

Cheshire West & Chester Specialist Provision Strategic Review

**Report on Co-Production and
Recommended Considerations for
Consultation**

Version 1.i – For Feedback

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1. Introduction

The Children and Families Act 2014 sets out a statutory duty for local authorities to keep provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) under review. This is to ensure that the area's high needs provision is evidence based, fit to meet future demand, and shaped by co-production with all stakeholders.

In February 2018 Cheshire West & Chester Council commissioned a comprehensive review of its high needs provision. The **SEND High Needs Provision Strategic Review** was published in November 2018¹ and identified the key issues and challenges facing the local area's SEND system and highlighting areas for development and Considerations for exploration based on approaches in other areas. CW&C's Cabinet approved a co-production² process between young people, parents, schools, providers and officers to identify solutions and actions in response to the areas of development identified in the report and consider how viable they are for Cheshire West and Chester; the co-production process has been conducted in line with the Co-production Strategy which was developed by the Parent/Carer Forum and approved by the Children's Trust. The process took place between January – May 2019 and this report presents the findings from this process.

The council has commissioned **FWL & Associates** to carry out this work, a consultancy with significant experience in this area. They have in recent years delivered a number of comparable projects including:

- Playing a central role in the transformation of Warwickshire County Council's SEND systems and provision including the delivery of over **250** more specialist places locally (with more on the way) for high needs learners with complex needs, including supporting the development of three new special academies/free schools.
- Reviewing high needs SEND provision for Shropshire Council, where they are now supporting the development of new provision to meet the area's needs, including developing a successful bid for a new special free school.

The co-production process has been led and coordinated by Donna Webster, Associate Consultant, and overseen by Jonathan Wilding, FWL & Associates Director.

2. Strategic Intentions

To ensure that Cheshire West and Chester Council's High Needs provision is evidence based, fit to meet future demand, and shaped by co-production and consultation with all stakeholders.

¹ Available here: <http://cmttpublic.cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk/mgConvert2PDF.aspx?ID=63155>

² Co-production means working with people who use services and their carers as equal partners in the design and development of policy and practice including the commissioning, delivery and review of services in Cheshire West and Chester.

3. Principles

The following principles for the co-production process to be measured against emerged from early discussions with parents and professionals:

- **SEND is Everyone's Business** ... the whole system needs to be involved in addressing the needs of learners with SEND
- **Clarity, Transparency & Consistency** ... clear communication with no surprises can mean avoiding unnecessary fights
- **Shared Vision & Values** ... do what we say we will do; use shared language so we understand that we mean the same thing
- **Right Child, Right Place, Right Time** ... effective transitions between mainstream to special on to adult independence means success
- **Code of Conduct** ... young person's needs are paramount: we are all responsible & accountable, generously sharing skills & knowledge
- **Sustainable & Affordable** ...take the long view, a way of working that is fit for the future and doesn't lead to "project overload"

4. Summary of the findings of the SEND Review – November 2018

Although the high quality of CW&C's specialist provision should be applauded, pressure is mounting on the SEND system locally (as nationally) and the review identified a number of issues and challenges that need to be addressed if the system as a whole is to remain effective and sustainable. These challenges were identified by a range of stakeholders consulted during the review process and are also confirmed by analysis of the data, as set out below:

i. Partnership, engagement and communications

- Communications need to be sharper and clearer with many stakeholders feeling very unclear about what support is available or how to access services.
- There is a limited sense of awareness, collective ownership or shared purpose between parents, schools and other partners regarding the local SEND strategy.
- In recent years national education policy has not been actively encouraging inclusion and this has been in decline, but recent messages from the DfE indicate a growing recognition that this needs to change; schools need to find ways of working together more cohesively to respond to the challenges of growing demand by catering for a wider range of needs in mainstream settings.
- There is the need to build closer partnerships, collaboration and increased joint commissioning between education, health, social care and adult services.

ii. Skill sharing and capacity building

- Need to enhance skill-sharing and partnership between specialist and mainstream providers to develop capacity and build confidence in the mainstream system.
- Academic attainment for learners with SEND is below national expectations, despite funding being higher than average. More critically life outcomes could be better.
- Concerns have been identified about early identification of need in pre-school.

iii. Imbalances in the mix of provision

- There is strong evidence that the vast majority of children with SEND benefit academically, socially, in confidence and self-esteem from education in mainstream schools rather than further away from home or in specialist settings. This will not be true for all children or in all circumstances, but research strongly supports a policy of adopting mainstream placement as the default position wherever possible.
- CW&C has very high rates of placement in special schools compared with elsewhere and there are too many pupils with lower level needs are currently attending special schools who could thrive in mainstream schools with appropriate support.
- There has been dramatic growth in special school placements in recent years with a 33.3% increase in pupil numbers since 2014 largely driven by increases in placement of pupils with ASD and MLD.
- An insufficient proportion of pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans are attending mainstream secondary schools.
- Transition from primary into secondary mainstream for SEND pupils could be better supported by schools working together.
- Increasing numbers of EHC plans are driven by post-16 growth – provision and policy needs to develop to cater for this and the post-16 offer needs to be clearer and more diverse. Partners also need to start earlier in developing routes into employment for SEND learners.
- It is beyond doubt both that the education system is facing an increasing complexity of need. In future there will be more young people for whom special school will be the only option. CW&C faces urgent pressure to ensure that local mainstream provision is better able to cater for lower level needs so that specialist provision can focus on the most complex needs.

iv. Financial pressures

- Current pressures on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant present a financially unsustainable position; unless the local system adapts to find more effective ways of meeting needs, the position will become untenable.
- There is evidence that CW&C's overall levels of high needs funding for schools are relatively generous compared with averages elsewhere, which given that outcomes are below average indicates that resources could be used more effectively and that there may be efficiencies available.

