

**PROVISION FOR PERMANENTLY EXCLUDED PUPILS FROM
WELWYN HATFIELD AND BOREHAMWOOD**

Report of the Director of Children, Schools and Families

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1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To provide the Scrutiny Committee with information about the provision for permanently excluded pupils from Welwyn Hatfield and Hertsmere, compared with the provision in other areas of the county.
- 1.2 To enable the Scrutiny Committee to consider the need for additional capacity for pupils from Welwyn, Hatfield and Hertsmere who have been permanently excluded from school.
- 1.3 To inform the Scrutiny Committee of plans to review the funding of ESCs.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The Park ESC in Hatfield caters for pupils in Years 7-11 who live in Welwyn, Hatfield and Hertsmere and have been permanently excluded from school.
- 2.2 Permanently excluded pupils in Key Stage 4 living in Welwyn, Hatfield and Hertsmere, are generally placed on Youth Programmes Unit (YPU) provision. They spend 10 hours each week at The Park following academic courses and 15 hours under the supervision of YPU.
- 2.3 The capacity of The Park is currently set at 16, following a survey of all Education Support Centres carried out during the 2001-02 academic year.
- 2.4 The current funding arrangements for ESCs are based primarily on the number of pupils living in the area of the ESC and do not reflect the capacity of each ESC to cater for permanently excluded pupils.

3. Conclusions

The Committee is asked to consider the contents of this report and any action that it deems necessary.

1. Background

- 1.1 There are currently 8 Education Support Centres (ESCs) in Hertfordshire, providing about 180 places. They have 2 key roles:
- a. Providing an outreach service for primary and secondary pupils at risk of exclusion.
 - b. Providing education for pupils who have been permanently excluded from secondary school :-
 - Key Stage 3 pupils receive their full-time education at the ESC.
 - Key Stage 4 pupils, who are linked to a Youth Programme Unit (YPU) receive 10 hours at the ESC and 15 hours with YPU undertaking vocational and social education.

It should be noted that Key Stage 2 pupils are allocated a place at an EBD Unit if an alternative primary school is not appropriate.

In the case of any of these children, if there are difficulties with placement, the ESC normally organises tuition at home.

- 1.2 With the exception of Three Rivers and Hertsmere, there is an ESC in each District Council area. (The Park serves Welwyn and Hatfield). Pupils who have been permanently excluded and live in:
- the Three Rivers area are educated at Chessbrook in Watford
 - the Bushey area of Hertsmere are educated at The Park at the New Barnfield site in Hatfield
 - the Borehamwood/Potters Bar area of Hertsmere are educated at The Park at the New Barnfield site in Hatfield

2. Capacity Assessments

- 2.1 The legislative requirement to provide all permanently excluded pupils with full-time education from September 2002 led to a review of ESC accommodation in January and February 2002. From September 2002, in line with the recommendations of the ESC Review and the Behaviour Support Plan (2001-2004), primary-aged pupils who have been permanently excluded from school, are no longer educated on the site of an ESC.
- 2.2 There is no formal guidance from the DfES regarding the required building capacity for an Education Support Centre or for educating permanently excluded pupils generally.

2.3 On the basis that permanently excluded pupils have not been able to cope in a mainstream setting, it was not appropriate to apply mainstream space standards (Building Bulletin 82) to these centres. Therefore in assessing capacity two measures were applied:

- The individual view of the ESC Headteacher regarding:
 - a. which rooms should be regarded as teaching rooms.
 - b. the maximum capacity of each teaching space (generally Headteachers preferred to operate groups no larger than 4 pupils.
 - c. the maximum number of pupils who could be provided with education on-site at any one time with regard to health and safety.
- DfES guidance from Building Bulletin 77, which relates to pupils with special educational needs, specifically those pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

