Education, Children and Families Committee

10am, Tuesday, 11 October 2016

Getting it Right for Special Schools - Planning for the Future

Item number 7.1

Report number Executive/routine

Wards

Executive Summary

The Council is committed to providing high quality support for children with additional support needs in Edinburgh. This includes high quality special schools for children who require them.

Successive reports to Education, Children and Families Committee, most recently in December 2015, have highlighted the growth in the population of children who require additional support in school in recent years. The Council has adopted a strategy for Additional Support Needs that takes into account these demographic pressures and policy priorities.

The Education, Children and Families Committee has approved a number of measures to support the delivery of strategic priorities including steps to ensure that our special schools keep pace with changing needs, so that all children and young people to have their additional support needs met within Edinburgh.

Significant growth in the needs of children with autism has already been reported to Committee as too has the progress in making more effective inclusive local provision for children with social, emotional and behavioral support needs.

Links

Coalition Pledges P1, P4, P5, P7, P29

Council Priorities CP1, CP2, CP3

Single Outcome Agreement <u>SO3</u>



In order to respond to changing patterns of need, we are undertaking a strategic review of the special school places with the intention that we can maintain high quality provision for existing pupils, we have the right provision for the growing number of children with autism and that we can take account of changes in the need for placements for children with other additional support needs.

The review will take into account the opportunities arising from the replacement of St Crispin's School and consideration of areas where there is a reducing need for special school places in our population. This includes a feasibility study to investigate future options for Braidburn and Oaklands and high quality provision for children with complex additional support needs into the future.

Taking account of the redesign of progress in developing inclusive local provision for children with social, emotional and behavioural support needs, the review has informed proposals for the consultation on the closure of Panmure St Ann's special school.

We anticipate that there will not be a reduction in special school placements as a result of the review. The aim is to ensure that provision for the future is well balanced to meet the needs of current and future pupils. No children currently in special school will lose a place as a consequence of the review. No strategic changes will take place without consultations with all interested parties and Committee approval.

This approach aims to take account of children's changing needs and secure best value through a programmed approach and reinvestment of savings as required.

Report

Getting it Right for Special Schools - Planning for the Future

1. Recommendations

It is recommended that the committee:

- 1.1 Notes that changing patterns of need have implications for the future provision of special school places;
- 1.2 Notes that the strategic review of the special school estate reflects a best value approach to enable reinvestment and improvement within existing resources;
- 1.3 Notes that a feasibility study to investigate future options for Braidburn and Oaklands and high quality provision for children with complex additional support needs into the future;
- 1.4 Agrees that the outcome of the feasibility study be reported to Committee by March 2017;
- 1.5 Notes that any proposals requiring significant changes to a special school including any possible school merger or restructuring will be subject to Committee approval to initiate a formal consultation process;
- 1.6 Notes the proposals for the closure of Panmure St Ann's is the subject of a separate report;
- 1.7 Notes the measures reflect the Council's priority to ensure that we have an appropriate level of specialist provision for the growing number children with complex needs arising from autism.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council has responsibility for responding to the changing needs of children and young people with additional support needs who require a special school environment. The 1980 Education (Scotland) Act as amended places a statutory duty on authorities to make adequate and efficient provision of school education for their area. The authority is responsible for taking into account the needs of the whole area and the likely pattern of need in the future, beyond the current school population and pattern of demand.
- 2.2 The strategy for additional support needs links closely with the Council's priority to provide high quality care and learning for children and young people wherever

- possible in their own communities and within the City of Edinburgh, reducing costly out of authority placements.
- 2.3 The review of special school places is essential in order to secure the Council's duties under the Additional Support for Learning Act and the duty to secure best value as required by the Local Government in Scotland Act 2003.
- 2.4 The last major review took place towards the end of the 1990's, since that time there have been significant changes in our population and the pattern of our children's needs.
- 2.5 Reports to Education, Children and Families Committee have highlighted the growth in the population of children who require additional support in school in recent years. The Council has adopted a strategy for Additional Support Needs reflecting demographic pressures and policy priorities founded upon a twin strategy of investment and measures to secure improvements in quality and performance. In December 2015, the Education, Children and Families Committee agreed its priorities for 2016-19.
- 2.6 The Committee approved a number of detailed steps including:
 - Establishing Additional Support for Learning teams and networks in, around and between schools and clusters Deploying robust frameworks for inclusion to support effective high quality practice and improving outcomes; Networking key resources and expertise;
 - Aligning provision to optimise progress in the presumption of mainstream and specialist provision to enable all children and young people to have their additional support needs met within Edinburgh.

