



Bristol City Council

Strategic Case for SEND Capital Expenditure

Increasing and rationalising specialist provision in Bristol for children with special educational needs and disabilities

SEND Case for strategic capital expenditure

Rationalising specialist provision in Bristol for children with special educational needs and disabilities

Summary

Increases in the city's population since 2004 have brought about an increase in need for more school places in primary, secondary and specialist settings. Primary and secondary place numbers have increased since, accordingly, through a significant programme of building. Specialist educational placements have *not* increased in order to meet the rising numbers of pupils – so far they have been reorganised across the city in order to reflect pupil numbers and to meet a new, wider duty to meet need for a new, older SEND population. But the specialist settings are now full, and the alternatives, usually identified as more expensive INM (Independent Non-Maintained) local specialist settings are also full.

Introduction

The BCC strategy to provide places for special needs, developed as part of citywide school planning co-ordinated strategy for 2015-2019 (Integrated Education Capital Strategy of 2015 IECS), actually furnished an increase in mainstream places while projects for specialist provision have remained unfunded.

But the IECS has brought very limited change to Bristol's special education where the population has also grown, as for mainstream, and the duty to provide has also increased. Clearly justified and specific proposals for projects to provide have been set out, but the need has not been met. These projects were intended to deliver the bulk of the number of places required and thus offset the additional cost which would be incurred through placement in INM settings.

The plan for specialist settings is to offer:

- Local Educational Settings (schools or Resource Bases) - local pathways of provision in the city where sufficient needs exists (e.g. SEMH, and ASC)
- Local School for Bristol - one setting where there is sufficient need across the city as a whole (e.g. PMLD/PD)
- An estate that is fit for purpose and which costs less to maintain - improved estate where pupils are currently being taught in sub-standard accommodation which is not suitable for purpose, and which costs excessive amounts of revenue to maintain.

The approach to increasing place numbers has been either to encourage Free School development with suitable providers, or otherwise to identify BCC capital grant where Free Schools have not proven to be viable.

The former approach has been successful so far, including a new Venturers Free School (90 place ASC) and a new Free School for the Learn@MAT (eg BCC special school formed into a MAT) to be opened in 2019/20 (80 BCC places for SEMH/SLCN). To date, *insufficient* BCC capital grant has been used to improve the specialist estate. The likely consequences will be additional significant costs arising which will have to be met from the revenue budget – the High Needs Block.

Analysis continues to identify the programmes below as required in order to meet rising need through population growth, combined with increased demand from statutory obligations.

Project	Project Description	Value	Budget
Kingsweston: Block C & The Keep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refurb and extension to existing school to make the KEEP provision permanent. Without this project the provision can't be maintained and will cease. This will mean all 8 children will be moved to INM out of city (see Appendix A2 for cost implications). 	£3.82m - Funded	Basic Need Grant Funding
KnowldeDGE Sixth Form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construction of a new 6th form block adjoining KnowldeDGE. Allows for decant of 6th form pupils and the creation of 40 SEMH/ASD/ASC places in the main school (see Appendix A2 for cost implications). 	£7.18m - Funded	Basic Need Grant Funding
Claremont & Elmfield – Reconfiguration of sites and rebuild	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal to continue feasibility work and develop project business case. Take immediate action to ensure ongoing operation of facilities. £4.5m maintenance regime required to keep buildings operational over next 10 years if no alternative is found (see appendix A4 for survey data and lifecycle costing). Project required due to risk of losing availability of buildings, no 	Up to £1.4m – (funded) in development costs and enabling works £10-15m (currently unfunded) full project cost supported by business case to demonstrate viability. To be seen by Cabinet in 2020.	Basic Need SEND Grant Funding TBC

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> proposal to expand capacity. • Profound physical disability and deafness need types 		
Learn@ Soundwell College Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 Place SEMH/ASD/ASC • New build • New School • ESFA delivering 	£0	Free School Programme
Kingfisher Academy – Resource Base	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of additional ASC capacity in unused area at Kingfisher Primary Academy • Working with Venturers Trust to achieve this. 	£0	N/A
Briarwood Expansion to 242	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment and extension to existing site. • Additional xx places 	£1.5m (estimate, currently unfunded) Need for places to be reviewed in 2020	TBC
Rainbow Wave 3 - Ashley Down	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post 16 • Semi independence training • Highly successful in Brislington 	TBC - Unfunded	TBC

Strategic Need for Capital Expenditure

This report seeks support for a capital investment programme to deliver the specific SEND capital strategy objectives.

