

COMMISSION FOR CHILDREN AND SCHOOL RESULTS – 1 FEBRUARY 2006

SEN STRATEGY AND SCHOOL EXCLUSION CENTRE - REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PUPIL SERVICES

Background

The Local Authority developed its first comprehensive strategy for special educational needs in 2001. This set out a number of key themes and actions to be achieved over a 4 year period. The outcomes of those actions is set out as Annex A in the attached revised strategy document.

Within the National context the DfES require Local Authorities to: ensure that children who have difficulties learning receive the help as soon as possible; to embed inclusive practice in every school and early years settings; to raise expectations and achievements; to improve partnership working.

This strategy sits within the work plan which has been led by the Children's Services directorate in moving towards multi-agency working through the development of a Children's Trust in support of delivering the 'Every Child Matters' agenda as set out by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES).

The Process of Consultation

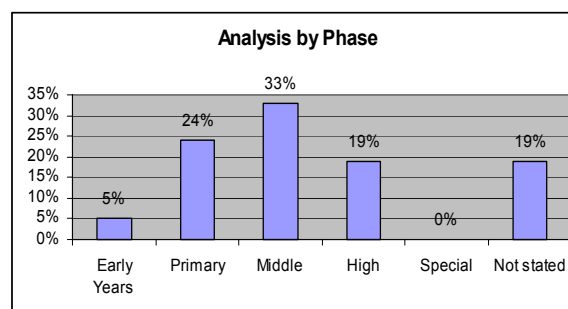
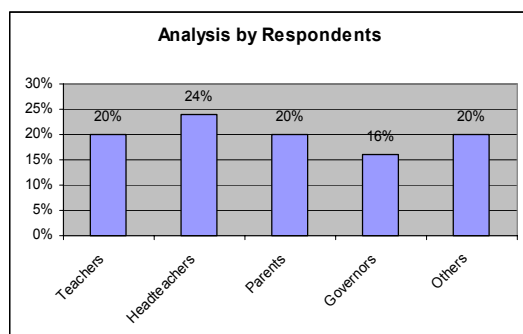
In developing this strategy document formative consultation was undertaken with stakeholders including parents and other professionals to 'shape' the document.

The formal consultation period extended from 5 December 2005 through to the 13 January 2006 although late returns have been included in the figures up to 18 January 2006. The consultation was sent directly to Headteachers and Chairs of Governors; Rural Community Council; Primary Care Trust and the Health Care Trust. In addition the information and consultation forms were published on the EduWight website and an advertisement placed in the County Press drawing the public's attention to the consultation.

