

APPENDIX A – Cabinet Paper for Specialist Education – 29 January 2019

Suffolk County Council

Policy Development Panel for Specialist Education

Report to the Cabinet Member for Children’s Services, Education and Skills from the PDP – 10 January 2018

Establishment of the Policy Development Panel for Specialist Education

1. The PDP for Specialist Education was established in late September 2018 immediately following the decisions taken by Cabinet. Cllr Chris Chambers, the deputy Cabinet Member for Education was appointed to Chair the PDP.
2. The following members were appointed to the Panel: Councillor Jack Abbott, Councillor Elfrede Bramley-Crawshaw, Councillor Stephen Burroughes, Councillor Rachel Hood and Councillor Colin Spence.
3. The scope of the PDP was agreed at its first meeting to be to make recommendations regarding the following:
 - The future policy for Suffolk regarding the designation of specialist school places
 - The future role of specialist education units in Suffolk (their focus in terms of profile and age and how we create an environment that supports their growth alongside mainstream provision)
 - The future policy for the development of existing and new special schools in Suffolk given the context of the other policy decisions made
 - The future policy for developing additional specialist places in early years and post-16 provision
 - Suffolk’s future policy regarding developing a regional specialism in low incidence high cost education provision
4. The Panel met together on five occasions to plan their work, consider evidence gathered and develop their recommendations as set out in this report. Outside of these panel meetings panel members participated in an extensive programme of visits to a wide range of education settings both within and outside of Suffolk and discussions with key individuals and groups of stakeholders as set out in Appendix A. The evidence from this programme of field work was gathered together to inform the collective development of the recommendations reached by the panel.

Brief summary of report and context

5. Suffolk County Council has a statutory obligation to provide a suitable education placement for every child of school age and for young people with SEND up to the age of 25 years where appropriate to their needs.
6. In September 2018 Suffolk County Council Cabinet considered the issues relating to the supply and demand for specialist education placements as set out in the education section of the SEND Sufficiency Plan. This identified a

significant undersupply of local specialist education placements across Suffolk to meet both current and projected future increased demand.

7. Demand data from education, health and care sources indicated a projected rise of 18% in the number of children and young people with SEND between 2018 and 2020, with a likely continuing increase in demand of a similar magnitude beyond this timeframe.
8. An analysis of current supply data indicated a lack of specialist placements in Suffolk to meet both current and future demand and a low number of specialist placements compared with other similar local authorities. This means Suffolk has difficulty in meeting its statutory obligations and too many children are having to wait a considerable time for specialist education or being placed too far from home. This impacts children's progress, isolates children from their communities, and in some cases is not good value for money.
9. Cabinet agreed that urgent action was required to develop a plan to address the current and future need for new specialist placements. A set of principles for the future development of new specialist provision was agreed and an overarching model for the development of the new offer. It was agreed that the new approach would be to provide additional specialist places through a combination of specialist units attached to mainstream schools and new local special schools with only a small minority of children and young people being placed in independent specialist provision for high cost low incidence needs.
10. Cabinet also supported the proposal to establish a cross-party Policy Development Panel (PDP) with immediate effect to develop the policy principles that would sit within the overarching decisions taken at Cabinet. Under the chairmanship of Cllr Chris Chambers, the PDP has completed this work and is now reporting to the Cabinet Member as previously agreed.
11. The PDP has developed a series of recommendations which are set out in this paper for cabinet to consider. In summary these cover:
 - the establishment of a pathway framework for specialist provision in Suffolk that draws on the national Code of Practice for SEND and provides a clear approach to the future development, planning and access of the local specialist education offer for all practitioners and service users
 - the creation of a significant number of new specialist SEND education places through establishing specialist units attached to mainstream schools and new special schools, this will require a capital investment to achieve.
12. If the Cabinet Members agrees these recommendations it is proposed that work should begin immediately on a Specialist Education Commissioning Plan that will enable the rollout of the proposed expansion of specialist placements within Suffolk and the development of more detailed proposals for consideration within the capital programme. It is also proposed that a further PDP is considered in relation to Alternative Education following on from this work.

13. Finally, it is proposed that, should these recommendations be agreed by Cabinet, there should be an annual review of progress with implementation of this programme by the Council's Scrutiny Committee

Recommendations

The Policy Development Panel recommends:

- That Suffolk should adopt a pathway framework for specialist provision that provides a clear and systematic approach to the future development of local specialist provision and is published to parents and carers to provide better information to them about the range of education options.
- That the Cabinet Member should progress work to enable the commitment of the Council to a capital investment programme that creates an additional 828 specialist education places across Suffolk for children of school age over the next 5 years with a maximum investment of £ 45.1m.

Reason for recommendation

14. Suffolk cannot currently provide sufficient specialist education placements to meet the current and future projected needs of the resident population of children and young people with SEND. Urgent action is needed to address this under supply.
15. The PDP members have undertaken an extensive programme of visits and discussions and having weighed up the alternatives based on the evidence available believe that these proposals recommended here are the best way to meet the needs of Suffolk residents going forward.
16. The establishment of a new specialist pathway framework will provide clarity for practitioners and service users alike. It will also provide a framework within which future planning and development can take place ensuring a comprehensive offer that can meet the majority of SEND needs locally.
17. The development of 828 new specialist placements through a combination of specialist units attached to mainstream schools and new special schools across the range of specialist needs will enable Suffolk to create an offer that adheres to the principles that have been adopted by Cabinet for the future development of specialist provision set out below and enables the Council to meet its statutory obligations. This growth in local provision will also significantly reduce the number of independent specialist placements that will be needed, thus reducing travel time and costs for children and young people. In addition, it would also provide a local cost-effective option that appropriately meets individual needs.
18. During the evidence gathering undertaken by the PDP, members identified a range of further lines of enquiry relating to the provision of alternative education provision that need to be considered but could not be addressed within the scope of this PDP, therefore a recommendation is made for a further PDP to consider alternative provision including the Pupil Referral Unit offer.

