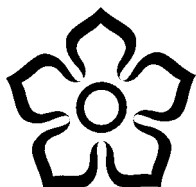


WARDS AFFECTED
All Wards



Leicester
City Council

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:

CABINET

17 June 2002

**REVIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATION –
SCHOOLS WITH ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (SARs)**

Report of the Assistant Director of Education (Pupil and Student Support)

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To inform Cabinet of the details of the key element in the strategy to provide greater opportunities for Inclusion for pupils with Special Educational Needs;
- 1.2 To seek Members' approval to undertake the relevant action to establish Schools with Additional Resources (SARs)
- 1.3 To note the request by Scrutiny Committee for Cabinet to consider an expansion of the SEN Project Board

2. Summary

- 2.1 The report suggests a strategy for increasing the inclusion opportunities for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) via an effective combination of partnerships between special and mainstream schools, additional revenue and capital funding and training programmes.
- 2.2 A similar strategy was proposed in the early stages of the SEN Review when 13 schools indicated an interest, It is expected that expressions of interest will increase with the availability of additional information on funding.
- 2.3 Mainstream schools with Additional Resources (SARs) will be provided with the resources necessary to meet the needs of pupils who might also be considered for places in special schools. The advantages of establishing this kind of provision are set out under paragraph 1.19.
- 2.4 Partnerships between the special and mainstream schools in Leicester will be essential to ensure the conservation and development of specialist expertise.

2.5 Development of SARs is considered in two phases: the consolidation of schools currently offering 'unit' provision into SARs; and the process of determining new SARs in consultation with schools. Examples of possible funding models are provided.

2.6 The recommendation of Scrutiny Committee that Cabinet should consider the concerns raised by professional associations and others over representation on the Project Board is addressed with suggestions for augmentation of Board membership, increasing the number of primary school representatives.

3. Recommendations

3.1 Cabinet Members are recommended to:

- i) approve consultation with schools on achieving SAR status;
- ii) approve a renegotiation of contracts with schools with special units to become SARs;
- iii) approve the establishing of formal partnerships between mainstream and special schools to increase inclusion opportunities; and
- iv) consider the possible expansion of the SEN Project Board

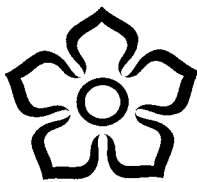
4. Headline Financial and Legal Implications

4.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report. Any costs can be contained within the relevant budgets designated for Special Educational Needs (SEN). Financial implications for schools are set out under paragraphs 1.22 -1.25 of the Supporting Information.

4.2 All proposed developments in provision for pupils with SEN contained within the report comply with the relevant legislation.

5. Report Author/Officer to contact:

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Leicester
City Council

**WARDS AFFECTED:
ALL WARDS (CORPORATE ISSUE)**

FORWARD TIMETABLE OF CONSULTATION AND MEETINGS:

CABINET

17 June 2002

REVIEW OF SPECIAL EDUCATION – SCHOOLS WITH ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (SARs)

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Report

Introduction

- 1.1 Most pupils with Special Educational Needs have always been educated in mainstream schools. Special schools have an important role to play in supporting those pupils with particularly complex needs. The expertise and resources that reside in the special sector must to be used to benefit more pupils. There are good examples of special schools working creatively with mainstream schools to provide effective support to pupils. There are also good examples of the provision made directly by mainstream schools. This needs to be built upon. The proposals in this paper do this by suggesting how mainstream provision can be enhanced through the establishment of schools with additional resources.

Background

- 1.2 In August 2000, the Education Committee approved a policy for Special Educational Needs based on the following aims:
- To ensure high levels of achievement, effective learning, progress and development for all pupils regardless of any special educational need.
 - To support Leicester schools in meeting the diversity of needs of all pupils with SEN increasingly within their own communities (i.e. “developing inclusive schools”).
 - To secure a range of provision appropriate to pupils’ individual needs.
 - To facilitate a high level of satisfaction and participation of pupils, parents and carers in determining how pupils’ needs are best met.
 - To ensure effective mechanisms which sustain consistent practice

across all City schools through a clear and common understanding of the respective responsibilities of schools and the LEA and the agreed procedures which ensure timely identification, assessment, monitoring, review and evaluation of needs, intervention and provision.

- To establish transparent mechanisms which resource schools and ensure all pupils' needs are appropriately met, wherever possible, without recourse to Statements of Special Educational Needs, and that for all pupils (including those with Statements, resources are used in a transparent and accountable manner.
- To ensure that schools identify and describe how they provide access to a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum, for all pupils.
- To facilitate collaboration in inclusive practices between all city schools.
- To ensure access to appropriate training and expertise to support the aims and objectives of the LEA's policy.