The overarching strategic objectives and benefits are summarised as follows:

- Meet the Council's obligation to champion the rights of young people to access suitable education.
- Meet the growing and changing needs of SEND across Bristol
- Offer improved outcomes for pupils with high levels of SEND
- Deliver high quality provision for all pupils
- Offer inclusion and equity of access within the city
- Deliver sufficient, safe, suitable and flexible local provision for young people and their families
- Address the urgent need for key elements of the SEND provision across Bristol
- Deliver optimal SEND provision, transform the facilities available to Bristol children and transform the ability of the Council to commission places at good value to the City

This approach includes opportunities to minimise SEND transport costs and travel times. It will provide new fit for use accommodation locally, freeing up old deteriorating buildings for potential reallocation and or disposal, all providing contribution to a ‘Spend to Save’ methodology of supporting this request for capital investment.

Benefits

Life outcomes for pupils with SEND will be supported through good provision. There would be reduced commissioning of out of Local authority specialist places along with a reduction in transportation costs to INM placements. Capital savings would be made through rationalisation of education estate, reduced operational and maintenance cost through increased efficiency. These costs are not only capital costs at this time, but also a cost to the HNB.

There are also opportunities to support the wider Bristol City Council’s corporate objectives, such as improving social infrastructure through housing, health and community employment. The following list of benefits can be classified as “Strategic, Service and Financial”.

- Maximising EFA/central government investment
- Reduced travel time for students
- Reduced travel costs
- Reduced Out of LA SEND places, costs and management
- Provides equity of access no matter where a pupil lives in the city
- Provide facilities which are fit for service, meeting the authority’s statutory obligations for SEND
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For the education estate

- Potential to realise capital contributions through asset disposal
- Reduce maintenance and lifecycle costs associated with older buildings
- Reduce carbon footprint of education estate
- Provide sufficient places for future needs

2 Background and Business Drivers

Ongoing increases in the city’s population since 2004 has brought about a requirement for increased numbers of places. In line with projections for the mainstream population, both the 2016-2019 projections and projections to 2026 show further substantial requirements in special educational needs provision,

including alternative learning provision (ALP) which could be considered as part of the SEMH estate.

Compounding issues to be taken into account include the geography of existing schools, the suitability and the condition of buildings and the changing legislative frameworks for pupils with SEND in terms of delivery to a wider age range.

Bristol City Council currently commissions places at 10 BCC or Academy/Trust maintained special schools and Free Schools along with 8 specialist resource bases, and 2 pupil referral units which form part of a MAT. These places are supplemented by individually commissioned places at local and 'out of area' independent special schools (ISP) and independent non-maintained settings (INM) for young people with highly specialist needs and also through alternative learning providers. There is one maintained school outside the City's boundary (Nottton House) which caters for boys with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

East and Central Bristol is inadequately provided with specialist teaching, and the pupils from this densely populated area mostly travel to the other parts of the city which impacts of the desire to offer equity of access.

Legislation aimed at raising the age of participation (16 to at least 18/19 years) is placing a strain on post-16 provision. Post-19 sufficiency is being considered alongside the Employment and Skills Strategy to develop new courses and pathways including supported internships and routes into employment. Meanwhile, post 16 pupils with SEND who are not yet ready for college based provision are placed in parts of schools which might be otherwise used for the increased population of pre 16 pupils. This, despite a huge increase in post 16 provision brought about through strategic partnership with City of Bristol College.

