

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) REVIEW

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (SEN) REVIEW

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Since the report to Executive in April 2007, we have completed the agreed recommendations. This report outlines additional proposals for development and implementation over the short, medium and longer term.

1.2 The key issues identified in the April report that we needed to address were as follows:

- (i) Bedfordshire lacked a clear strategy for development in the area of SEN and inclusion (and was criticised for this in its 2002 Ofsted inspection)
- (ii) The percentage of the overall school-aged population who are placed in special schools (1.5%) is higher than the national and regional average, and than the Authority's statistical neighbours .
- (iii) Since local government reorganisation, the number of children attending Bedfordshire special schools from other neighbouring Authorities (particularly Luton) has fallen significantly, leading to some excess capacity in the system
- (iv) The existing pattern of special provision has developed on a piecemeal basis, resulting in gaps in some areas of need, and excessive travel for some young people who are placed in special schools / unit provision attached to mainstream schools at some distance away from their local neighbourhood / community
- (v) Bedfordshire overall spends a higher than average amount of its delegated budgets on special schools. This partly reflects the higher percentage of the population in this sector. However, there are also inconsistencies in the way that individual schools are funded, and in the associated transport costs
- (vi) The number of out of Authority placements made in the independent / non-maintained special school sector (though small) requires significant levels of funding that could be used better to enhance and develop more local options for children with complex and challenging needs
- (vii) The overall percentage of the school-aged population with statements is higher than the national and regional average, and than most of the Authority's statistical neighbours, though there has recently been some reduction
- (viii) Although the Authority retains a small number of central support services, these need to be better focused and coordinated (and in some case better funded) in order to make a greater impact at child / family and teacher / school level and on broader strategic outcomes

1.3 Principles agreed at April Executive

- Localness – strengthening local options / filling gaps
- Fitness for purpose – ensuring provision matches current and future needs
- Personalisation – linking provision to individual needs not 'fixed' categories
- Inclusive system – closer links between mainstream and special school sector

- Building capacity – through training and development of skills
 - Better not less – change motivated by improving outcomes for children and families
 - Cost-efficiency – reducing unnecessary expenditure and re-investing to meet identified and unmet needs
- 1.4 Members agreed in principle at the April Executive meeting to develop a range of provision, including Area Special Schools. It was also agreed that the current number of special school places should be retained, but should be re-designated. It is recognised that current pupils within specialist schools or provisions will need to have their placements protected as we develop these proposals. Further consultation was recommended, while further work on modelling future provision was undertaken.
- 1.5 We have consulted with parents/carers, schools, and other agencies about the future for SEN provision in Bedfordshire, and their feedback has been incorporated into this paper. Generally, all those consulted have agreed with the principles and the recommendations that are contained in the April report to members. The consultation demonstrated the importance of maintaining the confidence of all parents that the needs of their children will be appropriately met in any setting.
- 1.6 A number of immediate recommendations were identified in the Executive report in April '07 and actions identified below have been taken to address this.
- We have carried out a feasibility study on the suitability of special school sites, to establish which sites could be developed to become fit for purpose as Area Special Schools for children and young people with complex needs, and which could not.
 - We have mapped the additional specialist provision required against known and potential future need.
 - We have taken into account the recent House of Commons Select Committee report on SEN and the Ofsted report of July 2006 outlining successful practice and recommendations to Local Authorities and schools. The Government's response to the report has reiterated a commitment to ensure that a range of provision is available locally to meet individual children's special educational needs.
 - We have taken into account the guidance from the DfES (now Department for Children, Schools and Families: DCSF) on the planning and development of special educational needs. This made it clear that when proposals are developed for reorganising or altering SEN provision, Local Authorities (LAs) will need to show how they will improve on current arrangements. There is a SEN Improvement test identifying a number of factors that LAs and decision makers should consider which we have taken into account. It encourages LAs to develop a range of provision to meet the range of children's SEN, recognising that this may include provision in special schools or mainstream schools, in specialist resourced provision within a school or in a specialist unit attached to, or co-located with a school, in mainstream early years and child care settings, or through federation, collaboration and partnership. The key feature in all forms of SEN provision is the access to appropriate specialist support and advice however that is provided.
 - We have reviewed staffing levels and the organisation of the Assessment & Monitoring Team and Psychology & Specialist Support Service. We are using

secondments as a way of supporting increased capacity in both teams, and therefore also developing expertise that can be taken back to schools. Specifically we have:

- created a post in commissioning for an Assessment and Monitoring Officer for Out-of-County Specialist placements.
 - added an additional SEN Officer role to the Assessment and Monitoring Team and plans are in place to increase their management capacity.
 - restructured the Educational Psychology and Specialist Support Services (PSSS) to include the Early Years Support Team, Sensory team, Music Therapy, Advisory Teachers for Learning and ASD and Educational Psychologists (EPs) together in one Service.
 - successfully recruited staff to this service. This includes educational psychologists, advisory teachers for learning and for ASD, and sensory specialist teachers. The recruitment of EPs is very positive as there is a shortage of EPs nationally due to the changes in training requirements. There is also a need to be able to appoint EPs in training in the future, who are undertaking their doctoral qualification, to ensure the future supply of EPs in Bedfordshire.
 - reorganised our behaviour support services (SEBSS and PRU) together into one team with a single point of referral.
- We are consulting on a Behaviour Strategy which incorporates all of the services in Children's Services and provision in mainstream and special schools for pupils with Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD). The strategy will provide clarity to schools and families as to what is available and how to access it. It will also ensure there is a continuum of provision to meet the range of needs of pupils who have BESD needs.
 - We have clearly laid out in the school's budget report this year the level of funding for mainstreams schools to support children with SEN. This allows the Local Authority to support and challenge schools, if resources are not being effectively managed or targeted to support pupils.
 - We have undertaken a piece of work as part of the deprivation review to look at how money is allocated to schools for those most vulnerable pupils as well as those with additional educational needs. The schools forum has recommended the formula for the delegation of this funding. A proposal for the next 3 years budget period, of how additional money targeted for SEN and deprivation can be distributed to schools has been agreed. This will increase support for the more vulnerable children by more than an additional £3 million.

1.7 The following report brings together work that has been completed around the following areas:

- Early Years provision
- Speech and language provision
- Analysis of special school sites
- SEN funding in mainstream schools

- Funding of special schools
- Mapping and analysis of specialist provisions
- Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (BESD) provision
- BESD support services

1.8 We are committed to delivering on these principles and would confirm that this strategy will follow the key principle for SEN provision in Bedfordshire, which will be better provision, not less for children and young people. It is based on the principle of early intervention and prevention, building a continuum of provision for those with lower level needs to those with the most severe and complex needs. We will endeavour to meet the needs of ALL children and young people in Bedfordshire with additional needs. In order to achieve this, we need to ensure that:

- Resourcing is in proportion to need
- There is access to equivalent provision wherever the child lives

1.9 Building a strong base to the pyramid of provision aids prevention, is cost effective and leads to more effective intervention. However, this requires adequate resourcing to ensure children and young people's needs are not escalated up the pyramid of provision unnecessarily. We will need to clarify how provision for children and young people is distributed along the continuum, building on effective practice at the lower level, matching levels of provision appropriately and predictably to levels of need.

1.10 We have considered the financial implications of all of the above proposals.

2. CONTINUUM OF NEED – CURRENT PICTURE

2.1 Based on this year's figures (2007), the table below illustrates:

- the number of children at each stage/type of provision;
- total spend on that provision
- the breakdown of average spend per pupil

2.2 It highlights the need to refocus resources and ensure that adequate resources are provided at every level, and not at some levels at the expense of others.

2.3 The figures presented below are based on the schools' January 07 Plasc (School Census) return and do not accurately reflect needs. Nationally, there is an average of 5.53% of pupils at Action Plus¹, but in Bedfordshire only 3.9% of pupils are at Action Plus. The population profile in Bedfordshire indicates that this is an under-identification of need. The reasons for this under-identification are not clear, but draft guidance was issued to schools in 2006 regarding the identification and appropriate provision for pupils at Action and Action Plus. This is being revised following feedback from schools and parents, and includes guidance for Early Years.

2.4 Transport costs are significant as many children and young people are travelling significant distances to access specialist provision.

