

## Appendix A

### SEN Improvement Test

(from 'Planning and Developing Special Educational Provision – A Guide for Local Authorities and Other Proposers – DSCF 2007)

#### Introduction

This document provides a guide to Local Authorities and other proposers of new special educational provision and all those responsible for making decisions about the organisation of special educational provision.

This guidance requires that when proposals are developed for reorganising or altering SEN provision LAs and/or other proposers will need to show how they will improve on current arrangements. The SEN Improvement Test sets out a number of factors that local authorities and other decision makers should consider when determining statutory proposals to reorganise SEN provision.

Within the context of any review or reorganisation of SEN provision LAs should be endeavouring to ensure equity and fairness across the authority. LAs and other decision makers need to appreciate that making changes to historic patterns of provision can be difficult to achieve as they may lead to a perceived reduction in the range of type of provision in one school or locality whilst ideally contributing to a greater and more appropriate range of provision across the authority or region. It should also be recognised that maintaining unnecessary provision may lead to unreasonable public expenditure which does not represent value for money. Reorganisation can, of course, release funding which can be used to invest in more effective provision.

Under the 'key factors' below we have set out how these have been taken into account.

#### Key factors

*Details of the specific educational benefits that will flow from the proposals in terms of:*

- a) *improved access to education and associated services including the curriculum, wider school activities, facilities and equipment, with reference to the LA's Accessibility Strategy*
- The proposal brings together a range of specialist expertise which will broaden the curriculum for all pupils.
  - There would be increased access to a diverse range of specialist resources for pupils across all 3 sites as appropriate to need and age.
  - Improved access to the facilities in all 3 schools will be supported, and an accessibility audit will be completed in line with the LAs Accessibility Strategy.
  - For those pupils currently attending Weatherfield School for whom it is appropriate, there would be access to school-based provision post

- b) *improved access to specialist staff, both education and other professionals, including any external support and/or outreach services*
- Due to the existing expertise at Glenwood and Hillcrest schools in meeting the needs of children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) which is internationally recognised, this proposal could provide the provision currently lacking in Central Bedfordshire for pupils with Moderate Learning Difficulties and ASD.
  - This would provide a centre for professionals from Health and other services to support provision for children with complex needs.
  - The size and designation of the school would provide a model for leadership that would support the growth of future leaders in special education.
  - The proposal could provide an integrated model for coordinating specialist peripatetic services and outreach to support the most vulnerable children wherever they receive education as part of an extended role for special schools. Glenwood School is already the identified lead school for provision of outreach in this area.
  - This proposal alongside the development of our support services could provide focussed professional development for all staff working with our most vulnerable pupils 0 – 19 and post 19 that supports continuity and progression and aids transition into the next stage of their lives

c) *improved access to suitable accommodation*

The increased access to space and resources for all groups of pupils will improve the access to suitable accommodation for all pupils.

d) *improved supply of suitable places*

The proposal will provide places for pupils with complex needs in this area of Central Bedfordshire.

**LAs should also:**

- i. *obtain a written statement that offers the opportunity for all providers of existing and proposed provision to set out their views on the changing pattern of provision seeking agreement where possible*
- The proposal was considered as part of a public consultation February/March 2011. These views will be considered by the Executive at their meeting on 31 May 2011.
- ii. *clearly state arrangements for alternative provision. A 'hope' or 'intention' to find places elsewhere is not acceptable. Wherever possible, the host or alternative schools should confirm in writing that they are willing to receive pupils, and have or will have all the facilities necessary to provide an appropriate curriculum.*

The pupils will continue to utilise the current sites but will also have access to resources currently provided through the other schools as appropriate to age and need. All pupils will have a place.

- iii. *specify the transport arrangements that will support appropriate access to the premises by reference to the LA's transport policy for SEN and disabled children*

Transport arrangements will continue to be provided as set out in the Central Bedfordshire Transport Policy.

- iv. *specify how the proposals will be funded and the planned staffing arrangements that will be put in place.*

The funding for the proposals is set out in the Executive report. Subject to a decision being taken following publication of Statutory Notices, the schools will initiate a consultation on a staffing structure with staff and professional associations that ensures the needs of the pupils continue to be met.