

Consultation on a proposal to create a Resource Provision for students with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) at Stratford School Academy

Introduction

This proposal is part of the London Borough of Newham's plan to provide more suitable places for children with Special Education Needs.

The audience for this document is: parents and carers of children who attend Stratford School Academy; parents in the local area; The London Borough of Newham as the Local Authority; The Admissions Forum, Primary, Secondary, Special Schools, sixth-form colleges and Colleges of Further Education in the area, staff at the Academy and the unions that represent those staff.

Publishing this document is the start of the consultation process and everyone will be able to tell the Academy what they think of the proposal. (See the Consultation Process section of this document.)

Before making a final proposal the Academy's Board of Governors will think about all the comments they receive either at a meeting or that in writing.

The programme will play a big part in the achieving the aims of Newham's Best for All strategy¹.

Resource provision for children with SLCN

A school with a Resource Provision is one at which places are allocated to pupils with specific types of special education needs. It is expected that pupils in a Resource Provision are taught in mainstream classes for at least half the week but that in addition their education will require work with specialist staff and sometimes for the school to provide extra facilities.

Schools with Resource Provisions have to make additional educational provision and so they receive extra money.

It is estimated that around one in ten of pupils in this country have a SLCN but at present there are no Resource Provisions in the London Borough of Newham specifically for these children. So there is a clear need for a Resource Provision.

Stratford School Academy (SSA) is proposing to establish a Resource Provision (RP) for 25 children with SLCN, opening in September 2018. The expectation is that there will be around 5 pupils per year group within the Resource Provision for children with SLCN. These pupils will be an extra to the 300 pupils in each year group. The provision will be based in the Academy's Grosvenor Road building and is in addition to the Academy's existing Resource Provision for children with Autism at Upton Lane.

¹ Best for All published February 2018 – http://join-newham.co.uk/content/application/files/8815/0771/2986/SEND_B4A_PLAN__18.7.2017_-_final_18.7_.17-10.47_.pdf

The pupils who attend the SLCN Resource Provision will have an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan or a level of need that in another authority would be in receipt of an EHC plan.

Speech, Language and Communication Needs are split into two categories; communication and interaction needs and cognitive and learning needs. The Resource Provision at SSA will be for children with communication and interaction needs. Children with a communication and interaction needs may have difficulties in one or more of the areas of speech, language and communication, specific examples could be dyslexia, hearing loss or a sensory impairment.

The children who attend the Resource Provision will be ones who have significantly greater difficulty with learning than most children of their age, or who, because of their SLCN, find it difficult to learn in a typical secondary school and so need educational provision which is additional to, or otherwise different from, the educational provision made generally for children of their age.

Pupils admitted to the Resource Provision will be taught in mainstream classes for as much of the week as possible – and certainly for at least half of the week. If any of these pupils need extra help in class - and they won't always - they will receive support from a trained teaching assistant working with the classroom teacher. When pupils are not in mainstream lessons, they will be in smaller classes following speech and language programmes and amongst other types of help as required.

The school will employ extra staff to provide, for example, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, counselling and to provide the extra help to children with SLCN when in the classroom. We will also be able to train existing school staff to provide the additional and different provision that most of these children with SLCN need.

Our buildings and classrooms are new and well designed. We have large classrooms, and a good range of small group rooms. Governors are confident that the extra pupil numbers can be managed.

The Consultation Process

The guidelines for the process are set out in “Making significant changes to an open academy”²

The Public Consultation Process will be as follows:

- Distribution of Consultation Document (this document);
- Meetings with Parents, Governors, SSA Staff, all other stakeholders and Unions representing staff will be invited to explain the initial proposal – Tuesday the 8th of May 2018:
 - 4:30 -5:30 -Staff and unions
 - 5:30 - 6:30 - Parents
 - 7:00 - 8:00- All stakeholders;
- A consultation period to allow interested parties to consider the proposal and make comments.

² Making significant changes to an open academy, Department for Education, published March 2016 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/making-significant-changes-to-an-existing-academy>

A report is then prepared and presented to the Academy's Governing Body for consideration.

Finally, having considered the comments made during the consultation, if the Governors agree to go ahead, a full business case is submitted to the office of the Regional Schools Commissioner for a decision on the proposal.

How can I make my views known?

The Academy is happy to receive comments:

- In writing to F. Begum, PA to the Headteacher, Stratford School Academy, Upton Lane, Forest Gate, London E7 9PR. To be considered all letters must include the authors name, signature and address;
- As an email. All emails should be sent to F.Begum@stratfordschoolacademy.org
- Tell us what you think at one of the consultation meetings. There will be someone taking notes of any raised, replies given and comments made.

Definitions

Speech Language and Communication Need (SLCN):

SLCN is split into two categories; communication and interaction and cognitive and learning. Our RP will be based on communication and interaction.

Communication and interaction:

Children and young people with SEN may have difficulties in one or more of the areas of speech, language and communication. These children and young people need help to develop their linguistic competence in order to support their thinking, as well as their communication skills. Specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia or a physical or sensory impairment such as hearing loss may also lead to communication difficulties. Those with speech, language and communication needs (SLCN) cover the whole ability range. They find it more difficult to communicate with others. They may have problems taking part in conversations, either because they find it difficult to understand what others say or because they have difficulties with fluency and forming sounds, words and sentences. It may be that when they hear or see a word they are not able to understand its meaning, leading to words being used incorrectly in or out of context and the child having a smaller vocabulary. It may be a combination of these problems. For some children and young people, difficulties may become increasingly apparent as the language they need to understand and use becomes more complex. In addition, Children and young people with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), including Asperger's Syndrome and Autism, have difficulty in making sense of the world in the way others do. They too may have difficulties with communication, social interaction and imagination.

Special Educational Need:

A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for them. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if they: (a) have a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age; or (b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions. Areas of special educational need Special educational needs and provision can be considered as falling under four broad areas: (1) Communication and interaction; (2)

Cognition and learning; (3) Social, mental and emotional health and (4) Sensory and/or physical. Many children and young people have difficulties that fit clearly into one of these areas; some have needs that span two or more areas; for others the precise nature of their need may not be clear at the outset. It is therefore important to carry out a detailed individual assessment of each child or young person and their situation at the earliest opportunity to make an accurate assessment of their needs.