¹ The terms 'action' and 'action plus' come from the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice 2001, and refer to those children and young people with special educational needs who require the school to take action that is additional to, or different from, the normal range of differentiated activities in the school/classroom.

Table 1 Figures as of July 2007 based on January PLASC return

Distribution of Pupils with SEN	No. pupils	% of school population	Cost of SEN provision excluding transport costs	Av. cost /pupil £
Out-of-County Independent & Non-Maintained Special Schools	46	< 0.1	3,089,946	67,173
Maintained special school	837	1.3	12,662,004	15,128
Specialist provisions in mainstream schools	90	0.1	2,051,989	22,800
Statement of SEN in mainstream schools	1,117	1.7	5,846,995	5,235
SEN Action Plus	2,540	3.9	Share of Notional 5% of DSG + 1020824	1,755
SEN Action	6,796	10.6	Share of Notional 5% of DSG	351

2.5 The data used to underpin the review was based on the Executives decision that the number of special school places, though greater than in comparator counties, would be maintained at current levels. There would be a re-designation of these places based on current and future demands.

2.6 We analysed where children currently lived so we could identify need based on localities.

Table 2

District	Pupil numbers
Out of County	68
Bedford Borough	313
Mid Bedfordshire	204
South Bedfordshire	252
Total	837

2.7 The table above shows where special school pupils live by postcode, based on the January 2007 return.

2.8 This figure has reduced due to a number of children leaving school in July 2007 many of these being Luton children. The chart below shows children currently in special schools broken down by area. Children can travel considerable distances to get appropriate provision so it does not truly reflect area need.

Table 3

District	Pupil numbers
Non Bedfordshire pupils in Bedfordshire schools	44
Bedford Borough	337
Mid Bedfordshire	157
South Bedfordshire	255
Total pupils (excluding non Beds)	793 (749)

- 2.9 This table shows children as of 8th November 2007 who are placed in special schools in each area of the county; it excludes 46 pupils at Oak Bank School.
- 2.10 We also know that it is likely that the population of the special schools, excluding Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties(BESD) may drop in the next three year period especially in the Moderate Learning Difficulties(MLD) population (see table 4).

Table 4

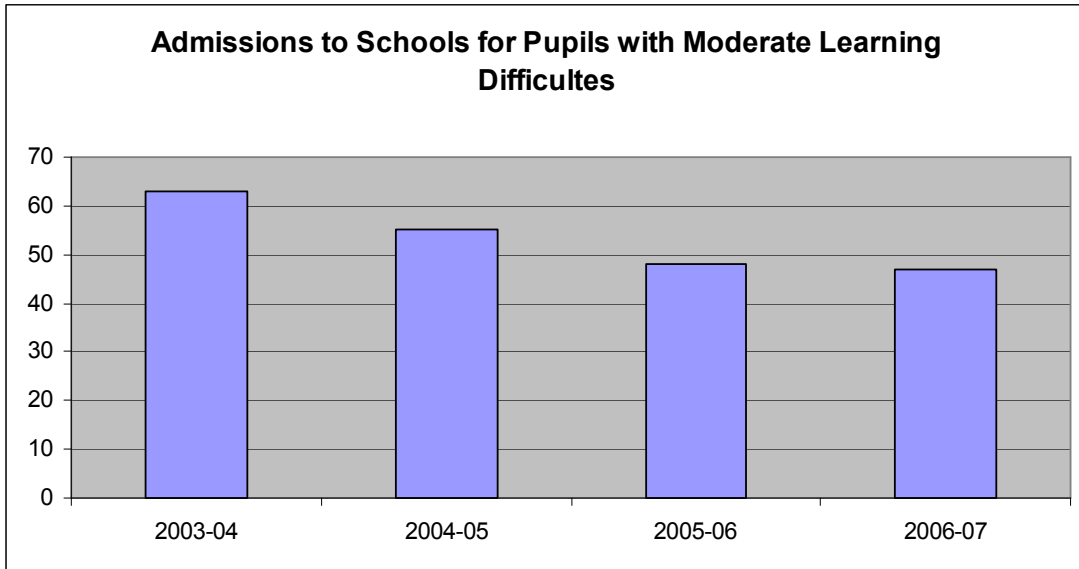
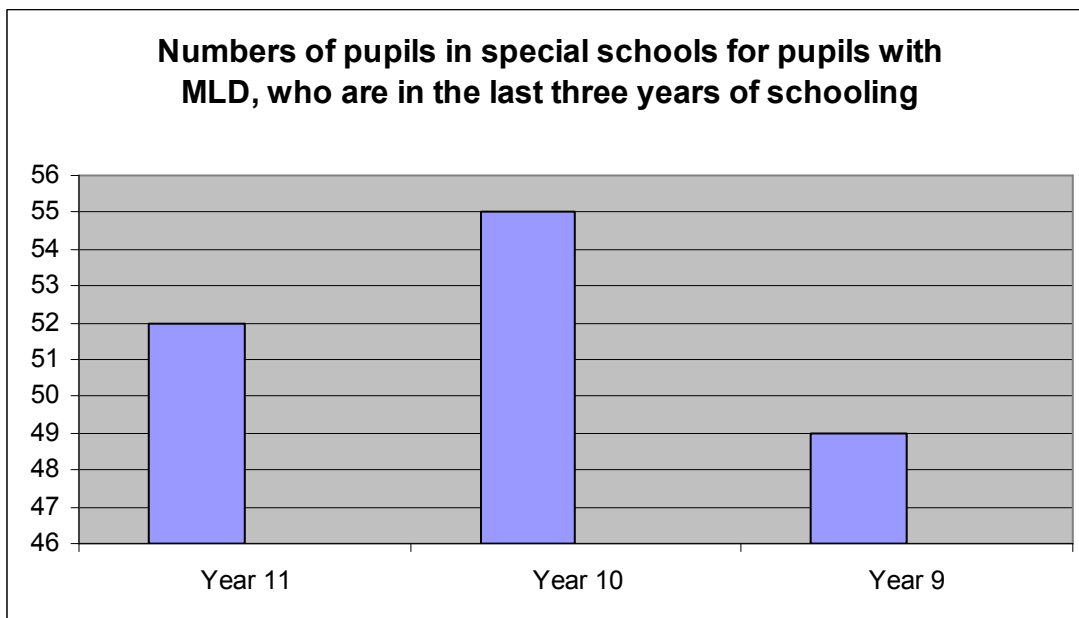


Table 5



- 2.11 The table below shows the number of children in each of our special schools, and the places funded and surplus places.

Table 6**Special School Numbers - 8 November 2007**

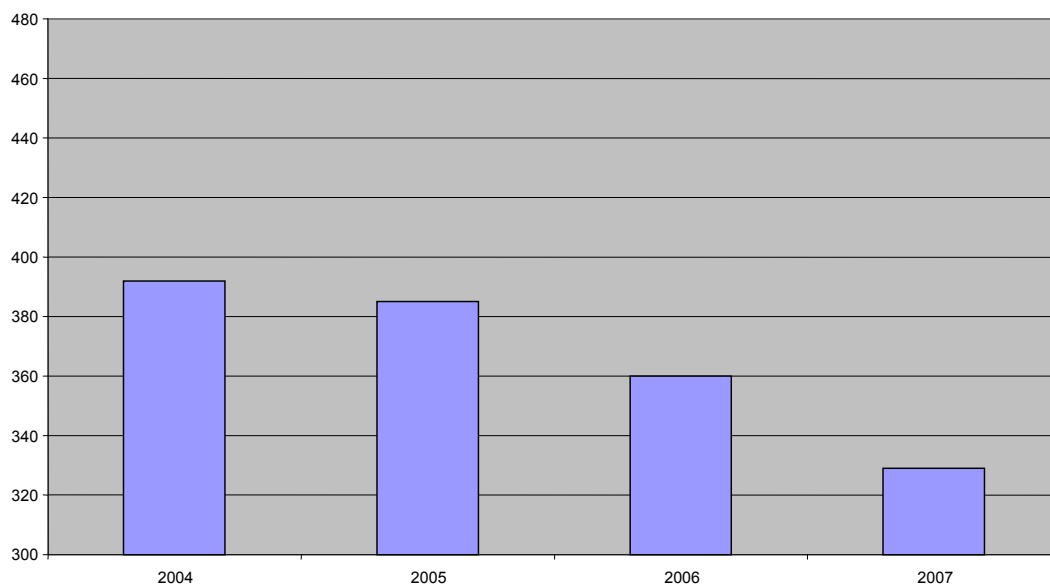
	District	Numbers	Funded places	Surplus Places	inc OLA pupils
Hitchmead MLD	Mid	58	79	-21	
Sunnyside SLD/PMLD	Mid	99	86.5	12.5	
Total		157			
Grange MLD	North	138	160	-22	2
Ridgeway PD	North	56	68.5	-12.5	7
St John's SLD/PMLD	North	143	126.5	16.5	5
Total		337			
Glenwood MLD	South	66	81	-15	4
Hillcrest SLD/PMLD	South	84	94	-10	21
Weatherfield MLD	South	105	142	-37	5
Total		255			
Oak Bank BESD		46	49	-3	
Total		795	886.5	-91.5	44

