

# Cabinet

## Dorset County Council



Date of Meeting	4 April 2018
<p><u>Cabinet Member(s)</u></p> <p>Steve Butler – Cabinet Member for Safeguarding</p> <p><u>Lead Director(s)</u></p> <p>Nick Jarman – Interim Director for Children Services</p>	
<b>Subject of Report</b>	<b>Sufficiency of SEND Provision Capital Requirements</b>
Executive Summary	<p>A review is being carried out to assess the current pressure and demand for places in specialist provision across the county for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). This includes all types of education, from mainstream schools, who cater for children of all levels of need, to Resourced Provision Bases and special schools where our most complex children are educated. This review is being conducted in partnership with all stakeholders including Families, Schools and the SEN service, and is being led by the SEND commissioning team.</p> <p>Part of this work has identified the need to expand provision in Resourced Provision Bases, helping to reduce demand for as many external and internal special school places in the future and Special Schools in Dorset, which cater for children with complex needs. This work will lead to 82 additional Base places, and an additional 194 places in Special Schools in Dorset, which will ensure more children can continue to be educated close to their family, home and community.</p> <p>This paper seeks to allocate capital funding to support the implementation of this strategy, and improve the outcomes and life chances for more children with SEND.</p>
	Equalities Impact Assessment:

<p>Impact Assessment:</p>	<p>This will allow more children to access their statutory education closer to home and their community.</p> <hr/> <p>Use of Evidence:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive needs analysis Pan Dorset (2014 / 15)</li> <li>• Stakeholder engagement.</li> <li>• SEN2 Dataset</li> <li>• Feasibility work related to building work requirements</li> </ul> <hr/> <p><b>Budget:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. This work is designed to avoid future costs of provision educating children outside Dorset.</li> <li>2. A reduction in the SEN transport budget is also expected.</li> <li>3. Capital funding for these schemes will come from SEN capital grant to be received over the next three years and the re-prioritisation of existing capital allocations.</li> </ol> <hr/> <p>Risk Assessment:</p> <p>Having considered the risks associated with this decision using the County Council's approved risk management methodology, the level of risk has been identified as:</p> <p>Current Risk: High Residual Risk High</p> <hr/> <p>Other Implications:</p> <p>This will help to improve outcomes for children and families by providing specialist education much closer to home. This will reduce travel times for children, and reduce travel costs for the Local Authority.</p>
<p>Recommendation</p>	<p>Cabinet is asked:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The capital work at Beacroft school to proceed, at a cost of £668,300 in <b>section 8.5</b> of the report, providing replacement modular accommodation, and additional capacity for children with SEND.</li> <li>2. The capital investment of £2,094,769 to deliver sufficient capacity of Resourced Base Provision across the county, for children with Complex Communication Needs (CCN) as outlined in <b>section 8.13</b> of the report. This will reduce the need to place children outside of Dorset, and ensure children are able to access appropriate education close to home.</li> </ol>

	<p>3. It is also recommended that the capital investment is managed and monitored through the School Organisation, Capital Programme and Admissions Board, (Previously Modernising Schools Programme Board), and the Director of Children’s Services has delegated authority to administer the capital, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member for Economic Growth, Education, Learning and Skills.</p>
Reason for Recommendation	To allow capital investment in the education estate, in support of children and families, by providing appropriate specialist provision close to their families, home and communities.
Appendices	<p><b>Appendix a</b> Pan Dorset Needs Assessment – Children with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities (SEND) – <b>September 2014</b></p> <p><b>Appendix b</b> Dorset Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy <b>2018 to 2021</b></p>
Background Papers	N/A
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# **Sufficiency of SEND Education Provision**

## **Special Schools & Resourced Provision Bases - Complex Communication Needs (CCN)**

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**VERSION HISTORY**

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date Issued</b>	<b>Brief Summary of Change</b>	<b>Owner's Name</b>
Draft v1	02032018	1 <sup>st</sup> Draft Version	Gary Binstead
Draft v2	15032018	2 <sup>nd</sup> Draft Version	Gary Binstead
Draft v3	19032018	3 <sup>rd</sup> Draft Version	Gary Binstead

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## **APPENDICES**

1. Pan Dorset Needs Assessment – Children with Special Educational Needs and / or Disabilities (SEND) – September 2014.
2. Dorset Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy 2018 to 2021