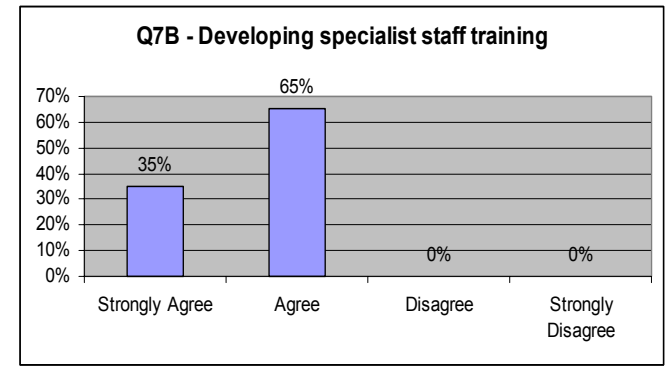
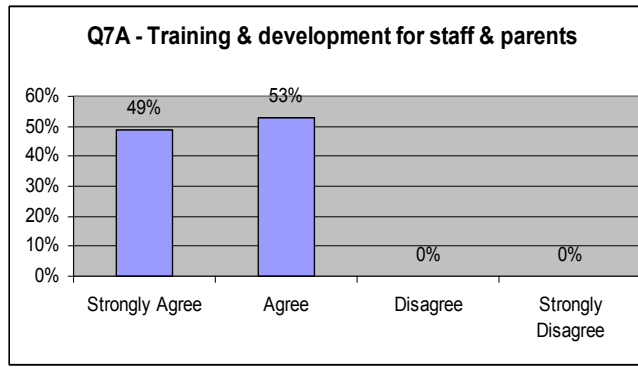
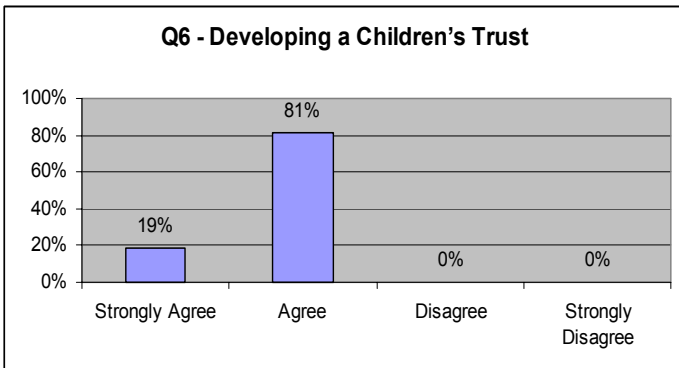
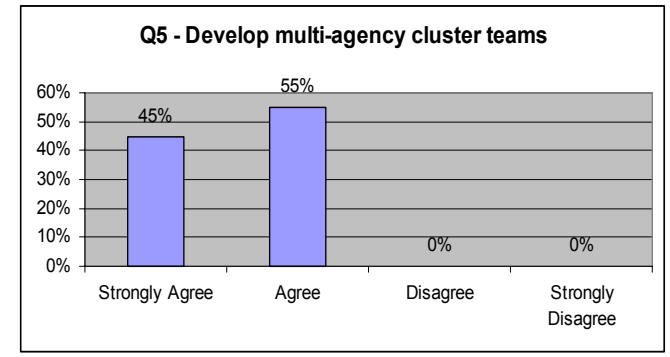
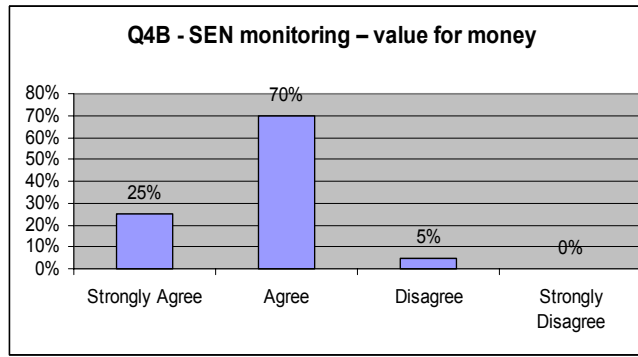
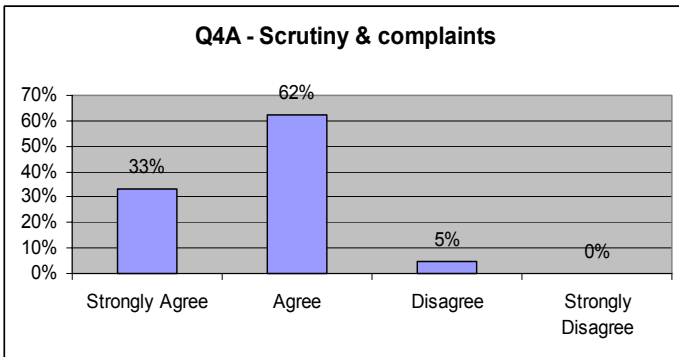
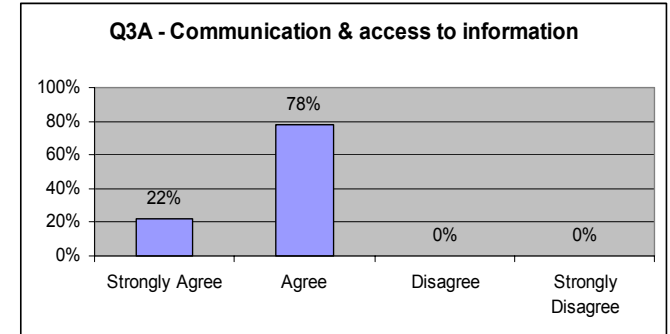
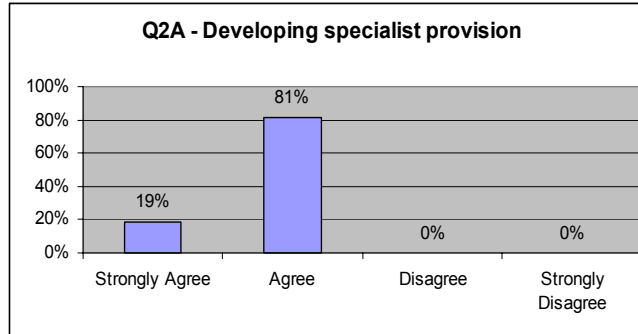
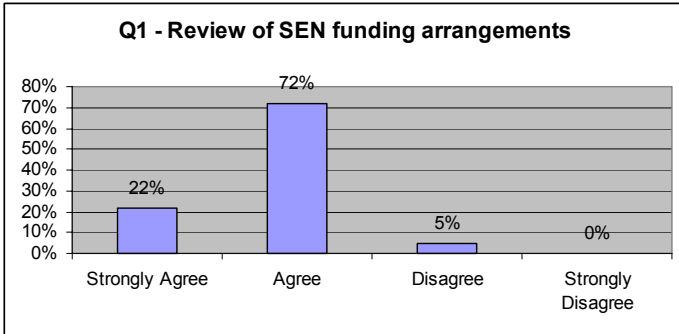
Consultation Analysis

The total number of returns was 25. This is a disappointingly low figure although the responses received did cut across all phases of education and those involved either as parents, staff, governors or other agencies.

