



Agenda Item 5

**Autism Spectrum Disorder and
Language and Communication Support
Bases Developments**

Falkirk Council

Title: Autism Spectrum Disorder and Language and Communication Support Bases Developments
Meeting: Education Executive
Date: 10 April 2018
Submitted By: Director of Children's Services

1 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report provides a further update on proposals for the development of the expansion of provision for children and young people who have social and communication difficulties including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and the options which have been considered to meet their needs.

2. Recommendations

2.1 The Education Executive is asked to:-

- (1) agree to increase capacity for ASD provision by creating specialist classes within Easter Carmuir's Primary School and Larbert High School from August 2018; and**
- (2) agree that Children's Services undertake further work to assess the impact that the current expansion plans would have on the need to provide further specialist classes in the future.**

3. Background

- 3.1 A review of Additional Support Needs was undertaken by the Policy Development Panel in early 2017. The review identified a number of children and young people with Additional Support Needs requiring specific and specialist educational provision to meet their needs. Pupil Census Data (Falkirk) 2010 – 2016 also indicated that Falkirk is experiencing a rise in the number of children with social and communication difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- 3.2 Statutory consultation was undertaken between 13 September 2017 to 10 November 2017. The outcome was reported to the Education Executive in January 2018.

- 3.3 The Education Executive agreed on 23 January to progress the expansion of such provision and for officers to provide further details to the next Education Executive meeting in March 2018.

4. Consultation

4.1 Consultation Process

Ongoing consultation is taking place with Head teachers and other Senior Officers within Childrens' Services to continue to seek their views with regard to the expansion within their schools.

We will continue to liaise with:-

- Councillors;
- parent Councils in each school to update them on the development of the expansion programme;
- children and young people to continue to seek their views and update them on the expansion in their schools; and
- school staff in each school to update them on the development of the expansion programme and staff development opportunities.

5. Considerations

- 5.1 The overall longer-term aim is to decrease the numbers of children and young people attending the additional support facilities at Ladeside Primary School, Denny High School and Grangemouth High School. These existing ASD centres have a greater population than originally planned. Research has shown that it is more effective to promote inclusion with smaller numbers of pupils. Consequently, it is appropriate to increase capacity in other geographic areas to both meet the increased overall demands and reduce the numbers of children attending these existing provisions in future.
- 5.2 There are a significant number of children and young people with social and communication difficulties and ASD who reside in the Falkirk and Larbert areas. To meet the needs of this identified group specialist classes will be required to be established in these areas. Therefore, Easter Carmuir Primary School and Larbert High School will be the main focus for expansion. These establishments will require internal work to develop the learning spaces to accommodate the new resources.

5.3 Additional Staffing Required 2018/19

Post	Grade	Establishment		Total
		Larbert High	Easter Carmuiris	
Principal Teacher	PT3	1.0	1.0	2.0
Teacher	BT	1.5	0.5	2.0
SfLA	D	4.0	2.0	6.0
TOTAL	-	6.5	3.5	10.0

- 5.4 The implementation will be closely monitored and the requirement for any future additional provision kept under review. A further report will be presented to the Education Executive next session, updating members on our predicted demand and whether there is a need for any further ASD provision across the school estate.

6. **Implications**

6.1 Financial – Capital Costs

The cost of the proposals outlined in section 5 will be met from the **£0.275m** provided within the 2018/19 capital programme.

6.2 Financial – Revenue Costs

The costs associated with the additional staff outlined in section 5.3 for 2018/19 are:

Financial Year	Period	FTE	Cost £000's
2018/19	August 18 - March 19	10	219
2019/20	April 19 - June 19	10	131
		Total Cost	350

These costs can be met from the additional budget allocation of **£0.365m** included within Children's Services recently agreed 2018/19 Revenue Budget for ASN sector growth.

6.3 Staff Development

To further support staff, a multi-agency programme will be delivered to newly appointed staff in the proposed schools for expansion and in existing ASN provisions.

Training will be provided in:-

- development of a strategic approach to assessment, appropriate intervention and reporting;

- development of a strategic cyclical approach to quality assurance including action planning and monitoring and evaluation;
- autistic spectrum disorder and associated barriers to learning;
- management of challenged children and young people;
- understanding of Additional Support for Learning (ASL) legislation and ensuring practice take cognizance of this;
- wellbeing plans and nurture principles in line with GIRFEC; and
- development of family learning, once the specialist provisions are in place.

6.4 Legal

The Council has a duty to make provision for school education including for children and young people with additional support needs. The proposal reflects the duties placed on the Council.

6.5 Risk

The changing demographics of the population of children in Falkirk means that the service's current configuration carries:-

- a moderate risk of children not having their Additional Support Needs met within current provision;
- a legal risk for the council in not meeting its statutory duties;
- a high risk of current provision for Additional Support Needs being oversubscribed;
- a moderate risk of a higher than normal number of individual children requiring independent special school placement;
- a high risk of increased costs with short term additional support;
- a high risk of reducing the resources available in mainstream schools;
- the council faces reputational risk if specialist provision is not available;
- a high risk of untimely transitions; and
- a high risk of building work being uncompleted by August 2018.

6.6 Equalities

An equality and poverty impact assessment will not be required.

6.7 Sustainability/Environmental Impact

A sustainability and environmental impact report will not be required due to the use of existing facilities.

7. **Conclusions**

7.1 There is a need to change how Additional Support Needs are met within Falkirk Council. This is based on:-

- improving educational and life outcomes for children of Falkirk;

- demographic changes within the population of children with Additional Support Needs. National and Local trends indicate year on year increasing numbers of children with social and communication difficulties and Autism Spectrum Disorder; and
- providing best value for Falkirk Council.

7.2. The proposed additional Primary and Secondary provisions will provide a locality model which will enable children with Additional Support Needs to be educated as close to their home and community as reasonably possible whilst meeting their additional support needs.

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Appendices: None

List of Background Papers: None