

Report to: Children and Young People's Panel / Cabinet

Date: 17 January 2008 / 24 January 2008

Subject: Review of Provision and Use of Resourced Schools:
Outcome of Statutory Consultation

Report of: Director of Children and Young People's Services

Contact officer: Kath Nelson – Assistant Director k.nelson@wiganmbc.gov.uk
Elaine Baulcombe 01942 486127 e.baulcombe@wiganmbc.gov.uk

Purpose / summary: The purpose of this report is to:

- inform Panel and Cabinet of the outcome of statutory consultation on the proposal to:
- discontinue the specialist nursery provision at Meadowbank Primary School, with effect from 1 September 2008;
- discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School, with effect from 1 September 2009;
- seek Cabinet approval to proceed with implementation of the proposals.

Alternative options considered and reason for selecting the one recommended: The alternative option considered was for no change. The reasons for selecting the recommended option are contained within the report.

Recommendation / decision: Members are recommended to grant final agreement to implementation of the proposals as outlined above.

Key Decision: This report involves a key decision within ground(s) 1. The decision made as a result of this report will be published within **48 hours** and cannot be actioned until **seven working days** have elapsed, i.e. before 5 February 2008
This item is included in the Forward Plan.

Risks / Implications:

Financial:	Revenue savings of approximately £459,000 will be re-invested to develop resourced provision.
Staffing:	Permanent staff who may be at risk of redundancy would be supported in finding alternative employment.
Policy:	Wigan's Strategy for School Places and Buildings. LA Inclusion Strategy.
Equal Opportunities - Has a Diversity Impact Assessment been conducted?	No
Wards affected:	All

Property Implications– Does the proposal involve a reduction, addition or change to the Council’s asset base or its occupation?

The proposal is not identified as having property implications. The Council’s asset base would be unaffected, as the discontinuation of resourced places would not result in the vacation of any building.

If yes have the property implications been agreed with the Corporate Property officer?

N/A

Does this proposal have significant implications for the Council and the local population?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Does this proposal involve a new policy or procedure or significant changes to an existing policy or procedure?

A diversity impact assessment is not necessary at this stage, however, equality and diversity implications have been considered when producing this report.

Has the Director of Legal and Property Services confirmed that the recommendations within this report are lawful and comply with the Council’s Constitution? **Yes**

Has the Director of Finance and IT confirmed that any expenditure referred to within this report is consistent with the Council’s budget? **Yes**

Are any of the recommendations within this report contrary to the Policy Framework of the Council? **No**

For Cabinet reports only :

Categorisation of the report:	x		x
Discussion leading to a decision	x	Discussion	
Monitoring		Decision	
Sharing for corporate understanding		Information	

Tracking/Process:

	Consultation	Ward Members	Partners
Panel	Overview & Scrutiny	Cabinet	Council
17/01/08		24/01/08	

List of Background Papers in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972:

Document	Date	File Reference	Place of Inspection
Review of Provision and Use of Resourced Schools Report to CYPP Report to Cabinet	24 May 2007 31 May 2007		Progress House Westwood Park Drive Wigan WN3 4HH
Review of Provision and Use of Resourced Schools: Results of Informal Consultation Report to Cabinet Report to CYPP	18 October 2007 8 November 2007		

Proper Officer	Nick Hudson
Date	07/01/08

1. Background

- 1.1 Following Cabinet agreement, informal consultation on the proposal to discontinue the provision which is specifically reserved for children with special educational needs at Meadowbank and Hindley Green Primary Schools took place. This ran from 7 - 21 September 2007.
- 1.2 The results were reported to Cabinet on 18 October 2007, with the recommendation that the proposal be taken to the statutory stage.
- 1.3 Based on the information provided, Members agreed the recommendation.
- 1.4 Statutory notices were published on 8 November 2007, and the closing date for responses was 19 December 2007. Complete proposals were circulated to a wide range of interested parties, and made available on request.

2. Response to Statutory Consultation

During the statutory period, written comments on, and / or objections to, the proposals were invited by the Director of Children and Young People's Services. Responses are detailed below.

2.1 Meadowbank Primary School

- 2.1.1 Letters were received from:
 - Consultant Paediatrician in Community Child Health – WWLNHS Trust
 - Learning Disability Services – ALWPCT

Letters and Local Authority (LA) responses are attached at Appendix 1.

2.2 Hindley Green Primary School

- 2.2.1 Letters / emails were received from:
 - Consultant Paediatrician in Community Child Health – WWLNHS Trust
 - Learning Disability Services – ALWPCT
 - Speech and Language Therapy Services – ALWPCT
 - School staff (x3)
 - School governors (x3)
 - Parents (x1)

Letters / emails and LA responses are attached at Appendix 2.

3. New Decision Making Arrangements

- 3.1 Since 1999 it has been the responsibility of the School Organisation Committee (SOC) to make decisions on proposals for changes to schools. However, in May 2007, under the Education and Inspections Act 2006, SOCs were abolished. The decision-making responsibility will normally now lie with the LA whose duty it is to promote choice, diversity and fair access, and respond to parental demand.
- 3.2 The statutory proposal to discontinue the specialist provision which is specifically reserved for children with special educational needs, is a prescribed alteration. Under the new arrangements, the LA is responsible for making the decision on the proposal within two months of the end of the statutory

consultation period. Failure to do so must result in the proposal being referred to the Schools' Adjudicator for a decision to be made.

- 3.3 It is planned to present a comprehensive report to Panel and Cabinet on the new decision making powers of the LA, and the process by which these new powers may be enacted. The latter is not prescribed by the new regulations and the LA has discretion as to how to exercise its new power in this respect.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The number of children taking up specialist places at Meadowbank Nursery and Hindley Green Speech and Language Development Centre has decreased in recent years, as more parents have expressed a preference for local mainstream education. This, along with the LA's commitment to providing inclusive and equitable educational provision across the borough, led to presentation of the proposals for consultation.
- 4.2 There are currently two resourced primary schools in the west and centre of the borough, and negotiations are underway to identify a third school to become the resourced school in the east.
- 4.3 Under the current proposals, the type of specialist provision which is currently only available in the centre at Hindley Green, and in the east at Meadowbank, will be made available, borough-wide, at the three resourced schools.
- 4.4 The LA has responded fully to all communications received during the consultation period. At the request of the Chair of Governors of Hindley Green Primary School, all correspondence is attached as appendices. This should provide Members with sufficient information on which to base their decision.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 Statutory Regulations stipulate the information to be provided to stakeholders in relation to consultation on Local Authority proposals. As consultation has been undertaken in line with all applicable statutory requirements, and all issues raised during the representation period have been addressed, it is recommended that Cabinet take the decision on the statutory proposals.
- 5.2 After full consideration of the concerns raised in the letters received, and the LA responses, Members are recommended to give final agreement to implementation of the proposal to:
- discontinue the specialist nursery provision at Meadowbank Primary School, with effect from 1 September 2008;
 - discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School, with effect from 1 September 2009, with a phased reduction in planned places from April 2008.