5. Potential Solutions for Discussion Identified by Review

- i. Additional specialist MLD provision within mainstream for secondary learners
- ii. Implement CW&C expectations that MLD learners will be educated in mainstream
- iii. Revisit business case for residential provision
- iv. Review special school bandings to ensure applied consistently and transparently and affordably
- v. Develop & publish 'foundation' documents to build and reinforce consensus and understanding of SEN support in every setting

- vi. Revisit business case for 'top-up' funding for non-EHCP learners
- vii. Enhanced Transition pathways to enable more learners to remain in mainstream
- viii. Active placement in CW&C by neighbouring LA's to alleviate financial pressures
- ix. Enhanced networking & PDP for SENCOs
- x. Enhanced SEND peer support and learning/leadership coaching
- xi. Reintroduce quality kitemarks for education providers
- xii. Engage and stimulate the market to develop wider Post 16 offer

6. Funding to support the findings of the Review

There has been some recognition of the acute pressure on high needs budgets nationally; on the 16 December 2018 the Department for Education announced that councils would receive an additional £250 million nationally between 2018-20 on top of the £6 billion already provided for the high needs budgets. In CW&C this funding amounts to an additional **£703k** per year for 2018-19 and 2019-20. Whilst this funding is not entirely uncommitted it has relieved some of the budgetary pressures. The budgetary position for 2020-21, when the proposals set out in this report could begin to be implemented (subject to consultation and approval), remains unconfirmed but this does mean there is a small degree of financial flexibility available.

Earlier in 2017 the Department for Education (DfE) had already announced the 'Special Provision Fund'³ to support local authorities in England by providing capital investment to address the growing demand for specialist provision nationally. CW&C has a capital allocation of **£919,081** Special Provision Fund for 2018–21 of which **£738,622** remains to be allocated. This is provided in addition to the basic need capital funding that local authorities receive to provide new pupil places.

7. Co-Production Process

Co-Production is a way of helping services do what they have to do by law or have agreed to do in their own plans. It means:

"Professionals, parent carers and young people working together to improve the outcomes and the health and well-being of children and young people with special educational needs and or disability. It is about people with different views and ideas coming together to make things better for everyone. It needs to be well planned and sustainable. Co-Production is good practice for all."⁴

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-provision-capital-funding-for-pupils-with-ehc-plans>

⁴ Quote from [Cheshire West & Cheshire Local Area Co-production Strategy](#)

Co-Production helps improve services for families.

Co-Production helps save money by reducing or avoiding future conflict and by giving evidence of need.

Co-Production helps people work better in their community

Co-Production challenges services to think about how they make people's lives better and stop them having more problems.

Co-Production challenges perceptions and highlights opportunities amongst partners.

Co-Production helps services to work together more.

Everybody has something to give and nobody is more important than anyone else.

The starting point for the process was to undertake analysis to identify a key list of stakeholders (See Appendix 1 - Co-Production Plan, page 14). The stakeholders are the interested parties who affect and influence the SEND High Needs Review, as well as those who will be influenced by the outcomes. In particular this includes young people and their parents and carers, special and mainstream schools, governors, the local authority and voluntary agencies, neighbouring local authorities and partners in other organisations such as health and social care.

In order to avoid duplication and make best use of time, existing meetings, groups, networks and communications were engaged wherever possible. This enabled the reviewers to draw on the multiple perspectives and experiences as part of co-production. The Co-Production Plan has remained a live document growing and changing to take account of learning acquired throughout the process.

Three Task & Finish Groups were established to coordinate stakeholder's discussions, distil the views expressed and reflect Considerations and conclusions taking into account all stakeholder viewpoints. (See Appendix 2 – Summary feedback from Co-production)

The process has followed a collective approach to working together strategically with a mutual understanding that all participants are striving for the best for all students as far as is equitably possible, the aim being to do the best for all children and young people and to use the available funding as efficiently and effectively as possible. The process culminated in identifying the consensus as to the best option available or in the absence of a clear consensus the 'best fit' to delivering the principles of the process.

Over 600 people have been involved throughout the CWAC High Needs Review from all stakeholder groups and at all stages of the process and decision making. Assessed against the Ladder of Participation⁵ (Cheshire West and Chester's tool to assess co-production) there can be a high degree of confidence that this co-production process has engaged with a very wide range of stakeholders and their views have consistently informed the outcomes.

⁵ Link to document [Cheshire West & Cheshire Co-Production Strategy Self-Assessment Tool](#)

8. Stakeholder Feedback

Contributions have been sought through a range of mechanisms designed to provide an opportunity for everyone to contribute their thoughts and ideas regarding SEND provision in CW&C. This was achieved through:

- Conversations with young people in schools, colleges and youth clubs
- Listening events for parents
- 1:1 meeting with parents, professionals and volunteers
- Attending meetings and 1:1 with key stakeholders and interested groups
- Site visits to schools and colleges
- Letters, emails and telephone calls

This resulted in an expansive list of potential opportunities, benefits, challenges and risks to be considered.

The three top key priorities for the majority of stakeholders were:

- Expanding options for learners with SEND
- Increased skill sharing and outreach from specialists into mainstream schools
- Recognition that change is not an option it's a necessity

Key Themes from Young People

What do young people want?

- "Learn from me what helps and what doesn't help me"
- Want to feel safe
- Want to have friends
- Want to feel welcomed and included not rejected or 'difficult'
- Want adults to be kind, understand and help them help themselves
- Want to know which adult to go to when they get stuck or have a problem
- Want to know where to go to be safe and manage themselves
- Want to know where they can have space
- Want to control themselves and behave
- Want to be successful, but often don't get the chance
- Want to learn and make progress, become independent, get a job

What helps us settle into a new school?⁶

- We like the buddy scheme... It was about team work... we're all making new friends
- Getting to know the other new starters... we like small groups of new starters... we were moving around with each day
- We would tell (any member of) staff if we didn't feel safe... we know we can talk to staff if we aren't settling in... we met all the staff
- We know our new drivers
- We like the staggered lunch and breaks
- Help to find our way around... where to go for first aid and main places like toilets... take part in fire drills
- It was OK to find out where we are up to with maths and English

⁶ Petty Pool Vocational College, Learner Forum for Quality Improvement, 'The new starter experience' 2018-2019

- Functional skills help us to: read a timetable, know phone numbers, check our change in a shop, get a job
- They told us when we leave here we are going off out into the big wide world...
- We need to start thinking about work, some leavers get jobs, some get paid ... “did you know that you were here to get a job?” “No!”
- We do more things independently, going on trips, staying over

What do young people not want?

