

Agenda Item 8

Specialist Education for Additional Support Needs in Primary and Secondary Schools

Falkirk Council

Title: Specialist Education for Additional Support Needs in Primary and Secondary Schools

Meeting: Education Executive

Date: 5th September 2017

Submitted By: Director of Children's Services

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To seek approval from the Education Executive to conduct a statutory consultation to expand provision for Additional Support Needs.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1 The Education Executive is asked to agree:-

- (1) Statutory public consultation on opening specialist classes in 3 mainstream primary schools and 2 mainstream secondary schools which do not have social and communication difficulties and Autism provision. The specific schools are detailed in paragraph 4.2 and 4.4.
- (2) Consultation document attached as Appendix1.
- (3) That the Director of Children's Services prepares a report for the November Education Executive which will summarise the outcomes from the consultation and make recommendations for the Education Executive to consider and agree next steps.

3. Background

3.1 Additional Support Needs arise from four main areas as defined in the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004:

- Learning environment
- Family circumstances
- Medical and disability
- Social, emotional and behavioural development

3.2 During the course of 2015-2017 a review of Additional Support Needs was undertaken by the Policy Development Panel which identified a growing number of children and young people with Additional Support Needs in all areas. This report brings forward a proposal to expand capacity for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Further reports will be brought to the Education Executive.

- 3.3 Pupil Census Data (Scotland) 2010-2016 indicates over the last 4 years there was an increase of School pupils in Scotland where communication disorder is the reason for additional support. Appendix 2 shows an average year on year growth of 35% for the period between 2012- 2016.
- 3.4 Pupils Census Data (Falkirk) 2010-2016 indicates that Falkirk is also experiencing a rise in the number of children with significant Additional Support Needs in education with social and communication difficulties and autism. Appendix 2 indicates an average year on year growth of 12% for the period between 2012 – 2016.

4. Considerations

Primary

- 4.1 Currently within Falkirk Council we have Primary provisions for social communication and autism within Ladeside Primary school. From August 2017 this has capacity for 48 children. This cannot be increased any further due to the nature of the school site and our need to maintain a balance between mainstream and specialist provision pupil numbers.
- 4.2 By August 2018 Falkirk Council requires additional capacity to meet the ongoing demands of ASD provision. Children's Services believe that children should be educated as close to their home and community as possible. We have identified 3 Primary Schools with the physical space to accommodate expanded provision within the geography of Falkirk.

These schools are:

- Sacred Heart Primary School;
- Easter Carmuir's Primary School; and
- Moray Primary School.

Secondary

- 4.3 Currently within Falkirk Council we have 2 Secondary provisions for social communication and autism within Denny Northfield and Grangemouth Additional Support Centre (ASC). From August 2017 the school's capacity will be for 76 children. This cannot be increased any further due to the nature of the school sites and our need to maintain a balance between mainstream and specialist provision pupil numbers.
- 4.4 By August 2018 Falkirk Council requires additional capacity to meet the ongoing demands of ASD provision. Children's Services believe that children should be educated as close to their home and community as possible. We have identified 2 further Secondary Schools with the physical space to accommodate within the geography of Falkirk.

These schools are:

- Bo'ness Academy; and
- Larbert High School.

4.5 **Proposed Support**

As part of the proposed expansion additional teaching and support staff who are skilled in supporting ASN will be required. A staff professional programme will be established to ensure all staff are kept up to date in their practice and to develop innovative approaches in learning, teaching and support.

5. **Consultation**

A statutory public consultation on opening specialist classes in Sacred Heart Primary School, Easter Carmuir Primary School, Moray Primary School, Bo'ness Academy and Larbert High School secondary schools will be conducted in September/October 2017.

Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010

A formal consultation is required for any proposal to change the Council's policy with respect to the constitution of a special class, not in a special school, and for the establishment of a new special school. This consultation fully accords with the requirements of this legislation.