SLD = Severe Learning Difficulties
PMLD = Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
MLD = Moderate Learning Difficulties
PD = Physical Difficulties

2.12 This table below shows the decreasing numbers of children with MLD placed in our special schools over the last three years. However, while these numbers have been falling the needs of those pupils being admitted have become more complex. The predicted number of children leaving the top of the schools over the next three years especially in the south and mid of the county, without corresponding numbers of children joining at the bottom of the school, calls into question the continued viability of these schools into the future. Children with MLD are often very successfully included within mainstream provision especially with increased personalisation of curriculum within schools.

Table 7

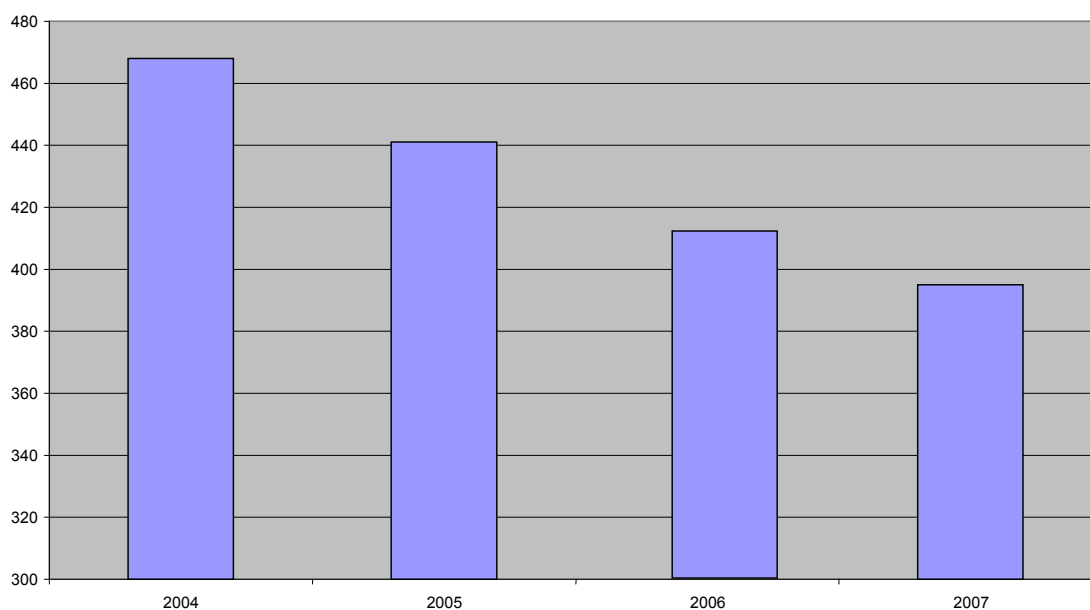
Numbers on roll in Special Schools for Pupils with MLD



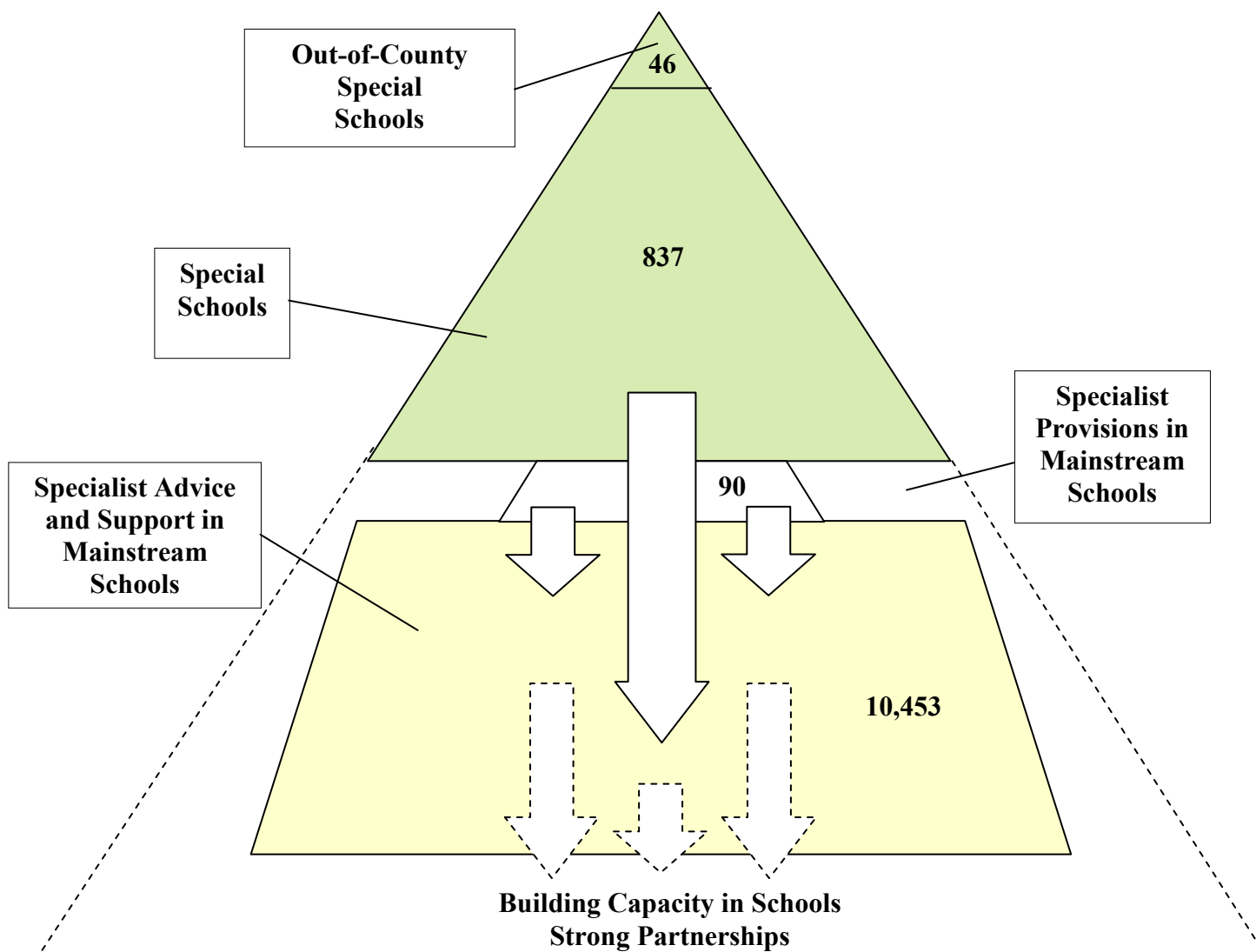
2.13 The numbers of children with SLD has also dropped within our special schools, although the drop in these numbers is mainly due to the decrease in the children placed by other Local Authorities, in particular Luton. Admissions have increased significantly in two of our SLD / PMLD schools, but there is not sufficient accommodation available. As within the MLD sector the children within the SLD schools needs have also become more complex.

Table 8

Numbers on roll in Special Schools for Pupils with SLD



RANGE OF PROVISION



3. OUT OF COUNTY SPECIAL SCHOOLS

- 3.1. Currently, some children and young people are placed in out of county provision because they require a residential element to their provision. We have already started to provide residential provision in county for some, thus reducing the need for out of county provision. Others are placed out of county because parents have lost confidence in the county provision. This highlights the need to maintain parental confidence at all stages, and to ensure that in county provision is flexible to meet the range of needs.
- 3.2. There will always be a need for out of county placements for a small number of children and young people with very specialist or low incidence needs whose parents want it, for example profoundly deaf children who require a total signing environment. It is not cost effective to develop this type of specialist provision locally.