In general the response to the revised strategy was extremely positive with the majority of respondents supporting the actions as laid out. Not all respondents answered all the questions therefore the tally of responses for each question does not necessarily equate to the total returns.



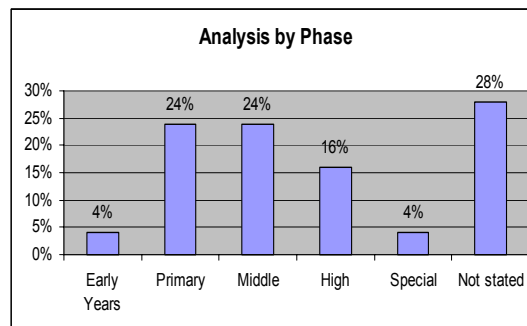
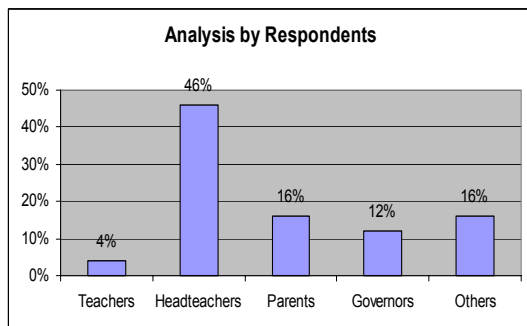
SEN STRATEGY FEEDBACK



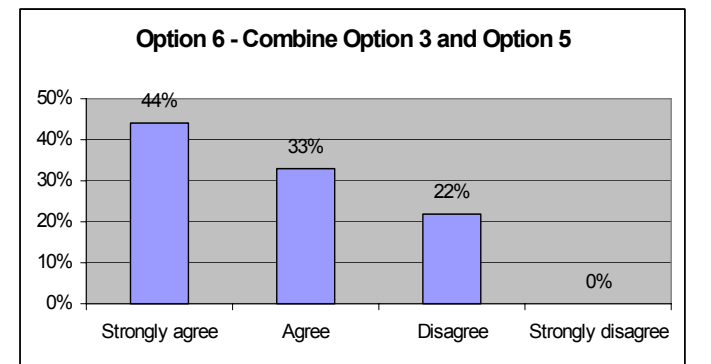
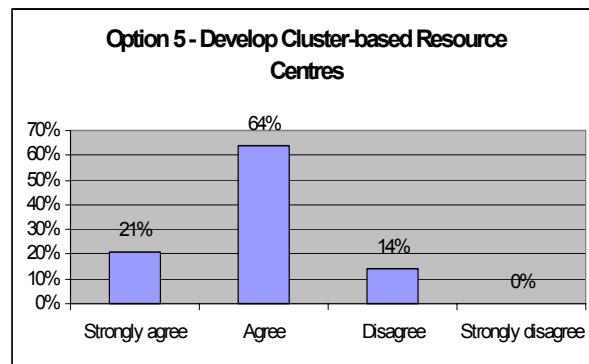
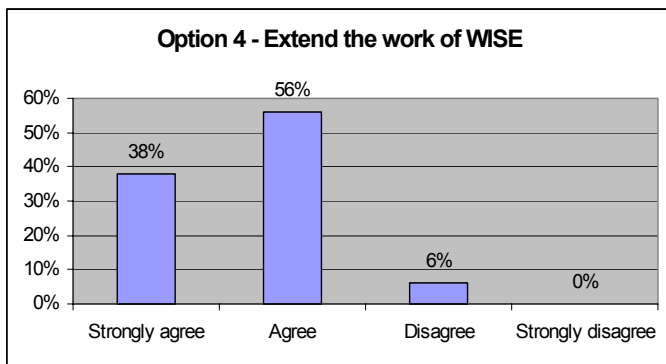
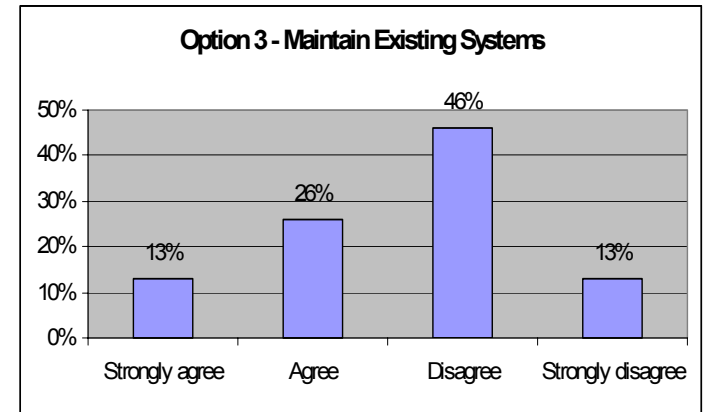
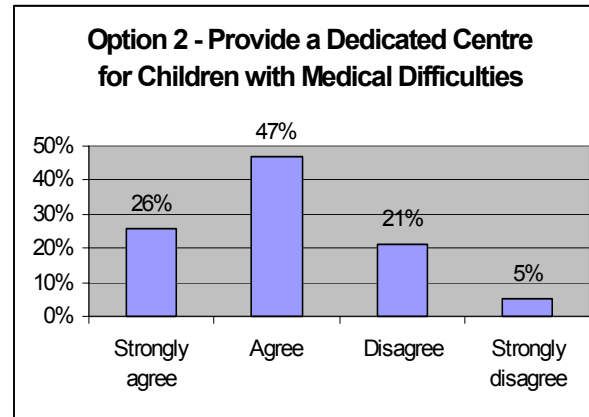
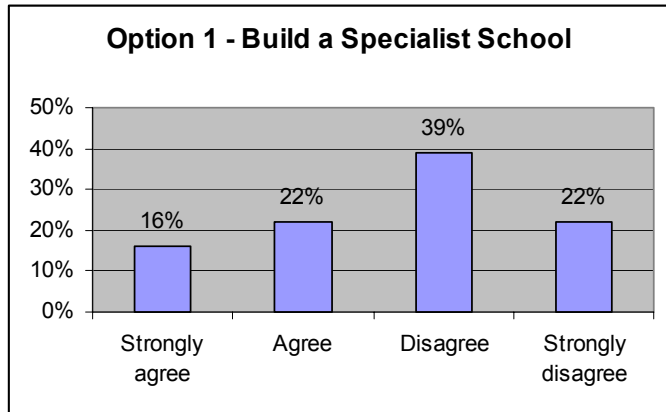
In addition to the consultation on the SEN Strategy, a separate consultation was undertaken in relation to the options considered by the Commission for Children and School Results in September 2005 regarding the development of a school exclusion centre.

