

To: **Schools Forum**  
**15 September 2022.**

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**Specialist Resource Provision Review**  
**Executive Director of People**

**1 Purpose of Report**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide an update to Schools Forum on the review undertaken of Bracknell Forest Specialist Resource Provisions (SRP's).

To highlight areas of challenge identified through the review and for the forum to note recommendations to support the development of current SRP's and the development of further SRP's within Bracknell Forest.

Comments are sought to support the development of current SRP offer and to capture consideration for the further development of SRP's.

**2 Recommendation(s)**

- 2.1 For the forum to be sighted on the findings to date of the review of SRPs in Bracknell Forest and to provide comments.

**3 Reasons for Recommendation(S)**

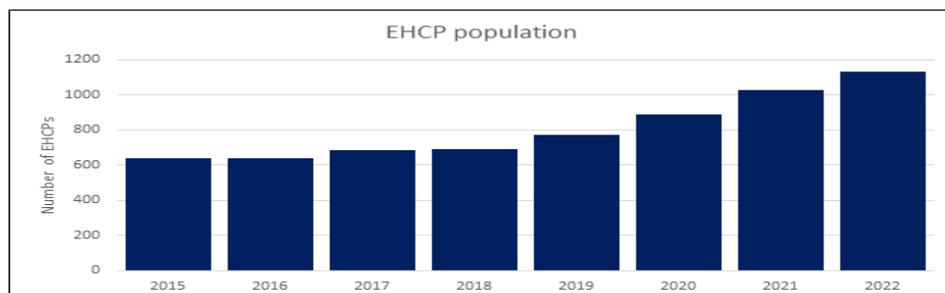
- 3.1 None

**4 Alternative Options Considered**

- 4.1 None

**5 Supporting Information**

- 5.1 In line with national data Bracknell Forest has continued to see a rise in the number of children and young people supported by an EHCP. See table below.



No of children and young people supported by an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in Bracknell Forest

- 5.2 During this period Bracknell Forest has become increasingly reliant on the independent sector to meet its statutory requirement in providing suitable education for children and young people supported through an EHCP.

Specialism	Nos	Cost
ASD	70	£3,982,453
HI	3	£142,681
MLD	5	£170,669
PD	3	£238,310
PMLD	2	£94,526
SEMH	57	£3,212,891
SLCN	8	£244,870
SLD	6	£203,931
SPLD	5	£219,174
VI	1	£28,483
<b>Total</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>£8,537,988</b>

No of Children by primary need accessing Independent and non-maintained schools (june22)

- 5.3 In 2021 the decision was taken to develop SRP's across the education landscape to meet the growing demand and to provide an alternative to the use of independent and on maintained provision.

The SRP development process formalised the few existing units already developed by schools. The development of further SRP's was managed by an expression of interest process across the primary sector.

Following the conclusion of this process the borough supported the development of a further 4 SRP's (highlighted blue) within the primary sector. See below.

School	Specialism	Nursery	KS1	KS2	KS3&4	No of places at opening	Places filled:Aug21	Prev. placement	Total places
<b>North Bracknell</b>									
Birch Hill	Autism & MLD	X	√	√	X	4/5	3 + 2 unconfirmed	Mainstream school	10
Harmans Water	SEMH	X	√	√*	X	4	3 + 1 unconfirmed	2 x HWPS 1 x Wildridings	14
Kings Academy	ASC	X	√	√*	X	2	1	Kings (YR pupil)	10
<b>South Bracknell</b>									
Owlsmoor	SLD (SEN Unit)	X	√	√	X	5	5	N/a	8
Rainbow	Communication & Interaction/ ASC	√	√**	X	X	6	2	N/a	10
Meadow Vale	Speech & Language	X	√	√	X	TBC	TBC	N/a	TBC
<b>Crowthorne &amp; Sandhurst</b>									
Sandy Lane	Autism and/or Lang & Comm	X	√	√	X	8	5 (1 non-BFC) + 3 unconfirmed	Mainstream	14
The Pines	MLD with autism or S&L needs	X	√	√	X	12	9	N/a	20
The Rise	ASC	X	X	X	√	8	56 (14 non-BFC + 1 unconf.)	N/a	56

Chart detailing SRP's within Bracknell Forest following development in 2021.