4. AREA SPECIAL SCHOOLS

4.1 A national report from the Special Schools Working Group considered the future role of special schools. The membership of the Group was largely made up of special school head teachers and voluntary organisation representatives. The Group saw special schools as having an important and continuing role within the range of provision maintained by Local Authorities. It agreed that special schools had a role in:

- (i) providing high quality education for the growing population of children with severe and complex needs
- (ii) supporting mainstream schools to become more inclusive by developing and improving their capacity, through advice, support and training

and that LAs needed to:-

- (iii) ensure provision was coordinated and further developed to ensure that children can have their needs met closer to where they live
- (iv) see special schools as an integral part of local service delivery, closely linked to Local Authorities Children's Services developments

and recommended that:

- (v) opportunities should be sought to reduce the barriers between the mainstream and special school sectors, through a range of measures, including future co-location of sites.

4.2 Area Special Schools are an important part of our strategy for Special Educational Needs in Bedfordshire, and serve a crucial role within the continuum of provision for our children and young people with the most significant needs. They also have a developing contribution to multi-agency co-ordination and support for mainstream schools and early years providers. This is a real opportunity to establish special schools at the heart of a co-ordinated multi-agency network of services for vulnerable children and families.

4.3 Officers, special school headteachers, governors and the lead member have visited other parts of the country (such as Cambridge and Darlington) where this model is already well-established, and see it as having considerable advantages over the current system in Bedfordshire. The vision for special schools sees them as Area resources, preferably based in close proximity to mainstream schools and the range of local support services, delivering more holistic and flexible provision for young people with special educational needs and their families. This would allow more individualised responses to young people with complex needs that might cut across the range of traditional category boundaries.

4.4 We believe Area Special Schools will offer the benefits brought about by concentrating and co-ordinating expertise and resources within a single organisation. Such benefits include:-

- High staff/pupil ratio;
- Small classes;
- Strong team-work ethic;

- Developed knowledge and understanding of complex learning disabilities;
- Wide range of specialist teaching approaches, strategies and methods;
- Well trained and experienced support staff;
- On-site access to a multi-agency team;
- Curriculum designed and delivered to ensure that pupil priority areas of learning remain paramount;
- Adapted environments, specialised equipment and resources.

4.5 Area Special Schools will also play an essential role within the LA continuum of provision and support because:-

- The degree of individualised planning required to meet the needs of some learners is feasible only within the special school context;
- Pupils are grouped with others of a similar age and ability;
- Teacher motivation is strong because they have elected to work with pupils presenting complex needs;
- Knowledge and skill associated with SEN is sustained, shared and developed within the professional community of the special school;
- Vulnerable pupils are safer within the supportive surrounds of the special school;
- Such schools are proven to be very cost-effective.
- Almost all pupils with Complex Learning Needs will have their needs met locally from early years to post-16;
- Schools with such a dynamic role will prove professionally attractive to teachers at all levels;
- Personalised learning (DfES 2004) will be refined further within a broad and balanced curriculum framework, including the National Curriculum, relevant to pupil need;
- Pupils with challenging behaviour will more effectively have their needs met locally due to concentration and collaboration of multi-agency expertise, resource and effort;
- They are well placed to provide 'extended' services to support pupils with SEN and their families beyond the confines of the conventional school day.

4.6 Close proximity would enable mainstream and special schools to share their resources and facilities and work more effectively in partnership. Special schools and services based on these sites would deliver support to mainstream schools (and to children and families) in the area. Special schools have much to offer in this regard, in terms of curriculum development and access, individual and personalised planning, positive behaviour management, augmented communication systems, ICT, as well as more specific inputs on access and support for pupils with ASD / physical disabilities etc.

4.7 In Bedfordshire, we believe that we can achieve a more equitable and appropriate provision for our children and young people with the most complex needs by the development of Area Special Schools. These Area Special Schools would serve their local area. Children and families value local provision as it allows children to stay in touch with their local community, and the community in touch with them. We

wish to give parents and carers confidence that local Area Special Schools can meet the needs of the majority of children and young people with the most complex difficulties, with support from the social care aspect of Children's Services where appropriate, so that even our most challenging young people can be provided for close to their own community.

- 4.8 We propose that the Area Special Schools would provide for children and young people from 2 -19 years. We have also investigated models in other authorities and would propose that consideration is given to extending some of the Area Special Schools to 25 years to meet the needs of those young people who need extended provision into adulthood.
- 4.9 We consider that Area Special Schools would be designated to meet the needs of children and young people with complex learning needs. In order to be ascribed as 'complex learning needs' and therefore require special school placement either fulltime or be on a dual role with a mainstream school, pupils must have high levels of need or must be complex and severe.
- 4.10 In order for a pupil to be considered as Complex Learning Needs, admissions guidance will need to be agreed to reflect this. The guidance should outline the needs of a child or young person to be placed in an Area Special School, however, the presence of such needs would not in themselves be a barrier to mainstream placement if this was deemed desirable and appropriate.
- 4.11 We recognise that the success of a special school in meeting the needs of all of its pupils relies on strong and clear leadership, a tailored curriculum that is relevant to all of its pupils, high quality teaching and learning that takes account of all individual needs, and excellent use of human and physical resources, including the school and community environments.
- 4.12 We and colleague special school head teachers have investigated different models of special school provision nationally, and have found that co-located special schools have been much more successful in providing real opportunities for young people to come together to both learn and socialise. This model has had a proven positive impact on learners, staff and parents in both the mainstream and special school contexts, and is the direction of travel that has been taken by Local Authorities who have been successful in developing their SEN provision. Work that has been done by Bedfordshire Special and Mainstream schools to provide co-location for some groups of pupils has been recognised as excellent and successful practice locally, regionally and nationally. This is the model that is seen as essential by all Bedfordshire Special School Headteachers, and was agreed as a preferred model at the consultation meetings. We would therefore look to developing Area Special Schools in close proximity to mainstream schools.
- 4.13 Having carried out a feasibility study of all of our current special schools sites, it is clear that, other than Hillcrest School, none of the buildings are fit for the purpose of an Area Special School or could be easily and efficiently adapted to provide for the range of children and young people with complex learning needs. It is also recognised that Hillcrest would require significant development to enable it to provide for the numbers and range of needs into the future. All special school buildings have already been adapted as far as is possible, and still do not provide adequate space to meet the needs of the current population. Most classroom sizes do not meet the current regulations. We wish to ensure that all of our special schools are fit for purpose both currently and into the longer term future, and that they are able to provide high quality education and support for all pupils up to 19 who need it.

- 4.14 We are currently in discussions with health colleagues about the delivery of all services for children and young people with complex needs. The development of Area Special Schools and Children’s Centres would provide the opportunity for all of these services to be delivered locally, as well as maximising opportunity for multi agency working and provide a model of extended services.
- 4.15 We propose that all Area Special Schools be set up to provide outreach support for statemented children and young people in local mainstream schools. It is agreed that all outreach should be consistent with Local Authority policy and strategy, and that special schools should not develop services in isolation. A model of outreach and a quality assurance process will be agreed by the special school heads and the Local Authority. It will be further developed through an SLA and funded appropriately, as any outreach work must not be at a cost to children and young people placed in the Area Special School.
- 4.16 As part of the provision in each area of the county, we will ensure that there is residential provision available for those children and young people who need it alongside the development of the schools. This will support the development of 24 hour curriculum.
- 4.17 In order to afford the building of the new Area Special Schools, Mouchel Parkman have undertaken a feasibility study of the current special school sites. We have received both minimum and maximum costings for the sites, set out in the table below. These are dependant on the footprint of the school and what would be available to build upon and release of playing field land subject to the Secretary of State approval. Those figures in brackets are where the land belonging to one of the special schools has been discarded from the calculation. Other sites would also increase in value if we were able to sell the whole site i.e. the site in Biggleswade. If the whole site, including the health provision was able to be released, the site would increase in value.

