

Report of the Director of Children’s Services

High Needs Funding and Places 2017-18

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

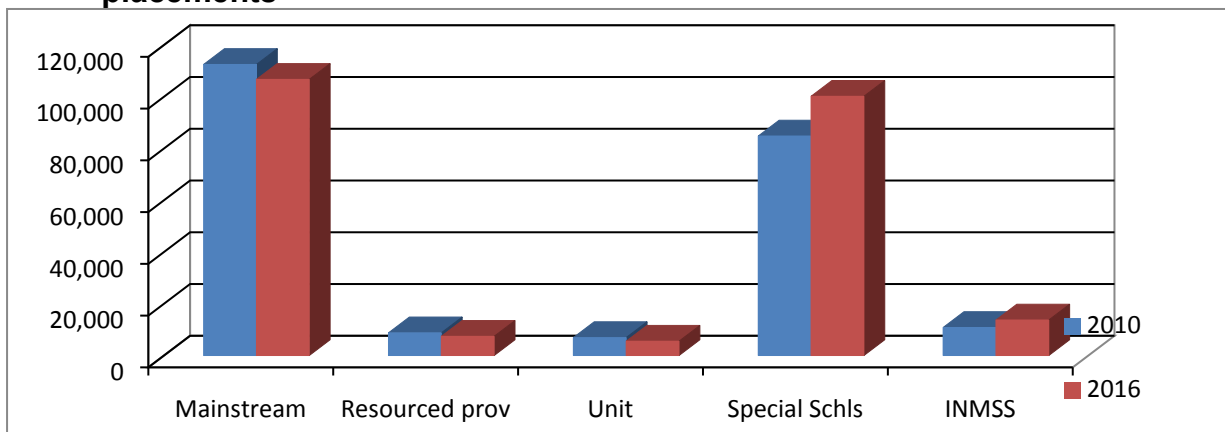
This report summarises the current position of High Needs places and makes recommendations to consult with schools and providers in respect of changes in mainstream specialist provision and special schools with effect from September 2017.

2.0 Background

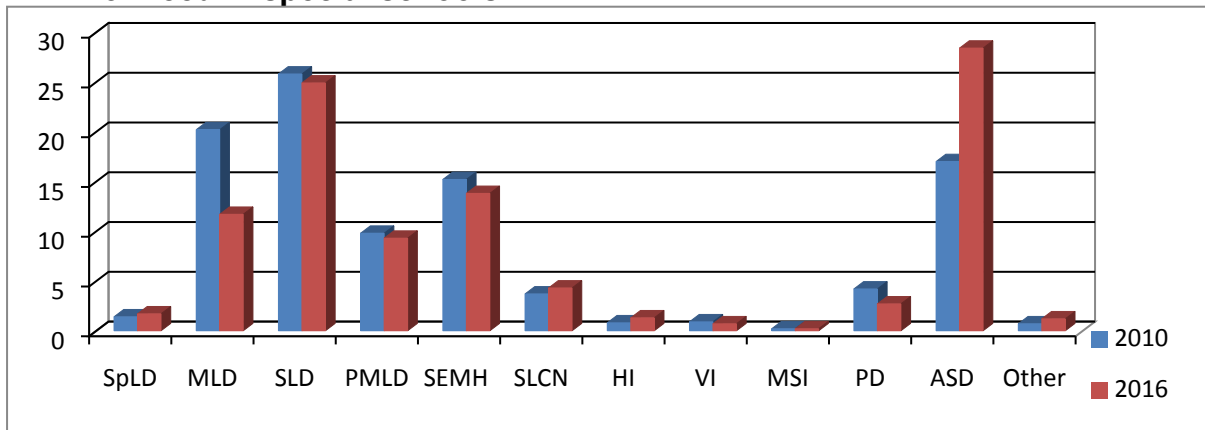
There has been a marked change in placements for SEN Children and Young People since 2010 to 2016. Recent information from the Department for Education highlights the reduction of CYP with EHC plans and statements in mainstream schools, resourced provision and units. This has resulted in the numbers in special schools and independent maintained schools increasing.