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Dorset County Council is in the process of redesigning services to meet the needs of the population in a time of significant financial challenges, through its Forward Together for Children programme. This programme has a particular focus on intervening early in the lives of children and families, in order to reduce the long term impact on children's lives. The way services are delivered will evolve over the coming years to support this prevention strategy.
- 1.2 A review has been carried out to assess the current pressure and demand for places in specialist provision across the county for children with Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND). This includes all types of education, from mainstream schools, who cater for children of all levels of need, to Resourced Provision Bases and Special Schools, where our most complex children are educated. This review has been conducted in partnership with parents and carers, schools, and all stakeholders including families, schools and the SEN service, and is being led by the SEND commissioning team.
- 1.3 This work has identified the need to increase specialist provision across the county, including the need to expand provision in Special Schools and Resourced Provision Bases, providing additional capacity closer to home for Dorset children to meet the growing demand. The increase in Base provision will reduce demand for as many external and internal special school places, and the additional capacity in the special school estate will allow more children to access education within the county. This work is intended to lead to at least 194 additional special school places, and a further 82 additional Base places in Dorset, to ensure more children can continue to be closer to their family, home and community.
- 1.4 The current commissioning activity builds on the consultation and commissioning work carried out in 2014 / 15, when Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole, together with the Clinical Commissioning group (CCG), commissioned a joint needs analysis for children with SEN, (**appendix a**). There has been significant further engagement and consultation in the interim with parents, carers, schools and other stakeholders.
- 1.5 The information provided for the SEN 2 dataset, (which is the return provided for the Department for Education (DfE)), taken at the end of March 2017 is the basis for the demand analysis, and this has been updated in **table 1** to show the current position as at 31<sup>st</sup> of January 2018. As you can see, this shows the number of children with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) by primary need. There has already been growth over the last 22 months of 724 children, (a 49% increase), some of whom will require specialist provision to meet their educational needs.
- 1.6 This growth is forecast to continue until at least 2023 as you will see in **table 5**, and the activity planned for the next few years is designed to ensure that sufficient capacity is available within Dorset to meet these demands.
- 1.7 **Table 2** shows the same cohort of children from March 2017 identified by their provision type. This indicates that half of these children with an EHCP are educated in a mainstream setting with the appropriate support, and the expectation is that these ratios will remain relatively constant.

Understanding Need**Table 1 - Children with a statement or an EHCP by primary need (Mar 16 – Jan 18)**

SEN Primary Need	Mar-16	Mar-17	Jan-18	16/17 growth	17/18 growth YTD	16 / 18 Growth YTD
Autistic Spectrum Disorder	415	509	569	23%	12%	37%
Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulty (BESD)	156	220	272	41%	24%	74%
Hearing Impairment	38	41	56	8%	37%	47%
Moderate Learning Difficulties	272	331	391	22%	18%	44%
Multi-Sensory Impairment	2	4	4	100%	0%	100%
Other Difficulty/Disability	21	1	1	-95%	0%	-95%
Physical Difficulties	192	210	222	9%	6%	16%
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties	36	34	31	-6%	-9%	-14%
Severe Learning Difficulties	124	137	139	10%	1%	12%
Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH)	3	1	4	-67%	300%	33%
Specific Learning Difficulty (Dyslexia)	46	53	64	15%	21%	39%
Speech, Language or Communication Difficulty	169	215	248	27%	15%	47%
Visual Impairment	10	16	21	60%	31%	110%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1484</b>	<b>1772</b>	<b>2208</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>49%</b>

(Please note that categorisation changed recently, so children who had a primary need of Behavioural, Emotional and Social Difficulty, would now be categorised as having Social, Emotional and Mental Health. Therefore these figures should be added together as below)

(BESD & SEMH)	159	221	276	39%	25%	74%
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**Table 2 – Children with a statement or an EHCP by placement type (Mar 2017)**

