUTHORITY

Introduction

The Schools Forum on 8 October 2008 requested a description of SEN provision in Wirral. Appendix A provides information on our 13 schools including Wirral Hospital School and our Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) WASP. Appendix B includes details about our primary bases for pupils with difficulties and Secondary Bases. In addition an update on independent school provision is included.

Background

The pattern of SEN provision varies from one Local Authority to another. Variation in the pattern of provision is related to local and national policy, levels of need, historical reasons and can be influenced by geographical factors.

Wirral's pattern of provision is different from other authorities in so much as we have more children in Special Schools than every other authority.

Secondary Special School Provision

We have one Secondary school, Clare Mount that caters for pupils with mainly Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD), two schools Foxfield and Meadowside cater for pupils with Severe, Profound and Complex Learning Difficulties. (SLD/CLD)

Two schools for pupils with Social, Emotional and Behaviours Difficulties (SEBD), Kilgarth and Observatory School. In addition we have Wirral Hospital School catering for secondary pupils with a range of health difficulties and a Pupil Referral Unit, WASP for pupils excluded or in danger of being excluded.

Primary Special School Provision

Primary provision includes three schools for children with Complex Difficulties, Elleray, Stanley and Lyndale. One school Gilbrook for SEBD pupils, Hayfield caters for MLD and Communication Difficulties and Orrets Meadow provides for primary aged children with Specific Learning Difficulties.

Educational Inclusion Bases / Resourced Provision

Appendix B sets out the details of the 224 pupils who attend either a Primary Education Inclusion Base (EIB) or a Secondary Resource Provision. The most recent development has been the Resourced Provision at Hilbre, Wallasey, Bebington and Odershaw.

Places at these four schools became available in September 2008, an additional choice is now available for parents of children with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).

Independent Special Schools

Appendix C lists Independent not maintained Special Schools used by Wirral

In December 2008, 93 pupils attended Out of Authority places at a cost of £3,568,537, in 2004 this was 126 children. Pupils who attend provision can be categorised under a broad heading often, however, they may have more than one need.

The largest group are those with Social, Emotional and Behavioural difficulties, 46. The second are those on the Autism Spectrum. Three pupils with sensory difficulties are placed in Independent Non Maintained Special Schools, five with Complex difficulties.

It is anticipated that as increasing numbers of pupils with moderate learning difficulties have their needs met in secondary additionally resourced provision and Clare Mount cater for pupils on the autistic spectrum the number being placed in independent provision will reduce.

Recommendation

That this report be noted.