There has also been a change in the type of need of pupils with EHC plans/ statements in special schools in the North West. The MLD population has decreased and the ASC population has increased.

Department for Education EHC plans/ Statements- Changes in placements

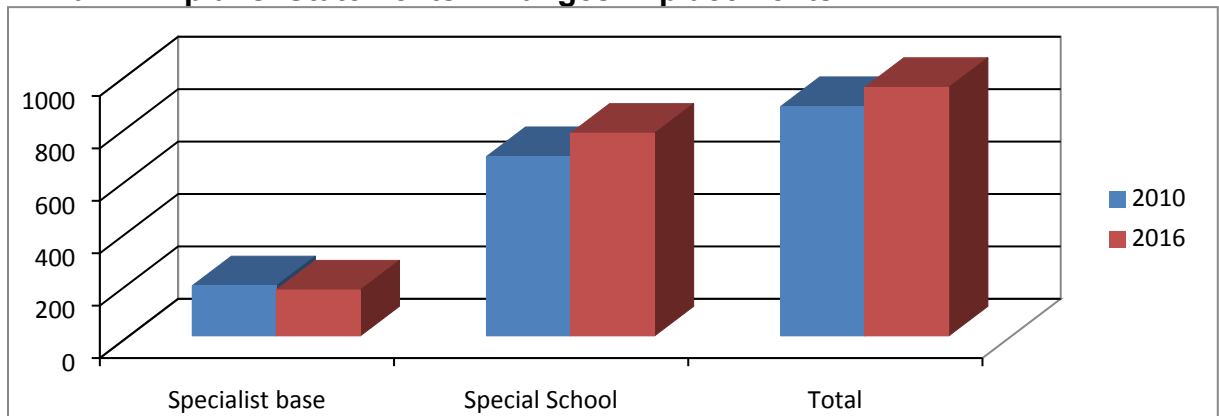


Department for Education %pupils with EHC Plans/ statements by type of need in special schools in NW

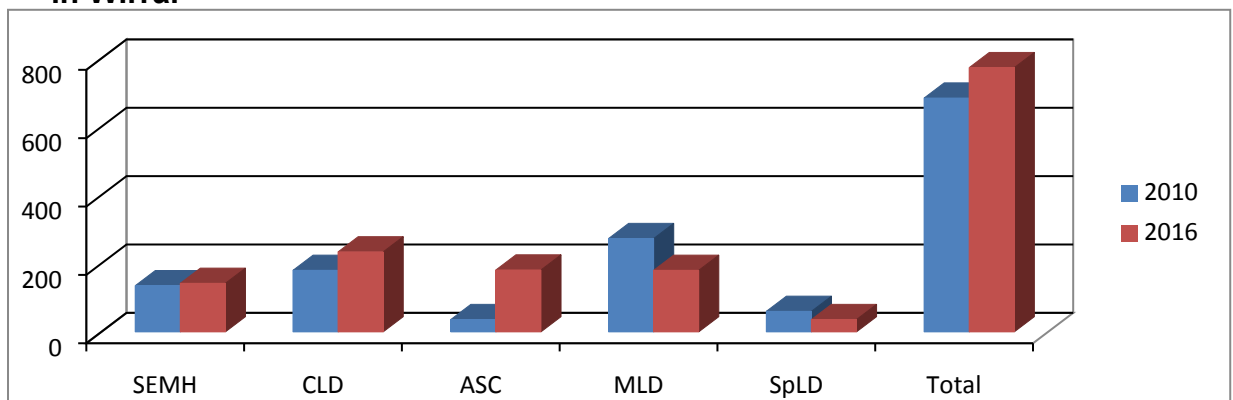


Wirral figures reflect the national picture with a decreasing number of SEN pupils in mainstream resourced provision. There has been approximately a 13% growth in the special school population and an 8% decrease in the specialist base resource population since 2010-2016. However, as Wirral figures in the special school sector were already much higher than the national average, this growth and the overall growth in SEN numbers is placing the High Needs budget under considerable strain. The majority of provision in the Special School Sector and Specialist Base provision is full from September 16.