The results of this consultation are much more diverse in the responses received. The analysis is set out below.

In response to this consultation 24 returns were received.



DEVELOPMENT OF AN EXCLUSION CENTRE FEEDBACK



Conclusions and recommendations based upon Consultation returns

SEN Strategy

The consultation returns indicate positive approval for the revised strategy which sets out the key themes and actions arising from these over the next three years. These themes are:

- Revising funding arrangements for special educational needs
- Developing provision and support for children with special educational needs
- Improving communication with key stakeholders
- Monitoring SEN provision including value for money
- Developing multi-agency teams within the principles of a Children's Trust
- Developing training opportunities for staff and parents

Within the strategy document these are several innovative actions which have received positive responses from the consultation process and are not, as far as the Local Authority is aware, current practice in other Authorities. For example, enabling parents to access via the internet, the SEN process in order that they can track documents received against a timeline, would be a first in the Southern region, if not in the country.

Development of a School Exclusion Centre (refer to Annex 2)

As evidenced through the consultation returns, views regarding the range of options proposed which were considered by the Commission in September 2005 are extremely varied. It is however possible to draw some conclusions from this process to take forward the positive support for children and young people who have difficulty in managing behaviour within a mainstream classroom.

Developing a specialist school provision for children and young people with social emotional and behavioural difficulties is not overwhelmingly supported with 61% of respondents expressing disagreement with such a proposal. It is of note that Headteacher respondents were more opposed to this development than parents or governors.