What are the key issues to consider?

19. Suffolk County Council has a statutory responsibility to provide an appropriate education placement for all children and young people with SEND up to the age of 18 years and where appropriate to age 25 years resident in Suffolk. While most children and young people with SEND can make good educational progress in mainstream schools, there are a significant minority who need a specialist education placement.
20. Suffolk currently has insufficient specialist education placements available both in terms of volume and type to meet the current and future needs of our residents. Given the time it takes to develop new specialist provision, the Council needs to act as soon as possible to address this shortfall and avert a more challenging situation in the future.
21. All indications are that future demand for specialist placements will increase as the overall numbers of children with SEND grows as a proportion of the school population. The Sufficiency Analysis indicates particularly high growth in demand in places for children with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) and autism as their primary need.
22. The lack of available local specialist placements results in children with SEND having long waits for suitable education provision. This impacts on their progress and means that many children whose needs could be met locally are attending independent specialist schools a long distance from their homes and at additional cost. This does not sit well with what families tell us they want for their children – which is suitable education provision close to their own communities.
23. During 2017 and 2018 the Council has secured additional local placements by working with existing providers to grow their offer, however this innate capacity has now been exhausted and therefore any new growth in specialist units will necessitate capital investment to either repurpose existing buildings/space for specialist use or require new build. Both options will require capital investment.
24. Currently the Council is having to increase its use of independent specialist sector placements again as we have exhausted the local offer. The costs of these placements are significantly greater than locally provided places, are variable in quality and often require children to travel long distances each day or be residential. If the County Council does not commit to developing its local specialist offer there will be an increasing reliance on the use of independent sector placements. The costs of an independent placement range between £30,000 and £250,000 per annum. While the Council will always need to purchase a small number of high cost placements to meet very complex needs, the majority of children and young people who are currently educated in independent specialist placements could be offered an equivalent or better education locally typically at a cost that is approximately half that paid in the independent sector. Pressure on the transport budget would also be reduced significantly through reduced journey times.
25. Recurrent funding for specialist placements is provided from the High Needs Block of the dedicated schools' grant. £12m is currently spent on independent placements. This strategy, once fully implemented, will reduce this £12m

commitment by a significant proportion (estimated between 25% and 30%) on a like for like basis.

26. Cabinet has already taken the decision to adopt a set of principles for the future development of specialist placements in Suffolk and to develop the offer of specialist unit-based provision linked to local mainstream schools alongside new special school provision. This was identified by Cabinet in September as the best way to address the shortfall in placements, deliver on the preferences expressed by parents and providers and achieve best value for money in growth of the offer.

What are the resource and risk implications?

27. To develop the required number of new specialist placements will need a significant capital investment programme from the Council over the next five years. At this stage the exact amount of capital investment required can only be estimated in broad terms as the exact locations for specific projects have not been identified and this will impact the costs of individual projects, however overall it is estimated that a commitment of up to £45.1m will be required to deliver the proposed programme. This will need to be front loaded as new places are needed as swiftly as possible.
28. Investment in projects to repurpose existing buildings and sites should be prioritised first as these will provide places more rapidly than new build, with new build options to follow. Officers will endeavour to reduce this maximum cost envelope through seeking to repurpose existing infrastructure in as many cases as possible and to utilise other capital funding sources first before capital committed directly by the Council.
29. Failure to develop the proposed new specialist places will increase pressure on mainstream and existing special schools, and further increase the Council's dependence on the independent specialist sector. The limited availability of independent placements is pushing costs up as local authorities compete for this limited availability. This situation will accelerate the rate of overspend within the high needs block of the dedicated schools' grant resulting in a further increased deficit balance going forward.
30. This continued reliance upon independent placements which are generally located further away from a child's home is also significantly impacting upon the specialist transport budget which is funded from the Council's core budget as part of school transport funds, a budget which is also under extreme pressure. Creating more placements locally will reduce transport costs significantly.

Alternative options

31. **Reduce the Scale of the Programme in terms of investment per place created:** only develop provision where existing buildings could be re-purposed and therefore remove the requirement for new build. While this would require less capital, it would not meet the principles agreed for the development of specialist placements and location of new places would be driven by existing infrastructure. It is likely to result in only a partial offer across parts of Suffolk and therefore will still result in long journeys and high transport costs, combined with an increased reliance on the independent sector where provision is sparse. While this would ameliorate the current lack

of placements it would result in geographical disparities and would also increase the risk of under supply within a few years as it would be only a relatively short-term solution and would not enable a longer-term strategic approach to be taken to the overall development of the offer in Suffolk.

32. **Reduce the Scale of the Programme in terms of numbers of places created.** Only create enough new provision to meet the immediate growth requirement of 300-400 new specialist school age places projected to be needed by 2020. This would require less commitment in capital investment at this stage, but it is likely that Cabinet would need to revisit this plan within a short time period as the projected growth in demand beyond 2020 would not be addressed and the proposals would only address the immediate problem rather than creating a longer-term strategic approach.
33. **Reject the proposals for the development of any new specialist placements.** This option would mean that the Council did not commit to any capital investment to create new placement. A small amount of growth in places would be achievable through the SEND capital funds from the DfE and through use of some basic need funding, but this would be insufficient to address the current undersupply or future demand in a timely fashion and would result in an exacerbation of the existing problems that the Council faces in providing appropriate specialist placements.