Some special schools operate from buildings that were not built for the purpose and, as a result, their condition and suitability are poor. There is an urgent need to rebuild, these schools to make them 'fit for purpose' and to help support parental decision to select the school for their child. Additionally, there is a need to support the creation of future additional places.

Key Messages, as identified in the Integrated Capital and Education Strategy 2015-2019, remain true for 2019-2026 and beyond, as follows:-

- Special schools where places are needed are already full early in the academic year, 2018. The population of the city continues to increase.
- The statutory requirement to provide educational places has changed from age range 2-16 years to range 2-25 years (for SEND), with no increase in funding.
- Areas of deprivation require higher numbers of places for SEND as these pupils tend to have to travel to their education setting. East/Central area is particularly poorly served.
- Significant parts of the Council's existing education estate is in a poor state and in many cases not purpose made or fit for its current use.

Mode of Service Delivery and Analysis of Specialist Need

Service Delivery

Specialist provision planning requires a partnership model with mainstream schools which provides flexibility and breadth of provision for all types of need. These influencing approaches are:

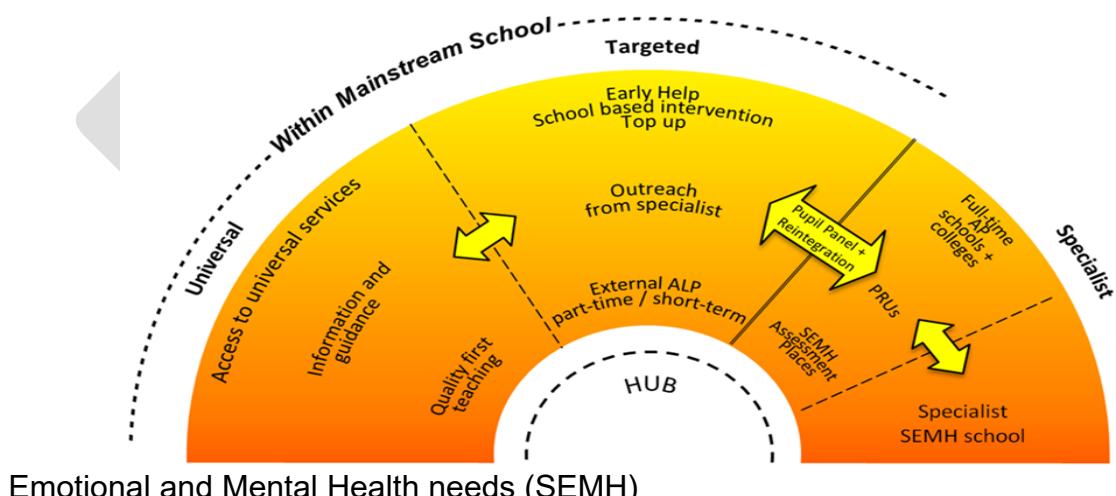
Geographical: Robust local services are enabled through geographical grouping of schools to local sufficiency of places and collaborative working.

Systems Leadership: Special schools extend their expertise and support to mainstream colleagues, to support inclusion.

Whole System: Special schools will be encouraged to operate a hub and spoke system of providing specialist settings as Resource Bases within mainstream settings as part of the special school roll.

Pathways: Pathways for provision are available for all need types, in all areas of the city. The whole system approach includes universal services, targeted and specialist provision which provide pathways to provision for all need types. This means that planning for a child with identified SEND can identify a suitable pathway to provision, regardless of the level of need.

The example below shows the models for Pupils who are described as having Social



Place Planning

Place planning for Specialist placements is less predictable than for mainstream settings. Councils remain responsible for admissions into special schools or to specialist provision. It is a system where the number of places required is affected by many outside factors not within the Council's control, and which are intrinsically unpredictable. These factors include the effect of having a renowned children's hospital nearby; changes in the practice of health diagnosis; changes in benefits;

inward migration led by national policy, inward migration because of the good existing special provision known to be made by the City and of available housing. Lastly, but not insignificantly, the city was the core part of the area of Avon which was split into 4 councils some years ago, but the city continues to provide places for local OLA pupils. This is unavoidable, but should also be viewed as helpful in that the OLA pupil funding supports Bristol's need to provide for its own children.