Table 9

Value of Land – minimum and maximum costing

Area	Minimum amount	Maximum amount
North Bedfordshire	£8M (£5M)	£22M (£12K)
Mid Bedfordshire	£2M (£.5M)	£10.5M (£1.5M)
South Bedfordshire	£10M (£7M)	£12.5M (£ 9.5M)
Total	£20M (£12.5M)	£43M (£23M)

- 4.18 In relation to the number of school sites and the affordability of this there are a number of considerations to be taken into account. In the Bedford area Building Schools for the Future (BSF) will enable capital to be released to build new schools or remodel as appropriate however at this point it is not clear how much will be available. We also understand that half the value of the sale of land has to be paid back to the Government. We would also not realise all the value if we used some current sites to build upon (figures in brackets apply). Other options are being explored such as LIFT project alongside Health to fund up front the other projects across the rest of the county. This would allow some capacity to change revenue to capital to fund projects. However, it is anticipated that the infrastructure costs of the new special schools will probably absorb any possible savings incurred.

5. THE OPTIONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA SPECIAL SCHOOLS

5.1 Option 1

- 5.1.1 Build five Area Special Schools, two in the North, one in the middle of the county and two in the South with 150/160 places in each. This is the preferred option by officers and the special school headteachers' group.
- 5.1.2 We have estimated that a new Area Special School for 150 / 160 pupils that can provide all of the resources that are required to meet the needs of all pupils with complex learning needs will cost in the region of £8 million to build and set up.
- 5.1.3 In the North of the county, we propose the establishment of two Area Special Schools for children and young people with complex needs, at an estimated cost of £16 million. We propose to investigate building a new school on the site of Biddenham Upper School, and to build a new school or remodel on the current site of Ridgeway School on the Hastingsbury Upper School site. We would then decommission and sell Grange site and St John's site. We would achieve a maximum value of £12 million from the sale of the Grange site and St. John's, if we were to use the current Ridgeway site. This would leave a shortfall of £4 million to be found. We anticipate that BSF would make a significant contribution to delivering this outcome.
- 5.1.4 In the middle of the county we propose the development of one area special school for children and young people with complex needs, developed through LIFT and funded through the sale of one or both of the sites. However, without the sale of the Hitchmead site, there is insufficient capital generated to afford a new school. A suitable site, preferably offering close proximity to other schools would need to be identified. Possible options would be to rebuild on the Hitchmead site using prudential borrowing through the Schools Forum. Capital can be generated at a rate of £1.1Million for every £100k revenue released. Some savings (approx £300K) on central costs for the decreased number of special schools would be available. Another option is to sell the Hitchmead site and rebuild in the middle of the county, but this may increase travelling time for a number of children currently in the special school sector.
- 5.1.5 Development needs to move quickly in this area. Numbers in MLD schools have reduced as mainstream schools have become better able to meet the needs of these pupils. In order to retain viability in the short and medium term the Local Authority needs to take action by Autumn 2008 to ensure that Hitchmead School does not get so small that it loses good staff and is unable to deliver the curriculum. Hitchmead currently has 58 pupils on roll, 30 of whom are in Years 10 and 11. Sunnyside currently has more children on roll than the building is able to accommodate and this may result in children going out of county unnecessarily.
- 5.1.6 We would support the governors of Hitchmead and Sunnyside in the proposal to federate the two schools until a new Area Special School is built

- 5.1.7 In order to offer the Sunnyside site for development, it will be sensible to also consider a purpose built residential provision alongside this development.
- 5.1.8 In the South of the county we propose consideration of the development of two Area Special Schools for children and young people with complex needs, developed by the LIFT and funded through the sale of school sites. However, there may only be enough capital available to build one school immediately. It is proposed that the building of the second school could await the BSF wave in the South of the county.
- 5.1.9 We would propose to site one school in the Houghton Regis / Dunstable area and the other in the Leighton Buzzard area. The school in Houghton Regis could be a development of the Hillcrest school to incorporate the primary years and re-designate it as an Area Special School. There is a view that this is not a good site for the development of an Area Special School, and so other sites should be considered if this was agreed in principle. We have looked at the Manshead site, but there are concerns about accessibility in terms of it being at the edge of the county border and off the A5 which is a very congested road, and therefore this would impact on travel times. Another option would be to site an Area Special School on the proposed new building development to the North East of Leighton Buzzard, where it is proposed an additional upper school will be built. However, this development is not proposed until about 2020. We are continuing to explore other possible sites.
- 5.1.10 We would need to commence the extension of provision at Hillcrest, if this was the agreed site, to be completed by 2010.
- 5.1.11 For any of the above proposals to move forward, we would need to consult on these proposals at appropriate times.
- 5.1.12 In order to achieve this, we propose that we go through a staged approach, protecting current pupils' placements in special schools. Within this approach we would need to:
- rewrite the admissions guidance to reflect Area Special Schools;
 - agree and consult on staffing structures for the schools;
 - further explore sites for new Area Special Schools, and agree timescales for rebuild;
 - sell sites to partly fund the new build's timescales;
 - ensure the strategy is within BSF(LIFT) planning and development stage
 - prepare consultation documents as change of designation requires a consultation process with stakeholders (The Education (Maintained Special Schools) (England) Regulations 1999
- 5.1.13 In conclusion, the risks associated with this option are there is a possible shortfall in capital of £4 million in the North if this gap was not met by BSF. If the Hitchmead site was used to build upon, there will be a shortfall of £7 million, not allowing for the sale of the complete Sunnyside development through LIFT which may achieve a greater amount. An alternative site or

release of capital through prudential borrowing may mitigate this. The South proposals could be affordable if a second school was funded through BSF. Five Area Special Schools are the preferred option, due to size of school and travelling distances being reduced for children. There could be further savings over time on travelling costs for children and also reduction of children in out of county provision.

5.2 Option 2

5.2.1 Build three Area Special Schools across the county, one 300 place school in the North and two 250 place schools in the middle and the south of the county. A larger school will not double the costs as certain provisions i.e. hydrotherapy pools would not have to be replicated. Estimates received suggest that a 250 place school will cost £12,725 million and a 300 place school £14,600 million. The costs do not reduce radically. The disadvantages of this are that they become very large schools however, the building and management of these sites are essential to mitigate against this. There are gains in terms of economies of scale and flexibility of deployment of staffing. The travelling costs and time for pupils could increase and one of the main principles to encourage local provision will be lost. Parents may also find the large environment off-putting initially. The gains would be that in the north of the county you would achieve sales of the Ridgeway site and therefore generate more capital, but half of this would need to be returned to the government. The same issues would remain for the middle of the county provision in terms of affordability. One school in the south of the county would be affordable.

5.2.2 The same processes and timescales would apply, as well as protecting current pupils' placement in special schools.

5.3 Option 3

5.3.1 The third option is not to make any change to current provision and to leave it as it currently is, without change. This will be a no cost option in the short term, however, a number of our schools will become untenable in the next three years and we may need to close them as we will have large numbers of surplus places (see table 4). Our current provision is not providing good value for money, as we have frozen special school budgets. Over time we will need to extend our current SLD / PMLD provision as these schools become full. We could adapt those schools at risk of closure and re-designate their use. However, all our school's buildings are not meeting current requirements and will need considerable capital investment. A number of our school sites could not be extended as they have already fully extended on their current foot print i.e. St. John's, Sunnyside.

6. SPECIAL SCHOOL FOR BESD

6.1 It is recognised that there is not sufficient specialist provision for BESD (Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties) in the county, however there is not sufficient need for a second BESD school.

6.2 We therefore propose to initially extend Oak Bank School from 52 to 60 places and change their age range from 9 - 16 by April 2008 and 90 by 2010. The increase in places requires:

- Consultation on an increase to the place numbers to 60;
- Extension to the current Oak Bank site to include a sports hall and additional classrooms
- A recruitment drive to recruit high quality specialist staff
- Consultation on a change in designation to increase the age range to 9 – 19, and further increase the place number
- The development of a vocational centre for 14 – 19 whereby pupils can access education on two sites across the week.

6.3 The consultation process for the initial expansion of Oak Bank to 60 places is required by April 08 if pupils with these needs are going to be kept in county provision. The extension to the buildings on the site is required to accommodate the additional numbers. The recruitment drive has been partially successful in recruiting a substantive Deputy Head and an Assistant Head.