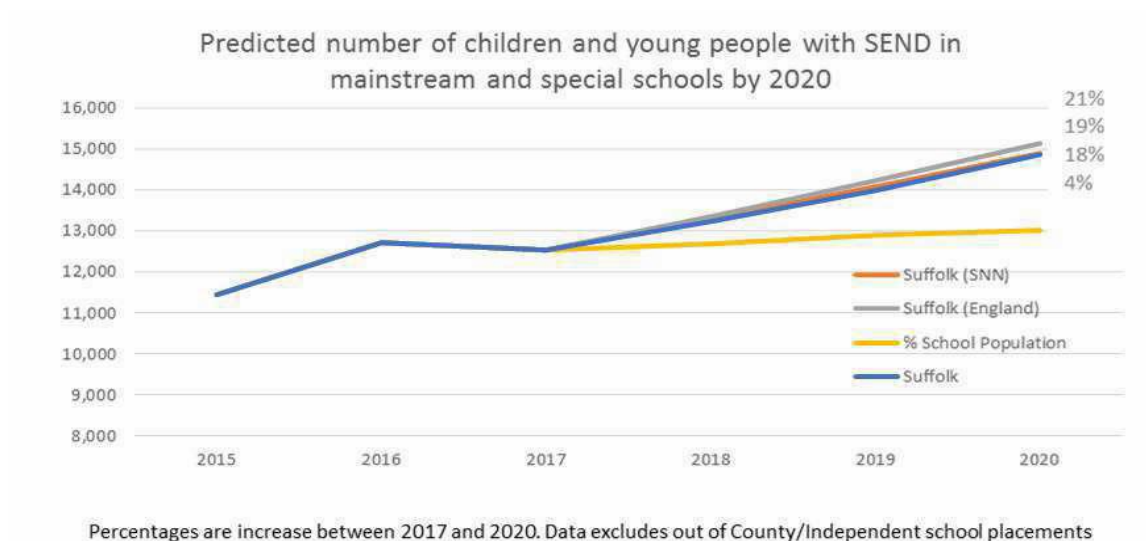
Who will be affected by this decision?

34. Children and young people with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities and their families. If Suffolk can develop a better specialist education offer it is envisaged that children will have less time to wait before an appropriate specialist placement can be secured, and if closer to home, this will strengthen their roots in their local community enabling them to build strong local networks as they move towards adulthood.
35. All education and training providers, both mainstream and specialist, maintained and independent. This new approach will provide new opportunities for local schools and other providers to develop their specialist education offer and increase expertise within Suffolk. It will also impact on the amount of specialist places and residential placements we commission from the independent sector, with the aim to reduce our dependence on them
36. Health services, if the Council grows its specialist local education offer and changes the pattern of this it will be necessary for health commissioners and providers to consider these changes as part of their future plans for provision of health services to children and young people with SEND.
37. Social Care Services, the greater availability of specialist education placements in Suffolk will reduce the number of looked after children whose needs cannot be met locally this means more of our children in care living in our Suffolk community. This will be particularly beneficial for adult social care services as young people will have already established themselves within their local community rather than requiring reintegration after a period in residential education away from Suffolk.

Main body of report

Understanding the Supply and Demand for Specialist Education Placements in Suffolk and Cabinet Decisions in September 2018

38. In September 2018 Cabinet considered the education supply and demand sections of the Suffolk SEND Sufficiency Plan. The SEND Sufficiency Plan is a strategic plan that sets out how SCC and the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) in Suffolk will develop future services for children and young people with SEND to ensure that we have enough provision to meet future need. This work is being led by a steering group of partners from education, health, care and parent / carer representatives.
39. Partners have drawn together all the data available across the system to provide us with the best possible picture of the current supply of specialist education and put this data alongside projected future demand. This is the first time in Suffolk that such a wide ranging and comprehensive set of data has been brought together to create a picture of future need for SEND services over the coming years and is the result of a strong partnership between education, health and care partners.
40. The analysis of historic and predicted changes in populations of children and young people with SEND identifies a significant and rapid increase in incidence, particularly in the number of children and young people with a primary need of moderate learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder and speech, language and communication needs. This data only records the primary need, and for a substantial proportion of these children there will be an equally important secondary need.
41. The number of children and young people with SEND will increase by 18% between 2017 and 2020. This compares to an overall growth in the school age population in Suffolk of 4%. Therefore, SEND is increasing in prevalence. It should be noted this includes the whole population of children and young people with SEND – many of whom will have lower level needs and be educated in mainstream schools. However, it was estimated that this increase would require an additional 300 - 400 new specialist education places for school age children by 2020 and similar additional places in Further Education (FE) provision.
42. These predictions for growth are short term, taking us only to 2020 and although longer term projections are less reliable, data on neo-natal hospital admissions indicates likely continued growth in demand for the foreseeable future.
43. In 2017/18 Suffolk commissioned 1,683 specialist placements within the local offer for children aged 5 to 16 years and 482 places for learners aged 16 to 25 years. In addition to this, 156 placements were purchased from the independent sector for 5 to 16-year olds and 47 aged 16 to 25 years.



44. Suffolk has fewer specialist placements than other similar authorities and therefore a lower proportion of children with EHC Plans attend special schools than in our statistical nearest neighbours (SNN) and the England average. The number of children with an EHC plan that attend a Pupil Referral Unit placement is high compared to our SNN and national data. The table below provides comparative data regarding placements for children with EHC Plans in Suffolk compared to other similar authorities and the whole of England.

Type of provision	Suffolk %	Statistical Neighbour Group %	England %
Early years settings	0%	0.5%	0.5%
Specialist units in mainstream schools	1.8%	1.2%	1.8%
Mainstream Schools	39.3%	34.7%	34%
Special Schools	13.7%	20.3%	26.4%
Independent specialist schools	4.3%	6.4%	5.9%
Pupil Referral Units/Alt. Provision	2.2%	1.1%	0.7%
General Further Education/Higher Education	10.1%	15.1%	11.7%
Other Further Education (includes training providers)	4.9%	3.2%	2.8%
CYP educated other than in school	4.8%	2.1%	2.2%

45. The Sufficiency review also analysed the existing physical estate and concluded that there was no significant scope for expansion of existing providers within their current premises.