3. Main report

- 3.1 This report proposes a programme of action to carry forward next steps approved by the Education, Children and Families Committee, to deliver 'specialist provision to enable all children and young people to have their additional support needs met within Edinburgh'.
- 3.2 The Council currently operates 12 special schools catering for a wide range of additional support needs (Appendix 1). Our initial analysis has identified the need to increase special school places in some areas and opportunities to reduce provision in others where the level of need for special schools has reduced. There are two areas where there is a reduced need and two where there are pressures.
 - In both cases these trends appear to be likely to continue for the foreseeable future.
- 3.3 The areas where there is reduced demand now and for the anticipated future are:
 - Secondary Schools for children and young people with social emotional and behavioural needs at Panmure St Ann's and Gorgie Mills;
 - Provision for children with complex needs at Braidburn and Oaklands Schools.

- 3.4 The increased need for special school places is arising for:
 - Children at P7- S1 where autism gives rise to complex social, communication and sensory needs that require the structured and secure environment of a special school in order to access the curriculum;
 - Primary aged children who have autism and an associated learning disability which means that the presumption of mainstream cannot be sustained from early primary school.
- 3.5 As an immediate response to these pressures, from August 2016 we have established an additional S1 class for children with autism at Kaimes Special School. In addition, we have created two additional primary classes in special schools for children with an ASD with an associated learning disability. These classes will be at Redhall school and at Oaklands Special School (in association with St Crispin's) making use of spare accommodation.
- 3.6 These steps create 20 new places to address the immediate pressures but alone they do not provide a sustainable basis for meeting the needs of our children into the future. The pressure for specialist provision is particularly acute in relation to autism and challenging behaviours.
- 3.7 We are already committed to building a new school for St Crispin's and we are currently considering in detail how that will best contribute to improving the balance and quality of provision for children with complex additional support needs and autism into the future.
- 3.8 The review of special school provision for learners with social, emotional and behaviour support needs has identified over capacity of special school places and the scope for a future rationalisation of provision at Panmure St Ann's and Gorgie Mills Special Schools.
- 3.9 Table 1: Placements at Edinburgh's special schools for SEBN provision

Special School	2013/14	2014/15	April 2016	August 2016
Gorgie Mills	55	53	53	47
Panmure St Ann's	54	43	28	14
Total	109	96	81	61

3.10 Meanwhile, our initial analysis of the position identifies spare capacity at both Oaklands and Braidburn special Schools. In addition, the age profile of pupils in these schools suggests the prospect of more spaces becoming available in the future. Meanwhile, the need in both Braidburn and Oaklands schools for high levels of therapy and specialist health care, technological support, high levels of accessibility and specialist teaching, offers a number of options moving forward including the possible scope for merging or rationalising provision at a future date. The combined capacity of the schools (P1 – S6) is 190 with a current total population of 119 pupils.

3.11 Table 2: Primary and Secondary Placements in Oaklands and Braidburn Schools

	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total
Braidburn	5	4	5	7	5	4	6	4	2	6	3	6	16	73
Oaklands	5	3	5	7	2	4	1	1	6	6	3	1	2	46
Total	10	7	10	14	7	8	7	5	8	12	6	7	18	119

- 3.12 A key objective in this process is to maintain high quality provision for children with severe and complex additional support needs in purpose built facilities on a sustainable basis.
- 3.13 Should a future merger/rationalisation prove feasible it would offer an opportunity to increase provision for children with complex additional support needs and autism. This would provide more suitable accommodation for these children and more places for other children where the pressure is the greatest.
- 3.14 In light of the above we are undertaking a detailed assessment of the feasibility study at Oakland and Braidburn. The feasibility study includes consultations with parents, the NHS and other stakeholders. Work has begun with the school Councils to facilitate this and a briefing for parents has been provided (Appendix 2).
- 3.15 This approach aims to secure best value through a programmed approach. Currently we anticipate that there will not be a reduction in special school placements as a result of the review. The aim is to ensure that provision for the future is well balanced to meet current and future needs.
- 3.16 No children currently in special school will lose a special school place as a consequence of the review.
- 3.17 Any proposed merger or closure of a special school will be subject to a formal consultation process under the under the terms of The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 has been amended by Part 15 of the Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014.