Diversity Impact Assessment form

Section:

Policy/Service Area:

Person Completing Form:	Date:

Do any of the below groups suffer specific disadvantage (please indicate)

	Yes	No		Yes	No
Race			Disability		
Ethnicity			Gender		
Age			Religion		
Class			Sexual Orientation		

Is there evidence of disadvantage or associated problems?

How was the information collected and/or who have you consulted with?

Action Plan – <i>What specific actions are planned to tackle any disadvantage identified?</i>

Is the policy in line with current equality legislation and relevant codes of practice?

Timescale	
Responsibility	
Comments	


Are the actions specified included in any other documents/plans?

Departmental Service Plan	
Section/Team Plan	
Other (Specify)	

Date for further review

**CORRESPONDENCE IN RELATION TO
MEADOWBANK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Appendix 1

Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh 

Whelley Hospital, Bradshaw Street, Whelley, Wigan, WN1 3XD

NHS Trust

Telephone No: 01942 822623
Fax No: 01942 822692
e-mail: rob.downes@wwl.nhs.uk

RMD/SM

23rd November 2007

Director of Children and Young People's Services
Access and Inclusion Team
Progress House
Westwood Park Drive
Wigan
WN3 4HH

Dear Sir/Madam

**Statutory Consultation on the Proposal to Discontinue the Specialist
Nursery Provision at Meadowbank School, Atherton**

I am writing in response to the invitation to comment on the proposal to discontinue specialist nursery provision at Meadowbank School, Atherton.

For the last 20 years Meadowbank Nursery has provided an excellent resource for pre-school children with additional needs particularly in the area of language and communication difficulties. Recently the number of pupils attending the nursery who required the additional resource places has fallen. This is not because the numbers of such children have reduced but is principally because it has not been presented as a potential choice. This may be because professionals supporting the parents felt that an equivalent level of service could be provided in the local mainstream setting. With sufficient resources in Health and Education this should be possible but I am not sure at the moment whether we can honestly say an equivalent level of help has been provided. This could perhaps be the subject of an audit as the results would help to clarify this uncertainty. The other part of this audit would be to look at outcomes during the first two years at school as this would also help in judging differences between the various models of supporting children during the pre-school period. Parental views about the process should be included.

In the proposal it is suggested that there should be three Resource Schools placed in the East, West and Centre of the Borough. We await a decision about the best place for the third Resource School on the East side of the Borough. Meadowbank School is well placed to be the appropriate school on the East side and is on a site that could be developed. It is a pity that it could not have been the choice for the East side Resource School. I can only hope that another suitable site will be found as it is very important to have such a facility on the East side which is an area of need.

If the provision of additional resources in the three schools is to be as good as it was at Meadowbank it will be important to have ongoing discussions with the Commissioners for child health within Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT to ensure that adequate therapy resources are allocated to each centre. If this negotiation had

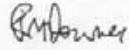
Chairman: Mr. B. J. Strett Chief Executive: Mr. A. K. Foster CBE



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already been completed it would certainly provide information that could be reassuring to parents who have children requiring this type of special needs support in the pre-school period. This may well require an uplift to present therapy resources given that it will be spread over at least three centres rather than a smaller number at present.

Yours sincerely



DR R M DOWNES
Consultant Paediatrician in
Community Child Health

Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Dr R M Downes
Consultant Paediatrician in Community
Child Health
WWL NHS Trust
Whelley Hospital
Bradshaw Street
Whelley
Wigan WN1 3XD

Our reference:
Your reference:
Please ask for: Lorna Hulme
Extension: 86128
Direct line: 01942-486128
Date: 4th January 2008

Dear Dr Downes

Proposal to Discontinue the Specialist Nursery Provision at Meadowbank School, Atherton

I am writing in response to your letter of 23rd November 2007, regarding the above.

As you note, Meadowbank Nursery has been established for twenty years. When it was first established, there were very few places for pre-school children to enjoy nursery provision in Wigan, particularly children with special educational needs. There have been massive changes in the availability of provision and in parental expectations over this time.

The proposal to discontinue the resourced places at Meadowbank does not call into question the quality of provision there. Parents have the right to request mainstream placement for their children, and many pupils with a variety of additional needs are already taught very successfully in mainstream settings. However, there still remains the choice of mainstream, mainstream resourced or special school provision, depending on individual pupil needs.

The Local Authority (LA) monitors the progress of all pupils across settings using the Foundation Stage Profile analysis. We are lucky to have high quality settings across the borough supported by a nationally noted Early Years Quality and Inclusion Team.

Resourced primary provision in the east is currently being developed in partnership with the Senior Management Team of an identified school. Meadowbank was offered the first opportunity to become the resourced school serving the east of the borough but the governors and staff decided not to pursue the offer.

Discussions with managers within ALWPCT have already begun, to look at how therapy services might be potentially allocated across three sites, and to analyse the levels of need across the cohort of pupils to see if additional resources will be needed.

The LA is committed to ensuring that provision across a range of settings offers high quality support for young children with additional needs.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme
Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion

Our Reference: LA/KS
Your Reference:
Department: Clinical Services
Please ask for: Lesley Austin

Bryan House
61 Standishgate
Wigan
WN1 1AH

20 DEC 2007

Tel: 01942 482841
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Website: www.alwpcct.nhs.uk

Email: Lez.Austin@alwpcct.nhs.uk

17th December 2007

Director of Children & Young People's Services
Attn: Elaine Baulcombe
Progress House,
Westwood Park Drive,
Wigan
WN3 4HH



Dear Elaine,

Re: The proposal to close the Specialist Nursery Provision at Meadow Bank School and discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School.

Ashton, Leigh and Wigan Primary Care Trust wish to highlight issues relating to the specific needs of a small number of children (about 12 at any one time) with specific language impairment (SLI) which will be affected by the changes to service provision across these two establishments as outlined in the Consultation Papers.

It is felt that neither of the alternative approaches to delivery of services to this cohort of children will be adequate for the delivery of Speech and Language Therapy direct to this cohort of children, as neither clinic nor mainstream approach will meet their specific needs as currently identified. These SLI children are likely to be in the 3 resourced schools according to where they live as identified in the consultation document. We currently have one Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, who currently provides a service to these children 2 or 3 times a week as well as school staff carrying out Speech and Language Therapy programmes. The current intensive approach will not be possible if the same numbers of children are across the 3 sites instead of the current one.