46. The Sufficiency review chapters when taken together identified a substantial gap between existing supply and current/future demand for specialist education placements.

47. In response to the Sufficiency Analysis Cabinet agreed that this matter needed a swift and significant response. It agreed to:

- adopt a set of principles to underpin the future development and commissioning of specialist education placements in Suffolk. These are set out at paragraph 44 below
- to meet most additional growth locally by developing a combination of new specialist support centres and new special schools, using independent placements for only a small number of very specialist needs.
- To establish a Policy Development Panel (PDP) to undertake a more detailed review of the approach that should be taken to implementing decisions a and b above. The PDP was requested to report back to the Cabinet in January 2019.

48. Principles adopted by Cabinet for the future development of specialist education provision:

- *Parents are part of the decision-making process, they should have choice of provision for their child that is located near to their home.*
- *Suffolk should have a range of flexible specialist provision that will appropriately meet the growing and changing needs of SEND pupils.*
- *A personalised curriculum should be in place for all learners.*
- *There should be effective Multi-Agency working to integrate services so a range of support is available for pupils and families within educational provision.*
- *There should be equity of access to resources across the county.*
- *There should be robust monitoring and evaluation to ensure high quality and value for money.*

Recommendations of the Policy Development Panel

Recommendation 1: That Suffolk should adopt a pathway framework for specialist provision that provides a clear and systematic approach to the future development of local specialist provision and is published to parents and carers to provide better information to them about the range of education options.

49. Currently Suffolk has no formally stated approach to the organisation of its specialist provision. The current offer and the way it is described has developed in a piecemeal way over many years without being systematically reviewed. This has led to a situation where specialist settings have evolved and changed their remit (designation) without formal recognition of this, and where new schools have been established without clear ways to describe them that all stakeholders can understand, recognise and in turn access.

50. The purpose of the pathway framework would be to:

- Provide a simple and clear way to describe the broad type and purpose of each specialist setting in a way that families and practitioners can understand and access
- Provide a tool that can be used to identify broad gaps and development needs within the local specialist offer

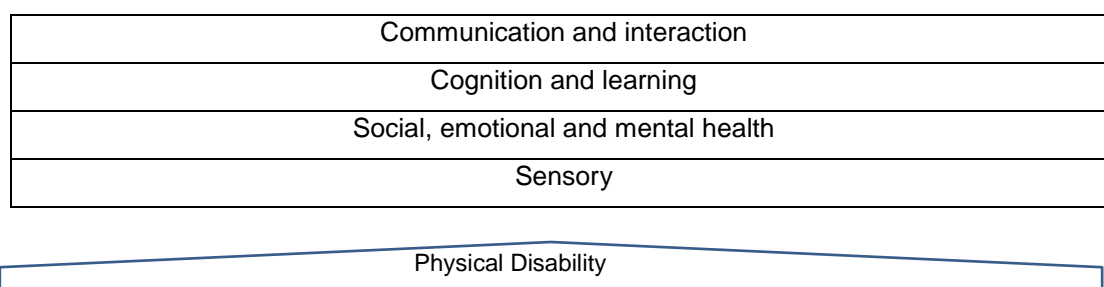
- Use consistent language to describe specialist settings in Suffolk
51. The national SEND Code of Practice published in 2014 identifies four broad areas of need. The PDP recommends that Suffolk should immediately adopt this terminology to create its pathways framework. The Code identifies the following areas of need:
- Communication and interaction;
 - Cognition and learning;
 - Social, emotional and mental health;
 - Sensory and/or physical needs
52. **Communication and interaction:** this broad heading describes provision that supports children who have a need for specialist support that enables them to develop their skills and confidence in communicating and interacting effectively. Children could have this need because of mental health challenges, autism or other special needs that require a nurturing and therapeutic environment. It is recommended that this should be a discrete pathway within the framework.
53. **Cognition and learning:** this broad heading describes the full range of needs associated with children with a learning disability. It encompasses the full range of needs that historically have been described as moderate, severe or profound and multiple learning disabilities. Children who attend provision within this pathway would have levels of cognition that make it difficult for them to access a mainstream curriculum even with specific support to do so and need a specialist curriculum that is tailored to their learning disability. It is recommended that this should be a discrete pathway within the framework.
54. **Social, Emotional and Mental Health:** this broad heading describes the full range of needs associated with children who are unable to access education because of their extreme reactions to everyday situations that can result in inappropriate behaviour or an inability to participate in the usual range of education activities that would be offered in a school even with specific support to do so. Children attending this provision have the cognitive ability to access mainstream education but do not have the necessary skills to do so. They could have this need because of experiences in their early life, a lack of understanding or ability to act appropriately in group situations or a need for specific therapeutic support to enable this. It is recommended that this should be a discrete pathway within the framework.
55. **Sensory and/or Physical needs.** Although the Code groups these, the PDP, after much deliberation decided to consider them separately due to the very different nature of these needs.
56. **Sensory needs:** this broad heading describes the full range of needs associated with children with a sensory impairment – such as a visual or hearing impairment. Children who attend provision within this pathway would have the ability to access a mainstream curriculum but because of a severe sensory impairment need specialist support to do so. It is recommended that this should be a discrete pathway within the framework.
57. **Physical needs:** this broad heading describes the full range of needs that relate to children with a physical disability ranging from those who with

appropriate mobility aids can successfully participate in the full range of educational and social activities to those children whose physical impairments are so severe that complex medical interventions are routinely needed in their daily lives and their ability to participate is impacted without very specialist support.