4. Measures of success

- 4.1 Education outcomes for all children and young people with additional support needs are improved and the provision of high quality special schools for children who require them is maintained.
- 4.2 Special schools keep pace with changing patterns of need and secure best value, so that all children and young people have their needs met within Edinburgh where the presumption of mainstream cannot be met.

5. Financial impact

5.1 The review of special school places will be undertaken within existing resources. Full consideration of financial impact will be taken into account in reporting the outcome of the review.

6. Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

6.1 All statutory legislative and procedural requirements will be followed to minimise the risk of any proposals arising from the review. Any change requiring the closure, merger or relocation of a school will be subject to full consultation as appropriate.

7. Equalities impact

7.1 The implementation of the recommendations from this report will enhance the provision of more tailored support for the education of children and young people with a range of additional support needs within their local communities in Edinburgh.

8. Sustainability impact

8.1 The review will include consideration of environmental impact in the determination of any proposals.

9. Consultation and engagement

9.1 The feasibility study is being carried forward in close collaboration with the Schools' Councils and active engagement with parents, the NHS and other stakeholders. Any proposal for a merger or closure that arises from the review will be presented to Committee for approval prior to a formal consultation process under the terms of the Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010, as amended.

10. Background reading/external references

Report - Additional Support 10am, Tuesday, Needs Planning and Performance Update 2015 - 8 December 2015

The Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

Alistair Gaw

Acting Executive Director Communities and Families

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11. Links

Coalition Pledges	P1. Increase support for vulnerable children, including help for families so that fewer go into care
	P4 Draw up a long-term strategic plan to tackle both over-crowding and under use in schools
	P5 Seek to ensure the smooth introduction of the Curriculum for Excellence and that management structures within our schools support the new curriculum
	P7 Further develop the Edinburgh Guarantee to improve work prospects for school leavers
	P29 Ensure the Council continues to take on apprentices and steps up efforts to prepare young people for work
Council Priorities	CP1 Children and young people fulfil their potential
	CP2 Improved health and wellbeing: reduced inequalities
	CP3 Right care, right place, right time
Single Outcome Agreement	SO3. Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential
Appendices	1. Special School Provision 2016/17
	2. Briefing for parents

Appendix 1

City of Edinburgh Council Special School Provision 2016/17

SCHOOL	SCHOOL TYPE	PROFILE
Pilrig Park	Day special Secondary.	Pilrig Park meets the complex additional support needs of young people where the presumption of mainstream cannot be met. The needs of the learners are primarily associated with learning disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder.
Woodlands	Day special Secondary	Woodlands meets the complex additional support needs of young people where the presumption of mainstream cannot be met. The needs of the learners are primarily associated with learning disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder.
Prospect Bank	Day special Primary	Prospect Bank meets the needs of primary aged learners with long term additional support needs where the presumption of mainstream cannot be met. The needs of the learners are primarily associated with learning disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder.
Redhall	Day special Primary	Redhall meets the needs of primary aged learners with long term additional support needs where the presumption of mainstream cannot be met. The needs of the learners are primarily associated with learning disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder.
Rowanfield	Day special Primary	Rowanfield meets the additional support needs of primary aged children with severe and complex social, emotional and behavioural needs.
Kaimes	Day special Primary and Secondary.	Kaimes meets the complex long term additional support needs of children and young people where the presumption of mainstream cannot be met. The needs of the learners are primarily associated with Autism Spectrum Disorder and learning disability.
St Crispin's	Day special Primary- Secondary	St Crispin's meets the additional support needs of learners with severe and complex learning disabilities and Autism Spectrum Disorder where the presumption of mainstream cannot be met.
Braidburn	Day special Nursery- Primary- Secondary	Braidburn meets the needs of learners who have severe and complex additional support needs including those with Multiple disabilities and visual impairment. (MDVI).
Oaklands	Day special Nursery- Primary- secondary-	Oaklands meets the needs of learners who have severe and complex additional support needs including those with Multiple disabilities and visual impairment. (MDVI)
Gorgie Mills	Day special Secondary	Gorgie Mills meets the additional support needs of secondary aged learners with severe and complex social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Panmure St Ann's	Day special Secondary	Panmure St Ann's meets the needs of secondary aged learners who are experiencing such significant social, emotional and behavioural difficulties that they cannot maintain a full time place in a mainstream school.
Edinburgh Secure Services	Residential special	Howdenhall and St Katharine's provide an education for young people who have been received into secure accommodation or young people who are resident in one of the close support units and who do not have an alternative school placement.