- Some are angry & don't want others to go through the same as themselves
- “I struggle listening to instructions and concentrating ... I get in trouble when I don't”
- Don't want to be bullied, feel shy or scared because adults think they are cross
- To be faced with a huge crowd e.g. dining hall... it's much easier going in first, then the crowd entering after

Key Themes in Feedback from Parents

The following themes have been raised by so many contributors that these are worth highlighting here:

- Many families feel they have to chase and fight to access the support they feel their young person's (YP) needs; “It's a constant battle”
- Early identification, assessment and intervention to maximise learning and progression for YP with SEND
- Many parents feel that schools & colleges are not ambitious enough about the outcomes their YP can achieve, rarely stretched, no personal targets
- “There was a robust structure in primary... if the same was available in secondary, he could have stayed in mainstream”
- Lack of clarity about what each Special School specialises in or what their entry criteria are, so that:
 - Parents don't have a clear understanding of who could meet their child's needs best and waste everyone's time visiting the wrong schools
 - Advice and support sought by mainstream reaches the right place first time
- Communication could be improved:
 - Local Offer difficult to navigate, and find what you need to know
 - Telephone calls to SEND offices sometimes go unanswered
 - No proactive contact with SEND team, “You need to shout and pester”
- Education Health & Care Plan Process:
 - “EHCP important because it means needs are recognised and have to be met”
 - Process painful with a negative impact on families
 - Paperwork is onerous
 - No updates about progress, without harassing SEND Officers
 - Frequent delays in receiving EHC Plans
 - Sometimes EHCP doesn't reflect the child's needs by the time it arrives
 - No feedback as to why an assessment or EHCP is rejected or deferred
 - Decisions are made ‘behind closed doors’

9. Activity Underway to Address Identified Issues

- Significant changes are being made to the CW&C Local Offer site, which are to be launched imminently and will see major improvements for users
- Investment has been made in a new online EHC Planning Tool, which is being launched in Autumn 2019 and will enable all those involved in the assessment and planning process, including parents to upload contributions and to view updates and progress directly by logging in to their account. This should ease many of the frustrations with the current system,

10. Recommended Proposals for Implementation

Following the extensive co-production process the following Considerations have emerged as those with the most widespread support. These are summarised immediately below and set out in more detail in the following pages.

A. Summary List of Recommended Considerations Emerging from Co-Production

- i. **Consideration 1** - Continue with development & publication of 'foundation' documents reflecting what is expected in mainstream inclusive provision, as follows:
 - a. Complete co-production of Primary & Secondary inclusion matrix setting out descriptors from universal through to Band 3 needs and provision
 - b. Complete co-production of Post-16 inclusion matrix setting out descriptors from universal through to Band 3 needs and provision
 - c. Complete co-production of specialist provision matrix setting out descriptors of need and bandings for specialist provision
 - d. Develop document setting out admissions process and descriptors of all Specialist Provision and publish this on the SEND Local Offer
 - e. Establish an independent moderation process that will ensure rigour and consistency in the application of the 0-25 descriptors
- ii. **Consideration 2** – Following completion of Considerations 1a-c, review financial values across the revised bandings to ensure consistency and transparency whilst ensuring spending remains sustainable within CW&C's High Needs Block.
- iii. **Consideration 3** – Commission increased level of outreach from special schools and resource provision staff to tackle identified and emerging local need including support for transition process and support for individual learners
- iv. **Consideration 4** - Broaden the continuum of provision to support more learners with SEND being educated closer to mainstream as follows

- a. Refresh and reinvigorate the Dual Placement process with agreed policy & protocol for placements, a clear funding model and tri-partite Service Level Agreements and outcomes criteria so that lessons are learned
- b. Development of secondary phase satellite provision for learners with Moderate Learning Difficulties, operated by special schools on mainstream sites as funding allows
- c. Development of secondary phase specialist resourced provision for learners with Moderate Learning Difficulties, operated by mainstream secondary schools, as funding allows
- v. **Consideration 5** - Phased introduction of changes to Top-Up Funding for non EHCP Learners in line with embedding of 0-25 descriptors
- vi. **Consideration 6** - Create small innovation grants programme to address priorities (inclusion & transition) and stimulate new models of partnership provision adopting an 'action learning' approach
- vii. **Consideration 7** - Multi-agency options appraisal regarding remodelling and widening access to residential provision in partnership with Health and Social Care
- viii. **Consideration 8** - Continued development of Post-16 options and Local Offer
- ix. **Consideration 9** - Continued Support for Peer-led programmes of professional development and support including:
 - a. SENCO Development Programme and Cluster Networks
 - b. Training Programme based on local audit of need
 - c. Mentoring and Coaching of Senior Leadership Teams regarding SEND
 - d. Introduction of locally-grown Inclusion Kitemark for 0-25 years provision
- x. **Consideration 10** - Following the principles of co-production that have shaped the process up until now, establish **SEND Co-Production Transformation Group** to provide governance and oversight

B. Details of Recommended Considerations Emerging from Co-Production

- i. **Consideration 1** - Continue development & publication of 'foundation' documents reflecting levels of SEN Support expected in inclusive mainstream provision

Background

Work is already underway on co-producing and publishing SEND 'foundation' documents setting out expectations as to what can be achieved in mainstream inclusive provision, starting with the publication of the Early Years Inclusion Matrix.

This work now needs to continue to cover the full spectrum of provision from mainstream to specialist and covering all ages from 0-25yrs, as follows:

- a. Complete co-production of Primary & Secondary inclusion matrix setting out descriptors from universal through to Band 3 needs and provision
- b. Complete co-production of Post-16 inclusion matrix setting out descriptors from universal through to Band 3 needs and provision
- c. Complete co-production of specialist provision matrix setting out descriptors of need and bandings for specialist provision
- d. Develop document setting out admissions process and descriptors of all Specialist Provision and publish this on the SEND Local Offer
- e. Establish an independent moderation process that will ensure rigour and consistency in the application of the 0-25 descriptors

Objectives & Benefits

Provides clarity for parents, schools and other professionals regarding expectations as to what every learner should expect to access across every education setting in the area.

Funding Implications

Cost neutral - This process is achievable within existing resources, draws on existing officer time and is already underway.

ii. Consideration 2 - Following completion of Consideration 1a-c, review financial values across the revised bandings

Objectives & Benefits

To ensure consistency and transparency whilst ensuring spending remains sustainable within CW&C's High Needs Block.

Provides clarity for parents, schools and other professionals regarding expectations as to what every learner should expect to access across every education setting in the area.