58. The PDP debated at great length the approach that should be taken to provide appropriate specialist education for children with a physical disability and after looking at the evidence and the range of needs determined that in modern Britain with much improved accessibility to all public buildings and a greater level of inclusiveness in society as a whole it was not necessary to create a discrete pathway specifically for children whose only specialist need was a physical disability. Instead it should be expected that the significant majority of mainstream and specialist settings should have the ability to include children with a physical need so that all children in this group can access the education – either mainstream or specialist, which will give them the best potential outcomes.

However, consideration would need to be given to those buildings whose layout would be a barrier to children with physical disabilities from accessing the site.

59. In summary, the PDP recommends that going forward specialist provision in Suffolk should be organised within the following pathway framework:



60. **Key considerations in relation to the pathways.** The PDP wishes to highlight the following critical points that underpin the development of this pathway framework:

- **The right to a mainstream education** The presumption should remain that every child has the right to a mainstream education that provides them with the greatest possible breadth of learning opportunities combined with access to a diverse peer group from their local community that reflects the full breadth of society in modern Britain. Each of these specialist pathways begins in mainstream and the first approach in supporting any child with additional needs should be to provide the personalised curriculum they need through quality first teaching. Following on from this, specialist support within a mainstream setting should be the next step. This could be through specific measures adopted by their teachers and other staff supporting them, with support and advice from specialist outreach services where needed, and in some cases through the provision of some additional specialist measures provided through high needs funds. Moving a child

or young person out of their local mainstream education system and into a specialist setting should be an exceptional decision.

- **Every child is an individual.** The talents, skills and needs of every child are unique and many children that have specialist needs will have a range of needs that are not easily described or categorised into primary and secondary needs. The purpose of the pathways described is to create a range of different types of specialist provision catering for children with differing needs. This approach seeks to strike the balance between offering a diversity of provision and enabling different types of offer to be available across Suffolk. It will always be the case – as for any child – that families and the Local Authority will need to work together to identify the setting that provides the best fit for each child’s needs and within each type of provision it is likely that some settings will have particular strengths and specialism, just as in the mainstream system each school will have its specific strengths and specialisms.

61. In making this recommendation the PDP considered the full range of evidence they had gathered from discussions and visits including, in particular, the points below:

- The SEND Code of Practice is nationally recognised and widely understood therefore using terminology from this will ensure consistency
- The majority of people the PDP members met supported the use of this approach and there were no suggestions for an alternative model of pathways
- The profile of learners has changed considerably since many provisions were established. The current designations do not reflect the variety of needs our children and young people have.
- PDP members felt that there was a need to develop an approach that was easily understood, preventing any potential gaps in provision.
- Families would welcome an approach that provides greater clarity in understanding the local specialist education offer in Suffolk
- The PDP were advised to use the exact wording in the code and have done so within this recommendation
- Whilst it was acknowledged that every child or young person was unique and often quite complex there was an absolute need to have a “best fit” approach.
- A balance needs to be reached between the development of provision which have the specialism to support the needs of compatible groups, but ensuring they are broad enough for the provision to be viable. It would be unwise to develop provision if there was not enough demand to ensure it was sustainable.
- The approach to children and young people with physical disabilities has changed in recent years, to a position where the vast majority with purely physical disabilities are being supported in mainstream education. This has resulted in Suffolk’s only designated physical disability school, Thomas Wolsey, in Ipswich catering for a much

narrower profile of cognitive ability. and those children attending the school now all have complex cognition and learning needs combined with very significant physical disabilities.

- There is insufficient provision for children and young people with high levels of anxiety and those with autism. This cohort is currently primarily supported within pupil referral units. Often these children remain in placement too long and are not able to make good progress. This in turn means they are unable to return to mainstream education, impacting upon both them and other children who would be more appropriately placed in these settings, but are unable to do so in a timely manner.

62. Having developed a proposed pathway framework for the future organisation of specialist provision the PDP turned their attention to considering what components should make up each pathway within the framework.

63. Having considered the decision by September cabinet, that future development of local specialist provision should be through a combination of specialist units attached to mainstream and new special schools, the PDP reached the following conclusion regarding the components of a pathway:

Increasing complexity of need

Mainstream school with quality first teaching & personalised support	Mainstream school with support from specialist outreach services and/or additional specific measures	Specialist Unit attached to mainstream school	Specialist School within local offer	Specialist Independent School or outside of Suffolk
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64. The PDP was then able to create the full pathway framework for Suffolk's specialist offer by combining these two elements:

Increasing complexity of need

	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 4	Step 5
Communication and interaction	Mainstream school with quality first teaching & personalised support	Mainstream school with support from specialist outreach services and/or additional specific measures	Specialist Unit attached to mainstream school	Specialist School within local area	Specialist Independent School or school outside of the local area
Cognition and learning	Mainstream school with quality first teaching & personalised support	Mainstream school with support from specialist outreach services and/or additional specific measures	Specialist Unit attached to mainstream school	Specialist School within local offer	Specialist Independent School or school outside of the local area
Social, emotional and mental health	Mainstream school with quality first teaching & personalised support	Mainstream school with support from specialist outreach services and/or additional specific measures	Specialist Unit attached to mainstream school	Specialist School within local offer	Specialist Independent School or school outside of the local area
Sensory	Mainstream school with quality first teaching & personalised support	Mainstream school with support from specialist outreach services and/or additional specific measures	Specialist Unit attached to mainstream school	Specialist Independent School or school outside of the local area <i>(Because of the very low incidence of need it is not proposed to have a local special school offer catering for those with Visual or Sensory impairment and no other disability. Those children with sensory impairments alongside another primary SEND need would be catered for through other pathways.)</i>	

Physical Disability

65. **Early Intervention:** The PDP are keen to emphasise the very strong messages they received during all visits and discussions regarding the beneficial impact of early specialist interventions in supporting children to

make good progress and sustain mainstream education placements, where appropriate. In order for this support to be maintained the PDP would recommend that the DSG High Needs Block funding should be used to make up the decline in the central services block as schools academise so that the service level can be maintained.