Meeting the Needs of Children with Additional Support Needs in Edinburgh - Special Schools Planning for the Future.

A briefing for Parents and Carers of Children attending Braidburn and Oaklands Schools

Introduction

The Council is committed to providing high quality support for all children with additional support needs in Edinburgh. This includes providing high quality special schools for children who require them. We have a responsibility for meeting the needs of all of the existing pupils and for planning ahead to take account of the changing needs of children and young people with additional support needs who require a special school environment.

The needs of the existing pupils at Oaklands and Braidburn are our first priority and we are committed to maintaining and improving their learning opportunities and experiences and to work closely with our partners in the NHS to deliver the care and support all the children require at school.

The quality of the provision we currently make at Oaklands and Braidburn reflects our planning and investment over the last 15 years. We need to keep planning ahead to maintain quality for existing children and the new generations of children who may require special school places whatever their additional support needs.

We know from experience how valuable parents and your School Councils are in ensuring that we get planning right. We wanted you to know our proposals at the earliest opportunity and we value the questions and suggestions that have already been made. We will continue to work together and give you opportunities to be involved and influence the way forward throughout.

There is evidence that the pattern of needs is changing and we want to ensure that we have a strong and sustainable for current and future pupils. We will consider a range of options in the feasibility study. If we do conclude there is a viable an option to merge the schools as a result of the feasibility study these will be made public and there will be a formal consultation process. If there are other ways to move forward that allow us to meet the needs we are open to considering all suggestions.

We will work closely with the School Council to ensure that all vies and issues are taken into account and key information is shared openly.

Background

The Council has 12 special schools catering for a range of needs. These include 2 schools offering services specially designed for children with complex needs at Oaklands and Braidburn.



Both schools provide for a range of complex needs. Almost all of the children require some form of active healthcare/monitoring. Pupils in both schools benefit from high levels of accessibility including specialist services such as specialist teaching and classroom support staff, alternative and augmentative communication, therapies, movement programmes, hydrotherapy pool and sensory facilities. Many children in both schools have additional sensory and/or perceptual needs that require to be taken in to account to support their learning and overall wellbeing.

Braidburn School was built to accommodate a merger of Graysmill and Willowpark Special Schools in 2004/5. Oaklands School was relocated to its new building in 2006/7. Over a ten-year period there have been some important changes affecting the number and needs of pupils attending both schools.

Since Braidburn opened the number of pupils has fallen and balance of need has shifted towards learners with more complex needs. This pattern is largely the result of continuing improvements in support for children with additional support needs in mainstream and in some cases children moving on from Braidburn to mainstream school, which has led to a decrease in the demand for places.

When it opened, Oaklands School provided for a broader range of need, which included a number of children with complex learning needs who were physically independent and active, those children would also have language and communication difficulties.

Over recent years, the population at Oaklands has shifted so that it now includes a much smaller proportion of ambulant children with complex learning needs than was a the case in the past. This means that demand for school places at Oaklands has fallen as children with that profile of need were being placed in other schools where demand has increased.

