

## Questions from IR Consultation

(based on questions asked in 149 survey responses – 06.03.19)

### 1-13: – Questions about Primary IRs

1. If IRs will be non-specialist, how will children's very specific needs be met? / How will each IR manage to cater for the huge range of need in a locality?

This is one area that we are seeking feedback on. To some extent a move towards IRs meeting needs across communication & interaction as well as cognition & learning is recognition of existing practice. Whilst our current IRs usually have a designated specialism, the actual intake usually covers a broader range of need and we have examples of where this is working well. There is a need to think about how existing specialist knowledge and practice is then successfully shared across the system, so that the offer in each locality would be consistent and high quality. This already happens in some cases, but is ad hoc and we need to be more systematic in identifying where expertise exists and how it is shared. There is a further consideration around the extent to which primary-age children benefit from a more local setting and travel distance..

2. Would there be enough places at the IRs for the number of children with SEN in Sheffield? / How can you ensure that there is sufficient provision in each hub for the needs of each locality?

The number of children and young people in the city who require an EHCP to support their learning is increasing. This model of delivery would allow the system to increase at a level which would provide more choice for parents and provide a better geographical spread. Based on current data we can see where children and young people live who access IR provision now and can project this through the year groups. Although there are fluctuations year on year we believe the number of places on average would support the numbers of children and young people requiring this level of provision.

We are also working to improve our systems around understanding current and future demand and we will be in a better place to make further changes to system if further growth is required in the future.

3. Would funding be diverted away from existing schools? If so, how will they help their SEN children? / How will the new system be funded?

The resources to implement the growth element of this proposal will come from the increase in the overall high needs block – the allocation to Sheffield to support specialist provision.

4. Will places at the existing IRs be increased?

That is likely in some cases, but not all, and we are interested to hear views on whether this would be welcomed or not and any specific concerns relating to our existing IR capacity. Clearly we would need to make sure that any increase could be accommodated in terms of space, staffing and resources.

5. What is the point of duplicating provision in each locality?

Centralising this provision would create a provision that would need to cater for a high number of children and young people with SEND. One mainstream school, with a very large proportion of specialist places, may struggle to operate successfully as a mainstream school. Whilst if this was a wholly specialist provision, it would not have the integration of the dispersed model. In addition, previous feedback from a range of people has suggested that parents/carers would prefer that provision is located within a geographical location wherever possible.

6. How would moves be handled for children currently in IR provision? / What would happen to pupils already accessing existing IRs?

At this point there is no intention to move pupils who are currently accessing IR provision away from their current school/place. It is likely that any change would be done through a year-on-year transition process and the details of that would form part of a further stage of consultation before any decisions are taken.

7. What would happen in localities where there are already two existing IRs, i.e. localities D & G?

The overall proposal is to build on what currently exists and expand the provision available. We would only look to close an IR if that was best for the outcomes of children, and certainly not just to fit a model. If the principle around locality-based provision is supported through this consultation, then it may well be that in certain cases a locality is served by two IRs. It may be that those IRs could find ways of working together to support the wider locality and maybe serve different geographical areas within the locality.

8. At what age would children be able to start in an IR? / Would they include infant school children?

The starting point for the consultation is to seek to cover the entire primary age range (Reception to Year 6) in each locality. We would also be interested in views on early years provision.

9. Will places be available based on need or just to those children who have an EHCP?

The places at formal specialist provision will only be allocated to those children and young people who have an EHCP. The discussion around how the specialist IR or hub could then support other children and schools within their locality/area would potentially broaden the support to those who do not have an EHCP.

10. There is no mention of physical needs. Is accessibility being considered in the hubs?

Accessibility is always a consideration in any mainstream provision that is available for children and young people with a special educational need or disability. Any new space created through this proposal would need to take that into account, as well as the access to that mainstream school overall.

11. How will the IRs' links with special schools work? Will it be similar to the outreach service that special schools have provided to mainstream schools over the last couple of years?