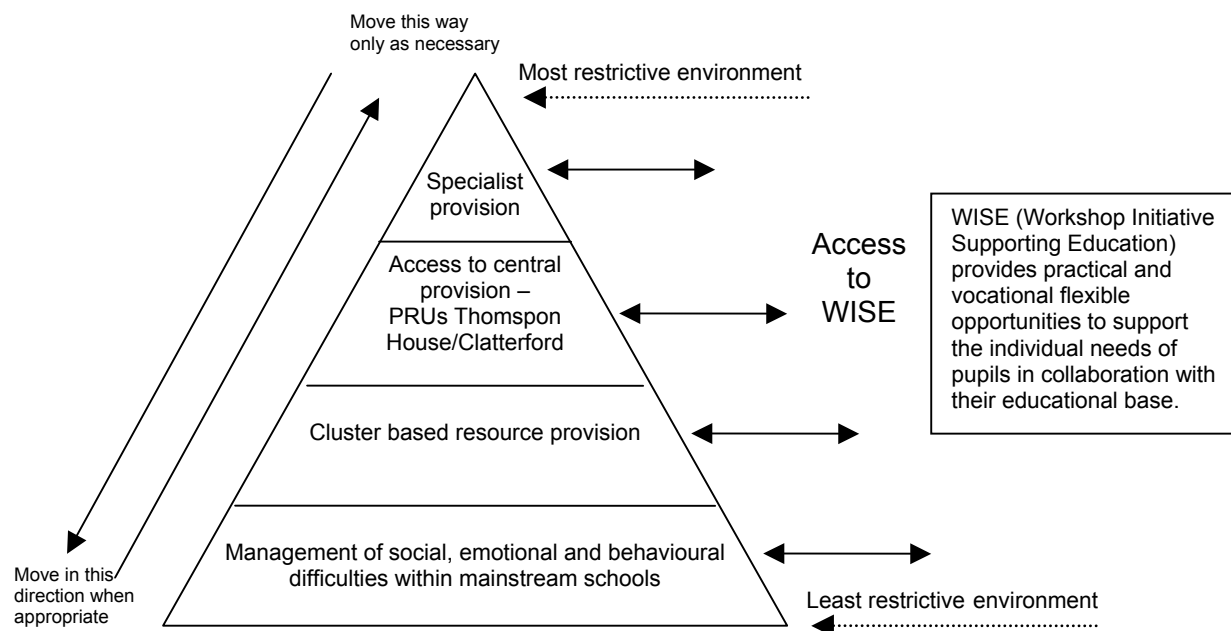
The analysis indicates that maintaining the current system is not sufficient. A number of positive options is available, each of which is compatible with the other and would reflect the consultation returns.

Three strands of service development have been identified as a result of the consultation.

- Provide a dedicated centre for pupils with medically related difficulties. If premises could be found to accommodate such a centre this would have the advantage of freeing up capacity within the PRU for Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils who are difficult to manage.
- Extend the work of WISE, which provides practical and vocational flexible options for youngsters, in order to provide further 'off-school site' activities.
- Developing cluster based resource centres to serve a 'cluster of schools' which would supplement centrally provided alternatives.

Through developing these 3 strands of provision a graduated response to the needs of children and young people with social, emotional and behavioural needs can be developed as illustrated below (see below).

A tiered approach to meeting the needs of pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties:



Recommendations

1. That the Commission for Children and School Results endorse the SEN Strategy and recommend approval to the Cabinet.
2. That the Commission endorse the development of:
 - a dedicated education Centre for pupils with medically related difficulties
 - the WISE facilities
 - cluster based resource centres for pupils who are excluded or at risk of exclusion and those with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. This will be in addition to the existing provision.

Attached papers:

1. [SEN Strategy 2006-2009](#) including Annex A
2. Annex 1: Provision for Speech Language and Communication Needs
3. Annex 2: Development of a School Exclusion Centre

Other references:

1. Commission Report, September 2005

For further information:

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SPEECH LANGUAGE AND COMMUNICATION NEEDS

Background

Nationally there is a recognition that more children have difficulties with language and speech production from an early age. Whilst the causal effects for this are difficult to determine; lifestyle changes and an increased reliance upon a visual medium (television) are cited as factors in a decline in conversation with very young children which leads to delayed and impaired language development.

Provision

Traditionally remedial services for SALT have been provided through National Health Speech and Language Therapy Services. There is a recognition locally and nationally that early intervention is key to overcoming these difficulties.

The Government through its Sure Start programme and Children's Centre Programme have set provision for language development as a part of the foundation of its strategy.

Local Development

The Isle of Wight Local Authority has systematically developed its provision for pupils with speech language and communication difficulties; particularly over the life of its SEN Development Plan 2001-2004. In addition, the re-organisation of special school provision into primary and secondary provision for children and young people with severe and complex special needs was completed by September 2003. The revised SEN strategy (draft) sets out in broad terms the developments necessary in order to meet the needs of this group of children and young people; this paper being an integral component.

The current arrangements for supporting the needs of this group are through collaboration arrangements with NHS colleagues. The inter-connection between these services and provisions were set out in my report to the September 2005 meeting. This refers in particular to the overlap between SALT services and also specialist provision.

Specialist provision (outside of special schools) currently provided through the local authority includes:

- Specialist provision at primary school through Love Lane Primary School
- Specialist provision at middle school through Nodehill Middle School*
- Specialist provision at high school through Carisbrooke High School*

* staffed via St Catherine's School through contract (excluding SALT).