## **6.0 Review Methodology**

- 6.1 With the exception of one primary, 6 schools hosting SRP's were visited, meetings were held with headteacher and key staff. The one primary not visited had an opportunity to feed into the review via a team's call.
- 6.2 A visit was planned for the one secondary SRP however this was cancelled at the end of term and this visit will be diarised for the new academic year.
- 6.3 Parents and carers were met on two occasions, face to face and virtually to gather parents experience and thoughts around SRP provision and development.
- 6.4 Discussion was held with the Head of Send, Head of Early Years and advisory teaching service.

## **7.0 Findings**

- 7.1 When visiting the schools, a high proportion of heads and senior staff voiced that they found the funding mechanism was complex and not well understood for the SRP provision, due to this they felt that they were not able to plan their budgets effectively. It has been confirmed that a slide deck has been developed to support and training has been provided by the finance team.
- 7.2 Rigidity of approach around the expected 50% attendance in the mainstream classroom created tension, it was felt that this approach was not always best for the child. This had a greater impact for those providers in the early stages of growth as the need to commit a Teaching Assistant (TA) to support 50% of the time in mainstream classroom, however lack of economies of scale created challenges.
- 7.3 At the time of the new SRP's being set up in 2021 there was the perception within the Local Authority (LA) that the 50% attendance requirement within a mainstream classroom setting for children accessing an SRP placement would allow twice the number of children to be placed, as these additional children could access the SRP while another child was accessing 50% within the mainstream classroom setting. This was not an achievable outcome given the complexity of children accessing the provision.
- 7.4 Many headteachers expressed the view that they did not feel that the education landscape in Bracknell Forest were fully aware of the SRP's, schools were unsure of the nature and needs of the children that the SRP's could support, and they were unclear how to secure a placement for an appropriate child.
- 7.5 It did not appear that there was a shared understanding between the LA and SRP headteachers as to the complexity of children that should be accessing the Resourced Provision. Headteachers felt that they received inappropriate consultations for placements from the LA. LA officer's felt that SRP's were reluctant to admit children with a level of complex need they felt should be accommodated within an SRP.
- 7.6 All SRP headteachers voiced concern over the lack of secondary options that their children could transition into; frequently leaving children and parents with a lack of clarity of where the child would be starting in year 7 creating high levels of anxiety.

- 7.7 Many headteachers voiced concern over a high level of consultations from other local Authorities. Invariably these consultations were earlier than Bracknell Forest consultations supporting the phase transfer process, potentially impacting on the number of places available for Bracknell Children. Many of these consultations were inappropriate, the situation was further compounded as the SEND Code of Practice (CoP) sets out the requirement for other LA's when consulting with maintained schools to also consult with the home LA. This is not happening consistently.
- 7.8 Headteachers also voiced concerns that phase transfer consultations for placements were disconnected and done in isolation. This was felt to be a missed opportunity to ensure the best provision fit for children being considered.
- 7.9 Schools that host an SRP do not receive an increase Educational Psychologist (EP) offer, resulting in staff having to make difficult decision how to utilise this support, potentially disadvantaging all children the attend a primary setting with an SRP.
- 7.10 Schools value the support that they received from the Behavioural Support Service and the Autism Advisory Service but did not feel that it was enough. It was felt that not enough support has been provided to SRP's to differentiate from the mainstream setting and to ensure a high level of skill and confidence to support the needs of the children they were supporting. There was no expectation defined by the LA as to the skill set and qualifications that the SRP lead should possess.
- 7.11 Some headteachers voiced that they were unhappy with some aspects of the Service Level Agreement (SLA) and had declined to sign resulting in a lack of legal framework to support both parties.
- 7.12 Parents said that they were unclear about the SRP's, they didn't know which schools hosted SRP's and how to access them. They had a lack of clarity of how each individual SRP would be able to support their child effectively. SRP's are not well detailed on the Local Offer, resulting in parents not being able to make fully informed decisions.
- 7.13 Through the review and visits it must be noted that all head teachers were committed to the SRP's that they hosted. Senior staff and lead teachers were keen to "make a difference" and to secure good outcomes for the children they supported within the SRP.