Mainstream schools are required to demonstrate ever higher levels of attainment and progress while also managing a population with increasing need in terms of social issues, mental health problems and identification of special educational need. Bristol City Council recognises the pressures on mainstream schools and will offer strategic support to meet needs.

As such, projections of increased need and demand in places for children and young people with SEN is necessarily based on developing trend data from existing sources and combining this with local knowledge, intelligence and experience. It is a complex process and is a 'best assessment of need approach' under the current framework of statutory obligations.

Pathways of Provision

Special Schools have grown across the city to meet demand, the consequence of which is an imbalance, or lack of equity, of provision type and places across the three areas of the city.

In order to deliver sufficient Special places required by the City, the council has 5 key pathways which provide every young person with a local specialist school place for their specific needs across all key stages.

In identifying pathways it has become clear where gaps currently exist in the city across geographical area and key phase i.e. Early Years, Primary and Secondary, post 16. Some pathways are not available for certain types of SEN, and these are highlighted in "red" in the chart below. The orange sections indicate where education pathways are unsustainable or only partially adequate for the needs of the young people. So, red and orange sections indicate current need.

Chart 3.3 – Pathways Map

Key:	Very Good, good or adequate provision
	Not suitable or poor condition
	Pathway of provision does not exist
	Not required, strategically

Pathway for Cognition and Learning Offer = Resource Base route and/or Special School

ASD/SLD/ PMLD	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	KS5
NORTH	RB-Oasis Long Cross	RB-Oasis Long Cross	Kingsweston	Kingsweston	KWS/CoBC
SOUTH	New Fosseway	New Fosseway	New Fosseway	New Fosseway	NFW/CoBC
EAST/CENT	RB-Barton Hill@Briarwood	RB-Barton Hill@Briarwood. More places needed in E/C	Briarwood	Briarwood	Briarwood

Pathway for Communication and Interaction. Offer = Resource Base route and/or Special school route

ASC/SLCN/MLD	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	KS5
NORTH	RB-Shire@KWS	RB-Shire@KWS	RB-Oasis B'stowe@KWS	RB-Oasis B'stowe@KWS	
SOUTH	RB-Oasis New Oak	RB-Oasis New Oak	RB-Oasis BEC or Venturers FS	RB- Oasis BEC or Venturers FS	
EAST/CENT	(New Learn@FS 2020 partial meeting of SLCN places, but not ASC)	(New Learn@FS 2020 partial meeting of SLCN places, but not ASC)	City Academy (New Learn@FS 2020 partial meeting of SLCN places, but not ASC)	City Academy (New Learn@FS 2020)	(New Learn@FS 2020)
CITYWIDE	Very high need, complex ASC placements at 'The Keep', Kingweston.				

Pathway for Social Emotional and Mental Health: Offer = Mainstream plus specialist support (EIB) or Special School or ALP

SEMH &ALP	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	KS5
NORTH(1)	M/s (+EIB)	M/s (+EIB)	Learn@ PRU	Learn@ PRU	FE
NORTH(2)	Woodstock	Woodstock	Bristol Gateway	Bristol Gateway	FE
SOUTH(1)	M/s (EIB Learn@)	M/s (EIB Learn@)	Learn@ Lansdown PRU	Learn@ Lansdown PRU	Learn@
SOUTH(2)	Learn(@)KDGE	Learn@KDGE	Learn@KDGE	Learn@KDGE	Learn@KDGE
EAST/CENT	Learn(@) FS 2020	Learn(@)FS 2020	Learn(@)FS 2020	Learn(@)FS 2020	Learn(@)FS 2020