6. **Financial**

- 6.1 Following consultation a report will be prepared for consideration by the Education Executive proposing the number of places in each new provision and an outline of the staffing requirements. It will also detail any building/ infrastructure adaptations required.
- 6.2 The process will require an appraisal of the associated revenue and capital costs. At this stage it is anticipated that these costs will be significant and will not be capable of being accommodated within the Service's revenue or capital budgets without compensating revenue savings and existing capital projects being adjusted.

Resources

- 6.3 The Service will be required to undertake the full statutory consultation. Resources will be required to manage the process and analyse the contributions from stakeholders. Children's Services has recently appointed a Graduate trainee who will assist with the consultation process.

Legal

- 6.4 The proposals in relation to ASD provision aim to meet to Council's duties to make provision for additional support needs. Consultation is required in terms of the School (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010 as the new provision will constitute the establishment of a new stage of education in the relevant schools.

Risk

- 6.5 The changing demographics of the population of the children in Falkirk means that the Service's current configuration requires to be adapted to ensure the Council continues to meet its statutory obligations. This will reduce the risk of children and young people requiring to access high cost external provision.

Equalities

- 6.6 The consultation process will ensure all consultees will have the opportunity to attend public meetings and access documents.

Sustainability/Environmental Impact

- 6.7 The proposed expansion will ensure that Falkirk is able to sustain high quality educational provision for children with ASN and meet future demand for specialist placements.

7 Conclusions

- 7.1 The expansion proposed through consultation will ensure Falkirk Council continues to meet the needs of children and young people with Additional Support Needs, improving educational and life outcomes.
- 7.2 The additional 3 Primary and 2 Secondary school provisions will provide a locality model which will enable children and young people with Additional Support Needs to be educated as locally to their home and community as reasonably possible.

Director of Children's Services

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Date: 29 July 2017

Appendices

Appendix 1 Inclusion and additional support needs in Falkirk proposals for 2018 onwards.

Appendix 2 National and Local pupil census data 2010-2016

List of Background Papers:

None

Appendix 1
Inclusion and Additional Support Needs in Falkirk proposals for 2018 onwards

Consultative Document

Falkirk Council
Children's Services

**INCLUSION AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS IN FALKIRK:
PROPOSALS FOR 2018 ONWARDS
A CONSULTATIVE DOCUMENT**



1 PROPOSAL

Background Additional Support Needs arise from four main areas as defined in the Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004:

- Learning environment
- Family circumstances
- Medical and disability
- Social, emotional and behavioural development

In practice, many children who have Additional Support Needs (ASN) experience them across more than one of these areas.

In Falkirk there is a rise in the number of children with significant Additional Support Needs in education arising from:

- Social and communication difficulties;
- Autism;
- Complex needs arising from disability and learning factors;

Falkirk's needs are in line with national trends. In addition there are significant challenges in ensuring that education provision and approaches are sufficiently high in quality to meet children's and young people's Additional Support Needs.

Currently 15 primary schools have Enhanced Provision 3 primary schools have ASN for complex needs. Falkirk Council has identified an increase in demand to support children and young people with social communication difficulties and Autism.

Proposal

It is proposed to establish specialist classes in 3 primary schools and 2 secondary schools to providing high quality education provision for children and young people who have social and communication difficulties and autism. The Council aims to provide specialist provisions closer to home wherever reasonable or possible.

Legislation and Current Policy

Schools in the Falkirk Council area are open to pupils of all denominations, all faiths and none. The local authority is required to meet the ASN of all children for whom they are responsible and is required to consider a presumption of mainstream education. This reflects the duties outlined for local authorities in the:

- Education (Scotland) Act 1980.
- Education Scotland Act 1981
- Children Act 1998
- Standards in Scotland's Schools Act 2000
- Additional Support for Learning (Scotland) Act 2004 (amended 2009)
- Equalities Act 2010
- Children and Young People Act (Scotland) 2015
- Education (Scotland) Act 2016

The legislation, taken together, provides a range of duties on a local authority to provide adequate education for all children, and to presume that the child should be included in mainstream school. The legislation ensures that local authorities assess and make provision for the additional support needs of children and work in a coordinated approach with partner agencies to both meet children's needs and improve their outcomes.