Yes, current outreach models that exist could develop a more formal, coherent approach through this proposal and we are interested to listen to views on whether this has worked, how it could improve and whether this is something that we should be seeking to grow.

#### **14-28: Questions about Secondary Hubs**

12. Although my child is in primary school, she will continue to need additional support. Would sufficient capacity be created to meet need?

The proposal seeks to ensure that we develop a clear pathway for children and young people from primary phase through to secondary phase. By increasing the level of mainstream based specialist provision at secondary level sufficient capacity should be created within the system.

13. If children will spend part of the week in a hub then return to their mainstream classroom, how will they be supported on return?

It is envisaged that each child or young person would have a bespoke programme of work overseen by the special school. We would not anticipate any fixed rule about what proportion of time a child or young person would spend in the specialist IR/hub space or in the mainstream classes.

14. Where does therapeutic support fit in? Will there be a link with CAMHS?

Alongside the proposals regarding the type and level of provision available, the Council are also considering the support services that are available alongside. It is understood that we would want to improve access to support from therapy services and would be interested in views on how or what we should look to change.

15. Is post-16 provision also being looked at?

Post 16 as well as early years is being looked at as part of the strategic vision to provide clear pathways and seamless transitions across different specialist provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. We would be interested in views on how we should be developing provision in those age ranges although we may need to look at a separate consultation process to consider the wider landscape of post-16 provision.

16. Are 3 hubs going to be enough? Would they be part-time or full-time like the IRs?

At secondary level we are looking to create 6 special led hubs. 2 in each area of the city known as East/West/North. It is envisaged that each child or young person would have a bespoke programme of work which was agreed between the parent/carers and the school. At this stage there is no fixed rule about what % time a child or young person would spend in a special led hub this would be determined by the child /young person's needs .

17. Who will be responsible for assessing which children receive this support? Locality schools or LA led?

The places for the special led hubs would be allocated via the special schools which are named on the child/young person's EHCP. If a wider support offer, beyond the formal specialist places, was part of the proposals, then that would need further discussion on how that support is accessed.

18. Will children who go to a primary IR (on the roll of a mainstream school) automatically go to one of the two special led hubs in which they are on register for a special school?

The starting point for this discussion would create more places at secondary level and similar numbers of places so broadly there would be capacity for children from primary IRs to move on to hubs at secondary. There would not be an automatic transfer and each child and their family would need to look at the options and be supported through the transition process to access the right secondary provision.

19. Would regular communication take place between the hub and integrated resource to ensure joined up thinking and best outcomes for all children that attend?

It is hoped that through a formalised process this would form an integral part of the agreement.

20. Where are the hubs to be? In which schools? Which special schools will lead them?

This would need to be worked out following the consultation process if the principles outlined are supported.

21. What will it mean in practice? Will you stop penalising schools in the south west because you think all the parents and kids are rich? Our school gets way less in funding because it's in a 'posh' area.

The purpose of the proposal is to create a better offer to children and young people across the city to create some consistency and also a better geographical spread of specialist provision.

22. How does only two IRs reduce travel across the city?

Geographical spread of provision will always provide a challenge depending on where a child/young person lives. It is envisaged that more children and young people would benefit with less travelling time if more provision was more locally accessible.

23. Has there been a space survey? Are there enough mainstream schools with the physical space for hubs? / How will a typical mainstream school accommodate the hub? Most schools are too small for this to be appropriate.

This work would need to be commissioned following the consultation process if the principles outlined are supported.

24. Would just two hubs allow for sufficient provision in the large West area which contains three localities and more than 10 secondary schools?

This would need to be considered as part of developing the proposal. If the principle around area-based provision is supported through this consultation, then it may well be that we need to think differently in certain cases, to take account of elements such as the geography of the west - we recognise provision at King Egbert in Dore would not be 'local' for young people from Stocksbridge!