## **8.0 Meadow Vale School Rainbow Provision and Unit - special note**

- 8.1 During the process of undertaking the SRP review, Meadow Vale school have taken the decision that they no longer wish to host the Rainbow (nursery) Provision. The school were of the view that the provision was no longer financially viable and after discussions with the LA the decision was taken by the school to close the provision at the end of the 21/22 academic year.
- 8.2 It must also be noted that the school has voiced concern around the utilisation of Meadow Vale Speech language and Communication Needs (SLCN) provision that they currently host. The provision has been set up to host 20 children, however 21/22 saw only 4 children accessing the provision and in July 22, the school reported that they were only expecting 3 children to be with them for the 22/23 academic year. Given the low take up of places in the provision, further work needs to be undertaken to understand why this is the case and does the current model result in children with

SLCN needs in other schools not having their needs met sufficiently due to a high level of resource being focused on the SRP.

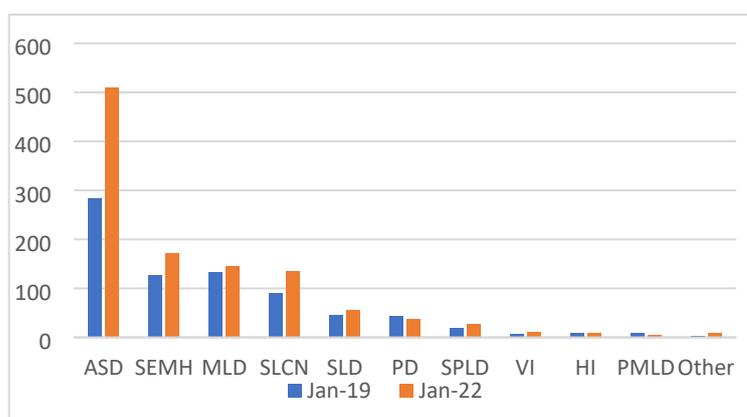
## **9.0 Recommendations - Primary**

- 9.1 A working group should be set up to review the current funding mechanism for SRP's to ensure that schools hosting SRP provision fully understand the funding mechanism to support effective budgetary planning and oversight.
- 9.2 To explore the removing of the requirement for children to be accessing 50% of their lessons within a mainstream classroom. While this should remain an ambition it should be a child led model and based on the child's needs and ability.
- 9.3 To consider moving away from the perspective that due to 50% attendance in mainstream that the SRP can double up the number of children it can host. Prior to the review there was not an awareness that this was an issue for any setting and was not an approach that had been adopted by the SEND Team. It is important to note that this was not reflected within the SLA.
- 9.4 To explore work between the LA, all SRP headteachers and/or leads to clearly define the needs of the children that can access their provision. To set out the approaches and specialist resource that can be accessed at the SRP. This will also define the skills and qualifications needed within the provision. This should appear on both the school's website, Can Do website and the LA's Local Offer. This should clearly define the admission route and the processes required to secure a placement. This will provide clear information to all, around placements.
- 9.5 The LA will need to consider developing further SRP's within the secondary sector to ensure that children accessing primary provision have an appropriate educational establishment to move onto. Further detail relating to the secondary sector is detailed further in this paper.
- 9.6 The local authority could consider the support offer to settings hosting an SRP. They should consider reviewing the level of allocation of EP provision to ensure children accessing schools hosting SRP's are not disadvantaged. The support offer should be detailed within the SLA and reviewed annually with flexibility built in to reflect the level of complexity of children accessing the provision. A skills audit should also be considered to support the development of a training package for SRP's leads to drive up quality.
- 9.7 The LA should consider the approach around phase transfer. It is recommended that a meeting is held between the LA and all SRP's to consider the best fit for children requiring a placement considering parental preference, geographical parameters and the nature and needs of individual children.
- 9.8 Due to the decision to close the Rainbow unit, further work needs to be undertaken to develop an alternative nursery option. This work is paramount as the Child Development Centre (CDC) have reported an increase of more than 70% of early years children that require specialist interventions.
- 9.9 Review the current SLA currently in place for Primary SRP's: Note this work has been undertaken during the summer break.