2017 SEN by placement type	
Row Labels	Count of DOB
AP/PRU: Free School	3
AP/PRU: LA Maintained	6
Apprenticeship	2
Educated Elsewhere	23
Education Elsewhere	15
Mainstream School: Academy	283
Mainstream School: Academy (Resourced Provision)	17
Mainstream School: Free School	9
Mainstream School: Independent School	12
Mainstream School: LA maintained (including foundation schools)	361
Mainstream School: LA Maintained (Resourced Provision)	56
Non-maintained early years settings in the private and voluntary sector	4
Post 16: General FE and Tertiary Colleges/HE	174
Post 16: Other FE	24
Post 16: Specialist Post-16 Institutions	23
Special School: Academy/Free	109
Special School: Independent Special Schools	80
Special School: LA Maintained (including Foundation Schools)	522
Special School: Non-maintained	49
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1772</b>

1.8 The following tables show the number of places commissioned by Dorset County Council in March 2017. **Table 3** shows the range of needs commissioned from Independent providers, where there is a high complexity, or the type of provision is not available within the county, which could be for a range of reasons including specialism or capacity.

**Table 3 – Out of County / Independent placements by Primary Need**

SEN Primary Need	2016	2017	% change
Autistic Spectrum Condition	43	57	33%
Hearing Impairment	5	5	0%
Medical	0	1	
Moderate Learning Disorder	5	1	-80%
Physical Disability	26	32	23%
Profound & Multiple LD	12	12	0%
Social Emotional Mental Health	31	72	132%
Speech Language & Communication	4	3	-25%
Severe Learning Disability	6	1	-83%
Specific Learning Disability	5	5	0%
Blank	4	23	475%
<b>Total</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>50%</b>

1.9 **Table 4** captures the number of places that are commissioned within Dorset at a range of specialist education settings. The paper will focus on the capital investment required to expand the Resourced Provision Bases to meet growing demand, and help to reduce the reliance on more expensive independent provision outside of Dorset.

**Table 4 – Specialist places commissioned across Dorset**

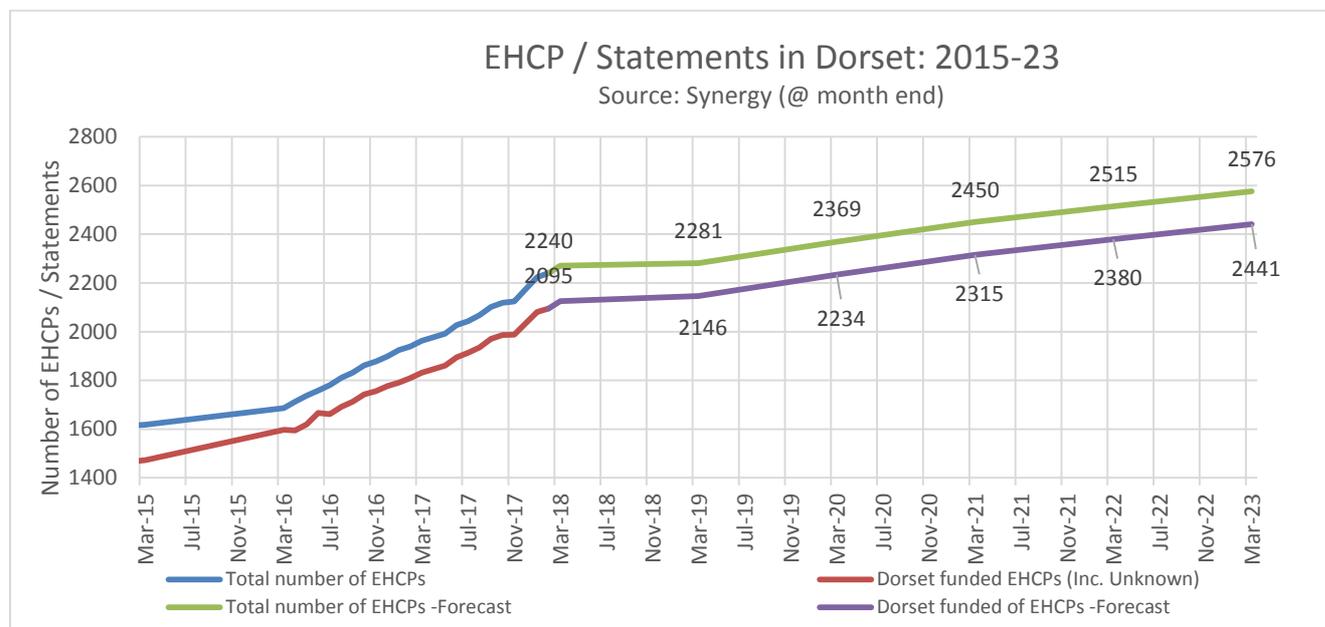
Type of places	Number of places
Resourced Base Provision	159
Dorset Special Schools	638
Learning Centres (Alternative Provision)	267

