

PLACES IN SPECIALIST PROVISION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. This report outlines the processes and progress in managing places in specialist SEN provision. Specialist SEN provision means special schools, of which there are eleven, or resourced provision, often called units or bases, which are part of mainstream schools and academies. A list of this provision is available in Table A.
2. Currently, we have been implementing local processes to manage places. In the future, starting in April 2013, when new national funding arrangements begin, we will have to negotiate our place numbers in specialist SEN provision on a two yearly cycle with the Education Funding Agency (EFA). For budget setting for April 2013 the EFA will be using our current place numbers unless we discuss changes with them in July 2012.
3. This paper describes the proposals for places changes on which we are currently consulting schools and hope to negotiate with the EFA.

Background

4. In keeping with our statutory duty to keep provision constantly under review we are currently in varying stages of discussion and planning with a number of providers about place numbers. This report summarises them. Table A provides a list of current specialist provision, the number of places currently commissioned and proposed changes.
 - 4.1 We have put measures in place for The Lyndale Primary Special School and Foxfield Secondary Special School to have their budgets reduced in September 2012 and the number of their places reduced by five in April 2013 through a reverse trigger mechanism.
 - 4.2 We are proposing an increase in the number of places at Gilbrook Primary Special School from 50 to 55. This is because the number of pupils on roll has been regularly above this number over recent years and a clear trend in the need for provision has been established. The school has received monies, part - year, from the closure of Brookdale Inclusion Base in August 2011. It is proposed that the full year allocation remains with Gilbrook and the number of places is increased to 55 from April 2012.

Gilbrook School also provides, with Forum agreement, an Outreach Service to all primary schools. The first full year report of that service is attached to this report.

The school has also provided education for pupils on the first day of a fixed-term exclusion for a number of years costing £40,000. Governors recently decided that the school no longer wished to provide that service under existing arrangements and funding has temporarily ceased. The LA is currently to start discussions about a new agreement with the school to commission exclusion provision for the 6th day of a fixed-term exclusion.
 - 4.3 Preliminary discussions have also been undertaken with Rock Ferry Primary School about the future of the base commissioned for pupils with moderate learning difficulties and whether it would like to consider changing its designation

to another type of SEN. This is because there is a clear downward trend in the numbers of pupils attending the base. The school does not want to change its designation and therefore we propose closing it at the end of the academic year 2013.

- 4.4 Elleray Park School has been over its place number for the last three years. In the January census for 2012 it had 84 pupils, in 2011 78 and in 2010 76 pupils. We propose changing the number of places from 75 to 80.

RECOMMENDATIONS

5. That the Forum note and agree the proposals in the funding consultation about future places in specialist provision:
 - 5.1 reduce the number of places at Foxfield from 138 to 133 from April 2013;
 - 5.2 reduce the number of places at The Lyndale from 45 to 40 from April 2013;
 - 5.3 increase the number of places from Gilbrook from 50 to 55 in September 2012 using the money from the closure of Brookdale base;
 - 5.4 increase the number of places at Elleray park school from 75 to 80 from April 2013;
 - 5.5 close the moderate learning difficulties base at Rock Ferry from April 2013.
6. That the Forum supports the LA moving these proposals forward through Cabinet and with the EFA, unless the outcome of the funding consultation determines otherwise.
7. That Gilbrook School is commissioned to provide education from the 6th day of a fixed-term exclusion from September 2012.

David Armstrong
Acting Director of Children's Services

Table A. Proposed Places in Specialist Provision for Academic Year 2013-14

Name of Provision	Current Number of Places	Increase / Decrease	Changes for April 2013
Special Schools:			
Elleray Park Primary CLD	75	5	80
Lyndale Primary CLD	45	(5)	40
Stanley Primary CLD	90		
Gilbrook Primary BESD	50	5	55
Hayfield Primary MLD/SCD	120		
Clare Mount Secondary MLD/SCD	189		
Foxfield Secondary CLD	138	(5)	133
Kilgarth Secondary BESD	50		
Observatory Secondary BESD	50		
Meadowside Secondary CLD	75		
Orrets Meadow Primary SpLD	66		
Resourced Provision:			
New Brighton Primary L&MLD	22		
Devonshire Park Primary SCD	26		
Rock Ferry Primary MLD	12	(12)	0
Fender Primary SCD	16		
Eastway Primary SCD	16		
Woodslee Primary SCD	8		
Priory Primary L	10		
Bidston Primary MLD	24		
Townfield Primary Hearing	12		
University Academy of Birkenhead Secondary SpLD	40		
Woodchurch Secondary SCD	15		
Oldershaw Secondary MLD	20		
Hilbre Secondary MLD/SCD	15		
Bebington Secondary MLD	20		
Wallasey Secondary MLD	25		
Alternative Provision:			
St Michaels Primary Behaviour	8		
Riverside Primary Behaviour	8		
Hospital School Secondary			
Wirral's Alternative Schools Programme Secondary Behaviour			

CLD: Complex Learning Difficulties
 MLD: Moderate Learning Difficulties
 BESD: Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties
 L: Language Difficulties
 Behaviour: Risk of Exclusion