66. Therefore, the PDP is making the following specific recommendations in relation to the implementation of the pathway framework:
67. **The Role of Specialist Outreach Support:** the PDP are keen to put on record the importance of specialist outreach services in all their forms in supporting children to access education. The PDP welcomes the recommendation of the recent Speech, Language and Communication (SLCN) Review to strengthen outreach services for children with SLCN needs and would ask cabinet to note the importance of continued investment in sufficient high-quality specialist outreach services.
68. **Specialist Training for Mainstream Teachers and Support Staff:** During their visits the PDP heard much about the importance of staff training and development and are keen to emphasise the importance of improved and extended training for new teachers and ongoing staff development following completion of initial teacher training. It is recommended further work is undertaken to work with the Suffolk School to School Support Partnership to explore how this could be strengthened, ensuring all children benefit from the highest quality teaching.
69. **Early intervention in Reception and Key Stage 1:** For children in reception and key stage 1 who begin their education in a mainstream school but subsequently have specialist needs identified that cannot be met through quality first teaching and outreach support the PDP is recommending the establishment of specialist units that are tailored to meet a very broad profile of need across all four pathways and focused on early intervention. The rationale for this is that at this early stage a combination of early intervention and assessment is needed to determine what is in the child's best interests and it would be too early, and perhaps inappropriate, to move a child of this age into a specialist pathway. It is envisaged that a significant number of children supported through a reception/key stage 1 early intervention unit would then be able to access a mainstream offer with support thereafter.
70. **Consideration of the framework for Post-16 learners:** currently post-16 provision for those with SEND is much more integrated with very little provision designated to meet specific profiles of need. A philosophy of integration of all learners at a time when young people are preparing to live and work within the community is appropriate, however it may be appropriate in certain circumstances for aspects of the framework to be applied post-16. The PDP recommends that this work should be undertaken as part of the wider programme of planning and commissioning described for post-16 provision below.
71. **Implications of this recommendation for existing specialist providers.** If this proposal were adopted by Cabinet, officers would work with each of our existing specialist providers to determine their place within the framework.

Recommendation 2: That the Cabinet Member should progress work to enable the commitment of the Council to a capital investment programme that creates an additional 828 specialist education places across Suffolk for children of school age over the next 5 years with a maximum investment of £ 45.1m.

72. This recommendation relates to the development of specialist provision within steps 3 and 4 of the pathway framework developed by the PDP and the future use of provision in step 5.

73. Having established the specialist pathway framework, the PDP were able to map the existing specialist offer into the framework for each geographical area of Suffolk to identify gaps in types of specialist provision.

74. This mapping was undertaken for three broad geographical areas linked to the 3 largest towns in Suffolk: Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Lowestoft. The provision maps are set out below:

Ipswich Travel to Learn Area

Step 3 Specialist Unit attached to mainstream school

	Reception & KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
Communication and interaction	Specialist support units offer some KS1 places; first base supporting dual placements, would need some evolution to deliver new approach			
Cognition and learning		SSC		
Social, emotional and mental health		SSC		
Sensory		Hearing Impaired Resource Base	Hearing Impaired Resource Base (Bury)	Hearing Impaired Resource Base (Bury)

Step 4 Specialist School within local offer

	Reception & KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
Communication and interaction				
Cognition and learning	SLD and PD Schools	MLD, SLD & PD Schools (gap between current SLD/MLD)	MLD, SLD & PD Schools (gap between current SLD/MLD)	MLD, SLD & PD Schools (gap between current SLD/MLD)
Social, emotional and mental health		New SEMH School from Sept 2020	New SEMH School from Sept 2020	New SEMH School from Sept 2020
Sensory				

Bury St Edmunds Travel to Learn Area

Step 3 Specialist Unit attached to mainstream/special school

	Reception & KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
Communication and interaction	1 Specialist support unit offers very limited KS1 places; first base supporting dual placements, would need some evolution to deliver new approach	1 small spec group	1 small spec group	
Cognition and learning		1 SSC		
Social, emotional and mental health		1 SSC		
Sensory		Hearing Impaired Resource Base	Hearing Impaired Resource Base (Bury)	Hearing Impaired Resource Base (Bury)

Step 4 Specialist School within local offer

	Reception & KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
Communication and interaction		School for CYP with autism	School for CYP with autism	School for CYP with autism
Cognition and learning	SLD and PD Schools	MLD, SLD Schools	MLD, SLD Schools	MLD, SLD Schools
Social, emotional and mental health				
Sensory				

Lowestoft Travel to Learn Area

Step 3 Specialist Unit attached to mainstream/specialist school

	Reception & KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
Communication and interaction		1 small spec temp. group attached to PRU	1 small spec temp. group attached to PRU	
Cognition and learning				
Social, emotional and mental health				
Sensory		Hearing Impaired Resource Base		

Step 4 Specialist School within local offer

	Reception & KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4
Communication and interaction				
Cognition and learning	SLD and PD Schools	MLD, SLD & PD Schools (gap between current SLD/MLD)	MLD, SLD & PD Schools (gap between current SLD/MLD)	MLD, SLD & PD Schools (gap between current SLD/MLD)
Social, emotional and mental health		SEMH School	SEMH School	SEMH School
Sensory				

75. An analysis of the current un-met need and the future demand was then considered. There are currently 247 children who are either awaiting placement, in a temporary placement or placed at independent provision some distance from home whose needs could be met within the local area. The table below provides more detail:

	Primary			Secondary		
	Ipswich area	Bury St E. Area	Lowestoft Area	Ipswich area	Bury St E. Area	Lowestoft Area
Communication and interaction	6	11	7	37	45	21
Cognition and learning	1	3	2	3	7	11
Social, emotional and mental health	6	6	1	40	24	12
Sensory	0	0	0	0	0	4

76. The SEND Sufficiency analysis identifies a potential need for 420 new specialist places by 2020. This plan was brought together to not only determine the supply of places, but also the future demand. Crucially it also incorporated information from a number of health settings allowing a forecast of the increasing number of new-borns who will likely require specialist educational provision in forthcoming years. If we assume that some of children above are also factored into this assessment (assume 50%) this still leaves a predicted shortfall of 297 places by 2020. If we project the recent rate of increasing demand for specialist provision and rises in EHCP plans over the four years beyond 2020 to 2025 this would suggest a further growth in need of an additional 300 more long term specialist places over this period.