Outcome of the Proposed Change

The proposed change in the approach to inclusion and meeting Additional Support Needs is intended to:

- ensure each additional specialist provision will be in a position to offer a positive educational experience to children with significant ASN;
- ensure children with significant ASN can have a suitable education and support within their local community;
- reduce the pressure and demand for intake to existing specialist schools and units;
- the specialist knowledge and skills of the staff in the specialist provisions will benefit the children and young people within the whole school;

Who Would Be Affected? Pupils with significant ASN and their families will be affected as their education will be provided either in their local school or in one of the existing special schools. Staff, pupils and their families will benefit from the increased level of support with the school community.

Date of Change It is proposed that this change will come into effect for August 2018 onwards.

Educational Benefits It is proposed that the ASN classes based within the 3 primary schools and the 2 secondary schools will provide additional support for pupils whose needs arise from significant social and communication difficulties. The identified schools will need to have the capacity for 2 ASN classes per school with a maximum of 6 pupils in each. This will provide a total capacity of 60 places.

Pupils who are allocated a placement in the ASN classes in all 5 schools will join the school roll. ASN provision seeks wherever possible to enable pupils who require significant additional support to access the mainstream curriculum and environment. The provisions aims for children and young people to be included, engaged and involved as appropriate, in the wider life of the school.

All specialist provision within Falkirk is non-denominational. All ASN classes provide small group setting to provide:

- access to mainstream learning experiences and environment as appropriate and possible;
- integrated support from the Speech and Language Therapy Service
- significant differentiation of the curriculum using social, communication and autism friendly strategies;
- a visual approach to learning and communication
- a high ratio of teaching and support staff who are skilled in supporting ASN
- associated with social communication difficulties.

The provision at the 5 schools will be available to meet the needs of pupils across Falkirk who have been, or may be, assessed as having significant social and communication needs (with or without formal diagnosis) and require significant additional support to access the curriculum.

All access to the council's specialist provision, whether by way of placing request or referral, is considered and determined by the council's Pupil Support Referral Group (PSRG). The referral to the PSRG can be made by; the child or the young person's mainstream school or parent/carer placing request.

Pupils may be allocated a place within the provision, subject to the council's placing arrangements. The PSRG assesses the referrals made and considers the information which will include;

- the specific needs of the pupils;
- the support strategies required in the learning environment;
- the existing or requirement of other agencies;
- existing levels of support with current school;
- recommendations from other agencies;
- team around the child meetings and the child's plan;



2 CONSULTATION

Legislation **Schools (Consultation) (Scotland) Act 2010**

A formal consultation is required for any proposal to change the Council's policy with respect to the constitution of a special class, not in a special school, and for the establishment of a new special school. This consultation fully accords with the requirements of this legislation.

Consultees During the consultation period, in accordance with legislative requirements, views are being sought from a range of interested parties including:

- the Parent Council or Combined Parent Council's of the 5 schools;
- the wider parent forum and the pupils at the 5 schools, the parents of any children expected by the local authority requiring a place at the identified provision within two years of the date of publication of the proposal paper, in particular, the children in Nursery and Early Learning establishments, within the localities;
- the staff of the 5 schools;
- the trade unions representative of the staff in affected schools;
- the community councils;
- elected members;
- Education Scotland;
- other local authorities where children attend Falkirk Council schools.