- 1.3 The publication of the Government-sponsored 'Index for Inclusion' (Centre for Studies in Inclusive Education) and other key documents - for example, 'Preventing Social Exclusion' (Social Exclusion Unit) and 'Valuing People' (Department of Health) were further evidence of a strong cross-departmental drive to promote Social Inclusion nationally.

This is further reinforced by the launch of a major initiative to establish a national Strategy for Children in 2002/3, led by the Children and Young People's Unit, which embraces the principles of Inclusion.

- 1.4 Locally, the issue is that of achieving further inclusion whilst protecting the entitlement of all pupils to a quality education. There are some persuasive arguments as to why it is helpful to educate pupils with special needs alongside their peers. Indeed, approximately one fifth of pupils have Special Educational Needs at some stage in their school careers and the vast majority of these pupils has always been educated in mainstream schools - and would continue to be educated in mainstream schools. Nevertheless, for some pupils with very special and complex needs there are, currently, powerful arguments for education in a special school. However, this does not mean that they cannot engage for some part of the curriculum with pupils who do not have special needs.
- 1.5 Special schools need to be special, not only in terms of their additional resources but also in relation to the expertise that they bring to the education of pupils with Special Educational Needs. Like all schools, they need to add value to the pupils' education. Staff in special schools often have qualifications and expertise that are not always reflected in mainstream schools. This needs to be capitalised upon for the good of all pupils. What is good practice for pupils with Special Educational Needs is frequently good practice for all. The expertise can be used, therefore, to the benefit of the whole education system.
- 1.6 However, at present, the organisation of special and mainstream provision largely results in pupils either being placed full-time and permanently in a

special school or being educated in a mainstream school. Leicester maintains a higher than average number of special school places. The unit cost of places is also relatively high. These are factors which are the subject of performance indicators for both Ofsted and the broader Common Performance Assessment and which the LEA cannot, therefore, ignore. Greater flexibility would benefit many pupils. A system in which the resources could follow the pupils, rather than the pupils the resources, is worthy of further exploration. This is recognised as being of fundamental importance by the independent consultant engaged by the LEA to explore how work on inclusion can best be progressed.

“The development of new provision (SARs) in mainstream schools should enable a greater range of options to support greater inclusion.”

Peter Gray, Consultant, The Special Needs Consultancy.

- 1.7 Central to the task of preparing pupils for adult life is the provision of a learning environment enriched by peer-models of excellence in learning, social and linguistic behaviours. The successful integration of learning-disabled young adults will stand or fall by the degree to which schools are able to work with the students and their families to enable them to adapt and to learn skills crucial to supporting independent living. Schools with resources that are stretched by the need to achieve challenging targets will not be best placed to take up a new initiative. To do so successfully, they will require additional resources.

Definition

- 1.8 Schools with Additional Resources (SARs) are those funded over and above their delegated budgets in order to meet the Special Educational Needs of a wider range of pupils than those normally on roll.
- 1.9 The concept is not new: Schools with Additional Resources (or Enhanced Resource Schools [ERSs]) are becoming established in many Authorities. Locally, Nottingham and Derby, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire all have examples of SARs/ERSs. Indeed, forms of SAR are already in place in Leicester City : five primary schools, each funded in line with the LMSS scheme for 10 places each, in order to meet the needs of pupils identified as having Moderate Learning Difficulties (now General Learning Difficulties [GLD]); two primary schools funded to meet the needs of pupils identified as having Speech and Language Difficulties (SpLD); and two secondary schools staffed by specialist services to meet the needs of pupils who high levels of sensory impairment (Hearing Impairment & Visual Impairment).
- 1.10 The majority of the primary schools currently funded in this way have tended to operate in a traditional ‘unit’ type of provision where pupils are located in the school receiving a large part of their education separately from their peers. These schools are moving gradually towards more inclusive provision.

Future Developments

- 1.11 The formative consultation document – ‘Meeting Individual Needs:

Development and Restructuring of Provision for Pupils/Students with Special Educational Needs in the City of Leicester', proposed that,

“All primary and secondary schools will provide for a wide range of general learning difficulties, including moderate learning difficulties and specific learning difficulties.”