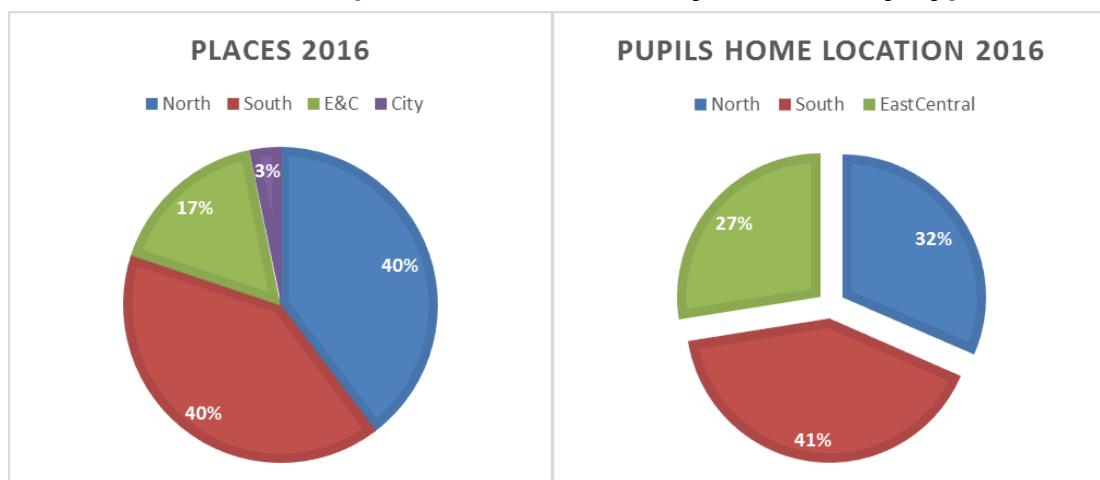
Pathways for Sensory: Offer = Mainstream plus support, or Hearing Impairment Resource Base, or Special School offered

DHI	KS1	KS2	KS3	KS4	KS5
CityWide	M/s +Sensory Support Service (SSS)	M/s +SSS	M/s +SSS	M/s +SSS	FE
CityWide	Elmfield or INM	Elmfield or INM	Elmfield or INM	Elmfield or INM	
NORTH	RB-(Henbury Crt)	RB-(Henbury Crt)	RB-Fairfield	RB-Fairfield	
EAST/CENT	(RB-Oasis New Oak South)	(RB-Oasis New Oak South)	RB-Fairfield	RB-Fairfield	
SOUTH	RB-Oasis New Oak	RB-Oasis New Oak	(RB-Fairfield)	(RB-Fairfield)	

Analysis of the incomplete “Pathways” has been used to define new provision required across all SEN types, areas and key stages. The selection of projects and building solutions in support of the strategy have been formed by these pathways, along with pupil projections arising from an increased population. These projects have been prioritised in the summary chart on page 2.

The analyses has also identified the need to address pressing issues of suitability, condition and sufficiency in a number of existing Special Schools which remain central to the delivery of strategic pathways. These are shown in “Amber” in the 2 previous charts.