2.4 The standards of Building Bulletin 77, which works to groups of 8 secondary-aged pupils are summarised below;

General Teaching area: 36 m ² for 8 secondary pupils/45m ² for 7/9 secondary pupils or for use by both primary & secondary pupils
Science (fitted and serviced space): 45 m ² for 6/7 pupils
Food technology (bay): 15m ² for 2/4 pupils
Art (and clay): 45m ² for 7/8 pupils
Design technology (practical area): 45m ² for 4/6 pupils
Small group room (withdrawal/one-to-one work): 6m ² for 1/2 pupils
Library: 15m ² for bay off corridor/25/30m ² for resource and study area
Hall: 120m ² for small all-age school
Social area: 45m ² for older pupils' informal social education; table games, etc.
Building Bulletin 77 does not provide guidance on office/storage/toilet space

2.5. The capacities agreed at each centre, unless requested otherwise by the centre, are at least as generous as those recommended by Building Bulletin 77. The table below summarises:

- a. the amount of teaching space in square metres at each ESC,
- b. pupil capacity if BB77 standards are applied,
- c. post September 2002 capacity agreed with ESC
- d. amount of teaching space in m² per pupil;

Quadrant	ESC	Total Teaching Space (m ²)	Pupil capacity as per Building Bulletin 77	Post September 2002 Capacity agreed with ESC	Teaching Space per pupil (m ²)
North	North Herts	128.46	26.8	32	4
	Stevenage	155.52	31.2	24	6.5
East	The Park	93.1	19.4	16	5.8
	Lea Valley	143.5	27.8	16	9
	Longmore	190.9	39.5	38	5
South	Chessbrook	611.8	85.4	24	25.5
West	Dacorum	133.76	25.9	15	9
	The Links	97.24	18.3	12	8

2.5 The capacity figures agreed through discussion with ESCs, represent the maximum number of pupils who should be on site at any one time.

2.6 The review highlighted concern at The Park about indoor recreation facilities, outdoor play space and general teaching space. The headteacher has asked that the capacity of the Centre be reviewed again, and this review is planned for later in the term.

3. Consideration of an Additional ESC

3.1 Section 5.1.10 of the Behaviour support Plan (2001-2004), agreed in April 2001, states that “consideration will be given to the development of an additional centre to cover the Hertsmere District Council area from September 2002 bringing the total number of Education Support Centres (ESCs) to 9...”

3.2 Following an extensive search by Hertfordshire Property Services, three separate feasibility studies were carried out during the academic year 2001-02 in order to establish a possible site for the ninth ESC in Hertsmere. The following areas were looked at:

- a. accommodation on the site of Oakmere Primary School, Potters Bar
- b. the former Ladbrooke School site
- c. surplus accommodation arising out of the school re-organisation review in Borehamwood.

These were either unsuitable (a & b) or already committed for disposal.

3.3 A bid for £750,000 was considered but was not included in the 2002-03 capital programme. A sum of £75,000 was, however, allocated for feasibility and design work. The revenue costs of the ninth centre were to be met by transferring resources from Chessbrook and The Park which are currently serving Hertsmere.

- 3.4 The review of ESC accommodation concluded that, even with the implementation of the full-time requirement, the service should be able to meet demand for places in terms of overall accommodation available. A combination of assessments against Building Bulletin 77 and comments by Headteachers led to a recognition that not all ESC accommodation was up to the standard required to provide full-time education and that demand for places might sometimes exceed availability in certain areas. The Park was identified as a centre which would face this sort of pressure.
- 3.5 The requirement to provide full-time education led to a review of practice at some centres and a reorganisation of provision. At Stevenage and The Park, for instance, in order to maximise the provision, Key stage 3 students receive education for the first five hours of each day and Key Stage 4 students, linked to YPU provision, for the final two hours. This type of organisation has reduced the pressure for places on these centres and is seen as an example of good practice.
- 3.6 Following further work on behaviour and achievement, the Achievement Panel on 26th September 2002 supported the development of more Learning Support Units within secondary schools. It is envisaged that, once established, these units will have a positive impact on behaviour and attendance at the schools in question. It is anticipated that the total number of places required at ESCs will fall from the current 180 to around 150.
- 3.7 In the light of this development and the difficulty in identifying a suitable site for an ESC in Hertsmere, it was agreed, after discussion with the Executive Member and Head of Centre, to refurbish and increase the capacity of The Park using the £75,000 originally intended for feasibility and design work.
- 3.8 Preliminary discussions have also taken place with Hertswood School about the possibility of establishing a Learning Support Unit. It is anticipated that the combination of the strengthened facility at The Park and a new resource at Hertswood would address the issues raised in the strategic review, which formed part of the development work for the Behaviour Support Plan. The refurbishment and development of ESCs is also part of a Private Finance Initiative bid currently being developed by CSF.
- 3.9 A mobile classroom is to be provided on the site of The Park in order to provide further teaching accommodation and to increase its capacity. This will be funded from the 2003-04 capital programme and is planned to arrive before the start of the new academic year in September 2003. Further discussions are planned with the Head of Centre to discuss the financial implications of this additional class and consider the most effective use of resources, building on experience elsewhere.
- 3.10 Where demand for places at ESCs exceeds availability for a period of time, it may be necessary to utilise spare capacity at neighbouring ESCs, particularly if students have been excluded from schools in the area of the preventative work of that ESC.