1.12 However, not all mainstream schools will be able to cater for all pupils who should have full access to the National Curriculum and appropriate resources and facilities. For example, few schools are fully accessible to pupils with physical disabilities and even with a rolling programme of improvement, this would take many years to achieve. It would be possible to designate certain schools with additional resources/facilities and staff expertise to provide for a range of learning disabilities:

- General Learning Difficulties
- Specific Learning Difficulties
- Sensory Impairment Speech and Language Disorders
- Physical/Medical Needs

Organisation

1.13 The general aim of the SARs will be to meet fully, the Special Educational Needs of statemented pupils whilst working towards the greatest degree of inclusion, 'normal' school experiences and social and academic achievement in the primary or secondary curriculum.

1.14 Each pupil will have an individual profile of needs - medical, social, emotional and academic. Much information on those needs will be provided through the statutory assessment process and will be specified in the pupils' formal statements. However, there will be a continuing need for assessment and review to determine each pupil's needs and their potential for full participation in normal school activities.

1.15 The responsibility for each pupil's success will not rest with specific individuals, but with all members of the school staff. Each adult working with the pupil will need to be aware of their particular Special Educational Needs and the approaches being adopted to meet them. The school will prepare Individual Education Plans (IEPs) to work towards the objectives of the statements of each pupil, in line with the guidance and requirements contained in the "Meeting Individual Needs" (MIN) document. They will also work in partnership with parents, to monitor progress and conduct reviews as required by the Revised Code of Practice on the Identification and Assessment of Special Educational Needs.

1.16 Specific organisation within each designated school will rest with the staff and governing body. Planning for pupils will aim at maximising the inclusion opportunities for each pupil but will need to take into account the developmental context of the school: skill levels of school staff; the individual needs of the funded pupils; and parental contributions. A SAR could thus, at any given time, be educating pupils at any point on the inclusion continuum from full functional integration, to a focus on social integration for some pupils with academic provision ranging from class, group or individual inputs.

1.17 There is also an imperative for special schools to be included in the development of SARs. The expertise which resides in the special phase could be used to enhance provision by contributing to direct pupil support through to enhancing the professional development available to staff in SARs.

1.18 Schools considering SAR status will be asked to provide an outline of the current systems operating within the school for meeting SEN and how becoming a SAR will complement/enhance/develop these approaches.

Advantages to mainstream schools of SAR status:

1.19

- Breadth of social experience for all pupils: increased understanding of disability issues
- On-site access to specialist teachers, support assistants and resources
- Development of expertise within the school staff through INSET
- Opportunity to develop specialist physical access
- Full compliance with SEN and Disability Act (schools skilled and prepared in advance for pupils disabilities coming into the school)
- Flexible support: opportunity for specialist SAR staff to enhance and support the SENCo and SEN dept within the school
- Opportunity for schools to become exemplars of full integration of pupils with high complex needs (ref Visual Impairment base in Babington) - potential Beacon status
- Increased budgetary flexibility

Admissions

1.20 All admissions will be administered by the Authority, according to the statutory regulations governing pupils with Special Educational Needs within the agreed range of pupil needs contained in the negotiated service agreement.

Funding

1.21 Funding for each SAR will be contingent upon the number of places bought by the LEA and the place factor designated for each level of Special Educational Need as determined by the LMSS formula. Levels of funding based upon appropriate arrangements for pupils with SEN were included in the Fair Funding document that was consulted upon in 2000/01. These are repeated in the Meeting Individual Needs (MIN) document, (Guidance to Schools). Some worked examples are provided, based on the current LMSS model¹:

¹ The Revised Code of Practice introduces the term 'General Learning Difficulties' (GLD) replacing 'Moderate Learning Difficulties' (MLD). Other abbreviations used in this section are as follows: AWPU – Age-Weighted Pupil Unit; LMSS – Local Management of Special Schools; MIN - Meeting Individual Needs: Assessment Document

1.22 Example 1 - Primary SAR - specialising in/with a focus on, GLD/MLD

10 places for pupils with General Learning Difficulties with the characteristics and suggested arrangements as described in Appendix 3 of the MIN document.

		£
10 places x £6600	GLD/MLD	66,000
10 x AWPU (averaged across primary for illustration)		14,170
Base allocation for resources etc...		1,000
Total		81,170

1.23 Example 2 - Primary SAR - no specific focus

10 places for pupils with a range of SEN as described in Appendix 3 of the MIN document

			£
5 GLD/MLD	£6600	x5	33,000
3 Visual Impairment	£8800	x3	26,400
2 Physical impairment	£5100	x2	10,200
10 x AWPU (averaged across primary age group for illustration)			14,170
Base allocation for resources etc...			1,000
Total			84,770

1.24 Example 3 - Secondary SAR- focus GLD(MLD)

			£
20 x GLD(MLD) funded places	£4800	x20	96,000
20 x AWPU (averaged across secondary for illustration)			39,660
Base allocation for resources etc..			2,000
Total			137,660