### Growth and Demand

1.10 **Table 5** below demonstrates the growth in the number of children with a statement or an EHCP from March 2015, and the forecast growth in the number of children which we have used to model the additional capacity required up until 2023. Numbers are expected to continue to rise, reaching 2494 by March 2023. This is driven by a number of factors, including legislation which means that pupils are now entitled to remain in education until the age of 25, increasing complexity of children's needs, all causing additional pressure on the system and budgets.

1.11 As you can see, there is a steady growth in the number of pupils with an EHCP, and a significant proportion of these children will require educating in a specialist education setting. The proposed growth in capacity will allow these children to access their education close to home and their local community, ensuring better outcomes.

**Table 5 – Forecast demand for EHCPs**



1.12 **Table 6** demonstrates the expected growth of EHCP's up to 2023 by age band, and as you can clearly see the greatest growth is in the post 16 area. This is due to recent legislative changes about the extended right to education up to the age of 25 from the age of 19. This is causing significant pressure in the system, and is the next big piece of work that has commenced in the service, to start to understand the demand and map and plan to meet these needs.

Progress will be reported in this area as the work develops, and is currently at the scoping stage for the work.

**Table 6 – Forecast Growth of EHCP by age**

Growth Forecast	Mar-18	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-21	Mar-22	Mar-23	Growth from 2018 to 2023
Under 5 years of age	37	40	41	41	43	45	22.81%
Aged 5-10	693	715	731	744	754	760	9.60%
Aged 11-15	749	752	753	754	754	755	0.76%
Aged 16-19	526	533	536	536	535	535	1.77%
Aged 20-25	89	106	174	240	293	346	288.45%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2094</b>	<b>2146</b>	<b>2234</b>	<b>2315</b>	<b>2380</b>	<b>2441</b>	<b>16.56%</b>
% Change on previous year		2.49%	4.09%	3.62%	2.81%	2.56%	

1.13 Using the growth forecast for EHCP’s, we have compared the number of pupils with an EHCP who are being educated in a specialist setting currently in **table 7**, to forecast the potential demand for these places up to 2023. You will notice that the growth in the middle years is small, but larger at either end of the age groups.

**Table 7 – Forecast Growth of Specialist Places**

Growth Forecast	Mar-18	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-21	Mar-22	Mar-23	Growth from 2018 to 2023
Aged 5-10	378	390	399	406	411	415	9.60%
Aged 11-15	409	411	411	411	412	412	0.76%
Aged 16-19	287	291	292	292	292	292	1.77%
Aged 20-25	49	58	95	131	160	189	288.45%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1123</b>	<b>1150</b>	<b>1197</b>	<b>1242</b>	<b>1276</b>	<b>1308</b>	<b>16.45%</b>
% Change on previous year		2.38%	4.14%	3.68%	2.76%	2.52%	

1.14 The commissioning team and others have been engaging with families, children, schools and many other stakeholders over the last few years, to establish a plan to meet the needs of these children, and in **table 8** you will see where the growth in places is planned to be over the next few years. There are additional places planned for 3 of our existing special schools through capital investment from a central government SEND capital grant, and also capital investment provided by Dorset County Council. This equates to an additional 38 special school places.

1.15 In addition, there is a new special school due to open in Bovington in September 2019, with a capacity of 160 places, which will meet the needs of children with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC), and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. This school was originally planned to be for 60 children with ASC, but through significant engagement with the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), agreement was reached to increase the size of the school to 160, which will be operated by the Delta Education Trust.

1.16 There is also a programme of additional Resourced Provision Bases planned for the county, which will provide additional capacity for children to access mainstream education with additional support. This is targeted at children with Complex Communication Needs (CCN), with a further plan to introduce Resourced Provision Bases for children with SEMH needs. This SEMH work is still under development. There is further information detailed in **section 8, table 12**.