Provides a consistent and transparent foundation for all funding decisions regarding support for specialist provision.

Resolve any remaining disputes regarding levels of special school funding through a co-produced process involving all key stakeholders.

Process

Examples of SEND funding matrices from comparable areas are available, but the co-production process by which representatives from the local area work together is paramount in ensuring widespread 'buy-in' and support. Whilst benchmarking levels of funding provides some helpful insight, this is no substitute for the benefits arising from developing a local approach in partnership.

Funding Implications

Cost neutral - This process is deliverable within existing resources and is designed to ensure the High Needs system remain sustainable within available budgets.

iii. Consideration 3 - Redirect High Needs Block to fund increased levels of outreach from special schools to support inclusion in mainstream

Background

The Local Authority is permitted to reduce special school top-up funding by a maximum of 1.5% each year under the protection of the Minimum Funding Guarantee; between 2018-20 this mechanism has been used in Cheshire West & Chester to contribute towards high needs block budget pressures whilst also recognising increasing levels of efficiency in larger schools by varying current banding rates according to the size of each special school. In 2019-20 this reduction amounts to circa £204k, but given the recent additional high needs block funding from the DfE announced in December 2018) it has been agreed that this budget reduction is redirected to commission increased special school outreach to support inclusion in mainstream schools.

Six Special Schools are currently commissioned to provide outreach to the early years sector at a cost of £27,000 for each (total cost £162,000). This proposal would be to extend and broaden that funding to offer outreach support to mainstream schools across the area.

Objectives & Benefits

- This is one of the most frequently raised requests during the co-production process –skill sharing between local special schools and mainstream
- Releases special school expertise to ensure peer-to-peer support, skill sharing and problem solving within the locality, building expertise across all schools.
- Provides capacity to build links and partnerships between special schools and their mainstream peers in the local area.
- Builds parental confidence in mainstream ability to meet needs.

Requirements

- Must ensure the ability to respond quickly to issues as they arise – this is one of the key benefits of the support offer and cannot be too burdened with bureaucracy, BUT must also ensure good governance and accountability.
- This can be achieved through quarterly reporting centrally on levels of activity to ensure the support is reaching the schools that need it.
- There is the risk that schools that need this support do not seek it – accessing support should be a key factor in considering whether schools have accessed outreach in meeting SEND needs when considering EHC Plans

Funding Implications

- To increase the budget for special school outreach by £200,000 drawn from the funding released by reductions in special school top-up budgets.
- In effect this redirects special school resources and expertise out of the individual schools and into supporting local mainstream settings.

iv. **Consideration 4 - Broaden the continuum of provision to support more secondary-aged learners with SEND being educated closer to mainstream (see Considerations 4a-4c below)**

Background

CW&C has a relatively high proportion of its secondary-age learners with Moderate Learning Difficulties (MLD) attending special schools and there is significant evidence to support that some of these learners would, with the right support, benefit from access to mainstream education that would enable their progression into employment and independent adulthood. As the number of learners with more complex needs continues to increase in the coming years there will be increasing pressure on special school places and the local education system needs to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to meet these needs. It is therefore essential that the area develops approaches that support more MLD learners to attend mainstream schools.

Objectives & Benefits

- To enable a wider range of learners with SEND (particularly those learners with MLD) to attend mainstream school sites, providing access to curriculum and social aspects of mainstream education whilst also benefitting from specialist support on site.
- To facilitate skill sharing between mainstream and specialist education with benefits for a wider range of vulnerable learners in mainstream education.
- To build confidence in parents and professionals that the right support is in place to enable a wider range of learners to benefit from mainstream education
- To free up capacity in CW&C's existing special school for learners with the most complex needs

Financial Constraints

Given the constraints regarding the High Needs Block caution is required in developing additional provision. The benefits flowing from these developments are clear, but any new developments will be challenging to fund, unless additional resources are made available from the DfE. Given recent signals from Government there may be longer term commitments to increasing the High Needs Block; should this arise then additional provision may become a more affordable prospect.

a. **Consideration 4a -Refresh and update the Dual Placement process and policy**

Background

A dual placements is the inclusion of a pupil within two settings agreed in partnership and collaboration, with defined responsibilities for curriculum delivery, progress, attendance, welfare and attainment of the pupil. Whilst this model is not effective for all learners it does provide benefits for some and there has been interest from a number of schools.

Currently Cheshire West & Chester does not have an established protocol nor guidance as to how dual placements are administered or funded and it is therefore recommended that the Council adopts a policy (based on best practice from other areas) to enable such arrangements to be implemented quickly with clarity as to the respective responsibilities of each of the parties to the agreement.

Objectives & Benefits

To provide another option for the placement of pupils with EHC Plans for those likely to benefit from aspects of mainstream school provision, but who may require a level of special school support in order to do so. This will further maximise opportunities for pupils who can attend mainstream school to do so closer to home and as part of their local community.

To provide clarity regarding governance and funding as to how such arrangements are to operate in the local area. This will eliminate duplication of effort and make such placements quicker to organise.

Funding Implications and Source

These placements would be funded in line with the current funding matrix for specialist provision; the policy determines how the funding should be apportioned between partner schools.

This Consideration is cost neutral drawing on existing Dedicated Schools Grant resources; this proposal does not require additional resourcing nor lead to additional places. There are some implications for SEN Transport in terms of logistics, but in general this would result in reduced journey times and this will outweigh any additional logistical costs of arranging different destinations for the same learner.

- b. Consideration 4b - To consider development of secondary phase satellite provision for learners with Moderate Learning Difficulties, operated by special schools on mainstream sites as funding allows

Operating Model

The Considerations would be to create a new satellite provision for 24 pupils. Satellite provision would be funded according the special school matrix, with an additional factor given the diseconomies of scale in operating a satellite base is suggested at the equivalent to resourced provision Top Up funding, which is currently £6,911 . The cost of 24 places in 'top-up' funding at this rate is £165,864 with a further £240,000 in place funding.

Funding Source & Implications

Total annual budget for 24 place satellite = **£405,864**

Funding for these places would be drawn from the high needs block as for all special school places.