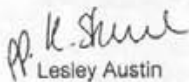
The Primary Care Trust are in the process of developing succession plans with representatives from the Education Department in order that teaching staff at the 3 schools are trained to prepare them for taking SLI children. This will hopefully make the placements appropriate in terms of teaching, however, the diffusion of Speech and Language Therapy across the sites remains a concern.

Travelling will of course minimise the activity sessions available.

We also have some concerns about the plans to make the new schools resources for children with ASD as well as those with SLI. The needs of the 2 groups are very different.

In conclusion we acknowledge the pending changes for the two sites that form the basis of this consultation. Although we have worked with the units involved to ensure that the teaching staff have the skills to work effectively with the children, we feel that this is less than satisfactory and that one must note that the capacity to deliver the service will be effected by the pending changes and the future delivery of service to this complex cohort of children will be effected for the future.

Yours sincerely



Lesley Austin
General Manager
Children and Young Peoples &
Learning Disability Services

Cc: Catherine Robinson – Commissioner - Children & Young Peoples Service

Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Ms L Austin
General Manager
Children and Young People's
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Wigan WN1 1AH

Our reference:
Your reference:
Please ask for: Lorna Hulme
Extension: 86128
Direct line: 01942-486128
Date: 4th January 2008

Dear Ms Austin

Proposal to Discontinue the Specialist Nursery Provision at Meadowbank School and the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

I am writing in response to your letter of 17th December 2007, regarding the above.

The numbers of pupils identified as needing intensive support from the Speech and Language Therapy Service at Hindley has reduced over recent years from 32 to a current number of 20. Both the Local Authority (LA) and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) agree that the number of pupils requiring support for Specific Language Impairment (SLI) will be no more than 12 at any one time.

Whilst the number of pupils has reduced, the amount of specialist support has remained the same. This suggests that there is capacity within the system to support the potential number of pupils with SLI in the three settings, taking into account some travelling time.


LA managers have been working with colleagues from the PCT to determine effective and efficient deployment of speech and language therapy resources whilst continuing the high quality provision. Plans are already in place for staff training, in conjunction with the PCT, to ensure that the level of expertise amongst resourced school staff is further enhanced.

The provision for pupils with autism is a new development which will be supported through extensive training and resources.

Your comments will be presented to Cabinet Members in January, to help inform the decision making process.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme
Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion

Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh 

Whelley Hospital, Bradshaw Street, Whelley, Wigan, WN1 3XD NHS Trust
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RMD/SM

23rd November 2007

Director of Children and Young People's Services
Access and Inclusion Team
Progress House
Westwood Park Drive
Wigan
WN3 4HH



Dear Sir/Madam

Statutory Consultation on the Proposal to Discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

I am replying in response to the invitation to comment on proposals to discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School.

Hindley Green Primary School which has had additional resources for school age children with more severe speech and language difficulties has been an excellent provision for children in this group for many years. It is no surprise therefore that parents of present pupils are strongly opposed to closure of this resource. The number of pupils with additional language difficulties attending the school has fallen in the last 2 years. Principally this has been because of the promotion of inclusion for pupils in their local mainstream school rather than attendance at the specialist unit. What would be useful to know is how the children who might previously have attended the Language Unit have subsequently fared in their local mainstream school setting. The results of such an audit of outcome would be useful to parents and professionals supporting the children with this type of language problem.

If the proposal is to replicate some of the facilities of the Language Unit within three Resource Schools across the Borough it will be important to hold negotiations with the Commissioner for Children's Services within Ashton, Leigh and Wigan PCT. This is to ensure that there would be an adequate provision of speech and language therapy services for these schools so that they could provide an equivalent or better service than that presently available at Hindley Green. If this were the case it would increase confidence in the proposal though the Local Authority would also have to look carefully at the provision of specialist teaching resources as well as these are also an important part of the work carried out at the Hindley Green Language Centre. Provided this was done the new provision should have every chance of exceeding the success of the previous one.

Yours sincerely

DR R M DOWNES
Consultant Paediatrician in
Community Child Health



Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Dr R M Downes
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Our reference:
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Please ask for: Lorna Hulme
Extension: 86127
Direct line: 01942-486128
Date: 4th January 2008

Dear Dr Downes

Statutory Consultation on the Proposal to Discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

I am writing in response to your letter of 23rd November 2007, regarding the above.

The proposal to discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green School does not call into question the quality of provision or staff expertise; the Local Authority (LA) acknowledges that the school had a good Ofsted inspection report in 2004. The aim of the proposal is not to reduce resources but to provide them more equitably across the borough.

The LA monitors the progress of pupils in all settings using rigorous analysis of data. Pupils in Wigan with additional needs achieve well compared to those in other areas. There are a variety of support services available to help schools achieve good outcomes for all pupils.

Discussions with ALWPCT managers have already begun to look at how speech and language therapy services might be potentially allocated across the three sites, and to analyse the levels of need across the cohort of pupils, to assess the level of resources required. The issue of additional physical resources and curriculum materials will be discussed in detail if these proposals go ahead.

The LA is committed to improving services for children and their families and will provide support and resources for pupils in the new area settings which is at least equal to that currently available at Hindley Green. The existing language facility provides an excellent basis from which to develop area-based provision.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme
Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion

Our Reference: LAKS
Your Reference:
Department: Clinical Services
Please ask for: Lesley Austin

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17th December 2007

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Dear Elaine,

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It is felt that neither of the alternative approaches to delivery of services to this cohort of children will be adequate for the delivery of Speech and Language Therapy direct to this cohort of children, as neither clinic nor mainstream approach will meet their specific needs as currently identified. These SLI children are likely to be in the 3 resourced schools according to where they live as identified in the consultation document. We currently have one Specialist Speech and Language Therapist, who currently provides a service to these children 2 or 3 times a week as well as school staff carrying out Speech and Language Therapy programmes. The current intensive approach will not be possible if the same numbers of children are across the 3 sites instead of the current one.

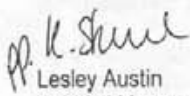
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Travelling will of course minimise the activity sessions available.

We also have some concerns about the plans to make the new schools resources for children with ASD as well as those with SLI. The needs of the 2 groups are very different.

In conclusion we acknowledge the pending changes for the two sites that form the basis of this consultation. Although we have worked with the units involved to ensure that the teaching staff have the skills to work effectively with the children, we feel that this is less than satisfactory and that one must note that the capacity to deliver the service will be effected by the pending changes and the future delivery of service to this complex cohort of children will be effected for the future.

