

# INCLUSION STRATEGY FOR SCHOOLS

<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor David Simmonds
<b>Cabinet Portfolio</b>	Education and Children's Services
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<b>Papers with report</b>	Inclusion Strategy final report and action plan

## HEADLINE INFORMATION

<b>Purpose of report</b>	Cabinet is invited to approve the 5 year strategy for supporting more inclusive practice in Hillingdon schools.
<b>Contribution to our plans and strategies</b>	The Children and Families Trust Plan (HCFTP) has identified improving outcomes for disabled children and those with additional needs as a key priority
<b>Financial Cost</b>	<p>Current assumptions are that activities within this strategy will be implemented within existing financial resources, redeploying and re-prioritising where necessary.</p> <p>Current costs to the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) for out borough placements is in excess of £5 million and transport to support all placements amounts to over £4 million. Retaining pupils in borough will enable significant savings to be made to both Council and DSG budgets.</p>
<b>Relevant Policy Overview Committee</b>	Education and Children's Services.
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	All

## RECOMMENDATION

That Cabinet is asked to:

- a) Approve the Inclusion strategy 2009 -13
- b) Note the correlation between this Inclusion Strategy and the Accessibility Strategy, Disabled Children's Strategy and BS21 strategy for change inclusion strand.

## INFORMATION

The Inclusion Strategy for schools has been developed in response to local and national policy agenda, together with legal requirements and responsibilities for inclusive provision.

Raising aspirations and achievement is a key theme within the HCFTP. Attainment has improved among pupils with special educational needs (SEN) in Hillingdon and Hillingdon is ranked in the top quartile nationally of all local authorities for the proportion of pupils with statements or needs met at school action plus who achieved level 2. The gap in attainment between pupils with SEN and their peers is narrower in Hillingdon as is the case nationally both at key stage 2 (year 6) and key stage 4 (Year 11)

### **Reasons for recommendation**

The recommendations are aimed at building on Hillingdon school's agreed strategic principles which set the future direction for all schools including: the use of the special schools to become centres of excellence to build capacity in mainstream schools, ensuring access and disability equality schemes are consistent and reflect Corporate direction, increase the voice of parent carers, children and young people in developing provision and improve the skills of the workforce and quality of teaching.

### **Alternative options considered / risk management**

The rising birth rate in Hillingdon means that there will be an increase in children and young people with disabilities and special educational needs. Indeed a summary of referrals for children with significant additional needs under 5 years old was undertaken in July 09 and indicated a 50% increase in referrals to services within Access and Inclusion division. This increase is reflected across London and LA provision in special schools is almost at full capacity.

The risk of doing nothing is a significant increase in funding requirements from both DSG and Council budgets for placements outside the LA with associated transport costs.

### **Comments of Policy Overview Committee(s)**

A POC review of 'How should inclusion in schools develop in Hillingdon to best reflect local needs and aspirations?' has recently been completed and a report is being presented to Cabinet as part of this agenda. Officers have worked with Members of the POC in helping shape their recommendations, which if endorsed by Cabinet, will be taken forward as part of this draft inclusion strategy.

### **Supporting Information**

#### a) Inclusion Strategy and action plan

The development of the Inclusion Strategy is aligned with other strategies and developments including:

- Disabled Children's strategy
- 14-19 agenda
- Accessibility Strategy
- BS21 Inclusion strand
- Children and Adolescents Mental Health strategy (CAMHS)
- Parenting Strategy
- Primary strategy
- Secondary Strategy

## **Financial Implications**

There are no direct financial implications associated with these recommendations

## **EFFECT ON RESIDENTS, SERVICE USERS & COMMUNITIES**

### **What will be the effect of the recommendation?**

The Committees recommendations will enable the Council to work closely with schools to take necessary steps to improve local provision in both mainstream and special schools to improve outcomes for children with additional needs.

### **Consultation Carried Out or Required**

Initial consultation was carried out by the Children's Society in 2007/8 which gathered the views of parents and carers of disabled children which informed the Disabled Children's Strategy. The views gathered by this research concerning school provision were used to inform priorities in the Inclusion Strategy.

In addition the inclusion working group developing the strategy consisted of parents, headteachers as well as officers within the Council. A consultation with all headteachers and Special Needs co-ordinators/Inclusion managers took place in March 09 to identify the eight strategic principles on which to base the strategy. Once established the draft strategy was widely circulated within the Council, to schools and parents requesting comments by the end of October 2009.

Consultation with young people is ongoing.

### **Group Finance Comments**

Current assumptions are that the activities within this Strategy will be implemented within existing financial resources, redeploying and re-prioritising resources where necessary. As such there will be no additional call on the Council's Revenue or Capital funding.

The proposed strategy to retain pupils in borough will enable significant savings to the Council. The savings will enable the service to cope with expected increase in number of referrals and the pressures already identified.

## **CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Corporate Finance**

This report seeks approval for a five year strategy for supporting more inclusive practice in Hillingdon schools which is aimed at building on Hillingdon school's agreed strategic principals. The proposed strategy for retaining pupils in borough will enable savings to be made to both the Council and Dedicated School Grant budgets.

The current assumptions are that the activities within this strategy will be implemented within existing financial resources, redeploying and re-prioritising resources where necessary. As such, Corporate Finance is satisfied that the recommendations in this report will be implemented within existing financial resources and that there will be no additional call on the Council's funding.

## **Legal**

This strategy will enable the Authority, Schools and others to further develop their cultures, policies and practices to include pupils and young persons. As well as continuing to seek to remove barriers to learning and participation it offers effective value for money provision. Approving this strategy and its actions to implement it will support the Council's obligations in terms of the legislation surrounding this area.

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

NIL