In addition, the local authority maintains a team of staff who support, directly or indirectly, pupils within mainstream schools. Current staffing comprises:

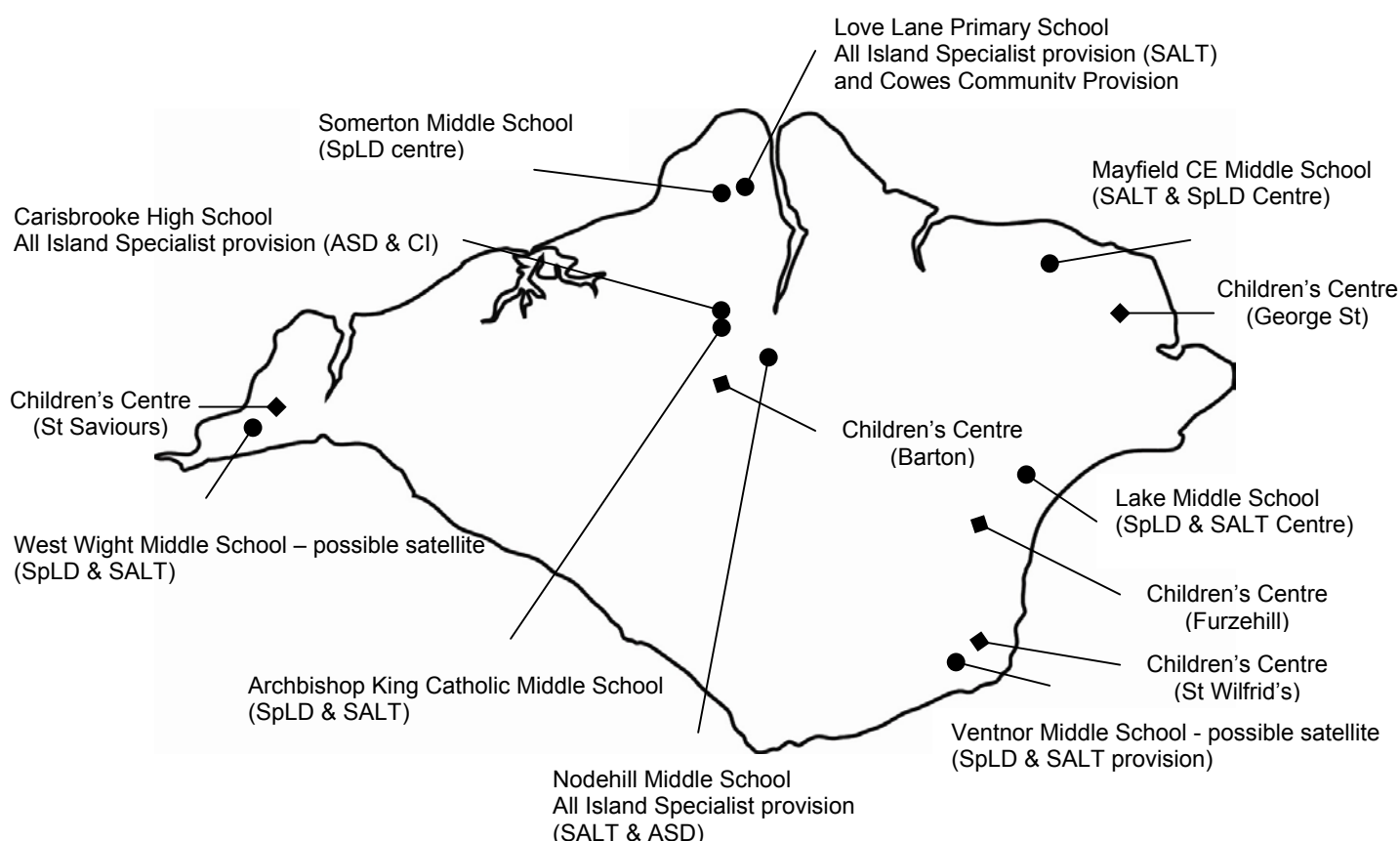
- Senior Practitioner Autism (Education Psychology)
- Senior Speech and Language Therapist
- Consultant Teacher Language Development
- Specialist Communication Support Workers 6.0
- Speech and Language Therapist (2.0) + (3.0) vacancies

Speech and Language therapists currently work 0.4 within Love Lane Centre; 0.4 within Nodehill Centre; 0.2 within Carisbrooke Centre; 0.4 within St George's. In addition, the LA contracts with NHS to provide SALT (1.0) within Medina House School.

Current and Future Development

The local authority in recognition of the identified needs of children and young people with speech, language and communication difficulties is enhancing provision through the following mechanisms:

1. Children's Centres are developed or in the process of development in 5 areas of the Island located at Newport (Barton PS), Shanklin (Furzehill); Ryde (George Street); West Wight (St Saviour's) and Ventnor (St Wilfrid's)
2. Extended schools through developing provision beyond the school day and facilitate access to other related services.



3. 'Cluster' School-based Speech and Language Centres

Providing 'cluster' based geographical centres to ensure SALT can be easily accessed on a regular basis. Each of these centres will be located alongside centres for pupils with specific learning difficulties (dyslexia) – essentially sharing the same building; utilising this at different times of the week.