4. Exclusions and Attendance

- 4.1 There were 60 permanent exclusions of secondary-aged pupils in Hertfordshire between the start of the academic year and 1st February 2003. Not all of these have yet been considered by the discipline committee of the governing body.
- 4.2 On 1st February, the number of single registered pupils (those who have been permanently excluded from school) on the roll of ESCs was 136, comprising 50 Key Stage 3 students and 86 Key Stage 4. The Key Stage 3 students attend full-time, whilst the Key Stage 4 students attend for 10 hours as part of their Youth Programme Unit programmes. The attendance at each Centre is set out below:

ESC Area	Agreed Capacity	Single Registered Pupils on Roll (1/2/03)	
		KS3	KS4
Lea Valley	16	5	15
Longmore	38	7	12
The Park	16	9	13
North Herts	32	4	7
Stevenage	24	8	5
Chessbrook	24	12	17
Dacorum	15	3	8
The Links	12	2	9
Total	177	50	86

- 4.3 In addition to the single registered pupils, an additional 65 dual registered pupils, who were still on the roll of a school and at risk of exclusion, were attending on either a full or part-time basis. The attendance at each Centre is set out below:

ESC Area	Agreed Capacity	Dual Registered Pupils on Roll (1/2/03)	
		KS3	KS4
Lea Valley	16	7	1
Longmore	38	1	4
The Park	16	0	5
North Herts	32	5	24
Stevenage	24	1	5
Chessbrook	24	0	1
Dacorum	15	2	10
The Links	12	7	1
Total	177	23	51

- 4.4 During the week commencing 3rd March, 130 different children are registered as attending an ESC for at least one session in the week.

4.5 These figures suggest that at this stage of the year there is sufficient capacity in the county's ESCs to cater for permanently excluded pupils and also provide support to schools in their preventative work. The balance of direct teaching and preventative work will fluctuate over the remainder of the school year according to the pattern of exclusions.

5. Funding Arrangements

5.1 The funding arrangements for Education Support Centres are based largely on the number of pupils living in the area supported by the Centre, with free school meal entitlement factored in. The capacity of each centre is not factored into the formula.

5.2 These funding arrangements have worked very well to date, as each ESC was able to consider the balance of its preventative work and provision for permanently excluded pupils within its budget constraints. Each ESC has been able to manage its budget and has carried an underspend into the next financial year.

5.3 The statutory requirement to provide full time education for excluded pupils has, however, created a need to review funding arrangements. ESCs are no longer in a position to determine the balance between provision for excluded pupils and preventative work.

5.4 Furthermore, the current formula does not reflect the capacity of each ESC and does not allow for a budget adjustment to take account of an increase in capacity, such as that proposed at The Park.

5.5 It is planned to carry out a review of ESC funding in the next financial year in consultation with ESC headteachers and Management Committees to develop funding arrangements which reflect the new requirements. Two preliminary meetings have been held for ESC headteachers.

6. Financial Considerations

This report has no financial implications. £75,000 has been allocated from the approved budget to improve accommodation facilities at The Park and increase its capacity.