Yours sincerely



Lesley Austin
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Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Ms L Austin
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Dear Ms Austin

Proposal to Discontinue the Specialist Nursery Provision at Meadowbank School and the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

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The numbers of pupils identified as needing intensive support from the Speech and Language Therapy Service at Hindley has reduced over recent years from 32 to a current number of 20. Both the Local Authority (LA) and the Primary Care Trust (PCT) agree that the number of pupils requiring support for Specific Language Impairment (SLI) will be no more than 12 at any one time.

Whilst the number of pupils has reduced, the amount of specialist support has remained the same. This suggests that there is capacity within the system to support the potential number of pupils with SLI in the three settings, taking into account some travelling time.

LA managers have been working with colleagues from the PCT to determine effective and efficient deployment of speech and language therapy resources whilst continuing the high quality provision. Plans are already in place for staff training, in conjunction with the PCT, to ensure that the level of expertise amongst resourced school staff is further enhanced.

The provision for pupils with autism is a new development which will be supported through extensive training and resources.

Your comments will be presented to Cabinet Members in January, to help inform the decision making process.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme
Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion

Pls pass to Kleres Basukus
① To reply ② TO action.

Ashton, Leigh and Wigan **NHS**

Primary Care Trust

13/12/07

Director of Children and Young People's Services
Progress House,
Westwood Park Drive,
Wigan.
WN2 4HH



Dear Sir,

Re: Proposal to alter the Language and Speech Development Centre
at Hindley Green C.P. School

Thank you for the opportunity to present our concerns regarding the proposed changes. The Speech and Language Therapy Department understand, in principle, the rationale behind reconfiguring the educational context for children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI). We are keen to ensure that these children continue to receive the most appropriate Speech and Language Therapy intervention to meet their needs, based on effective evidence-based practice, and feel that the following points need to be fully considered if these children are to achieve their communication potential. We have concerns regarding a lack of location specific input for the children with SLI, and the fact that there may be poorer outcomes for this cohort if their cases are not managed appropriately (i.e. intensively).

A description of children with Specific Language Impairment

The definition of Specific Language Impairment (SLI), also known as Specific Speech and Language Disorder (SSLD) is as follows: - "a condition in which children have a severe limitation in language ability, despite any obvious cause, and having adequate opportunity to develop language"

SLI has many facets – it can be persistent, where some children never achieve full mastery of certain aspects of language, even in adulthood.

SLI children develop at a slower rate than their peers – therefore the gap widens.

SLI children produce patterns that are never seen in normally developing children, and they make unusual errors ("Children with Specific Language Impairment" Laurence. B. Leonard. MIT Press 2000)

These core deficits with language place them at risk of associated literacy difficulties (Botting et al. 1998)

"Children with SSLD pose a particular challenge to the education system as a result of the need to address both oral language and access to the curriculum. Their difficulties often persist into adolescence where the latter problems predominate." (Stothard et al. 1998)

Background and current provision at the Language and Speech Development Centre.

At present, the current provision provides intensive therapy from 1 full time Specialist Speech and Language Therapist and two days from a Speech and Language Therapy assistant. The Specialist therapist offers individual and group therapy, on a needs basis, ascertained from assessment and observation. The time spent on each child, by the Specialist Therapist, can be seen in Appendix 1.

The therapist also devises programmes of work, provides training, and advice to teaching and non-teaching staff. As the therapist is on site full time, there is opportunity to fit these additional care packages around the timetables of teaching staff. They, in turn, are able to speak to the therapist for instant advice (i.e. at break times/lunch times/after children have left school) This enables the therapy services and teaching staff to have close collaborative working practices.

The teaching staff in the Centre has 20+ years of experience with these children, so there are practices that recur time and again. This means less need for training at a basic level, allowing more time for innovative practices. These teachers have worked closely alongside the current Specialist Therapist for 15+ years, and are therefore completely in tune with therapy requirements, and how they interface with the Curriculum.

The current provision has an extremely large amount of resources, which have been built up over the years – many of which have been designed for particular types of clients, which would be extremely difficult to replicate or duplicate.

Our concerns, therefore, are that this particular client group, at present, has a wealth of expertise and resources instantly to hand, and immediate access to the therapist, and, as input is centralised to one location, there are few issues with time being wasted due to therapist/s having to travel.

Points for consideration

1. Intervention level

- Within a different model of provision, it might be that intervention can not be offered at the intense and repetitive level required. If the therapist/s have 3 areas to cover, there are time issues, as mentioned above, and this is time out of therapy.
- Similarly, if inexperienced staff requires training, this also takes time out of therapy.

“At the level of practitioners, speech and language therapists, teachers, and SLT and teaching assistants, there is a need for agreed understanding of practice, as well as collaboration and coordination of service delivery. An increased use of the consultation model (Law et al. 2002) can be a concern to teachers and parents, who see it as a reduction in skilled, hands-on work with children. In this study, some LEAs reported teachers feeling out of their depth. The use of consultation models of practice by SLTs, ...given the shortage of therapists, ...puts more reliance on teachers and teaching assistants, and is currently of **unproven effectiveness**.” (“Local education authorities’ approaches to provision for children with specific speech and language difficulties in England and Wales” Lindsay, Dockrell, Mackie and Letchford.- European Journal of Special Needs Education. 2005)

2. Quality of provision

In a document "Local Educational Approaches to Provision for Children with SLI in England and Wales (Lindsay et al. 2003), it states "most LEAs wish to develop inclusion but many had doubts whether inclusion in mainstream was as effective compared with specialist language provision at meeting the needs of the children. Underlying this view is a tension between inclusion as a right, compared with effective practice. The draft consultation document "The Consultation on Planning and Developing Special Educational Needs" recognises this point and has stated that Local Authorities must include a test that will "demonstrate to parents, the local community and decision makers, that the proposed alternative arrangements are likely to lead to improvements in the standard, quality and/or range of educational provision for children with special educational needs."

As experienced practitioners working with these children, we are very concerned that there is insufficient evidence to support a move away from an intensive, locality based approach which meets the needs of these children.

We base our therapeutic intervention on the best available evidence and would be keen to share any information that the local authority has, that indicates that the outcome for these children would be improved by changing the current provision.

The government also makes it clear in this document that it wants to see a flexible continuum of provision.

During a previous consultation, the SLT dept put forward a case for a Key stage 1 centre, offering intensive input, with a development of an outreach service for key Stage 2. This would give those children with the most severe impairments the length of stay and intensity of approach they require and the expertise of the centre staff to support them during transition.