## 10.0 Recommendations - Secondary Development

- 10.1 As detailed earlier in the paper, headteachers voiced concern around progression from primary to secondary due to lack of appropriate provision.
- 10.2 The joint inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in December 2021 identified that there was a lack of local provision in Bracknell Forest to meet the needs of SEND young people. Development of secondary SRP's will start to address this identified area of weakness.
- 10.3 It is well documented that nationally, many children make the move from a primary mainstream setting to a specialist secondary setting at the primary to secondary transfer stage, the development of secondary SRP's would provide a suitable solution that would retain more children in a secondary mainstream setting where published outcomes are better.
- 10.4 Currently Bracknell Forest has one secondary SRP, The Rise. The Rise is an SRP meeting the needs of an autism cohort. The Rise is invariably full at the beginning of each academic year leaving little headroom to secure places outside of the phase transfer process.

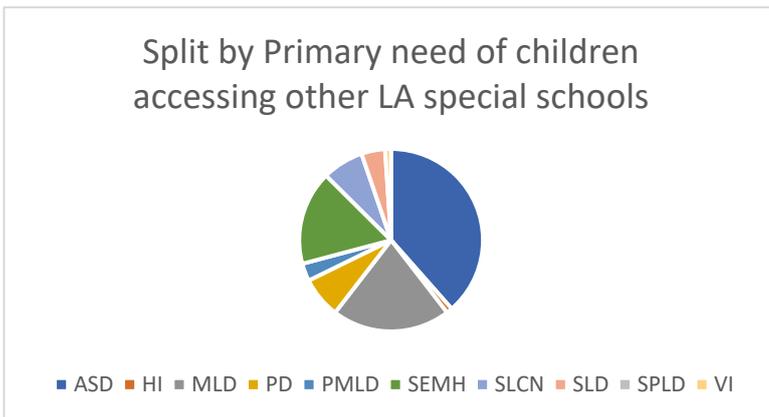
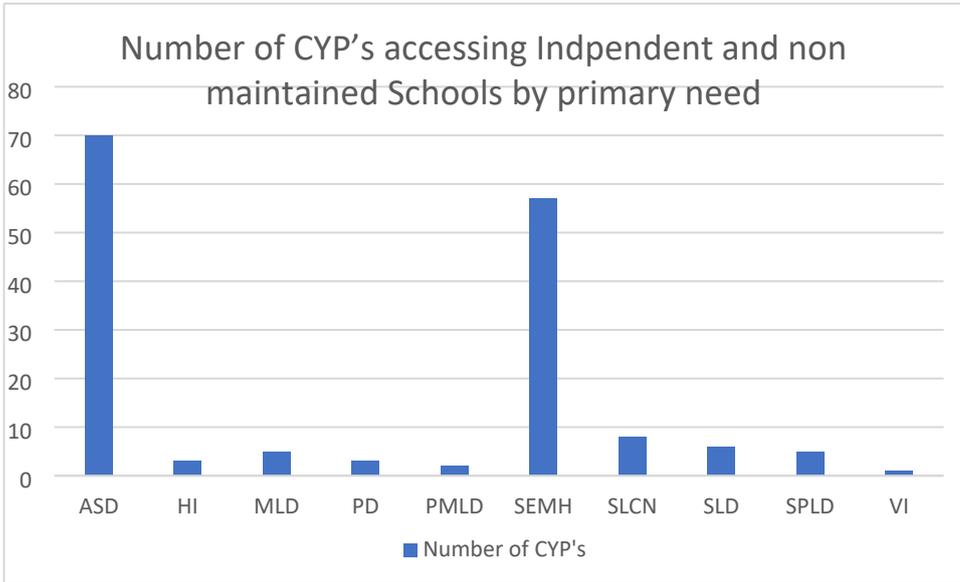
## 11.0 Data