6.4 A proposal for the site of the vocational centre is the old Rainbow school site, but other sites are also being explored. This will require some additional work to create a range of vocational hubs. It would be envisaged that this provision could also be accessed by pupils in the PRU and other special schools. It would be established as a second site for Oak Bank School and be managed through the current management structure.

7. EARLY YEARS

7.1 Members agreed funding for three pilot projects in 2005 to set up partnerships between special schools and mainstream nurseries to provide specialist support in for children with severe and complex needs, in mainstream settings. The Resourced Nursery project has demonstrated that the children were successfully educated in a mainstream setting but the planned costs are comparable to the average for a place in special schools for children with severe learning difficulties or physical difficulties. The costs of a resourced nursery place could be higher as during the pilot none of the nurseries ran at full capacity. The reasons for this were issues concerning the proportion of children with SEN in the nursery when the numbers on the main nursery roll were smaller than expected, staffing issues from the special schools and some parents did not want their child to travel a distance to attend a special nursery.

7.2 The review of this pilot recommended that it would not be value for money to develop this type of provision for all preschool children with severe needs in the County, and also is not consistent with the principles agreed in April 2007 regarding equity and localness.

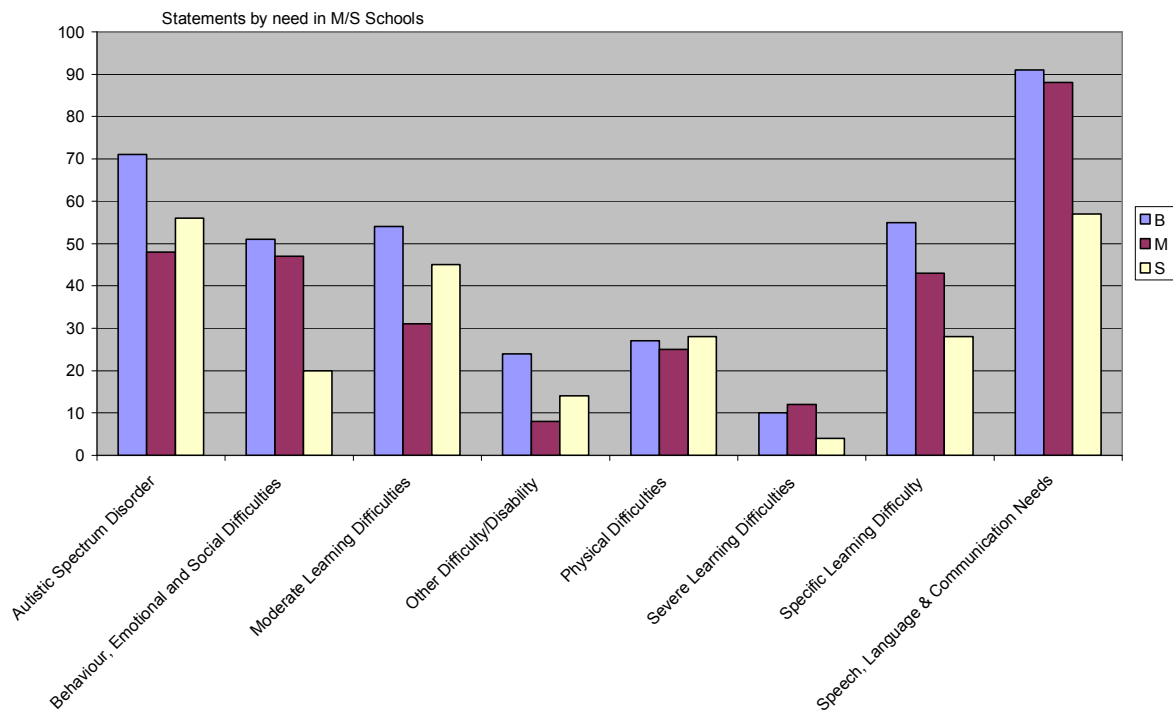
7.3 The Resourced Nurseries were intended for children who might be expected to have had a statement of SEN by the end of the reception year or those for whom it was thought with specialist intervention at an early stage they may not require a statement of SEN. The project demonstrated that the children were successfully included and educated. While 81% did require a statutory assessment leading to a statement of SEN on entry to school, only 73% were placed in a special school.

- 7.4 We propose using this funding differently to provide both additional teaching assistant support and specialist teacher input that the children with severe needs require in order to access local preschool provision. Some children will need placement in a special school from an early age, to access both the specialist teaching and facilities of a special school. However, many parents of young children with SEN would like them to be able to have access to specialist teaching in their local preschool setting. It is also not desirable to have young children travelling long distances to school, nor should we be carrying out statutory assessments on young children just in order to access appropriate support in preschool.
- 7.5 Children who attend private, voluntary or independent preschool settings already have access to additional funding to provide high levels of additional adult support from the Nursery Education Funding Grant. Given the number of children who attend preschools in this sector, it is proposed to increase this funding stream by £4,500, giving a benchmark budget of £95,500. This support is highly valued by the settings and parents.
- 7.6 It is also proposed that we use the existing budget, which is identified for children with severe and complex needs, to provide additional resources for children under statutory school age who attend maintained Nursery and Lower Schools. This will enable this group of children, who have higher levels of need, to receive support to access their entitlement to five sessions early years education, without the need for a statutory assessment. This would both enable early intervention but also give a more accurate assessment of their long term needs.
- 7.7 In addition to funding for individual support, in order to ensure the children are successfully educated, they need access to high levels of specialist teaching support and the holistic programmes designed by a multi-professional team. It is proposed that the remainder of this budget is used to fund specialist teacher support in the setting the child attends.
- 7.8 The specialist teachers may be from special schools, the Psychology and Specialist Support Service or on secondment from recognised high quality Early Years providers. They would co-ordinate the educational programmes for the children, and model and train staff in the setting to meet the individual needs of the child, and develop the capacity of the setting to meet a broader range of needs. The Psychology and Specialist Support Service are also developing their work to increase their resources to provide intervention for children and support to families according to need.
- 8. SPECIALIST PROVISIONS** (classes attached to mainstream school with specialist staff).
- 8.1 Some children and young people with specific disabilities require enhanced access to specialist teaching and support on a very regular basis. These children would not be appropriately placed in Area Special Schools. Bedfordshire currently has a range of specialist provisions focussed on ASD, Speech and Language, Dyslexia and BESD.
- 8.2 Parents, carers, schools and other professionals agreed through the consultation that we should extend our specialist provisions across the county. There are 'gaps' in these provisions both geographically and in terms of meeting certain types of special need. Historically this provision has grown up in an ad hoc fashion. However, alternative models of provision should be considered to ensure that resources are

used effectively and efficiently to meet the needs of those pupils who require more specialist provision.

- 8.3 We propose to develop partnerships in local areas to provide specialist support to meet the range of needs and disabilities, thus meeting all of the principles agreed at the April Executive as well as responding to the feedback received through the consultation meetings.
- 8.4 Specialist classes are required for those children with complex needs who require specialist teaching and support to enable them to access the mainstream curriculum. With the appropriate early support many of these children are likely to be able to go on to access local mainstream schooling, with continuing specialist support. We propose to set up specialist classes in the areas of the county where there are gaps, and to strengthen the access to specialist support wherever the child is educated.
- 8.5 As illustrated in the table below, there are significant numbers of children in mainstream schools with statements for particular categories of need. In order to better meet the needs of all of these children, wherever they are placed, and develop parental confidence, capacity needs to be increased in the support available to them. Most of these children do not require specialist classes, and schools have developed their knowledge and skills in making provision to meet the needs of these children. However, there is a need for enhanced training to schools and specific support to individual and groups of children to ensure they get what they need. The colours in the table relate to areas of the county (Bedford, mid and south)

Table 10



- 8.6 Funding arrangements and clarity over how all children who require this will access this range of support need to be further developed.