1.25 Example 4 - Secondary SAR generic

	£
10 x GLD(MLD) £4800	48,000
5 x PHYS £7000	35,000
5 x HI £5100	25,500
20 x AWPU (averaged across secondary for illustration)	39,660
Base allocation for resources etc...	2,000
Total	150,160

1.26 Ideally, such changes would be supported by a ‘pump-priming’ budget whereby schools could be resourced from a central budget set aside for the purpose of Inclusion. As these resources are not likely to be available, the purchase of places for statemented students will be funded from the special schools budget. However, the Department will continue to pursue the possibility of establishing growth in the budget for future years.

1.27 This means simply, that fewer places will be bought for the following year, in special schools – with subsequent effects to individual school budgets.

Capital Spending

1.28 Members have agreed to ring-fence all funding associated with special education for the purpose of delivering improvements to the City’s provision for pupils with SEN.

1.29 The Schools Access Initiative is expected to provide in the region of £400K for 2003/4.

1.30 Any potential recoupment of capital via disposal of property relating to SEN pupils (for example, the former Manorbrooke site) would generate 100% Supplementary Credit Approval, provided that the funding was targeted at pupils with similar learning disabilities, compared with 40% SCA for other purposes.

1.31 It would be possible, therefore, to offer schools some capital funding in addition to revenue, in order to enhance and/or adapt school buildings.

Conservation of expertise

1.32 In response to the formative consultation, schools and professional associations stressed the need for SEN training and for teachers to have opportunities for sharing experiences and comparing working practices. For the last 18 months, this has been one of the components of the Meeting Individual Needs (MIN) training. However, it has been a consistent recommendation from the early stages of the review, that in the first instance, special schools would form working partnerships with mainstream schools in

their near neighbourhood. This has the two-fold benefit of affording broader curricular opportunities for pupils with SEN whilst at the same time enabling the sharing of best practice. Any down-sizing as a consequence of budgetary reduction would provide an opportunity for mainstream schools to employ staff with the relevant expertise, who are familiar with their schools – and many of the pupils who will be transferring.

- 1.33 Where there are strong partnerships between mainstream and special schools, there is much potential for sharing staff, resources and expertise. The needs of pupils preparing for transfer and those experiencing mainstream contact for the first time would require special schools to develop a role of specialist support, in keeping with Government expectations in the Green Paper. In some authorities, this has already resulted in special schools transmuting into highly specialised peripatetic support services with the facility to offer off-site tuition for prescribed periods.

Implementation

- 1.34 After the initial presentation of issues in 1998/9, expressions of interest in SAR status were received by 13 schools. Given that these were generated without any illustrations of nominal budgets, it is likely that a further invitation will generate a higher number, although, clearly, the numbers following through to change of character will be fewer.
- 1.35 The range and number of potential SARs, therefore, will remain an unknown quantity until schools are invited to express an interest. The potential impact on special schools therefore, cannot be predicted at this stage. However, it is clear that for most special schools, a loss of six places will begin to create budgetary/staffing difficulties. However, this is unlikely to happen in the first phase of development.
- 1.36 The readiness of media to exploit the ‘newsworthiness’ of SEN issues is well known and the ability of interested parties to create disproportionate reaction cannot be overlooked. The presentation of SAR strategy will benefit from the preparation of a clear media strategy in order to reduce parental anxieties being raised without cause. The timing of the SAR strategy is therefore, important.
- 1.37 There is much to be gained by consulting on the SAR strategy alone. As this is central to the Inclusion strategy, it must be established first for schools to be well grounded in the issues and their potential solutions before moving to the next phase. A clear focus on the mainstream strategy will also avoid potential delays caused by opening debates on ‘category’ or ‘forms of disabilities’ issues.
- 1.38 The identification of ‘foundation’ pupils is likely to be a sensitive issue. In the first instance, the SES and Support services would work with those families actively seeking mainstream placement or transfer. This would mean that the total cohort would be significantly fewer for the first year than in subsequent years but would replicate the current practice of maintaining ‘headroom’ places in the special sector.