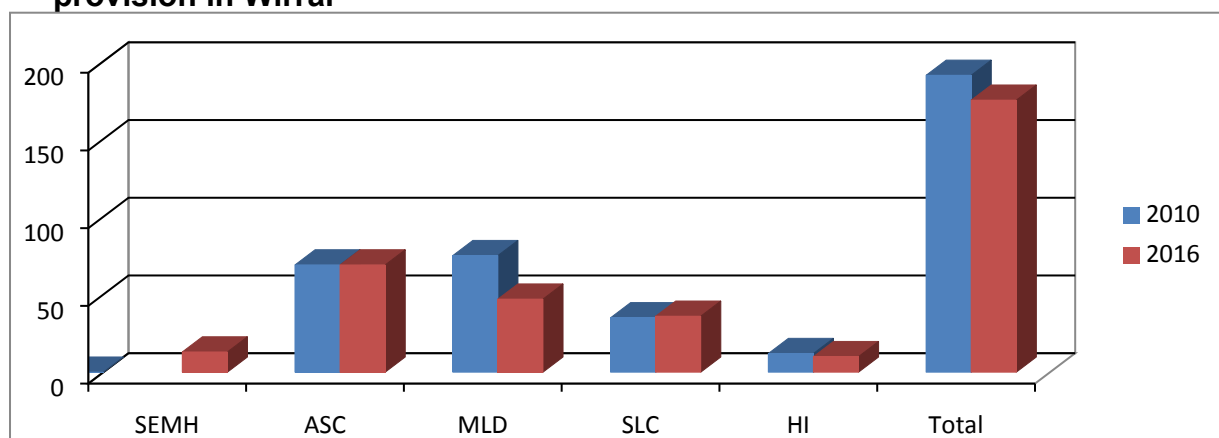
Wirral EHC plans/ Statements- Changes in placements



%pupils with EHC Plans/ statements by type of need in special schools in Wirral



%pupils with EHC Plans/ statements by type of need in specialist base provision in Wirral



2.1 Special School Figures

The two sectors with that have grown considerably since 2010 is provision for Complex Learning Difficulties (CLD) and for Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC).

2.2 Complex Learning Difficulties

There are currently sufficient funded places to meet demand at primary level. At secondary level the picture is different. Over the past number of years there have been significantly more parents/ carers showing a preference for Foxfield as opposed to Meadowside. Place funded numbers are at capacity at Foxfield whilst Meadowside has 22 unfilled places. The LA is meeting with both schools to address the challenges faced and to consider what options are available.

2.3 Autistic Spectrum Condition

The provision for ASC is located in 2 special primary schools, Hayfield and Orrets Meadow and 1 secondary special school Clare Mount. Hayfield and Clare Mount also cater for pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) and Orrets for pupils with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD). The LA over the years has negotiated a reduction in places at these schools for MLD and SpLD to accommodate the growing numbers of ASC pupils. These negotiations to reduce places for MLD and SpLD will continue during this academic year to ensure that the LA has sufficient provision for its ASC population. As all three schools are full, there will be no capacity for the schools to admit MLD or SpLD pupils during 2016-2017 and reduced capacity during 2017-2018. The LA will be supporting these pupils in either their mainstream school or in other specialist provision. The number of pupils on roll at Clare Mount has increased. This is partly because of the growth in ASC pupils and partly because of the growth in pupils remaining for Post 16 provision rather than accessing College Provision. The school is currently funded for 204 pupils with 216 currently on roll. The Authority is proposing to increase the schools' funded places to 216 from September 2017.