- 8.7 In addition, admissions guidance and management arrangements for specialist provisions need to be reconsidered and made consistent, as currently they vary for different types of provision.
- 8.8 In relation to speech and language provisions we require additional specialist support in middle and upper school for those children who continue to need access to a specialist teacher or teaching assistant. Numbers in our specialist speech and language provisions in lower schools have been reducing as parents have chosen for their children to remain in their local mainstream schools. We propose that alternative models of provision be considered whereby, specialist staff from the specialist provisions and speech and language specialists are able to go to where the children are placed to provide specialist support and advice. Consideration should be given to a middle school provision if children's needs demonstrate that this is required.
- 8.9 Additionally, Children's Services and Health staff should develop a professional development programme to support all schools, and in particular Nursery and Lower Schools, to identify and meet the needs of children with Speech, Language and Communication difficulties in the mainstream context.
- 8.10 The review of County provision for pupils with severe literacy difficulties including those with dyslexia shows that in all schools there are children whose literacy skills are inadequate to fully access the curriculum (5% at Key Stage 2 and 9% at Key Stage 3 at end of 2006).
- 8.11 We are developing a best practice literacy protocol based on the recent Rose Review (2006) and County research. The protocol will advise on best practice for teaching literacy skills to all pupils and to those with specific literacy difficulties.
- 8.12 We have a significant minority of pupils in Middle and Upper schools who require specific teaching to develop their ability to read and write. They also require changes to way the curriculum is delivered so they can realise their potential, while continuing to develop their literacy skills. We will work in partnership with Middle and Upper Schools to develop their provision for pupils with severe literacy difficulties and over time refocus the specialist teachers in the Dyslexia provisions to both support schools in the development of this type of provision and support pupils with similar levels of need within the wider community of schools.

9. PROPOSALS FOR SPECIALIST PROVISION

9.1 Specialist provision for speech and language provision

- 9.1.1 Through consultation and analysis of need we have established that there is a requirement for Middle school specialist speech and language provision for a small number of children from the lower school provisions who require that level of specialist support into middle school phase. We propose that this be provided where appropriate through the use of specialist teacher and teaching assistants from the Local Authority and the current lower school provisions, and that consideration be given to setting up a Middle School base.
- 9.1.2 We propose that we work with Health colleagues to agree a model of delivery for speech and language therapy in mainstream schools, and that

a Middle School be approached to consult on the setting up of such a specialist provision should it be needed in the future.

9.2 Proposal for North ASD provision

9.2.1 As part of the consultation on the closure of Rainbow School we gave a commitment to parents that we would ensure consistency of ASD Specialist Provision into Upper School for those pupils that needed it (using the admissions guidance). We also agreed that we would work with lower schools to provide additional ASD provision.

9.2.2 We propose to develop a flexible Lower School provision from September 08 to September 09. We are exploring Upper School provision with schools in the Bedford area and would propose that the same timescales as the lower school provision are applied. We suggest that part of the Rainbow Budget be identified to fund this provision.

9.3 Proposals for mid Bedfordshire ASD provision

9.3.1 There is currently no specialist provision for ASD in the Sandy / Biggleswade area of the county, and we need to ensure that there is equity across Bedfordshire. We propose that consideration is given over time to the re-designation of some of the Sunnyside satellite classes to become ASD specialist provision. This has been successful at Lincroft Middle School. In the shorter term, a lower school in the Sandy area has already expressed an interest in hosting such a provision. Consultation on proposals for this will need to commence as soon as possible if this provision is to be ready for the children who need it.

9.4 Proposals for south Bedfordshire ASD provision

9.4.1 To-date there has been less of a need for places in the provisions already set up in the South of the county. However, there are a significant number of children with statements of SEN for ASD in local Lower Schools. We propose to recruit staff to work across all Lower Schools where these children are placed in the South of the county, linked with the central support services. This will be reviewed according to developing need.

10. SUPPORT TO MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

10.1 55% of children and young people with statements are in our mainstream schools, and a further 4% are in specialist provisions.

10.2 Currently, Bedfordshire spends less on their advisory support services, even with recent additional posts, than other Authorities.

10.2.1 Bedfordshire has provided excellent specialist support for children with sensory difficulties and the inclusion and attainments of our pupils with visually impairment is recognised nationally. However, there are currently 186 pupils with ASD with statements of SEN, yet there are only three specialist advisory teachers for this group of pupils. We propose to build the capacity of central specialist services, specialist classes and special schools to provide a higher level of support to children placed in their local mainstream schools than is currently available.

- 10.3 A central theme of the feedback from the consultation meetings is that there is a need for more support from schools facing services at this level. They require more specialist training for the Teaching Assistants (TAs) employed to support the children and young people, and more support for teachers on how to differentiate appropriately for them, and model interventions. These support services can be supplied from a range of providers:
- Psychology and Specialist Support Service, and the Behaviour Support Services;
 - Special Schools' Outreach;
 - Commissioned support.
- 10.4 There will be a rolling programme of training for different types of disability and SEN so that school staff have regular opportunities to access this. This has already been successful for ASD and Down's Syndrome (run by the Down's Syndrome Association), and we plan to follow the same model for all types of need. We propose to write into the statements of SEN a requirement for TAs who are going to support a child to access this training within a specific time period.
- 10.5 We have issued guidance to schools on identifying and providing for children and young people at School Action and Action Plus.
- 10.6 Further work needs to be done to map more accurately the services to support children and young people with statements in mainstream schools.
- 10.7 In particular, we need to increase our specialist advisory team for Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and Speech, Language and Communication needs (SLCN) to meet the training and support needs of children and young people with these identified needs. This will ensure a better continuum of provision than is currently available.
- 10.8 In order to create capacity to meet the needs of children with statements in mainstream schools, the Area Special Schools' and specialist provision staff could provide an important source of expertise and support. This outreach can form part of the continuum of provision with central services and commissioned support, and will better enable us to provide a more flexible model as described in section 8.
- 10.9 Other providers will be commissioned according to need when local services do not have the capacity or are unable to meet the need.
- 10.10 The Common Assessment Framework (CAF) will provide a basis for a creating a common language and set of guidance around assessment and decision making for children. This will help to ensure continuity and coherence in planning for individual children and clarify the contribution of teams and organisations to the implementation of this plan.
- 10.11 Parents views expressed as part of the Early Years review, emphasised the need for holistic and continuous assessment which takes place in a variety of settings that lead to integrated reporting from a range of professionals. They particularly noted that more effective forward planning especially around transition into school is needed.

11. SUPPORT TO MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS IN BESD

- 11.1 We acknowledge that schools have been dissatisfied overall with the support they receive for children and young people with BESD, especially those with the greatest level of need. We have pulled all of our behaviour support services (SEBSS and PRU) together into one team with a single point of referral. At the same time we are in the process of developing a Behaviour Strategy which incorporates all of the services in Children's Services, and provides clarity to schools and families as to what is available and how to access it.
- 11.2 The support provided by the National Strategy Behaviour and Attendance Consultants for middle and upper schools is part of our universal services support for schools. The support consists of working with key senior leaders in each school to work strategically on Behaviour and Attendance and to create an emotionally healthy climate for learning. This includes the development of Secondary Social, Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) and the development of anti bullying policies and practice.
- 11.2.1 The support provided for Primary Behaviour and Attendance in lower schools is part of our universal support for schools. This support consists of helping schools to implement the primary SEAL.
- 11.3 In our areas of greatest need and deprivation a wide range of services alongside Surestart and Children's Centres will be offering a range of early interventions, including nurture group provision for those children who would require it.
- 11.4 Some Lower Schools have been developing 'nurture groups/provision', but analysis has shown that these are not consistent across the county. The Local Authority needs to ensure that the development of these is based on researched and proven models of practice, and provide guidance to schools to ensure that they provide better outcomes for the children.
- 11.5 Developing local partnership between schools will enable them to provide resources to develop these types of provision.
- 11.6 Middle and Upper schools felt that their own Learning Support Units (LSUs) were working well for the majority of young people. The DCSF provides a framework for monitoring these provisions, and schools should be supported in using this tool to identify and share good practice, and identify actions for improvement.
- 11.7 We should also consider allocating some of the resource tied up in support services to support schools in areas of high need in the running of effective school based provision.
- 11.8 The Bedford BIP (Behaviour Improvement Partnership) (funded by DCSF) and the Chiltern BIP (funded by the Local Authority) have had a significant impact on schools working together within the local community to find local solutions to support these young people. Both have had significant impact on reducing exclusions, and increasing attendance and achievement.
- 11.9 We have identified a further £400,000 from the previous Excellence Cluster/BIP in Bedford that we intend to use to support groups of schools in the Kempston, Sandy and Biggleswade and Leighton Buzzard areas of the county using BIP as a model. This will enable schools to develop a range of provision in the community to meet local needs and support schools with those young people with challenging behaviour.