In terms of capital funding required to develop the new provision, at this stage the particular location and partner schools involved are yet to be agreed, so it is impossible to speculate as to the price of developing the required accommodation. The Council will be in receipt of two remaining rounds of the Department for Education's **Special Provision Fund** between 2019-21 for a total of £738,622 (the full allocation from the DfE is £919,081 but the first tranche of £180,459 has already been allocated). Given this level of funding refurbishment and repurposing of existing accommodation will be the preferred Consideration and sites for development will be prioritised accordingly. Once approval has been given for this

proposed development, an expression of interest will be invited from interested special and mainstream school partners and fully costed plans will be developed.

Longer Term Plans

Whilst there are a number of similar well-established and successful models elsewhere it will be through establishing a local model that confidence will be increased across the parent and professional community to build the foundations to roll this model out across the area. Ultimately it is recommended that two further satellite bases would be developed in subsequent years.

c. Consideration 4c - To consider development of secondary phase specialist resourced provision for learners with Moderate Learning Difficulties, operated by mainstream secondary schools, as funding allows

Operating Model

The Considerations would be to create a new specialist resourced provision for 24 pupils. Provision would be funded according to the resourced provision funding matrix, with learners funded at Band 3C – which is currently £6,911 Top Up funding.

The cost of 24 places in 'top-up' funding at this rate is £165,864 with a further £144,000 in element 2 place funding and £96,000 in place funding drawn from the schools block.

Funding Source & Implications

Total annual budget for 24 place satellite = **£405,864**

Funding for these places would be £309,864 from the high needs block and £96,000 drawn from the Schools block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

In terms of capital funding required to develop the new provision, the position is as above under Consideration 4b.

v. Consideration 5 - Phased introduction of changes to Top-Up Funding for non EHCP Learners

Background

Currently the Council spends circa £1m on top-up funding for 436 learners who do not have Education, Health and Care Plans. The High Needs Review had called into question whether this provided good value for money and whether the funding could be more targeted?

Whilst there is consensus that there has historically been loose targeting of this funding and limited evaluation of its impact, work is already underway to address this position; documents are in production setting out detailed expectations as to what can be achieved in mainstream inclusive settings (see Consideration 1 above) including clear descriptors of the provision that can be expected at Band 1. This includes what may be time-limited interventions to prevent escalation of needs and potentially to avoid the need for an EHC Plan. Short term top-up funding, in such cases, may be a prudent use of resources.

It is recommended that such funding is **restricted to 1 year of intervention**, as needs requiring longer term intervention are likely to remain unchanged and in such cases an Education, Health and Care Plan may be a requirement. Deferring this process may impact on outcomes as well as by increasing the administrative burden on education providers later in the pupil's educational career. This would also bring the process into alignment with the annual review programme for EHCP.

It is also recommended that this funding is gradually **top-sliced to fund the introduction of alternative approaches** that will have a longer-term impact on whole-system effectiveness (see Consideration 6 below). This approach would honour the funding commitments already in place, minimise disruption for individual pupils whilst releasing the funding for innovation rather than for absorption into general budgets for continuing what has been before.

Objectives & Benefits

Primary school colleagues report that this funding plays a role in maintaining good levels of inclusion in primary.

Maintaining short-term top-up funding can help in overcoming barriers smaller schools can face in meeting expectations in the SEND Code of Practice.

Limiting the duration of the funding to 12 months would need to be phased in, honouring existing commitments.

Funding Implications and Source

It is proposed that the £100,000 funding for Consideration 6 below is top-sliced from top-up funding for non-EHCP learners in mainstream schools.

vi. Consideration 6 - Create small innovation grants programme to address priorities (inclusion & transition)

Background

One of the themes identified by many contributors throughout the review is of the need for all parts of the education system to work more closely together in partnership, sharing skills, develop capabilities, and pooling resources in order to increase capacity to meet ever increasing levels of need. In order to facilitate and encourage this, it is recommended that funding be distributed between individual packages of support to promote wider, longer term approaches that will benefit a wider number of pupils.

It is recommended that top-up funding for non-EHC Plan learners is top-sliced to create a small funding pot of £100,000 to be accessed by schools or academies working together in partnership on action research projects to develop and embed good practice around transition between primary and mainstream schools as well as on promoting and developing increased capacity around inclusion. This model has been adopted in other areas with evidence of high levels of impact in reducing exclusions and improving practice around Social Emotional and Mental Health or ASD.

Objectives & Benefits

The aim would be to engender an inclusive approach within education that welcomes all learners and meets their needs by developing their teams to be flexible in what they provide according to the SEND Code of Practice and Quality First Teaching.

It should also facilitate and promote partnership working between schools in sharing best practice, developing collaborative approaches and sharing resources.

The particular focus would be on transition planning to support pupils with SEND in making transition from primary to secondary mainstream. This could be through additional staffing, training or other resources.

Operational Model

The £100k grant fund would be accessible to school partnerships making joint bids for funding across primary, secondary and special schools.

Individual grants are limited to £10k which may be used to fund training / skill sharing / transition planning / SENCO Networking / action research / etc.

The scheme would require a steering group to oversee the application process, made up of headteacher representatives and LA officers.

Funding Implications and Source

The source of this funding is as identified under Consideration 5 – from the Top-Up funding for non-EHC Plan learners.

vii. Consideration 7 - work in partnership with Health and Social Care to carry out a multi-agency Considerations appraisal to remodel and widen access to residential provision

Background

Cheshire West & Chester has ten special schools and four of these offer residential facilities, Greenbank, Cloughwood Academy, Archers Brook and Hebden Green. The SEND High Needs Review has reached the conclusion, shared by the majority of stakeholders, that the current model for CW&C's residential provision is inequitable and unsustainable for the following reasons:

- Access to the residential provision is not available to all pupils with the highest levels of need who might benefit most, restricted as it is to pupils attending the special schools offering this service
- Whilst the parents that access the service are very positive about it, there are other parents and professionals who have voiced concerns and frustrations about the lack of equality in access to this support
- These services were reviewed in 2015 and that review made a number of Considerations that would have addressed these access issues, but these have not been implemented
- Currently the provision is unused for 13 out of 52 weeks per year; in some cases it is available at weekends but could be better used in providing opportunities for short breaks, respite and more all within the Local authority negating the expense of expensive 'out of county placements'
- Funding to support the service currently comes solely from the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant and there is some evidence that, whilst there are

educational benefits, many of the needs being served are closely linked to social care and/or health

Countering these concerns there are a number of significant benefits and potential benefits from the provision:

- The high quality of the services is not in question and is a credit to the schools in question. Families benefiting are unanimous in their praise and are fiercely protective of the service
- There is anecdotal evidence that the service supports families who might otherwise be at risk of breakdown thereby preventing care proceedings
- The service plays a role in minimising the demand for placements in costly independent specialist provision, which is at a very low level compared to other areas. Reducing these placements was the key focus of a strategic review in 2013 and this has been highly effective; in 2013/14 there were 86 pupils in this type of provision; by 2017/18 this figure had reduced to 46. Taking an average cost per place of £50k (based on evidence from statistical neighbour LA's) this represents circa £2.3m in savings. Given that the cost of placements in independent residential provision is significantly higher this represents a conservative estimate (although CW&C's residential services are not the only factor impacting)
- If access to the services was more equitable, then the impact on minimising care proceedings, as well as on reducing placements in independent provision could be further increased

The available budgets have been unable to keep pace with inflationary cost pressures and this is creating growing budget deficits, which are being subsidised by the schools operating the provision; CW&C Council spends circa £1.05m on the provision with the schools contributing around £380k in total. This is unsustainable for the schools concerned and all stakeholders agree that the current position cannot be maintained. Pressure on the High Needs Block continues to increase and in this context there is a strong case that, from a purely educational perspective, the costs outweighs the benefit of maintaining the residential provision.

There is, however, a window of opportunity to remodel the provision to create a shared multi agency service benefitting education, health and social care that could make it sustainable and increase access for children with high levels of need:

- CW&C's Children & Families Team (within Social Care) current operate the Pinewood residential short breaks provision in Winsford for children with disabilities. This provision is due for a follow-up review in the coming months and there is a willingness to carry this out as a joint process.
- There has been feedback that local families who currently access Personal Budgets for social care have in some cases been unable to spend their budget due to a lack of suitable provision. If the residential special school service were widened to allow

direct commissioning by families this would increase choice as well as bringing in additional resources.

- The Clinical Commissioning Group who commission local residential respite services have also expressed a willingness to carry out a joint review of Health-funded provision alongside the Local Authority's residential provision.

Whilst the target group of beneficiaries for each of the categories of provision may be different, there may be significant benefits in restructuring these services as part of a joint commissioning process, by streamlining funding / management / operations, as well as shared governance arrangements.

It is therefore recommended that CW&C to carry out a joint Considerations exploration and appraisal with the ambition of identifying Considerations for a shared residential service to meet the education, health and social care needs of the 0-25 year old population across Cheshire West and Chester.

Objectives

A Joint Residential Provision Working Group with representatives from education, health and social care to be tasked with the following objectives:

- To identify the level of needs in the area factoring in education, health and social care needs.
- To quantify the total resource available to meet these needs including through Personal Budgets allocated to individual families.
- To identify all options to meet these needs; i.e. Are there more effective alternatives to residential provision in some cases? Is there the risk of creating dependency through this service?
- To develop consistent access criteria and a referral pathway for residential provision
- To develop Joint Funding Protocols that establish the criteria for joint funding
- To minimise duplication and maximise integration across education, health and social care thereby rationalising resources and achieving better value for the public purse.
- To provide a springboard for joint commissioning arrangements thereby meeting one of the key ambitions of the SEND reforms (and a key requirement of the local area's imminent SEND inspection).

Recommended Next Steps

Working Group to present Considerations identifying risks and benefits of each scenario, to be presented back to Cabinet and other appropriate governance structures in the Autumn 2019.

viii. **Consideration 8 - Continued development of Post-16 system & Local Offer**

Background

The SEND High Needs Provision Strategic Review identified that, although there are examples of excellent provision there are also recognised gaps in the post-16 offer locally and the need for a more coordinated approach to addressing these gaps. Productive work on addressing these issues around post-16 provision is already well underway and it

is recommended that, rather than disrupt this progress, it is supported to develop and mature. This progress includes:

- Establishing a local College Network
- Creating a 0-25 (post-16) 'Funding Toolkit' through a task and finish group of the College Network, learning from and adapting the 'Surrey Transitions' leaflet.
- Development of a (currently draft) SEND inclusion descriptors document setting out local expectations as to what good inclusive post-16 provision should offer.
- Development of a local Preparation for Adulthood and Transitions Pathway through joint working across the SEND team, Social Care (Transitions Team) and the Young People's Service.
- Mapping 'Preparing for Adulthood', health and social care objectives and criteria against the SEND Strategy.
- Developing a draft model to determine pupil progress for post-16.
- Following development of a SEND inclusion descriptors document, to develop a fit for purpose funding model to benchmark and moderate costs. This will involve modelling against current numbers.

Objectives & Benefits

- To clarify expectations regarding SEND support and local pathways at post 16
- To ensure funding model for post 16 is transparent, sustainable and fit for purpose
- To create solid foundations to provide confidence for development of new provision and pathways to adulthood at post-16

Financial Implications

Currently any plans for provision are awaiting the completion of the development of the post-16 funding model to ensure the system remains sustainable, so there are no financial implications

ix. Consideration 9 - Continued Support for Peer-led programmes of professional development and support including

- a. SENCO Development Programme and Cluster Networks
- b. Training Programme based on local audit of need
- c. Mentoring and Coaching of Senior Leadership Teams regarding SEND
- d. Introduction of locally-grown Inclusion Kitemark for 0-25 years provision

Background

- CW&C's education system must prepare for quite radical culture shift in terms of educating SEND pupils.
- This will most definitely determine that mainstream colleagues will encounter more complex learning, emotional, physical, sensory and cognition need than previously.

Objectives & Benefits

- Facilitate continued joint working between CITA, the Ignite and CLTA led SENCo Cluster networks and the University of Chester.
- To ensure that all SENCO's and Teaching assistants have access to well designed, evidence and research based training; developing their capacity to support SEND pupils and their families.
- To ensure that training provides a baseline of 'expected' practitioner knowledge and classroom guidance equating to improved outcomes for SEND pupils from trusted and recognised specialists in the locality.
- To offer training that can be either a stepping stone to further accredited learning in SEND or can be accredited by University of Chester, offering credits towards Higher Education Qualifications

Funding Implications and Source

- Funding for SENCO Cluster Networks is currently provided through the Education Improvement Board; it is recommended that this support continues.
- Funding for the training programme comes from individual schools participating.

a. Consideration 9d - Introduction of locally-grown Inclusion Kitemark for 0-25 years provision

Background

Historically CW&C has worked with the Inclusion Quality Mark standards to promote best practice across the area but this scheme has lost momentum and during the course of the review a number of stakeholders have identified that there is a current lack of a coordinated, area-wide approach to this type of accreditation for settings. During the co-production process there has been guarded support for the introduction of a new QA framework, or a means of recognising and promoting good evidence-based practice.