Centres have been developed at Lake Middle School, Mayfield CE Middle School; Archbishop King Catholic Middle School. Whilst a centre has been developed at Somerton Middle School as the site is adjacent to Love Lane specialist provision, the Love Lane Centre will service the Cowes area. It is anticipated that 'satellite' provision can be developed at Ventnor and West Wight.

The rationale for developing cluster based provision through part time opportunities are to:

- Increase the range of SALT provision available
- Ensure provision is available as locally as possible up to age 11.
- Increase the 'throughput' of pupils by ensuring early intervention on time limited basis
- Provide local opportunities for parents to attend groups to further promote specific language and learning within the home
- Each main SpLD and SALT centre will have input from a dedicated 0.4 teacher of specific learning difficulties and 0.4 speech and language therapist*
- Local centres will provide opportunities for training of teachers and assistants
- Pupils attending these centres on a part-time basis remain on the roll of their local school

In addition, the authority will seek to develop specialist resource centres on the east and south of the Island (Ryde – Sandown axis) to facilitate the local education of those pupils whose needs are more complex, such that they require small group specialist provision on a day to day basis. This provision will, to a large extent mirror that being provided within Love Lane, Nodehill and Carisbrooke High School.

4. Developing Special School Provision

Reviewing the current arrangements of the placement of pupils within specialist independent provision provides an average of 10 pupils per year attending local independent special school provision plus a small number accessing mainland provision. The Local Authority will review how to secure specialist provision of this type to minimise the impact upon centrally retained budgets and maximise opportunities for pupils with these complex needs.

This will include exploring :-

- a) the development of its own specialist provision
- b) exploring the 'block purchase' of places within the independent sector.

Conclusion

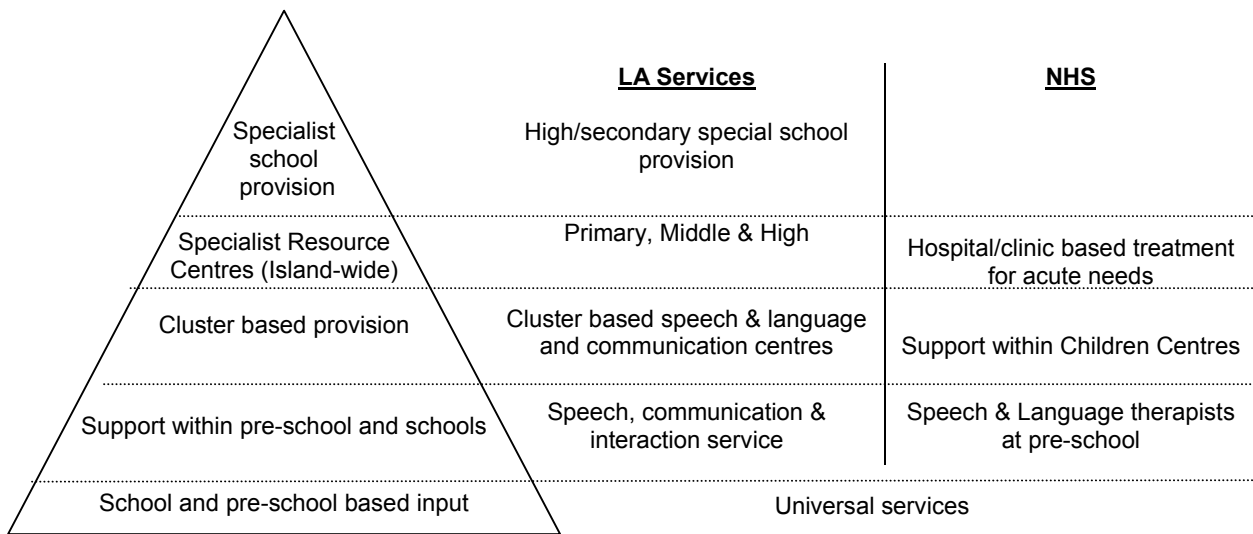
There is now national recognition, evidenced through research, that increased local specialist provision may not reduce the demand for 'out of authority placements' and indeed increased provision which is not based within mainstream schools reduces perceived 'thresholds' of how children's needs are met.

This specific strategy, targeted at those young people with speech, language and communication difficulties and ASD, has to be seen as a true partnership with parents, schools and others agencies with supportive and linked services across the various levels of service provision.

This strategy addresses, in a comprehensive manner, the perceived shortfall in provision and will, in the long term bring about greater efficiency of resources.

** dependent upon recruitment and retention of staff*

Service Provision Model



DEVELOPMENT OF A SCHOOL EXCLUSION CENTRE

Considerations and Background

School exclusion centres as such are not defined within current guidance or legislation, therefore in any such development there needs to be a clear understanding of what a school exclusion centre is; under whose management it would fall and what the criteria would be for admission and re-integration. A further important consideration is how such a centre would be funded.