2.4 Specialist Provision

The LA has 18 specialist bases, 4 primary and 2 secondary ASC, 2 primary and 4 Secondary Education Inclusion Bases, 3 primary language bases, 2 KS1 SEMH bases and 1 hearing impaired base. Primary and secondary ASC provision is full in September

16 and will need to grow to accommodate the increasing numbers of pupils requiring support in a mainstream setting. The authority is considering increasing primary ASC provision and would welcome interest from schools keen to develop this provision. At secondary the LA is proposing to increase the provision at Hilbre from 15 to 30. Hilbre will offer 11-18 provision for these pupils.

Provision for pupils in the primary EIB bases continues to be predominately full. There are currently 5 spaces and the LA anticipates that these will be filled throughout the year. The picture at secondary is different. There are currently 85 places with numbers on roll in September 2016 being 53. The LA is consulting on the closure of the bases at Birkenhead High and Kingsway Academy bases. The LA has had informal meetings with both schools to outline their thoughts and further discussions will be taking place during this term. The proposed reduction in places will ensure that all funded provision is fully utilised and will allow for a growth in other areas of need. In line with the 2014 Code of Practice these bases will be known as Cognition and Learning -Inclusive Provision.

2.5 Alternative Provision- (AP)

There has been an increase in both fixed term and permanent exclusions from 2014/15 to 2015/16. The rise in permanent exclusions has had a significant impact upon the request for places at Emslie Morgan.

Total number of schools giving fixed period exclusions

Year	Primary	Secondary	Special		Total
14-15	40	19	6		65
15-16	34	17	4		55

Total number of fixed period exclusions

Year	Primary	Secondary	Special		Total	Total no as % of NOR
14-15	240	1228	148		1616	3.3
15-16	218	1542	171		1931	3.9

Total number of pupils given fixed period exclusions

Year	Primary	Secondary	Special		Total
14-15	116	722	74		912
15-16	103	818	66		987

Total number of schools giving permanent exclusions

Year	Primary	Secondary	Special		Total
14-15	2	11	0		13
15-16	3	12	0		15

Total number of pupils given permanent exclusions

Year	Primary	Secondary	Special		Total
14-15	2	39	0		41
15-16	3	45	0		48

The LA has commissioned 80 AP places at Emslie Morgan. It has become apparent over the last couple of years that the number of funded places has been insufficient to meet demand. During the summer term 16 the number of required places exceeded the place number. The May 16 census highlighted that 122 pupils were on roll. The Local Authority is proposing to increase the place numbers at Emslie Morgan to 100.

The Local Authority will be working with schools to reduce the number of exclusions and to reduce the pressure on Emslie Morgan for places.

2.6 Place changes - summary

Proposed Changes in High Needs Places - Maintained and Academy Schools App.x 1

	Pupils Summer 2016	Pupils Autumn 2016	Funded Place Number	Proposed Autumn 2017	Change	Reason
Sp Schools						
Elleray Park	104	111	110	110	0	
Gilbrook	57	48	55	55	0	
Hayfield	112	118	120	120	0	
Orrets	74	73	70	70	0	
Stanley	109	121	120	120	0	
Clare Mount	203	216	204	216	+12	Pupil growth
Foxfield	118	132	133	133	0	
Kilgarth	54	49	55	55	0	
Meadowside	57	53	75	75	0	
Observatory	53	50	55	55	0	
	941	971	997	1009	+12	
Alternative Provision						
Riverside SEMH Base	7	7	8	8	0	
St Michaels SEMH Base	8	8	8	8	0	
WHS	88	60	80	80	0	
Emslie Morgan	122	80	80	100	+20	Pupil growth
	225	155	176	196	+20	
Bases						
Bidston Village EIB	19	21	24	24	0	
New Brighton EIB	10	10	12	12	0	
Dev Park Lang Unit	14	10	10	10	0	
New Brighton Lang Unit	10	10	10	10	0	
The Priory	12	10	10	10	0	