- 11.10 As with the Chiltern BIP these would require a locally devised action plan that would be monitored and evaluated with support from the Local Authority.
- 11.11 The consultation meetings clearly highlighted the lack of specialist support for BESD, especially around years 10 and 11 (15 and 16 year olds). Headteachers identified 3/4 young people from each year group who they felt required an alternative type of vocational provision within their week. Further work is currently ongoing to develop a flexible alternative vocational curriculum for 14 -19 year olds.
- 11.12 In the reorganisation of BESD support services we need to ensure posts that carry the additional specialist expertise required by schools to support these pupils. A specialist qualification in BESD should be a requirement over time. There is a distance learning course through Birmingham University that could provide this, and Standards Fund could be used to support staff in accessing it.
- 11.13 We are moving towards the government's target of having all secondary schools working in partnership to reduce exclusions and increase attendance. The Chiltern local BIP provides a good model for other schools to follow in the provision it is making for BESD.
- 11.14 Analysis of children at risk of exclusion and those who have been permanently excluded shows that the majority have significant difficulties in their home lives. Some of the older pupils have issues around drugs and alcohol. Many of them require wrap around services and many also require access to very specialist services.
- 11.15 Consultations have identified the need for a small number of young children to have access for part of their week to more therapeutic provision, as they are unable to manage full time in a school setting.
- 11.16 We propose that this could be delivered through the development of two of the Children's' Centres (one in the North and one in the South) which can also provide support for their families.

12. SCHOOL ACTION / ACTION PLUS

- 12.1 The government has required all Local Authorities to review the distribution of the deprivation factor of the Direct Schools Grant (DSG). A group of representatives from the School's Forum has been meeting regularly with Local Authority officers to identify a proposed method of distribution. The new model is based on a factor of the Acorn deprivation index, which is broken down by children's postcodes, as it was recognised that the uptake of free school meals was not an accurate method of allocation.
- 12.2 As part of this review, funding for SEN has also been considered. *Removing barriers to achievement* clearly recommends increased delegation of SEN funding to mainstream schools to enable them to meet needs at an early stage and without needing a statement to access support. This will reduce bureaucracy and increase funding for interventions for children and young people.
- 12.3 We currently delegate £9,997,885 (which includes LSC funding) though the notional 5% for SEN to schools, and a further £1,020,824 of additional money for higher need action plus pupils, which is substantially lower than our comparator authorities.

However, the Schools' Forum has recently recommended an additional £3million plus to be delegated to schools for supporting special educational needs.

- 12.4 This funding is used by schools to employ Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs) and Teaching Assistants (TA) to work with groups and individual pupils at action and action plus. The remaining delegated funding equates to an average of 1 hour TA support daily in a group of 5 pupils for pupils at Action, and at Action Plus 4 hours individual support or more, if working in a small group. The additional £1,020,824 delegated funding can be used to provide for 25% of the pupils at action plus with the most significant needs with a further 4 hours individual TA support a week. If the recommendation made by Schools' Forum is taken forward, this will impact positively on the amount of support that schools are able to provide.
- 12.5 While this is significant support when used effectively, many Authorities delegate funding up to 15 hours per week for those action plus children and young people with the most significant needs.

13. FINANCIAL IMPLICATION / AFFORDABILITY

- 13.1 One of the main principles of the SEN review was affordability and recycling of resources. We need our provisions to be cost efficient and to reduce unnecessary expenditure and re-investing to meet identified and unmet needs. There are a number of current budgets that need to be refocused to support the implementation of the SEN review.
- 13.2 The current revenue budget for all our special schools is **£12,662,004** including the Rainbow school budget. The funding for special schools places was protected in April 2006 until April 2008. Work has been ongoing with the special school headteachers to identify a model of funding for April 2008 that will provide transition support until the new Area Special Schools are in place. The place protection will continue to apply to schools during this transition period where there is a drop in numbers of pupils. It has been agreed to make minor amendments with funding from March 2008 around floor and central budget to provide clarity and equity but funding for places will await the outcome of the Review. It is anticipated that place funding (per pupil) may need to increase to meet the greater complexity of need. The funding of Oak Bank requires additional budget to enable the school to move to 60 places from April 2008 and provide a staffing structure for a broader age range of pupils with more complex needs than previously. This will support the Local Authority in enabling more young people with BESD to have their needs met in county. As a result, we will require a review of the place element.
- 13.3 Currently the Schools Forum have agreed that the contingency budget from the Rainbow school closure should continue to be used to support and develop resources for children with SEN. It was agreed that the money would follow the children. Additional funding was given to those schools receiving the children from Rainbow rather than expecting them to fund under their place funding. We have also set up an additional class at Lincroft for the children (transferring). The current budget available from the Rainbow school contingency once these commitments are taken into account is **£502,000** one-off cost. The ongoing year on year available budget available is **£440,000**. Any of this budget not committed will be used for the set up of additional specialist classes and extend the BESD provision to 90 places by providing alternative 14 -19 provision. Additional funding will need to be found through exploration of grants and funding via the Learning Skills Council and the redesignation of special school places.

- 13.4 The Resourced nursery budget of **£266,510** will be refocused to deliver alternative forms of provision, outlined in section 7 above. An extra £4,500 will be used to support the Nursery education funding grant and a further £112,500 for additional individual support to children with severe or complex needs in maintained nurseries or preschools. The additional £149,510 will supply additional specialist teaching support or outreach.
- 13.5 The resourced Lower school money of **£254,954** that was agreed by Executive in 2005 has not yet been used to develop additional provision to follow on from the Resourced Nurseries as there were early indications that the model would not viable / sustainable. It is proposed that this resource be used to develop a more flexible model of provision in the areas of the county that have no or incomplete specialist provision in mainstream schools.
- 13.6 These budgets form the flexible revenue funding available to implement parts of the SEN review, however it is also recognised that year on year the schools forum has agreed additional expenditure from the DSG to support the set up of new specialist classes across the county and the capital grant has also supported additional building.
- 13.7 We have identified an additional **£400,000** from the previous Excellent Cluster/BIP in Bedford which returns to Local Area budgets from April. We will use this to extend the current BIP provisions in the county and develop three new BIPs extending the Bedford BIP to include Kempston, one in the East covering Biggleswade and Sandy and a further one in the South covering Leighton Buzzard.
- 13.8 The Schools Forum in September 2007 also agreed additional money for the next three year period to support children with additional learning needs i.e. those children at School Action / School Action Plus within mainstream provision, raising this by an additional **£3million** plus.

14. NEXT STEPS

- 14.1 We seek agreement to the strategy and to progress on the development of the proposals outlined above:-
- Develop 5 new Area Special Schools;
 - Change the funding formula for special schools to reflect the complex nature of the children's needs;
 - Provide additional BESD places not as part of Area Special Schools, but as a separate provision by extending Oak Bank School to meet the needs of children and young people aged 9 – 19 years, and to extend its capacity from 52 places to 90 places over three years by establishment of an additional site for a 14 –19 vocational centre in the centre and north of the county for children with BESD;
 - Create a flexible model which can provide a range of provision for the continuum of needs in all parts of the county, and complete pyramids of provision. We will clarify guidance for entry into specialist ASD provision, and build a greater range of provision, including more intensive specialist teacher support for some children and young people;
 - Develop our support to children and young people in mainstream schools with a statement and at Action Plus through:-

- strengthening our specialist advisory teams;
- developing special school outreach provision;
- developing links with other providers, e.g. Children's Centres and externally commissioned providers;
- reorganisation of the support services for BESD to provide a single pathway for referral, and provide staff with the skills to support schools in meeting the needs of the most challenging children and young people.
- Strengthen support to mainstream schools for children with identified special educational needs and for those children that present schools with most difficulty by:-
 - developing an additional three Behaviour Improvement Programme (BIPs) through the investment of an additional £400,000;
 - agree to target an additional £3 million over the next three years in schools budgets, for those children with additional education needs.