Therefore, the projection additional estimated demand between now and 2025 would be 697 new places.

77. The PDP was then able to combine the gap analysis with the future demand projections for place numbers and identify in broad terms the volume of additional provision that would need to be established over the next 5 years.

78. The following assumptions were used in developing these projections:

- A specialist unit would have the capacity to accommodate between 12 and 24 pupils depending on the nature of need, the age of the pupils and the physical location. Therefore, two ranges have been used in calculating capacity – the lower figure of 12 across the board and then an average figure of 18 has been used in undertaking the capacity planning calculations unless otherwise stated.
- A new special school would accommodate between 100 and 140 pupils depending on the nature of need, the age of the pupils and the physical location. Therefore, an average figure of 120 has been used in undertaking the capacity planning calculations

79. The outcome of this exercise is set out below and in total proposes the creation of 828 new places at estimated capital cost of £45.1million.

80. It is proposed to establish the following new specialist units spread across Suffolk to ensure reasonable reach for all communities:

- 11 new Reception/KS1 specialist units for early intervention and assessment, these units would also accommodate the needs of pupils with the most complex SLCN needs who need a more intensive intervention than could be offered through the new SLCN outreach service proposals (assume 12 places per unit)
- 1 new hearing-impaired resource base for secondary pupils in the Lowestoft and East Suffolk area – (no places as supports into the mainstream school)
- 5 new secondary specialist units for communication and interaction
- 5 new secondary specialist units for learning and cognition
- 7 new primary specialist units for communication and interaction
- 7 new primary specialist units for learning and cognition

Giving a total of a minimum of 420 places and a potential longer-term capacity of 564 places.

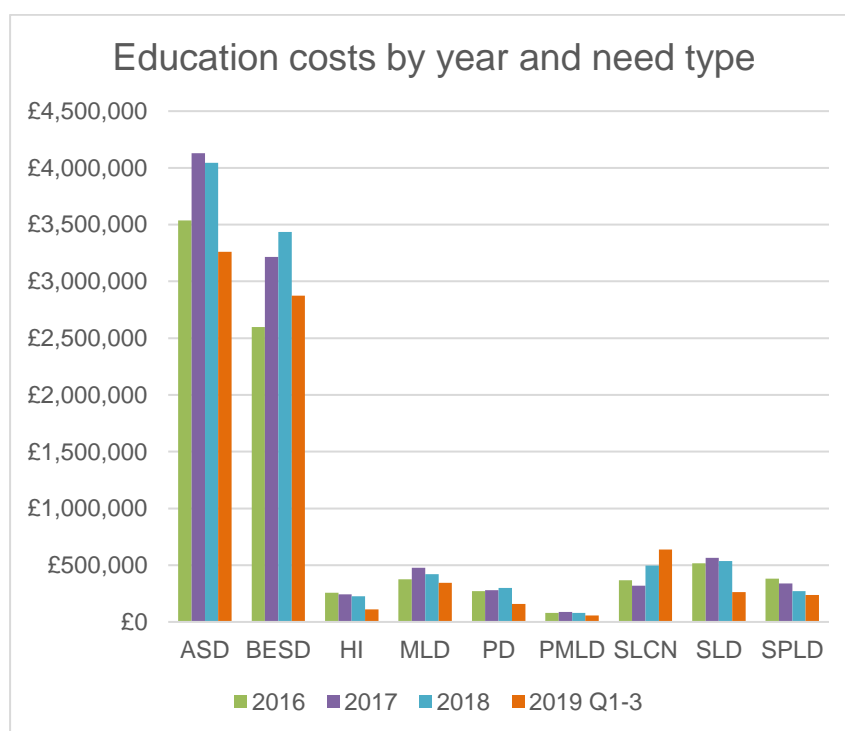
81. These new specialist units would be in addition to the existing specialist units settings that are already in place although there would need to be further discussion to determine their focus going forward. The new units would be established through a combination of adaption of existing under-utilised space within mainstream schools and new purpose-built facilities on mainstream sites. For the purpose of estimating a capital envelope for establishment of these units, the following assumptions have been used:

- a. Average cost of a new build facility £330,000
- b. Average cost of a refurbishment £100,000