Primary and Secondary Placements in Oaklands and Braidburn Schools

	P1	P2	Р3	P4	P5	Р6	P7	S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	Total
Braidburn	5	4	5	7	5	4	6	4	2	6	3	6	16	73
Oaklands	5	3	5	7	2	4	1	1	6	6	3	1	2	46
Total	10	7	10	14	7	8	7	5	8	12	6	7	18	119

Our initial analysis of the position suggests that given the age profile of pupils in the schools there is a prospect of a greater number of spaces becoming available in the near future. Excluding the Nurseries, the combined capacity of the schools (P1 - S6) is 190 (60 at Oaklands and 130 P1- S6 at Braidburn). The current combined population of the two schools is 119 pupils.

Both schools have Nursery facilities; currently both schools have 7 Nursery children. The Nursery provision caters for 3 and 4 year olds and typically children will attend for up to 2 years, not all children progress to a school place at Braidburn or Oaklands. The average combined referral rate is 9 new children per year.

As well as monitoring need for the current populations of Oaklands and Braidburn we are looking carefully at all of the special schools. Whilst there is a fall in the referral rate

for schools at Braidburn and Oaklands, we have an increase in the population of children whose additional support needs are associated with learning disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Successive reports to Education Children and Families Committee, most recently in December 2015, have highlighted the growth in the population of children who require additional support in school in recent years. The Council has adopted a strategy for Additional Support needs which takes into account these demographic pressures and policy priorities.

Taking a Closer Look

Taking into account all of the above, we have decided that we need to take a closer look at all of the circumstances to identify the best options for the future through a feasibility study. All options will be considered on merit, taking into account the range of pupil need, the facilities available, the potential for enhancing the range of opportunities for the current pupils and the scope to take forward new curricular developments. We will also consider the pros and cons with structured or evolutionary change.

The primary aim is to improve the overall quality and effectiveness of our special school provision in meeting children's needs. The proposal is not targeting cost saving but it is aimed to get the best possible outcome for all future children requiring a special school environment.

We need to maintain high quality provision for children with severe and complex additional support needs in purpose built facilities as we move forward. Looking to the future our aim is to strengthen provision, developing expertise and provide a sustainable basis for the delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum and the highest standards of care.

In light of the above we propose to undertake a detailed assessment of the options which may include merging the pupils at Oakland into Braidburn onto one site. As an interim measure we have made a seconded appointment for the Headteacher at Oakland's whilst we consider the feasibility of a possible merger. The feasibility study will include consultations with parents, the NHS and other stakeholders.

We anticipate that there will not be a reduction in special school places as a result of the review. The aim is to ensure that provision for the future is well balanced to meet current and future needs.

No children currently in Braidburn or Oaklands will lose a special school place as a consequence of the review. No merger will take place without open consultations with all interested parties and Committee approval.

Timescales Consultation and engagement

The feasibility study commenced in August 2016 and will consider all areas of pupil need and the curriculum. There will be a programme of engagement with parents which will be taken forward in collaboration with the School Councils. There will be detailed consultations with partners, in particular the NHS. We will keep parents up to date with findings to date and next steps.

As part of the study we will arrange meetings with School Councils and we will be issuing a questionnaire to gather parents' views. We aim to complete the study by the end of December 2016 and we will keep you informed of the progress.

We would welcome your contribution to this process and encourage you to raise any questions or concerns with your Headteacher and/or your School Council or contacting Leah Hart, Senior Project Manager, <u>Leah.Hart@edinburgh.gov.uk</u> or telephone 0131-469-3019 and ask for Leah Hart or Martin Vallely.

Martin Vallely
Senior Manager Special Schools

3 October 2016

Meeting the needs of Children with Additional Support Needs in Edinburgh - Special Schools Planning for the Future

What are Frequently Asked Questions?

The purpose of the FAQs is:

- To provide answers to questions and concerns from parents and carers of children with complex needs about Council planning for their education and care
- To provide a conduit of information to reach all parents and carers about activities and developments as the Council moves forward with planning for the future of children attending Oaklands and Braidburn Special schools
- The FAQs will be developed and added to over the school session 2016/17.

1. Changes in demand for current provision

Why is the Council now considering changes in the education provision of children attending Braidburn and Oaklands Schools?