The department also wish to draw the authority's attention to the core differences between a child with autism and a child with specific language impairment in terms of service delivery. The latter group require intensive approaches from a trained SLT, access to the range of social opportunities and benefit from a language-enriched environment. The service offered to these children is very different to that given to a child with autistic spectrum disorder whose core difficulties do not require an intensive approach and who also need significant environmental modifications to enable learning to take place

In conclusion, the SLT department are concerned that the proposals in the current form would lead to a less effective service being available for these children.

The amount of time needed to deliver the service now, is itemised in Appendix 1 for the present group of children and there would be a considerable shortfall of available therapy time if the service is spread over more school sites.

The SLT service currently offers a high standard of service for children with severe, specific language disorder that conforms to our professional guidelines.

Any changes to this service have to comply with these guidelines and the available evidence on effective practice.

We are of the opinion that the service based at the LSDC meets the needs of these children and we would recommend that this centre remains, to enable those children who need this specialist provision to reach their communication potential.

Thank you,

S Hendry

pp Jenny Brewin, SLT Co-ordinator (Special Needs) Mary Sheridan Centre, Leigh Infirmary, Leigh.
Sheena Hendry, Specialist SLT (Language Disorders) LSDC, Hindley Green C.P.School.

Appendix 1

Name	Age	Year Group	Diagnosis	S&L Priority	Therapy	Specialist SLT therapy time required per week	Additional time for administration and liaison (averaged)	Total Specialist SLT time required per week
Child 1	6.8	2	Severe Speech and Language Disorder (Dyspraxia)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology 	2½ hours (1½ hours individually, 1 hour in a group)	3 hours	5 ½ hours
Child 2	6.1	1	Severe Speech and Language Disorder (Dyspraxia)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Expressive language 	3¼ hours (all group work)	3 hours	6¼ hours
Child 3	4.11	R	Severe Speech and Language Disorder (Dyspraxia)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Expressive language 	2 hours (all group work)	½ hour	5 hours
Child 4	4.4	R	Speech Disorder	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology 	1½ hours (all group work)	3 hours	4½ hours
Child 5	5.8	1	Severe Speech and Language Disorder (Dyspraxia)	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Expressive language 	2½ hours (30 mins individually, 2 hours 15 mins group work)	3 hours	5¾ hours
Child 6	6.7	2	Severe Speech and Language Delay	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Expressive language 	1½ hours (all group work)	3 hours	4½ hours
Child 7	6.2	1	Language processing problems	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language therapy 	1¾ hours (1 hour individually, 45 mins group work)	2 hours 40 mins	4 hours 25 mins
Child 8	7.1	2	Language processing problems, delayed phonology	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Expressive language 	1½ hours (30 mins individually, 1 hour group work)	2 hours 40 mins	4 hours 10 mins
Child 9	6.9	2	Language processing problems	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language therapy 	1 hour (all group work)	2 hours 40 mins	3 hours 40 mins
Child 10	7.3	2	Language processing problems, speech disorder, Dysfluency	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dysfluency Speech exercises Language therapy 	1½ hours (30 mins individually, 1 hour group work)	2 hours 40 mins	4 hours 10 mins
Child 11	8.11	3	Language processing problems	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language therapy 	1 hour (all group work)	2 hours 40 mins	3 hours 40 mins

Name	Age	Year Group	Diagnosis	S&L Priority	Therapy	Specialist SLT therapy time required per week	Additional time for administration and liaison (averaged)	Total Specialist SLT time required per week
Child 12	10.00	5	Persistent Speech and Language Disorder (Dyspraxia)	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Expressive language 	2 hours (1½ hours individually, 30 mins group work)	2 hours 40 mins	4 hours 40 mins
Child 13	10.9	6	Persistent Speech and Language Disorder	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Expressive Language 	1½ hours (30 mins individually, 1 hour group)	2 hours 20 mins	3 hours 50 mins
Child 14	9.9	5	Language processing problems (ASD tendencies)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language therapy 	1½ hours (all group work)	2 hours 30 mins	4 hours
Child 15	8.4	4	Speech and Language Delay	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Expressive language 	1½ hours (1 hour individually, 30 mins group work)	2 hours 20 mins	3 hours 50 mins
Child 16	6.5	2	Speech and Language Delay (Bi-lingual Chinese)	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Language therapy 	1½ hours (1 hour individually, 30 mins group work)	2 hours 20 mins	3 hours 50 mins
Child 17	8.7	4	Speech and Language Delay	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Expressive Language 	1 hour (all group work)	2 hours	3 hours
Child 18	7.9	3	Speech and Language Delay	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Expressive Language 	1 hour (1 hour individual work)	1 hour 40 mins	2 hours 40 mins
Child 19	5.5	1	Speech and Language Delay	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Phonology Expressive Language 	1¼ hours (all group work)	2 hours	3¾ hours

Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Ms J Brewin & Ms S Hendry
Speech and Language Therapy Service
ALWPCT

Our reference:
Your reference:
Please ask for: Lorna Hulme
Extension: 86128
Direct line: 01942-486128
Date: 4th January 2008

Dear Ms Brewin and Ms Hendry

Proposal to Discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

I am writing in response to your letter of 13th December 2007, regarding the above.

The Local Authority (LA) totally concurs with your desire to give children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI) the most appropriate intervention to meet their needs. This is why we are proposing to develop three area-based locations across the borough to replace the facility now based at Hindley Green School.

Current Provision

The LA is committed to providing the same high level of support and resources for pupils in the new settings as is currently available at Hindley Green. Discussions with ALWPCT managers have already begun to look at how speech and language therapy services might be potentially allocated across the three sites, and to analyse the levels of need across the cohort of pupils, to assess the level of resources required. The issue of additional physical resources and curriculum materials will be discussed in detail if these proposals go ahead.

Intervention

The proposal to establish intensive speech and language support at the three resourced primary schools has been changed from an opening date of September 2008 to September 2009. One of the reasons for this, is to give staff at the resourced schools time to access initial training and awareness raising about speech, language and communication difficulties, and to start to develop some joint training with the Speech and Language Therapy Service.

Detailed discussions between the LA and Health managers has already taken place to enable all appropriate staff to be involved in training, and the LA will also take advantage of the government's innovative national 'Inclusion Development Programme', which is aimed at all schools and settings. One of the first two modules to be put into place is one developed with I-CAN about speech, language and communication difficulties.

We are indeed looking for an “understanding of practice as well as collaboration and co-ordination of service delivery,” as you quote from Law (2002). We do not propose reliance on a consultation model of delivery.

Quality of Provision

Wigan’s approach to inclusion for pupils with SLI has rested upon specialist language provision and will continue to do so in locally based area schools. We are not suggesting a move from an “intensive locality based approach,” but are improving the range of educational provision for parents and pupils by arranging intensive support in three settings rather than one.