**Consultation
Period**

The consultation is taking place over a 6½ week period between 6th September and 19th October 2017

**Public
Meeting**

Four public meetings will be held on the following dates:

- Easter Carmuir Primary School on Thursday 14 September 2017 at 6pm
- Bo'ness Academy on Tuesday 19 September 2017 at 6pm
- Moray Primary School on Thursday 21 September 2017 at 6pm
- Larbert High School on Tuesday 26 September 2017 at 6pm
- Sacred Heart Primary School on Thursday 28 September 2017 at 6pm

Once the schools have been identified staff, parents and carers of these schools will be informed of the venues date and time of the public consultation meetings. These will also be published on the council website and social media feeds.

Officers of the Council will be present to discuss these proposals and there will be an opportunity for attendees to ask questions at the meeting.

***How to
Respond***

Interested parties are encouraged to complete and return the response form which is attached with this proposal document. It asks some questions regarding the proposal, and provides an opportunity to discuss any concerns.

If any interested parties wish to provide a separate written submission this would be accepted by letter until **Thursday 19th October 2017** when the consultation period ends.

All submissions should be in writing to the
Inclusion and Additional Support Needs Consultation,
Children's Services,
Sealock House,
Inchyra Road,
Grangemouth,
FK3 9XB. Telephone conversations will not be recorded as part of the consultation.

Consultative Document

Falkirk Council
Children's Services



Following the Consultation

Education Scotland will receive details of consultation responses and the public meetings and will provide Children's Services with a report within 3 weeks of the consultation end date.

Children's Services will then prepare a **consultation report** which will be published on **17th November 2017** on the council website and it will also be made available to read in libraries and in Children's Services HQ (Sealock House in Grangemouth).

The consultation report will be discussed by councillors at the Education Executive who will consider whether these proposed changes should go ahead.

Contact Details

If you would like to discuss these proposals or have any queries regarding the consultation process, please phone 01324 506600.

When completed, please return the attached response form or any further written submission about these proposals to:

Inclusion and Additional Support Needs Consultation,
Children's Services,
Sealock House,
Inchyra Road,
Grangemouth,
FK3 9XB

or by e-mail to educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk

1 RESPONSE FORM

INCLUSION AND ADDITIONAL SUPPORT NEEDS IN FALKIRK: PROPOSALS FOR 2018

Name:

Address:

Contact Telephone Number:

Contact Email Address:

Name of Pupil(s) Concerned:

Name of School(s) Attended:

Your role (e.g. parent, pupil or organisation):

Do you agree with the proposed change to open a class or classes for Additional Support Needs in the 4 mainstream primary and the remaining secondary schools?