- 1.39 During the second year of operation (2004/5) families would be offered the opportunity to consider SARs as a viable alternative to special school placement. However, it is important to stress that parents and carers will still be able to express a preference according to their own views regarding the child's special needs.
- 1.40 The development of SARs therefore, would appear to be best established in two phases:
- i) renegotiating operational briefs with those schools already *de facto* SARs (those with current 'unit' provision) and identifying examples of good practice (during 2002/3); and
 - ii) linking elective SARs with those 'good practice' schools established in the first phase, to assist in the effective functioning of the new SARs.
- 1.41 A potential timetable might run as follows:
- June -December 2002 (end): consult with schools on SAR expressions of interest
 - June 2002 – January 2003: consult with existing schools with unit provision to establish new SAR contracts
 - January 2003-June (end): determine probable range of second-phase SARs
 - Jan 2003 - June 2003: identify pupil cohort for second-phase schools
 - January 2003 - June 2003: Modelling Group and Project Board consider range of provision that SARs will complement and complete proposed model for future restructuring.
 - June 2003: publish formal 'change of character' notices for new SARs for School Organisation Committee approval
 - June 2003 - November 2003: formal consultation on future pattern of specialist provision
 - December 2003 presentation of paper for Cabinet approval setting out future pattern of provision for the City
 - Second-phase SARs to open September 2004
- 1.42 During 2003-4 budget, building and other work with potential SAR pupils will continue.

- 1.43 The establishment of a range of mainstream provision in this way, would satisfy the recommendations of the second Ofsted report and CPA performance indicators. More importantly, such a strategy would also provide a strong foundation for the reorganisation of specialist provision based upon a clear understanding of the range and nature of those pupils requiring more intensive off-site specialised support.

Expansion of Project Board Membership

- 1.44 In keeping with the Authority's policy on major projects and in response to earlier requests for Head teacher involvement, the Department has established a Project Board to oversee future developments and to scrutinise proposals before recommending them for member approval.

- 1.45 The Board comprises: the Director of Education (Chair); The Head of Standards and Effectiveness; the Assistant Director (Pupil & Student Support) and three Headteachers representing all phases (Secondary: Soar Valley; Primary: Shenton; Primary; Special: Hospital School). An officer group Project Team with extensive expertise in special education will support the Project Board. In addition, a 'Modelling Group' has been established which will meet to consider and to comment upon any draft proposals for further development.

- 1.46 Latterly, concerns have been raised, by professional associations and others, over the potential imbalance of membership of the Board. The Primary sector is considered to be particularly under-represented. The professional associations also feel that their members' views should be represented. Clearly, the confidence of the schools and professional associations that their views are being heard will increase the probability of a progress on the SEN Review. At their meeting of 13 March 2002, Members of the Scrutiny committee requested that Education & Lifelong Learning Cabinet consider the expansion of the Board to ensure a fairer representation.

- 1.47 The present composition of schools within Leicester is as follows:

Special	9
Secondary	16
Primary (incl. infant & junior)	86

- 1.48 An enhanced Project Board might, therefore include Head teacher representatives in the following proportion:

Special	1
Secondary	2
Primary (incl. infant & junior)	4

- 1.48 A further place might be designated to a (non-Head teacher) professional association representative or one of the new Head teacher places could be taken by an appropriate representative.

- 1.49 At their meeting of May 22, Head teacher representatives on the SEN Project Board expressed strong views that they felt mandated to speak on behalf of

their colleagues and that any expansion of the group would endanger the sound working relationships that had been established. Views were also expressed that the contribution of the professional associations would be more appropriate through the formal mechanisms established for these purposes.

- 1.50 Given the work programme for the Board already approved, together with any work arising from this paper, an augmentation of the Project Board would be difficult to incorporate at this stage in the academic year. However, in response to Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet Members may wish to express views on potential changes for the beginning of the Autumn Term.

2. Financial Implications

These are set out under paragraphs 1.22-1.25 of the Supporting Information

3. Legal Implications

LEAs have a statutory obligation to review their services for pupils with SEN. The arrangements for making provision for pupils with SEN are governed by the 1996 Education Act and Code of Practice.

4. Other Implications

OTHER IMPLICATIONS	YES/NO	Paragraph References within this report
Raising Standards	YES	1.2, 1.4, 1.5
Equal Opportunities	YES	1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.11, 1.13,1.15, 1.19
Policy	YES	1.2, 1.44
Sustainable and Environmental	NO	
Crime and Disorder	NO	
Human Rights Act	NO	
Elderly/People on Low Income	NO	

5. Background Papers – Local Government Act 1972

Paper to Education & Lifelong Learning Scrutiny Committee, 13 March 2002: "Report on responses to the Consultation Document "Meeting Individual Needs – Leicester City LEA's Inclusion Strategy"

Paper to Education Committee, 21 August 2001 'Special Educational Needs Policy'

6. Consultation

Schools' views have been presented at each Project Board meeting via their Headteacher representatives.

7. Report Author

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