The case for a Key Stage 1 centre for intensive input was considered by officers in drawing up the current proposals for change. The LA wants all children, but particularly those in Key Stage 1, to have the shortest possible travelling times between home and school. The range of support should not be limited by Key Stage, as pupils do not always conveniently ‘complete’ their programmes of work at the end of a Key Stage.

The LA is very aware of the differences between pupils with autism and those with SLI. Before clear multi-agency assessment of autism and autistic spectrum disorders was available, it is possible that these two distinct groups were treated very similarly. In the past, pupils with ASD have very likely been placed at the SLDC together with those with SLI. The LA’s proposals for changing provision not only emphasises the differences between these two groups, but will lead to differentiated levels and types of support to meet their needs.

Looking at the detailed information about delivery of service currently offered, I must emphasise that the LA will probably be looking at meeting the needs of a smaller group of pupils by September 2009. Numbers of pupils accessing the SLDC have reduced steadily over recent years, and the evidence of high quality Early Years assessment and intervention suggests that numbers will reduce even further. It may be that the current level of provision has the capacity to meet future needs. As I have already mentioned this is the subject of close discussion between CYPs and ALWPCT.

The LA is committed to improving services for children and their families. The language facility at Hindley Green provides an excellent basis from which to develop area-based provision.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme

Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion

From: 2032 Headteacher@Hindley Green J& I
Sent: Mon 17 December 2007 12:11
To: Baulcombe, Elaine
Cc: Hulme, Lorna
Subject: Response to Formal Consultation

Dear Elaine,

First of all can I say that I welcome the recommendation to Cabinet and Panel that the discontinuation of the Language and Speech Development Centre be deferred until September 2009. Also I have no real concerns about the reduction in planned places from April 2008. This is something we would have expected anyway and at times catering for 32 children, and at one time 34 children, has proven to be unwieldy.

However, I can only reiterate all the comments I made during the Informal Stage:

- That we have provided an excellent service for the LA and Area Health Authority over a number of years which has been well recognised by OFSTED
- There will be an adverse effect on the school in terms of large budget reduction which will affect teaching and support staff
- An immense degree of expertise will be lost and may not be able to be replicated in the 3 area model in the near future
- I continue to have concerns about the children's welfare when they move away from here
- I would have hoped, given our track record, that the LA would have considered us as the resourced school for the East.

I trust you will take note of my comments and convey them to the relevant parties.

Regards,

Sue

Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Mrs S Bray
Headteacher
Hindley Green County Primary School
Thomas Street
Hindley Green
Wigan WN2 4SS

Our reference:
Your reference:
Please ask for: Lorna Hulme
Extension: 86128
Direct line: 01942-486128
Date: 4th January 2008

Dear Sue

Statutory Consultation on the Proposal to Discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

I am writing in response to your email of 17th December 2007, regarding the above. Your supportive comments on the proposal to extend the timescale for closure of the language facility at Hindley Green, to September 2009, have been well received.

The proposal to discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre does not call into question the quality of provision or staff expertise; the Local Authority (LA) acknowledges that the school had a good Ofsted inspection report in 2004. The aim of the proposal is not to reduce resources but to provide them more equitably across the borough.

Under the proposal, your school will be funded in exactly the same way as other primary schools with similar numbers of pupils. The agreed formula funding gives all schools the means to meet the needs of children on roll.

Discussions with ALWPCT managers have already begun to look at how speech and language therapy services might be potentially allocated across the three sites, and to analyse the levels of need across the cohort of pupils, to assess the level of resources required. The issue of additional physical resources and curriculum materials will be discussed in detail if these proposals go ahead. Officers will continue to work with Health colleagues, to embed the national professional guidelines for speech and language provision in the new settings.

Work will take place with parents and colleagues in schools to ensure that transition for any child is a positive experience, and that any changes brought about by this proposal are implemented sensitively.

The LA is committed to improving services for children and their families, and will provide support and resources for pupils in the new area settings which is at least equal to that currently available at Hindley Green. The existing facility provides an excellent basis from which to develop area-based provision.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme
Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion

Special Needs

Hindley Green C.P.School.

SPECIAL

05 DEC 2007

December 2007.

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to register my objection to the proposed closure of the Language and Speech Development Centre based at Hindley Green Community Primary School.

I firmly believe that, over the past 20 years, the L.S.D.C. has served the Health and Education Service extremely well and that staff past and present deserve to be proud of themselves, assisting many youngsters to communicate effectively and with confidence.

The success of the L.S.D.C has been due to the dedicated team of professionals who have strived to ensure consistency in teaching methods and provided daily, all round provision in order to meet the needs of children in our borough, assessed as having specific speech and/or language difficulties. Surely provision and not location is of most significance importance when considering the needs of children experiencing communication difficulties? Why change something "tried and tested" and split into 3 resourced schools?

I feel that many questions require answers and the sooner, the better for all parents, children and professionals, currently involved in the education of our youngsters assessed as having specific speech and/or language impairments.

Time may be running out for our children currently attending the L.S.D.C . Will the parents of the children be assured that all factors involved in any transition be successfully managed within such a short time frame?

I personally believe that early identification and intervention of any child experiencing a specific speech and/or language difficulty is of utmost importance and applaud our Health and Education Service for promoting this service.

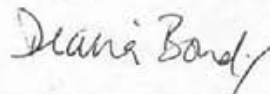
However, what happens to the children that continue to experience daily problems with school life despite early intervention?

I understand that the L.S.D.C based at Hindley Green C.P School has catered successfully for these children over many years. The children assessed as having speech and /or language impairment only get one chance to pass through the education system and it should be the very BEST we can provide.

I believe that the delivery of intensive speech and language therapy, together with specialised teaching being delivered within the L.S.D.C at Hindley Green C.P. School, is excellent provision and cannot, in my view, be "watered down" ie spread across 3 resourced schools.

I urge you to re-consider any decision in order to discontinue provision at the L.S.D.C based at Hindley Green C.P. School.

Yours sincerely,



Member of Staff. (H.G.C.P. School.)

Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Ms D Bond
Hindley Green County Primary School
Thomas Street
Hindley Green
Wigan WN2 4SS

Our reference:
Your reference:
Please ask for: Lorna Hulme
Extension: 86128
Direct line: 01942-486128
Date: 4th January 2008

Dear Ms Bond

Statutory Consultation on the Proposal to Discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

I am writing in response to your letter of 1st December 2007, regarding the above.

The proposal to discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green School does not call into question the quality of provision or staff expertise; the Local Authority (LA) acknowledges that the school had a good Ofsted inspection report in 2004.

The aim of the proposal is not to reduce resources, but to provide them more equitably across the borough. The LA works with parents and colleagues in schools to ensure that transition for any child is a positive experience. Please be assured that any changes brought about by this proposal will be implemented as sensitively as possible.