Opportunity:

- Could connect local expertise across S<, Health Visitors, LA & schools
- Create a coherent training offer across agencies to be a unifying force
- Blueprint from Warwickshire (WINCKS QA Kitemark) that could easily be adapted for CW&C to reflect local needs
- Social Communication kitemark piloted locally involved training, focused on a particular area, the lead school developed a sensory room
- University of Chester could help support with evidence of effectiveness

Benefits:

- Involve local management and teams in Quality Assurance arrangements, developing criteria and on-going accreditation process
- Special Schools funded for early years outreach, mindful CW&C Early Years team has shrunk over time... this initiative could draw in resources and expertise

Challenges:

- Cost... previous Quality kitemark ceased because of cost which had been LA funded
- Ensuring that any process is based on established models of best practice – there is no point reinventing the wheel.
- There was a view that growing a local quality standard would keep costs to a minimum and engage a wider audience. Drawing on local skills and expertise for accreditation develops skills and keeps cost of external verification down.
- Potential for ‘initiative overload’ – would many school engage in this?
- Not all schools know what is ‘out there’
- Releasing staff for training or to develop ‘Quality Assurance’ evidence... often needs to be completed ‘on the job’

Funding Implications and Source

Staff time.

Potential costs of accreditation – tbd.

x. Consideration 10 - Establish SEND Transformation Steering Group

Background

One of the consistent fears raised during the Co-production process has been the concern that the Review would not progress or be fully implemented. It is therefore recommended that, given the high level of engagement from all stakeholders that these foundations are built upon to support the implementation stage of the process. This SEND Co-Production Transformation Steering Group would be made up of representative from all phases of the education system, LA officers as well as parent representatives. This group would provide governance and oversight of implementation of the Considerations that are approved. It should report to the SEND Partnership Board and other governance bodies where appropriate.

Funding Implications and Source

Officer and staff time.

11. Timetable & Next Steps

Milestone	Date
Report presented to Cabinet for initial approval	12/6/2019
Formal Public Consultation	21/6/2019 to 20/09/2019
Findings of Consultation presented back to Cabinet	27/11/2019
Approved changes commence implementation	January 2020

12. Appendices

Appendix 1: Co-Production & Stakeholder Plan – see attached document

Appendix 2: Summary feedback from Co-production regarding the twelve 'Considerations for Discussion' identified under the SEND High Needs Review – see table below.

Option for Discussion	Outcome of Co-Production Process
Transforming SEND Provision	
<p>a) Agree preferred models for additional specialist MLD provision integrated within mainstream for secondary-aged learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadly the group agreed that more learners could be supported to remain within mainstream with the right support • The group felt there was no single ‘right’ model to fill identified gaps as this should be extremely personalised both with regards to individual pupil needs as well as to reflect local relationships between settings, as well as building on good quality provision in different localities • In order to achieve this there would need to be template agreements in place setting out the ground rules for each of the models of provision and support; Outreach from Special Schools into Mainstream; Dual Placements; Resourced Provision and; Satellite sites • The group felt the ideal model would be to increase fluidity of placements along the continuum of need with closer and more flexible working relationships between special and mainstream to achieve this • General agreement was that the satellite model provided the most impact in achieving this flexibility whilst also addressing parent’s and professional’s anxiety, BUT there is currently insufficient financial capacity to achieve this at scale and it would take some time to implement as resources are tied up within existing provision. • There was a view held by many that the ‘Dual Placement’ Consideration would be quicker to implement but would not suit all learners and could not be achieved at scale due to the logistical challenges for special schools. • There was a view that increasing resources for Special School outreach support for mainstream placements, either during transition or potentially longer term, could have a more widespread impact. • All of these Considerations would achieve an impact in terms of “Right Child; Right Place; Right Time” • There was also widespread recognition that CW&C’s education system could ill-afford increased levels of specialist provision and the associated costs; unless reductions were made in other areas then any new models of provision would need to be based on flexing existing resources rather than increasing pressure on the high needs block
<p>b) Assess and explore</p>	<p>Broadly there is consensus that more learners with MLD could be educated in mainstream provision, but</p>

Option for Discussion	Outcome of Co-Production Process
<p>CW&C expectations that the majority of MLD learners will be educated in mainstream</p>	<p>crucially this can only be achieved with the right support. Given the ambition to create a more flexible and fluid system for support drawing upon special and mainstream skills and strengths, and in light of the new SEND Inclusion document for mainstream schools, it was felt that this will begin to happen over time with learning programmes and support. Therefore having a blanket policy regarding where particular learners should be educated would be a mistake for a number of reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The presumption of mainstream is already a key feature of the SEND Code of Practice; implementing this as a blanket policy for one category of need may alienate affected parents and increase levels of anxiety • If CW&C's commitment across the whole education system is that pupils will be educated in the setting best suited to meeting their needs, there should be no need for such a broad-brush policy as this • The 'primary need' label attached to individual learner's EHC Plans can be a very imprecise description of need and is therefore not a good indicator of the right type of provision • Where such a broad policy is used to determine the type of provision for particular learners, this could impact on diagnoses with well-informed parents being encouraged to push for one 'label' in favour of another. Given the high levels of co-morbidity between MLD, ASD, SLCN etc this might promote diagnostic labels designed to meet entry criteria, rather than to identify and address needs <p>Given these views the implementation of a policy regarding placement of MLD learners was recommended against.</p>
<p>c) Revisit the business case for residential special school provision</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rather than recommending any new review it was agreed the Considerations made in the September 2015 still held true. Crucially there was also consensus that the context had changed in that the current model is unsustainable and inequitable without significant changes • Whilst there is a recognition that the status quo cannot remain 'as-is' there should be a final attempt to create a sustainable service with clear and transparent criteria for entry, wider access for a range of young people and with support from social care and (if possible) health • This process must have a clear timetable with expectation that it reaches a conclusion and implementation with some urgency