The City of Edinburgh Council has a responsibility under the Education (Additional Support for Learning) (Scotland) Act 2004 (as amended 2009) to meet the needs of existing children and young people with additional support needs attend our special schools and the new generations of children, whatever their additional support needs, who may require a special school environment in the future.

The provision the Council currently makes at Oaklands and Braidburn reflects our planning and investment over the last 15 years.

Our duty is to keep planning ahead to take account of changing patterns of needs to ensure that overall provision for the future for all children with additional support needs, who may require a special school place, is well balanced to meet current and future requirements.

Why is the Council now focusing on Oaklands and Braidburn Schools?

Out of the Council's 12 special schools, Oaklands and Braidburn offer services specially designed for children with a range of complex needs.

Since Braidburn opened in 2004/5 the number of pupils has fallen and the balance of need has shifted towards mainstream schools which are increasingly developing the facilities to accommodate learners with more complex needs.

When it opened, Oaklands School provided for a broader range of need, including more ambulant children with complex learning needs however the population has shifted so that demand for school places at Oaklands has fallen as children with that profile of need were being placed in other schools where demand has increased.

Additionally the average referral rate of new pupils for a place at Oaklands and Braidburn Schools is 9 pupils per year group. There are fewer children joining these schools at the start of the formal education than the schools originally built to accommodate. Excluding the nurseries the combined capacity of both schools (P1-S6) when designed was 190, including 60 children at Oaklands and 130 at Braidburn.

The total current total population is 119 pupils between both schools with the numbers of new children

coming on stream suggesting a shortfall taking up future places at both schools.

Whilst there is a fall in the referral rate for schools at Braidburn and Oaklands, we have an increase in the population of children whose additional support needs are associated with learning disability and Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Is this enough of a reason to merge both schools?

Where the changing pattern of need within the child population leads to significantly falling school rolls in particular schools the Council needs to look at merging schools as one of a range of options.

The needs of the existing pupils at Oaklands and Braidburn are our first priority and we are committed to maintaining and improving their learning opportunities and experiences and to work closely with our partners in the NHS to deliver the care and support all the children require at school.

We fully recognise we need to examine more closely the full range of options, in terms of Oaklands and Braidburn, to continue provide high quality educational provision children with complex needs, given the indication of reducing numbers overall.

If the schools merge has a decision been made which site would be used?

No decisions have been made at this stage and we want to consider all the options. However, based on the current numbers of pupils if the schools were to merge the Oakland's building would not be large enough to accommodate all of the children.

If the schools do merge could this be done gradually?

Yes, in considering all of the options one possibility is that existing pupils would have the choice to continue to complete their education at their current school.

Will my child still have a place at a special school which meets his/her needs?

Yes. A a reduction in special school places as a result of this review is not anticipated and no children currently in Braidburn or Oaklands will lose a special school place as a consequence of this review.

Will these changes impact on the availability of holiday provision?

Children's entitlement to holiday provision will not be affected by the outcome of the feasibility process.

Will be harder for parents of younger children with physical disabilities to get a place in a special school?

The Council Management Referral Group is responsible for making decision on referrals for places in all of our special schools. Placements are always made on the basis of pupil needs.

Our aim to ensure that all schools are accessible to pupils with physical disabilities. This increases choice and also ensures that we get the best possible match, taking into account the individual child's needs when children require a special school placement.

The Council has an ongoing duty to provide special school places where these are required and where the presumption of mainstream cannot be met. Overall we are increasing the number of special school places available for children with a significant disability.

Have any pupils been refused a place at Braidburn or Oaklands due to capacity and what will happen to those pupils when there is less capacity. Does it mean that overall places for children with complex needs will be cut?

No we have not declined any requests for places at Oaklands or Braidburn Schools. One of the purposes of the study is to look at all of the factors that impact on the demand for places. In particular we will be consulting closely with NHS colleagues to take account of relevant trends in health care and diagnoses.

Will all existing pupils at Braidburn and Oaklands be guaranteed a place if their needs are unchanged.

No children currently in Braidburn or Oaklands will lose a special school place as a consequence of this review.

Meeting the needs of Children with Additional Support Needs in Edinburgh - Special Schools Planning for the Future Children with Complex Needs at Oaklands and Braidburn Schools

Timeline