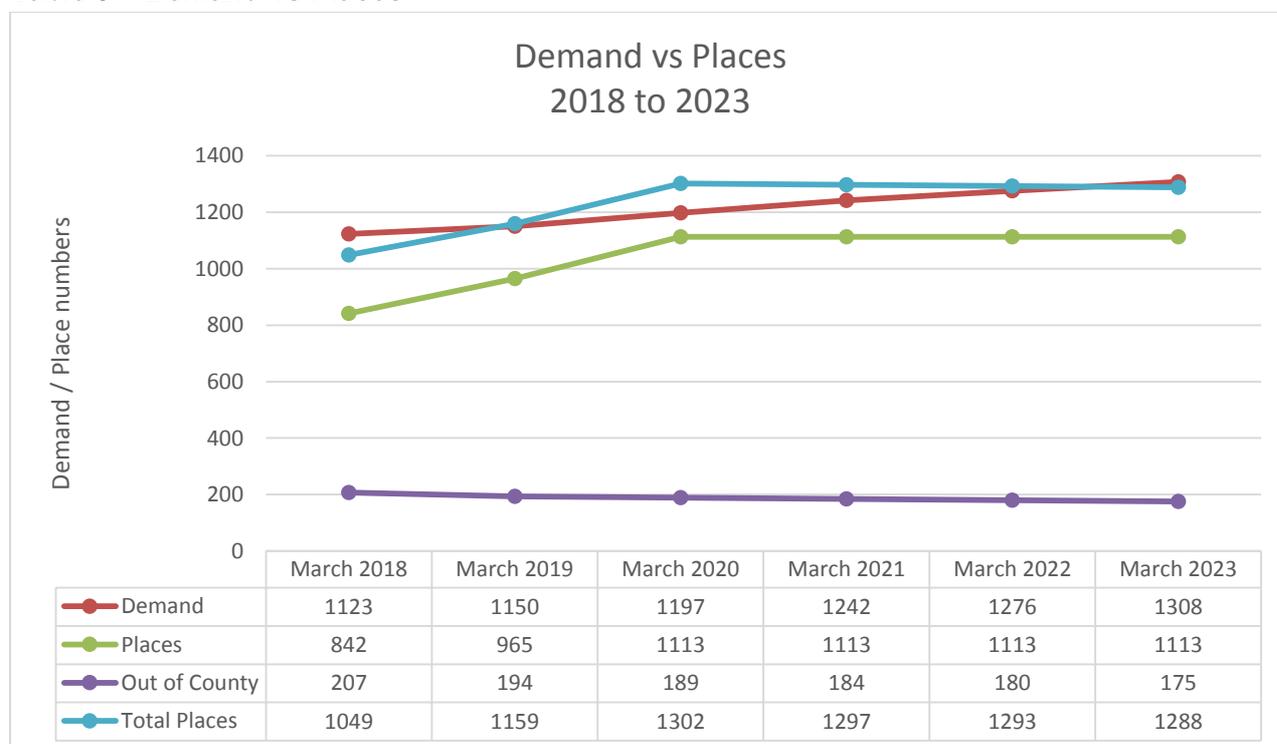
**Table 8 – Forecast growth in places**

Growth Forecast	Mar-18	Mar-19	Mar-20	Mar-21	Mar-22	Mar-23	Growth from 2018 to 2023
Special School	647	725	835	835	835	835	29.06%
Resourced Provision Bases	195	240	278	278	278	278	42.56%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>842</b>	<b>965</b>	<b>1113</b>	<b>1113</b>	<b>1113</b>	<b>1113</b>	<b>32.19%</b>
% Change on previous year		14.61%	15.34%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	
Out of County	207	194	189	184	180	175	-15.46%

1.17 The result of this analysis is demonstrated in **table 9** below, which shows the increase in demand, against the increase in the number of places. Alongside the additional capacity being provided, there is also work ongoing through a review of all complex cases, to reduce the reliance on independent places outside the county, where there will be a reduction in places as seen below. It is expected that children will return to specialist education places in Dorset as a result of this work.

1.18 The review of the complex cases is being lead through the SEND team, with support from special schools, Dorset Parent Carer Council (DPCC) and other teams within the authority.