Option for Discussion	Outcome of Co-Production Process
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There remained some concern that this activity needed to have clear accountability with named people responsible for progress
<p>d) Engage and stimulate the market to develop wider Post 16 offer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparation for Adulthood: Transition pathways plan is being developed through joint working across SEND Team, Social Care (Transitions Team) and Young People’s Service. Joint meetings with these agencies to map Preparation for Adulthood / Health / Social Care against SEND strategy • Models of funding toolkit is being developed • College network developing draft model determining pupil progress for Post 16
<p>SEND Finances</p>	
<p>a) Review special school & specialist provision bandings to ensure applied consistently, transparently and affordably</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inclusion documents under development for mainstream should be accompanied by an equivalent document setting out expectations and banding for Specialist Provision • A range of documents is needed to cover the full spectrum of provision to provide transparency • Should be cautious of transplanting a system from elsewhere - the process to arrive at this was just as crucially important as the end result – ensuring all stakeholders have a voice in the process will achieve buy-in
<p>b) Revisit ‘top-up funding’ for non-EHCP learners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workshop struggled to reach a consensus on this funding stream and as to whether it provides value for money. It became clear that there is no existing business case and that the funding was in place through ‘custom & practice’ rather than as a targeted approach. Recent changes that require a new funding application after 2 years has led to a reduction in requests and there has been a higher level of rejected requests than previously. • All agreed that the new SEND Inclusion documents at Primary and Secondary provided a clearer guide as to what was expected of every school and should improve the targeting of the funding for time limited interventions rather than ongoing long-term support. • There is no wriggle room within current high needs budgets, so if we are to do things differently the

Option for Discussion	Outcome of Co-Production Process
	<p>system needs to free up some flexibility from somewhere</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Guarded support for proposal to release some of this funding for doing things differently? This is one of the few areas where there could be some flexibility, but caution should be applied as this could have a particular impact on inclusion in smaller primary schools. There may be resistance to changing or reducing this funding particularly from primary schools.
<p>c) Explore actively encouraging placement in CWAC special schools by neighbouring LA's to alleviate financial pressures</p>	<p>This Consideration triggered an angry response from some parents who felt that it was already very difficult to secure special school places locally and were upset at the prospect reducing capacity any further.</p> <p>Discussion regarding the identified increasing need for available specialist capacity going forward; given the long term nature of school placements and the difficulty in shifting expectations once these were established it was felt to be risky to be seen to be encouraging school placements from neighbouring LA's. Consideration therefore rejected.</p>
<p>SEND Capacity Building and Professional Development</p>	
<p>a) Review models of mainstream based specialist provision considering implications for the workforce</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A single model of provision is not the answer, as that would insist that children and young people still have to fit into and around a system. It was agreed that that more options and flexibility of SEND provision was what was required, especially at secondary school level. Different models can and should co-exist side-by-side to genuinely offer learners and their parents a choice of options that could best suit their needs closer to home. However, those different models can and should share values and principles that are common across CW&C The workforce will need a leadership culture that encourages and is supportive of inclusion, led confidently from the top throughout all layers and all members of the school community Practical considerations and accountability will need to be assessed to mitigate risks caused by changes in the system with outcomes performance managed SEND development opportunities clearly identified for and by the workforce especially SENCo and their teams

Option for Discussion	Outcome of Co-Production Process
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This should be a graduated approach supported by the knowledge, skills and expertise of the specialist school workforce to support community inclusion and performance improvements for all young people with SEND and their families
<p>b) Develop enhanced transition pathways to enable more learners to remain in mainstream</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Important to build on the successful models already in place locally and build on these, rather than attempt to introduce a new area-wide approach • There was consensus that transition should start with earlier identification at every stage, it should engage parents and involve a robust process, such as ‘Action for Inclusion’ that is recorded and based on a pathway and sound methodology • Secondary school environments could be adapted to be more welcoming and less daunting particularly to Y7 pupils e.g maintaining the primary model for Y7 with close links to a form tutor and remaining within a single classroom or block within the school whereby learners can benefit from an induction process throughout Y7 that introduces change more gradually and brings them into the wider school community
<p>c) Develop & publish ‘foundation’ documents to build consensus and understanding of SEN support in every setting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was acknowledgement of the considerable body of work that is already underway including the 0-25 SEND ‘Descriptors for Inclusion’ document (Appendices XXX), which has been co-produced and led by the CW&C SEND team over recent months; this forms the basis of foundation documents that will provide a robust expectation and consistency across the system for SEND provision. • This work needs to develop further to cover
<p>d) Development of an Early Years: Quality Kitemark for Inclusion.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplication of recently produced and developing ‘Descriptors for Inclusion’ document is unnecessary • Unanimous support from the group that an Early Years Quality Kitemark for Inclusion would be a worthwhile area of work. It would be especially welcomed by parents when making choices between early years providers • Primary school representatives voiced that this should be joined up with work at primary school level <p>Some reluctance to buy in to potentially expensive accredited schemes as it was felt these were financially</p>

Option for Discussion	Outcome of Co-Production Process
	prohibitive. There was a preference to develop a locally grown model that could involve partners from across the area both in developing the scheme and accreditation. There are strong examples of this approach from other areas (the WINCKS scheme - Warwickshire Inclusion Kite marking Scheme that could provide a template for development.
e) Enhanced networking & PDP for SENCOs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote continued partnership working between CITA, Ignite and CLTA led SENCo Cluster networks (aligning knowledge sharing SENCo-TA) and University of Chester. • Supporting these key strategic partners into closer alignment will bring benefits for the area
f) Enhanced SEND peer support and learning/leadership coaching	<p>Special Schools are already commissioned to provide an outreach service, but currently this struggles to provide full coverage across the area.</p> <p>There is the option to increase the resources for this service and for Special Schools to provide more support for inclusion in mainstream.</p>
g) Reintroduce quality kitemarks for education providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duplication of recently produced and developing 'Descriptors for Inclusion' document is unnecessary • Unanimous support from the group that an Early Years Quality Kitemark for Inclusion would be a worthwhile area of work. It would be especially welcomed by parents when making choices between early years providers. • Primary school representatives voiced that this should be joined up with work at primary school level. • Other stakeholders recommended that this should cover the full 0-25's age range