- c. Assuming 2/3 new build and 1/3 refurbished existing facilities
82. Therefore, the capital cost of providing this 420 new places (with potential to increase to 564) would be £9.1million or £21,667 per new place.
83. It is proposed to establish the following new special schools:
- A complex SEMH needs school in the Bury St Edmunds area
- Two complex communication and interaction needs schools, one in the Ipswich area and the Lowestoft area
 - These would create an additional minimum 360 new places.
84. It is likely to be possible to use an existing vacant special school in Bury St Edmunds to accommodate one of the new schools. This would speed up opening and reduce cost. Therefore, the total cost of these three new special schools is estimated to be £33m (£15m per new school and £3m to refurbish) - £91,667 per place.
- 85. Additional post-16 provision:** while there is a significant need for new places for learners with SEND post-16 discussions between the PDP and the post-16 providers across Suffolk have indicated that the existing providers have both the capacity and the willingness to grow their specialist offer within their existing infrastructure. They have asked that the LA provide them with a more detailed analysis of exactly what commissioning needs will be in the future so that they can be responsive to this, however there will not be a need to develop new post-16 school infrastructure to accommodate these additional learners. The PDP therefore recommends that officers are tasked to respond to the request of providers for a more detailed analysis to support their planning, but that no capital investment in post 16 places is necessary for the foreseeable future. This expansion will however have an impact on the high needs block, but this is outside the remit of this PDP.
- 86. The role of Alternative Provision:** PDP members were keen to acknowledge the changing nature of Alternative Provision and the recent national report setting out the diversity of this offer across the country. Members felt that in light of the recommendations being proposed within this paper, a significant piece of work is required to establish the role of alternative provision in Suffolk going forward. Therefore, PDP members ask the Cabinet Member to consider recommending to the Leader that a further PDP is undertaken to look at this issue in greater detail.
- 87. Early Years:** the PDP did not consider early years provision as part of its enquiry and has therefore not made recommendations in this respect. However, the PDP recognises the importance of early years settings and are keen to emphasise this should be an area for future consideration.
- 88. Highly specialist school in Suffolk with a residential facility.** As part of its range of field work the PDP visited independent specialist providers and received reports from officers relating to others. Their conclusions were that there was no reason why Suffolk could not itself develop a more highly specialist offer for the most complex children and young people linked to a particular profile where the County Council is currently commissioning significant numbers of placements from the independent sector. It was noted

that it would also be beneficial if such a provision had a residential function to accommodate children from across Suffolk and serve neighbouring counties.

89. The PDP also visited Hampden House – currently a Pupil Referral Unit with a specialist residential facility and identified the potential for this setting to be refocused to provide such a specialist school in the future.
90. The PDP recommends that further work is undertaken to explore the potential to create a highly specialist school at this location with residential provision, with a possible profile of need being those with complex autism combined with SEMH needs. Cabinet are asked to recognise that if this proposal were viable and taken forward this would need an additional capital investment estimated to be approximately £3m for creation of a 48-place school with 12 residential beds – a cost of £62,500 per place.
91. By focussing upon our cohort of complex ASD with SEMH(BESD) this will not only provide more local placements for the profile of children and young people with the greatest growth in terms of numbers, but also cost. To provide some context, whilst the individual costs will vary due to the complex nature of need, they will be in the range of £80,000 and £110,000 per pupil per year, excluding transport. These costs are increasing as more local authorities compete for an ever-diminishing number of places.



92. In summary the plan set out here provides for a potential of 828 new places – however 132 of these are designed to be early intervention placements in Key Stage 1/Reception that may then enable a return to mainstream and 48 are for very specialist provision that sits outside these demand calculations. Therefore, if both these are discounted from the longer-term placement calculations, this proposal would provide 648 specialist places compared with a projection to 2025 of 697 - with potential capability to expand in the future should further growth be required. The PDP considers that this plan therefore offers the combination of meeting longer term need and the flexibility to respond to fluctuations in demand that cannot be predicted at this stage.

Sources of further information

- a) Cabinet Paper September 2018
- b) Sufficiency Education Chapters and Consultation September 2018
- c) Suffolk SEND Strategy May 2017
- d) SEND Code of Practice 2014

Appendix A – Lists of Provision and Groups that the PDP members visited

The PDP members sincerely thank the following settings and groups for their help in gathering the evidence to develop the recommendations in these papers. PDP members found the visits and meetings extremely helpful and thought provoking and were impressed by the excellent work happening across Suffolk and beyond to support our most vulnerable children and young people.

Highfield Special School,
Hillside Special School
Gorseland School - Specialist Support Centre
Everitt Special School
Priory Special School
Essex Fresh Start
Kesgrave High School
First Base, Bury St Edmunds
Bramfield House
Causton Junior School – Specialist Support Centre
Thomas Wolsey Special School
Churchill Special School
Hampden House Pupil Referral Unit
Hardwick Primary School – Speech and Language Unit
Rushmere Primary School – Speech and Language Unit
Dale Hall Primary School

Special School Headteachers Group
Pupil Referral Units Heads Group
Post-16 SEND Committee
Suffolk Parent Carer Network Management Board
SENDIASS Team
Specialist Support Centre Heads Group

Appendix B – Glossary of Acronyms

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
SEND	Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities
CFA	Children and Families Act 2014
HNB	High Needs Block funding
EHCP	Education, Health and Care Plan
IEP/PEP	Individual Education Plan / Personal Education Plan
OPP	One Page Profile
SENCO	Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator
SSC	Specialist Support Centres
PRU	Pupil Referral Unit
AP	Alternative Provision
Areas of need	
ASC/ASD	Autistic Spectrum Condition/Autistic Spectrum Disorder (Autism)
SLCN	Speech, Language and Communication Needs
MLD	Moderate Learning Difficulties
SLD	Severe Learning Difficulties
PMLD	Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
SpLD	Specific Learning Difficulties
SPD	Sensory Processing Difficulties
VI	Visual Impairment
HI	Hearing Impairment
MSI	Multi-Sensory Impairment (both HI and VI)
PD	Physical Disability
SEMH	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
BESD	Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulties (now known as SEMH)
FAS	Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
CP	Cerebral Palsy
GDD	Global Development Delay
Support	
EP	Educational Psychologist
CAMHs	Child and Adolescent Mental Health service
SaLT	Speech and Language Therapist
OT	Occupational Therapist
PT	Physiotherapist
CISS	County Inclusion Support Service
CAF	Common Assessment Framework
ST	Specialist Teacher
ADOS	Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule
PECS	Picture Exchange Communication System