Dev Park ASC Base	16	12	16	16	0	
Eastway ASC	15	16	16	16	0	
Fender ASC	11	14	16	16	0	
Woodslee ASC	8	5	8	8	0	
Townfield HI	10	11	10	10	0	
Bebington	16	20	25	25	0	
Birkenhead	7	4	20	0	-20 (proposed)	Closure
Hilbre High MLD/ASC	13	15	15	30	+15	Proposed increase in ASC/ post 16 provision
Kingsway	11	7	20	0	-20 (proposed)	Closure
Oldershaw	12	12	20	20	0	
Woodchurch ASC	9	15	15	15	0	
	193	192	247	222	-25	
Total	1359	1318	1420	1427	+7	

2.7 Post 16 Provision

Wirral Met College has met with the LA regarding an increase in places and funding for HNS for 2016/17. This was an exceptional request and followed the current Department for Education area based reviews of the post-16 education and training sector. As part of that process, Wirral Met College received feedback that their High Needs provision, although outstanding in quality, may not be cost-effective in terms of the amount they charge for the support they provide to students with SEND, particularly in their Prep 4 Life provision.

The College have therefore undertaken a review and re-structured their charges for support in their discrete 'Prep 4 Life' provision. The additional funding requested is both to increase the number of places as more eligible students have been identified who meet needs thresholds and to increase the level of Top Up funding provided.

The increase in places are from 72 to 109 (£222,000) and top ups in the region of £180,000. The total additional costs being discussed are £402,000 (full year) of which £72,000 has been previously agreed (and reported elsewhere on this agenda).

A further meeting will be arranged shortly, however the HNS block is fully committed for 2016/17. In 2017-18 there will be a request to increase in places to 109 (from 72).

Birkenhead 6th Form College have also indicated their numbers should increase from 60 to 65 from 2017 (£30,000).

3.0 Independent/Non Maintained Special Schools

3.1 Background Numbers

Year	Pupils	Cost £m
01.10	84	3.7
01.11	83	3.3
01.12	80	3.0
01.13	86	3.3
01.14	83	3.0
01.15	90	3.3
01.16	92	3.7

Note the costs from 2013-14 are mainly for top ups (place funding of £10k per place has been deducted and is not included in the overall cost).

Estimated Spend

The estimated spend for those pupils in attendance at Independent/Non Maintained Special Schools is £3,845,992 compared to a budget of spend is £3,689,000 (a potential overspend of £156,992). A significant contribution to this is the costs associated with West Kirby Residential School which has increased due to the enhanced bandings for some pupils and the retention of summer term leavers. The school is now offering pupils at post 16 a range of four options. These are

- A 5 day combined school/ Wirral Met placement
- An apprenticeship course
- An internship
- A one year A level course- transferring to a school/ college to complete their second year

The Local Authority will continue to meet with West Kirby Residential School to discuss post 16 provision. These pupils can have their needs met as part of the Authority's post 16 educational packages and the authority is keen for these pupils to be supported as part of their local community. Should however the uptake for the packages be high, then the estimated spend for the independent and non-maintained sector is likely to increase putting further strain on High Needs Budgets.

4.0 Financial Implications

At the time of writing the report there are potential additional costs that will need to be taken into account as part of the 2017-18 budget. These are as follows:

	Full year	Part Year
	£	£
High needs Places – Schools and Academies	20,000	12,000
Post 16 provision	432,000	422,000
Independent Special Schools	150,000	150,000
Reduction in Reserves	190,000	190,000
Total	792,000	774,000

Whilst there may be some growth in High Needs Funding Allocations announced as part of the schools budget settlement in December, allocations have not previously increased on this scale. In addition there may be other competing areas / demand pressures that may need to be considered.

It is important to understand that increasing places in provision is likely to be at the expense of other High Needs budgets such as “Top Up” funding and that as part of any consultation the questions “How should these changes be afforded?” needs to be asked.

Recommendations

That the Forum

1. Note the report and the pressures described
2. Refer the matter to the High Needs Working Group for further discussion
3. Endorse a Consultation with schools and providers to the place changes described

Julia Hassall
Director of Children Services