In 2002 the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) required all 'off school site centres' that provided education and training for pupils for more than 5 pupils on a full time basis to be registered with them. This was partly to ensure all centres were known and also to ensure they were open to Ofsted inspection.

The Isle of Wight Context

The Local authority maintains 2 Pupil referral units (PRU) which support pupils at risk of exclusion through a process of dual registration with their local school. They also provide for pupils who are permanently excluded prior to re-integration or alternative school placement.

The Thompson House PRU deals with primary age children year 1 to year 6. It also provides education for children who are unable to attend school because of medically related reasons up to year 13. This PRU was opened in September 2000.

The Clatterford PRU, sited in Watergate road, provides education for years 7 to year 11. This centre serves those youngsters who have difficulty with their behaviour in school. This PRU was re-sited and significantly upgraded in September 2004.

In addition to the above, the authority maintains a 'workshop facility' located on the Dodnor industrial estate. This offers a part time attendance option for pupils year 6 upwards to undertake a variety of practical activities including; woodwork, construction, mechanics, art and craft, landscaping and gardening. Schools make a small payment for students using this centre.

Permanent exclusion figures from schools on the Island are low. In 2004/5 nine pupils were permanently excluded one of whom was from a residential school for pupils with behavioural difficulties. The Isle of Wight is featured in the DfES 'best practice' website in maintaining a low figure.

National Context

The national picture described by Ofsted (2005) suggests that:

- The poor behaviour of a small minority continues to present a challenge to schools and other settings.
- Lack of agreed definitions on what constitutes challenging behaviour makes it difficult to gauge the full extent of it. Perception of poor behaviour is conditioned both by the context and by the observer's expectations.
- The challenging behaviour of many younger pupils arises mainly as a result of poor language and social skills and emotional development fitting to their age.

- The most common form of poor behaviour is low level disruption of lessons, perpetrated much more often by boys than by girls. This was also cited in the Elton report (1989) as the most common form of poor behaviour.

Consultation and Options

In developing any further provision of this kind consultation with stakeholders is key since, whilst the poor behaviour of a few students can be extremely disruptive, the idea that all students who exhibit poor behaviour from time to time should be excluded from school into a specialist centre is likely to be unrealistic even if considered desirable.

Consultation would need to include;

Headteachers and the Governing bodies of schools.
Health and Social Care professionals
Parents
Children and young people
Diocese
Learning Skills Council

Many Local Authorities have provision to meet the needs of pupils with social emotional and behavioural difficulties although a number also have a specialist school. Portsmouth and Southampton as our nearest unitary neighbours have a range of PRUs and Specialist schools. Similarly, Hampshire has a range of provision throughout the County.

Local Options

Option 1

Build a specialist school

The optimum size for a school of this type is between 40 – 60 pupils. All age schools are not considered appropriate because of the potential diverse age range and negative impact older pupils may have over their younger counterparts. There is no guarantee that pupils will not be permanently excluded from such a school.

The capital costs in respect of a 40 place facility and a 60 place facility are set out more fully in my substantive report to the September 2005 meeting. The headline figures for capital expenditure is £1.7 million and £2.5 million respectively which does not include the purchase cost of any land.

Revenue costs for staffing and infrastructure approx £700,000 and £1.1 million respectively per annum (school element only).

If a residential unit (20 place) is required the additional capital cost would be approx £3.2 million.

Revenue costs to be determined.

Option 2

To extend the work of the current Pupil referral units through providing a dedicated centre for those pupils who experience medical difficulties (currently supported through Thompson House) therefore allowing greater responsiveness to behavioural difficulties from year 1 through to year 6.

Capital costs to be determined.

Revenue costs based upon a 20 place facility approx £200,000

Option 3

Maintain the existing systems – costs related to pay awards and inflation.

Option 4

Maintain the existing PRUs and extend the work of WISE by developing a satellite centre in Sandown (this work is already partially underway) .

Capital costs approx £150,000 utilising an existing building.

Revenue costs approx. £75,000

Option 5

Engage with school clusters to develop a behaviour resource centre to serve each cluster of schools. This has the advantage of ensuring that pupils remain the responsibility of schools within the cluster. It focuses attention on a 'throughput' of pupils. The potential difficulty is likely to be finding a 'host school' for such a facility. The same conditions with regard to the age range of pupils apply as in option 1.

Revenue costs for a 10 place facility approx £98,000 per annum per cluster. Total £490,000

Capital costs. This would be dependent upon the physical space available within the host school; If additional space was required installation of a portable building approx £150,000 per cluster. Total Est. £750,000.

Option 6

A combination of option 5 and option 3 therefore extending the range of provision available overall to develop greater flexibility for pupils and schools.

Additional costs as per option 5.

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