The early identification of children with specific speech and language difficulties is at the heart of what the LA works to achieve, in partnership with colleagues in ALWPCT. Discussions between managers have already begun to look at how speech and language therapy services might be potentially allocated across the three sites, and to analyse the levels of need across the cohort of pupils, to assess the level of resources required. The issue of additional physical resources and curriculum materials will be discussed in detail if these proposals go ahead.

The LA is committed to improving services for children and their families and will provide support and resources for pupils in the new area settings which is at least equal to that currently available at Hindley Green. The existing language facility provides an excellent basis from which to develop area-based provision.

The decision on the proposal will be made by Cabinet Members, who will have sight of all comments received as part of the statutory consultation process.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme
Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion

Hindley Green C.P. School

14. 12. 07

Dear Sir,

I object to the proposed closure of the Speech and Language Development Centre attached to Hindley Green Community Primary School for the following reasons:

The Language Centre provides the specialist input required by children with specific language and speech disorders, - there is no other placement within the Wigan authority which delivers the same level of service to these children.

Children with specific language and speech disorders require intensive speech therapy delivered by a specialist speech therapist, plus support and teaching by qualified teachers, all of which is provided by the Language Centre.

It has to be recognized that the children presenting with such specific speech and language disorders are most likely to have problems in literacy. If these difficulties are not overcome in the early/infant years there may be a lifetime of illiteracy and all the known associated problems and costs to society.

The authority has been providing a wonderful service to the children and their families, enabling them to have hope for the future. Unless a better provision is offered to the children, with full time speech therapy, from specialist therapists, and support and teaching from special needs qualified teachers.

I strongly object to the proposed closure

Yours sincerely

Wendy Hudson

Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Ms W Hudson
Hindley Green County Primary School
Thomas Street
Hindley Green
Wigan WN2 4SS

Our reference:
Your reference:
Please ask for: Lorna Hulme
Extension: 86128
Direct line: 01942-486128
Date: 4th January 2008

Dear Ms Hudson

Statutory Consultation on the Proposal to Discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

I am writing in response to your letter of 14th December 2007, regarding the above.

The proposal to discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School does not call into question the quality of provision or staff expertise; the Local Authority (LA) acknowledges that the school had a good Ofsted inspection report in 2004. The aim of the proposal is not to reduce resources but to provide them more equitably across the borough.

The LA ensures that all pupils, including those with special needs, have access to a broad and exciting curriculum with an emphasis on the core subjects of literacy and numeracy. Pupil progress is monitored using rigorous analysis of data, and pupils in Wigan with additional needs achieve well compared to those in other areas. There are a variety of support services available to help schools achieve good outcomes for all pupils.

Discussions with ALWPCT managers have already begun to look at how speech and language therapy services might be potentially allocated across the three sites, and to analyse the levels of need across the cohort of pupils, to assess the level of resources required. The issue of additional physical resources and curriculum materials will be discussed in detail if these proposals go ahead.

The LA is committed to improving services for children and their families, and will provide support and resources for pupils in the new area settings which is at least equal to that currently available at Hindley Green. The existing facility provides an excellent basis from which to develop area-based provision without reducing input from specialist staff.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme
Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion

From: 2032 Hindley Green J & I*
Sent: Mon 17 December 2007 11:13
To: Baulcombe, Elaine
Subject: LSD Centre

OFSTED identified our LSD Centre as a Centre of Excellence to close it will send out the wrong kind of message to the children and their parents who benefit from using this LEA facility. They are happy with our excellent centre and are still unsure of what will be in place if our LSD Centre is closed.

To consult on a proposed closure without giving all parties exact details of what will replace our LSD Centre is unsound logic. Our Parents need to know the name and where the replacement will be situated, plus what it will offer in educational terms, before anyone can be asked to make a factual decision.

If our centre does close then Hindley Green CP School will have to manage a huge budget reduction over a period of two years as closure is proposed for September 2009. Even with this phased reduction it is clearly unmanageable and will be painful as teaching and support staff will be made redundant.

Because we fully integrate our pupils these job losses will affect our main stream pupil's education as we are told by LEA officers that all staff would be open to redundancy and not just our LSD Centre Staff.

This is a major issue for us at Hindley Green as we now have a young and experienced staff who also consider themselves at risk of loosing their jobs. They are now looking for new positions both within and out of the authority and this is not good for the school and the pupils education.

Mr W.S.Shaw

Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Mr W S Shaw
Chair of Governors
Hindley Green J & I School
Thomas Street
Hindley Green
Wigan WN2 4SS

Our reference:
Your reference:
Please ask for: Lorna Hulme
Extension: 86128
Direct line: 01942-486128
Date: 4th January 2008

Dear Mr Shaw

Proposal to Discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

I am writing in response to your letter of 13th December 2007, regarding the above.

The Local Authority (LA) acknowledges that the 2004 Ofsted inspection of Hindley Green Primary School judged leadership, and management and teaching, in the Speech and Language Development Centre (SLDC), to be very good. Although I cannot find reference to the Centre as being a 'Centre of Excellence' within the Ofsted report, the LA recognises that much good practice has been developed there.

The LA totally concurs with your desire to give children with Specific Language Impairment the most appropriate intervention to meet their needs. This is the reason for the proposal to replace the SLDC with three locations across the borough. Before any parent is approached to give preferences for future placement of their child, a full review of the child's needs will take place.

Work is already underway with the senior managers of a potential resourced primary school, as is detailed discussion with Health managers, to ensure that the level of future provision is at least as good as that which is currently available at Hindley Green.

The impact of the proposed budget reduction will be lessened if the closure of the SLDC is in September 2009, rather than September 2008 as originally planned. There are very well established procedures and protocols in place to help schools at times of budget reductions. In partnership with the Headteacher and Chair of Governors, the LA will work hard to ensure that Hindley Green School has a staffing structure appropriate to its needs.

The LA is committed to improving services for children and their families. The language facility at Hindley Green provides an excellent basis from which to develop area-based provision.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme
Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion

From: 2032 Hindley Green J & I*
Sent: 17 December 2007 11:21
To: Baulcombe, Elaine
Subject:

It is nonsense to take away a centre of Excellence as acknowledged by OFSTED at the last inspection. If it goes ahead there will be redundancies amongst teaching staff and support staff, which because of our Integration Policy will effect our mainstream children. It seems illogical to close the unit when you haven't given any details to which school it will be going to.