**Table 9 – Demand vs Places**



Occupancy

1.19 Historically, there has been a challenge around the occupancy rates of some of the specialist provision settings. This has been addressed, and the assumption for the future is that schools will be funded for any places that are occupied with children, and not for empty places. The work around capacity is aligned with the work to balance the pressure on the High Needs Budget, and this is essential to ensure value for money for these places. The exception will be a guarantee of minimum funding to ensure that a Resourced Provision Base can operate safely and appropriately, ready for children to be admitted, particularly as the new Bases are being established.

1.20 There will also be a transitional phase over the next few years where existing Bases will be de-commissioned, and the number of pupils being supported will reduce as children naturally leave these provisions. It is important to ensure that the education of these children is not affected, and schools will be supported through this work on an individual basis.

National comparison of SEND pupils in Special Schools

1.21 Based on the May 2017 census, which is the most up to date information we have for comparison, 2.6% of Dorset children have an EHCP, against a national average in January 2017 of 2.8%. This indicates that there is the potential for the demand on specialist places to increase, and will be reviewed annually to ensure that plans are in place to meet any future increase in numbers.

1.22 There are additional comparisons in **table 10** below relating to the percentage of children in each type of education setting, compared to national averages, as at March 2017 (the most recent data available). Taken from the Central Government benchmarking site.

**Table 10 – National Comparison**

<b>Type of Provision</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Dorset</b>	<b>Difference</b>
Mainstream School	37.30%	37.30%	0.00%
Special School	37.39%	38.37%	0.98%
Independent Special School	3.85%	4.51%	0.65%
Resourced Provision Base / SEN Unit	6.20%	4.11%	-2.08%
Alternative Provision	0.76%	0.56%	-0.20%
Post 16 Provision	11.16%	12.47%	1.31%
Other	3.34%	2.68%	-0.66%

Other includes : Educated Elsewhere / Internships / Apprenticeships / Training

## 2. Outcomes and Objectives

- 2.1 The aim of this work is to ensure that children with SEND are able to receive great education close to home, appropriate to their needs.
- 2.2 The outcomes and objectives listed below will be delivered from now until September 2020, and will be staged, as some of them require significant planning and building work.
- a. Children will have their SEND needs met closer to home, and therefore have reduced travel times.
  - b. Children will be attending more local provision which will mean they can remain closer to their family and local community
  - c. Reduced costs to the local authority as not as fewer children will require specialist Independent provision outside of the county of Dorset.
  - d. Resourced Base Provision for Complex Communication Needs (CCN) in place for children to access who cannot receive the appropriate levels of support in a mainstream setting in all parts of the county.
  - e. Resourced Base Provision for Social, Emotional and Mental Health Needs (SEMH) in place for children to access who cannot receive the appropriate levels of support in a mainstream setting in all parts of the county.
  - f. Additional Special school capacity in place for children to access who cannot receive the appropriate levels of support in a mainstream or Resource Provision Base setting in the county.
- 2.3 The outcomes that we aim to deliver are consistent with the corporate outcomes of Safe, Healthy, Independent and Prosperous.

## 3. Quality

- a. As a responsible local authority we aim to place children in Good or Outstanding provision where possible, and work with schools, and partners to achieve and maintain these high standards of education and inclusion.
- b. The table below (**table 11**) shows the current Ofsted rating for the special schools in Dorset as at the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2018.

**Table 11 – Ofsted rating for Dorset Special Schools**

Name of Special School	Current Ofsted Rating
Beaucroft	Outstanding
Mountjoy	Good
Westfield	Outstanding
Wyvern	Good

Yewstock	Outstanding
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#### 4. Engagement & Consultation