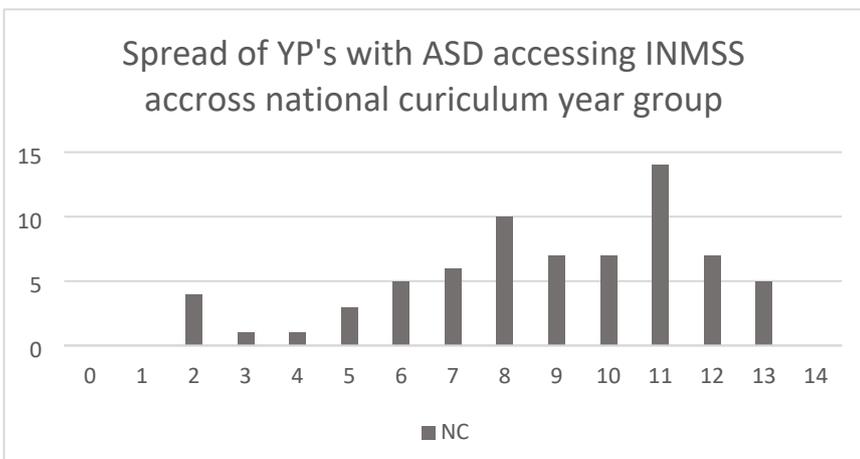
Illustrated growth of children with an EHCP by primary need over a 3-year period.

- 11.1 Bracknell Forest council have continued to see significant growth in the number of children and young people with a diagnosis of Autism. See above chart.

OFFICIAL SENSITIVE (COMMERCIAL)/OFFICIAL SENSITIVE (PERSONAL)



11.2 The largest cohort of children and young people accessing the independent and non-maintained (INMS) sector and other LA provision have a diagnosis of Autism. Above charts details the numbers, data taken June 2022.



11.3 Of those CYP's with Autism accessing INMSS provision the vast majority sit within the secondary phase of education. Above chart details split of ASD Children by national curriculum year grp, data June 22.

- 11.4 The LA are proposing the development of secondary based ASD SRP's within Bracknell Forest to provide additional capacity to allow children to be educated within their home LA. These SRP's should cater to children with High Function Autism.
- 11.5 It is unlikely that the LA will be able to bring all children with ASD back into local SRP provision within the secondary sector due to complexity of need.
- 11.6 The development of further places will support the effective transition from the current SRP's into the secondary phase of education. It is important to note that a proportion of children accessing provision in primary SRP's will require more specialist provision than can be sourced within the proposed secondary SRP's as they move onto their secondary phase of education.
- 11.7 The high proportion of children with autism and the numbers reflected both within the INMS sector and within other LA specialist provision means we must focus our development of provision within the secondary sector for children with ASC.
- 11.8 It is proposed that 30 places will be created through a robust co-produced procurement exercise, these 30 places should be developed in 2 schools across the borough, with the option to expand further to respond to changing numbers, to be built into to any development. These figures have been developed through discussion with the send service and in conjunction with data detailed within this report.
- 11.9 Further work is currently being undertaken within the LA to review the number of children who Electively Home Educated (EHE), to consider the number of children currently accessing part timetables and Educated Other than at School (EOTAS) provision. Once this work is completed the LA may need to consider increasing the offer of SRP development in secondary.
- 11.10 To further enhance the offer to the secondary sector it is proposed that any new secondary SRP is able to provide outreach to the sector to increase skill and knowledge enhancing the sectors' ability to meet needs.

## **12 Consultation and Other Considerations**

### **12.1 Legal Advice**

### **12.2 Financial Advice**

The financial implications arising from the outcomes from this review will need to be quantified and considered as part of the normal budget setting process

### **12.3 Other Consultation Responses**

### **12.4 Equalities Impact Assessment**

An Equality Impact Assessment will need to be completed as we move to the implementation phase of the development of further SRP's within Bracknell Forest.

## 12.5 Background Papers



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### Contact for further information

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OFFICIAL SENSITIVE (COMMERCIAL)/OFFICIAL SENSITIVE (PERSONAL)

Appendix 1

Setting	number of places created	Capital	21/22	High Needs Allocation 21/22	22/23
Birch Hill	10	£45,000	7	64,530	5
Harman's Water	14	£55,000	5	58,530	5
Kings Academy	10	0	1		1
Meadowvale Rainbow	10	0	2		0
Meadowvale language	20	0	4		5
Owlsmoor	8	£28,000	5	58,090	8
Sandy Lane	14	£10,000	11	71,385	11
The Pines	20	£15,000	11	82,168	14
The Rise	56	0	52		34