Yes

No

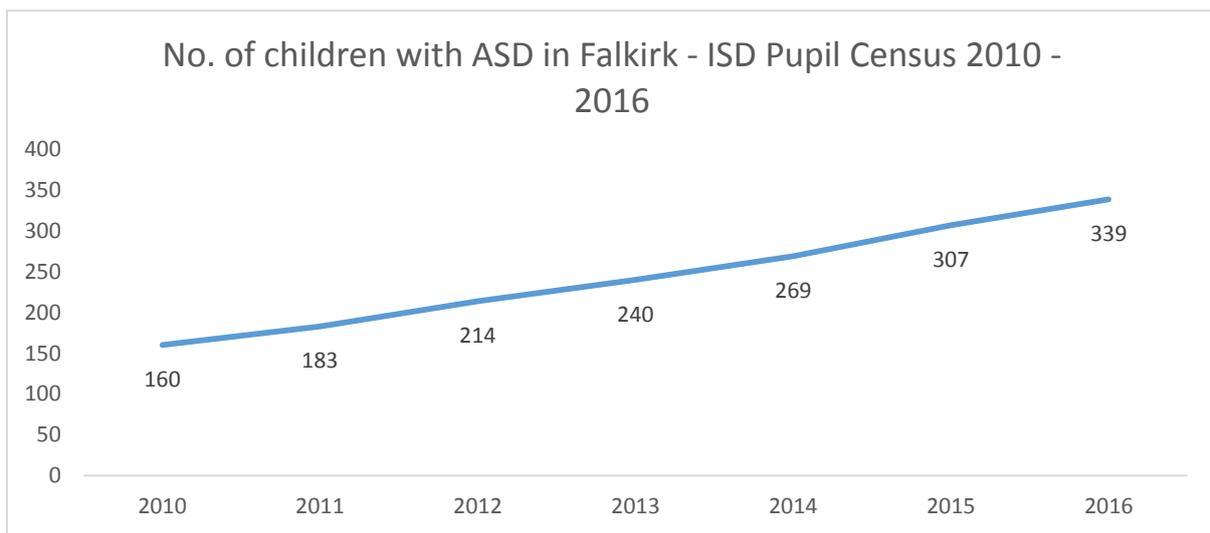
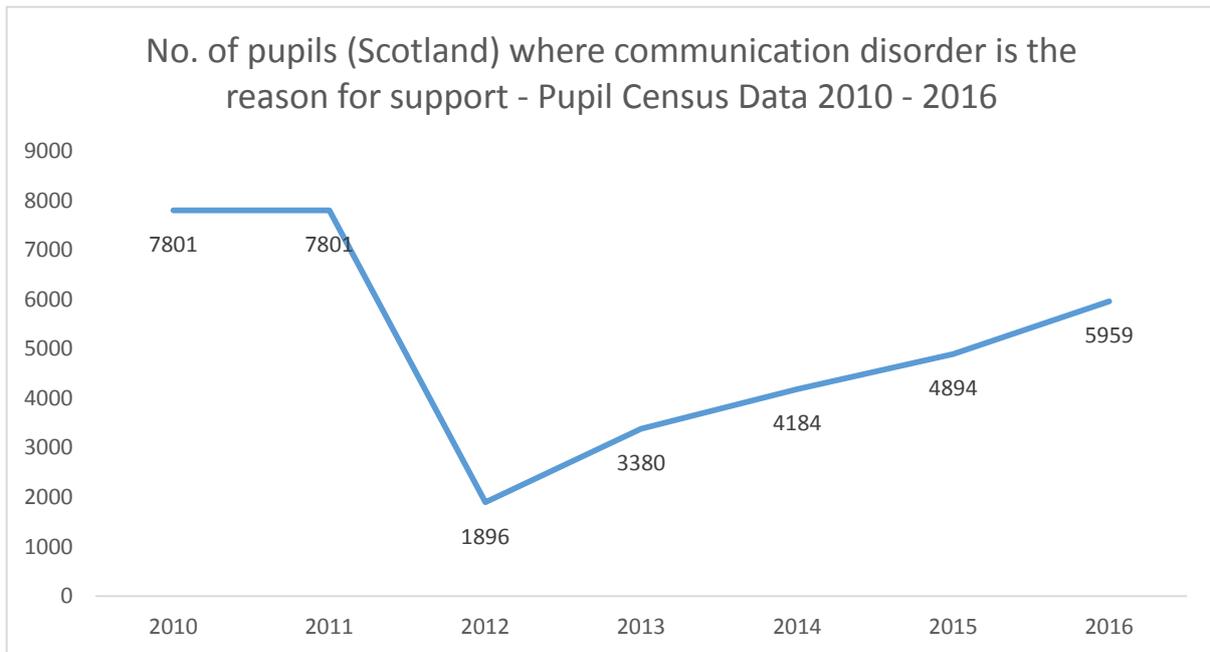
Do you have any further comments on this proposal? (please continue overleaf if necessary)

Please complete and return this form by Friday 28 September 2018 to:

Inclusion and Additional Support Needs Consultation
Children's Services
Sealock House
2 Inchyra Road
Grangemouth FK3 9XB

Or by e-mail to: educ.consultation@falkirk.gov.uk

National and Local pupil census data 2010-2016



Source: Pupil Census Data, Scottish Government.

<http://www.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/School-/dspupcensus/dspupcensus16 Table 1.8>