

**GROWTH IN NEED FOR SPECIAL SEND PROVISION**

To: Cambridgeshire Schools Forum

Date: 16th October 2015

From: Judith Davies, Head of Service: Commissioning Enhanced Services

**1.0 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 To provide an update to Schools Forum on the growth in demand for specialist special educational needs and disability (SEND) provision.

**2.0 BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 Whilst the number of maintained Statements of Special Educational Needs (Statements) and Education, Health and Care Plans (EHC Plans) remains fairly consistent it is expected that, as the impact of the SEND Reforms on the 16-25 age group become embedded, this number will rise from 3200 to about 4100 by 2018. It is difficult to estimate more accurately the impact of the SEND Reforms as young people and adults, who have left education, will now have the ability to apply for an EHC Plan to support their SEND in further education (FE) up to the age of 25 years. The Plans will also now have to continue whilst a young person is not in education, employment or training (NEET).

Despite the number of maintained Statements and EHC Plans remaining at around 3200 the demand for specialist provision has increased significantly over the last few years.

Cambridgeshire is the fastest growing population in the country. Approximately 74,000 new homes are planned for Cambridgeshire between now and 2031 (appendix 1). This will create the need for new education infrastructure on an unprecedented scale across the county to provide places for the 0-25 age range. An additional minimum of 38,000 children between the ages of 4 and 15 years will need school places. Of this number between 1000 and 1300 will have SEND that would meet the threshold for an EHC Plan. Given that Cambridgeshire has approximately a third of the children and young people with Statements and EHC Plans in specialist provision it is clear that there will need to be an expansion of this provision.

**3.0 GROWTH IN DEMAND**

- 3.1 Special School Places - The table below shows the growth in the number of places at each Special school in this financial year:

**Table 1**

	<b>No. of Places Apr – Aug 2015</b>	<b>No. of Places Sept – Mar 2015</b>
Castle	150	165
Granta	138	130
Highfield	106	116
Meadowgate	158	158
Samuel Pepys	102	102
Spring Common	165	175
The Centre	55	55
The Harbour	72	80
Trinity School	105	105
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,051</b>	<b>1,086</b>

- 3.2 The Council currently has six area special schools for children aged 2-19 with a new special school at Littleport planned for 2017. The current area special schools are:
- Castle School, Cambridge
  - Granta School, Linton
  - Highfield School, Ely
  - Meadowgate, Wisbech
  - Samuel Pepys School, St Neots
  - Spring Common School, Huntingdon
- 3.3 The Council also has three special schools for children and young people with social, emotional and mental health difficulties (SEMH). The SEMH schools are:
- The Centre School, Cottenham for boys and girls aged 11-16
  - Trinity School, Foxton, Hartford, and Wisbech (a multi-site special school) for boys and girls aged 11-16
  - The Harbour School, Wilburton for boys aged 7-16
- 3.4 The availability of places is an issue for the majority of the county's Area Special Schools. Additional accommodation has been provided at Spring Common, Highfield, Castle and Meadowgate to enable the Authority to commission additional places for this academic year. Despite this a number of the schools will be starting this academic year with very few available places. This creates significant pressure as the demand for places will be ongoing throughout the academic year.
- 3.5 There currently remains capacity within the SEMH schools in Cambridgeshire mainly due to issues relating Trinity School's ability to support greater numbers of pupils. As the school moves forward more students will be placed in the school.

#### **4.0 OTHER GROWTH AREAS IN SPECIALIST PROVISION**

- 4.1 Over the past few years the number of young people with Autism (ASC) has risen significantly to 32% of all children and young people with a Statement or an EHC Plan. At the same time there has been an increase in the number of young people for whom mainstream schools are unable to meet their needs and have therefore required specialist provision.
- 4.2 The number of places available through enhanced Cabin provision at Comberton, Witchford and Ernulf has increased to meet demand (for ASC). The commissioned places need to reflect need and growth. The number has risen from a total of 16 when the two cabins opened to 33 currently. This requires further discussion with the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to ensure sufficient places are commissioned from each of the cabins going forward. Any shortfall in the base funding would require the authority to fund from the HNB. This type of provision has meant that the flow of young people to the independent special schools at year 7 has ceased. However, this demand has not been resolved for the primary phase and the need has had to be met from the independent sector (Gretton and Park House) and ASC free/academy special schools in Peterborough and Haverhill. The Authority has agreed additional provision for an ASC Cabin at the new Trumpington Academy which will open in 2016 and is exploring option and costs for similar provision to be developed within the primary sector.

- 4.3 There are currently approximately 515 young people with EHC Plans and LDAs attending post 16 settings (Table 2). The data below shows that there has been an increase in this demand over the past few years. The EFA have limited the growth they will fund and this has resulted in the LA being required to support additional element 2 (£6K) funding gap. This brings a pressure to support the cost of additional commissioned places in year from the high needs block. There will be a year on year growth in the number of plans in Post 16 as the Learning Disability Assessments (LDAs) become EHC Plans and also as the age range has risen from 19 (Statements ceased at the end of the academic year a student was 19) to 25 years for EHC Plans. The authority will need to annually review carefully the deployment of post 16 commissioned places to ensure they are in the correct settings to reflect demand. Further discussion with the EFA will take place to ensure that there is recognition of this growth.

**Table 2**

<b>Type of Placement</b>	<b>No of Students</b>		
	<b>2013-14</b>	<b>2014-15</b>	<b>2015-16</b>
<b>Mainstream 6th Form</b>	74	79	54
<b>Special 6th Form</b>	132	135	135
<b>ASC Centres 6th Form</b>	5	6	6
<b>FE Colleges</b>	175	181	320
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>401</b>	<b>515</b>

## **5.0 FUTURE SPECIALIST NEED**

- 5.1 The increase in child population expected over the next 18 years will mean that current special school arrangements, including the new special school at Littleport, will not meet demand. The plans to respond to this include:

- A new special school built at Northstowe co-located with the new schools and services in a campus-type provision.
- A new Special school within the Alconbury also co-located
- A new special school within the Bourn Airfield development also co-located.

- 5.2 This would provide three new area special schools and 370 additional area special places across Cambridgeshire between 2019 and 2030. More work is underway to assess that this will support the level of anticipated need and to look at the needs for SEMH specialist provision that may be required. The Cabin provision will be kept under review and officers will continue to explore opportunities to increase this type of provision in other areas of the county including opportunities to establish in the new communities' secondary schools. As already stated the need for ASC primary provision for children with EHC Plans is at an early stage.

## **6.0 PRESSURE ON THE HIGH NEEDS BLOCK(HNB)**

- 6.1 There is work currently underway to quantify the budget implications, for 2016/17, of the increase in places in special schools and in Post 16 settings but clearly the current growth brings the need for additional funding as more children move from mainstream into special schools and the numbers in post 16 expand. The revenue funding for any new special schools has yet to be clarified by the EFA. The increase in the requirement for more commissioned places in Post 16 will be discussed with the EFA through the 16/17 commissioning process.

## **7.0 CONCLUSION**

- 7.1 The Schools Forum is asked to note the growth in demand for specialist special educational needs and disability (SEND) provision, as outlined in the report.

## APPENDIX 1

### MAP SHOWING PROPOSED MAJOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS IN CAMBRIDGESHIRE AUGUST 2015