Imbalance of current Specialist Provision – by Area and by Type



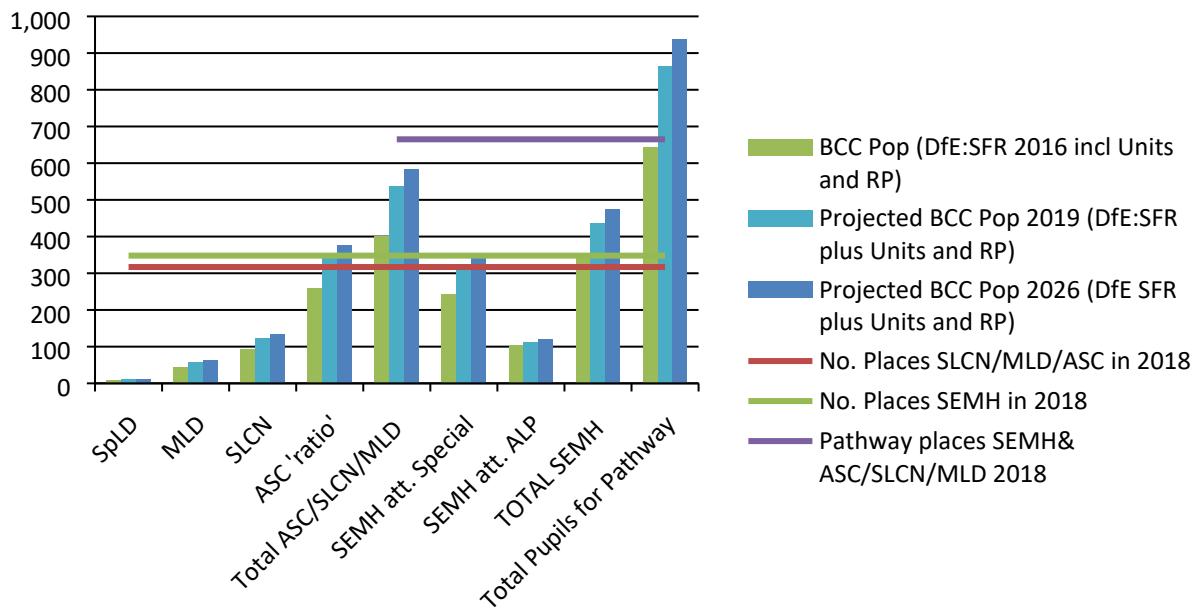
Specialist Provision in the City of Bristol

Current Provision

This graph was produced in 2016, to show how many places were needed to meet projected demand in 2019 and 2026 (Key IECS data). Pathways have been identified in order to mix need types appropriately and thus to offer optimal provision.

Actual place numbers were updated in 2018. Projections for pupil numbers in 2019 have already been exceeded.

Graph to show increased provision required to meet projected need for the ASC/SLCN/MLD and SEMH Pathway (ref: DfE Data census returns and ONS Population projections).



This chart was developed as an easy-to-read option for understanding the need to provide additional places. Only some of the need types projected are included in this document, to show where there is most need.

Horizontal lines on the chart show how many places available in Bristol. Where the horizontal line crosses below the top of a bar, it shows there are insufficient places. Place numbers for the 2018 census, as published by the DfE show that BCC already has more places in use than projected for 2019. Practically, this is apparent to the SEN Team who are attempting to commission suitable places for pupils going through statutory assessment and who are finding that settings are full. There has also been a particular growth in numbers of children with SEMH, ASC, Speech, Language and Communication needs (SLCN), complex needs and Multi-Sensory Impairment (MSI).

Commissioned Places

Bristol is fulfilling its statutory obligations to provide Specialist places, through the use of a substantial number of ‘commissioned’ places via independent, non-maintained special schools or Colleges. Due to distance many of these placements are necessarily residential. Some of this need has arisen through new requirement placed on Authorities to provide educational settings for young people with SEND from ages 16-25 yrs old, and to prepare for independent living.

The strategic intent has been to reduce the number of commissioned places in out of local authority special schools and to replace them with fit for use facilities currently maintained by the Authority or provided through the Department for Education, Free School route local to home address.

Analysis also identified other commissioned places which can be reduced by the other projects identified in this business case, specifically The Keep at Kings Weston Special School. These new facilities would replace the need for high cost commissioned places associated with a number of complex needs students currently placed in independent non-maintained special schools.

The following chart shows the reduction in commissioned places as the overall provision increases through the projects identified.

As the imbalance of provision is addressed, through provision being available more equitably across Bristol’s three areas, it provides the opportunity for the review of existing school buildings and sites which will become no longer needed. This will give rise to building maintenance savings and potential disposal and or development opportunities providing capital receipts to the Authority.

This ‘domino’ affect will allow students to transition to new or remodelled facilities which meet their SEND needs, more local to their homes, reducing journey times and associated costs; it will provide sufficient places to meet statutory requirement and reduce costs against school and Corporate funding.