Maureen Shaw
Governor

Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Mrs M Shaw
Governor
Hindley Green County Primary School
Thomas Street
Hindley Green
Wigan WN2 4SS

Our reference:
Your reference:
Please ask for: Lorna Hulme
Extension: 86128
Direct line: 01942-486128
Date: 4th January 2008

Dear Mrs Shaw

Statutory Consultation on the Proposal to Discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

I am writing in response to your email of 17th December 2007, regarding the above.

The Local Authority (LA) acknowledges that the 2004 Ofsted inspection of Hindley Green Primary School judged leadership, and management and teaching, in the Speech and Language Development Centre, to be very good. Although I cannot find reference to the Centre as being a 'Centre of Excellence' within the Ofsted report, the LA recognises that much good practice has been developed there.

The proposal to establish intensive speech and language support at the three resourced primary schools has been changed from an opening date of September 2008 to September 2009. One of the reasons for this, is to give staff at the resourced schools time to access initial training and awareness raising about speech, language and communication difficulties, and to start to develop some joint training with the Speech and Language Therapy Service.

Under the proposal, Hindley Green Primary will be funded in exactly the same way as other primary schools with similar numbers of pupils. The agreed formula funding gives all schools the means to meet the needs of children on roll.

The LA is committed to improving services for children and their families, and will provide support and resources for pupils in the new area settings which is at least equal to that currently available at Hindley Green. The existing language facility provides an excellent basis from which to develop area-based provision.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme
Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion

A Governor,
Hindley Green C.P.School,
Thomas Street,
Hindley Green.
Wigan.

Dear Madam

Re. Closure of Unit.

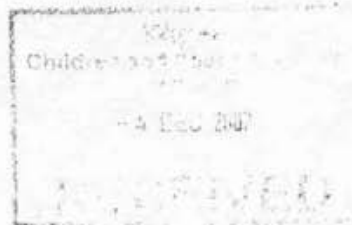
I would like to say thank you for the extension you have given school, even though I do not approve of what you are doing.

It will, I hope make things a little easier in the long run for Mrs. Bray and the management team. The next two years are not going to very easy for all the people involved.

Yours faithfully.

Anne Taylor.

Anne Taylor



Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Ms A Taylor
Governor
Hindley Green County Primary School
Thomas Street
Hindley Green
Wigan WN2 4SS

Our reference:
Your reference:
Please ask for: Lorna Hulme
Extension: 86127
Direct line: 01942-486128
Date: 4th January 2008

Dear Ms Taylor

Statutory Consultation on the Proposal to Discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

I am writing in response to your letter, which arrived in this office on 4th December 2007, regarding the above. Your supportive comments on the proposal to extend the timescale for closure of the Speech and Language Development Centre, to September 2009, have been well received.

The Local Authority is fully committed to improving services for children and their families, and the language facility at Hindley Green provides an excellent basis from which to develop area-based provision.

Your comments will be presented to Cabinet Members in January, to help inform the decision making process.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme
Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion

Mr. Mrs D. Roberts
66 Swinley Road
Wigan.
WN1 2DL.

15th December 2007.

SPECIAL

18 DEC 2007

Director of Children and Young People's Services,
F.O.A Elaine Baulcombe.
Progress House
Westwood Park Drive,
Wigan
WN3 4HH.

Proposal to Discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green
Primary School.

Dear Sir / Madam

Re the above and following the Public meeting held on 12th September, I represented my views to the Informal consultation on the 21st September, and I am writing regarding the next stage for the above proposal.

Below is a copy of my views following the Informal Consultation.

I have read your consultation document and I am aware of the suggested reasons for change in the delivery of provision. However, I believe that the proposed change away from the current proven quality of provision, which has served pupils for over twenty years, will disadvantage my child. Given the severe shortage in Language and Speech Therapists in the Local Authority, I cannot see how the present level of expertise and provision provided at the Hindley Green Centre can be replicated across a range of centres. I believe that provision for Luca will subsequently consist of two short periods of intervention daily, probably by a non specialist. This will not meet his needs, will delay his progress and is unacceptable.

The development of Speech and Language and communication skills need to be met as early as possible, as has been proven. The earlier and the more intensive the input of expertise and support, the greater the chance my son has of accessing mainstream education. I feel the Local Authority is disadvantaging my son.

I remain unconvinced by the argument provided that funding is not the predominant issue here. As tax payers we do not wish to see funding wasted if there is not sufficient demand for services. However along with other parents we want to ensure that our children are best served by the current set up and urge the L.A. to continue to support it financially.

I can only state that without the Specialist Provision from the Speech and Language Development Centre my son would not have made the progress academically, but more importantly in his self esteem, communication and overall development.

If Every Child Matters then this Specialist Provision has to continue.

At this time I am very concerned that views held by the LA seem still to deem the need to close a specialist provision that at this present time, can not be provided elsewhere. I still strongly disagree with the closure of the unit and have become increasingly worried about the provision that the LA will be offering my son. It will not meet his needs.

I hope you take into account the opinions of the parents and more importantly the needs of our children.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

MRS. JAYNE ROBERTS

MR. DAVID ROBERTS

Children and Young People's Services

Director : N Hudson

Mr and Mrs D Roberts
66 Swinley Road
Wigan
WN1 2DL

Our reference:
Your reference:
Please ask for: Lorna Hulme
Extension: 86128
Direct line: 01942-486128
Date: 4th January 2008

Dear Mr and Mrs Roberts

Proposal to Discontinue the Speech and Language Development Centre at Hindley Green Primary School

I am writing in response to your letter of 15th December 2007, regarding the above.

The Local Authority (LA) totally concurs with your desire to give children with Specific Language Impairment (SLI) the most appropriate intervention to meet their needs. This is the reason for the proposal to replace the Speech and Language Development Centre (SLDC) with three locations across the borough.

The early identification of children with SLI is at the heart of what the LA works to achieve, in partnership with colleagues in ALWPCT. Discussions between managers have already begun to look at how speech and language therapy services might be potentially allocated across the three sites, and to analyse the levels of need across the cohort of pupils, to assess the level of resources required. The issue of additional physical resources and curriculum materials will be discussed in detail if these proposals go ahead. There is no intention to reduce the amount of funding available to support children with speech and language difficulties.

All children currently attending the SLDC will have a full review of their needs during the coming year. From this, support will be identified to ensure that children continue to make appropriate progress in whichever setting they attend. The LA will work with parents and colleagues in schools to ensure that transition for any child is a positive experience. Please be assured that any changes brought about by this proposal will be implemented as sensitively as possible.

The LA is committed to improving services for children and their families, and will provide support and resources for pupils in the new area settings which is at least equal to that currently available at Hindley Green. The existing facility provides an excellent basis from which to develop area-based provision.

Yours sincerely

Lorna Hulme
Strategic Manager – Learning and Inclusion