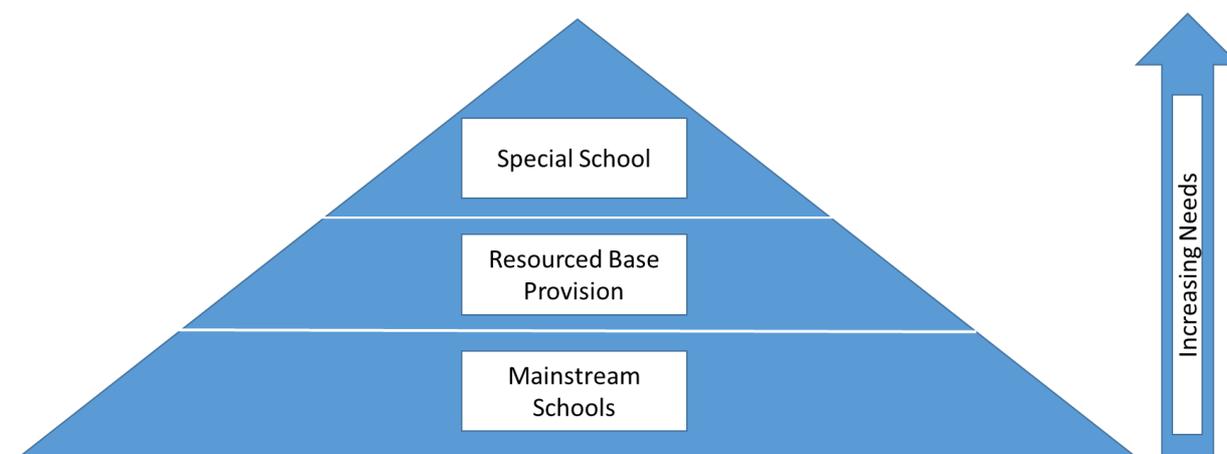
4.1 As part of the current review, significant engagement and consultation has been carried out, starting with the Pan-Dorset consultation in 2014 (**appendix a**). Since this time, the review has engaged with numerous stakeholders including :

- Families / carers
- Dorset Parent Carer Council
- Children
- Schools (including special, mainstream, maintained and academies)
- External / Independent providers of education
- DfE
- Members
- Colleagues within Dorset County Council and other Councils

4.2 This engagement and consultation will continue with stakeholders, until delivery of the project is complete, and the additional places are available. Further details are available on the 'Local Offer'.

#### 5. Pathway and Provision Model

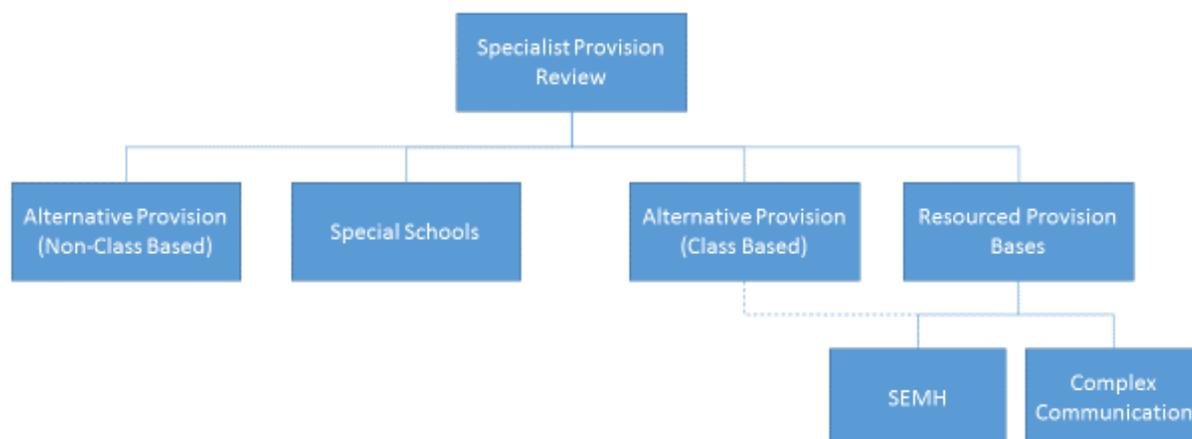
5.1 Models of delivery have developed over time through a number of staff and leadership changes, but the model below shows the agreed levels of provision and pathway for meeting the needs of children with SEN as their needs increase.



5.2 Many children with SEN can, and will have their needs met within a mainstream school setting. Once needs escalate to a certain level, and the school have

demonstrated a graduated response, a child may require a more specialist provision. This would normally be a Resourced Base Provision initially, with only the most complex children requiring a place at a special school.

5.3 The review has considered the needs of all children, and below you will see the range of specialist provision that is being reviewed, developed and implemented.



## 6. Progress to Date

6.1 As you will see from the information provided in the sections above, there is clearly a need for more provision within Dorset to ensure that children are able to access education close to their communities and families. This increase is forecast to continue to rise in line with the increase in the number of children with a statement or an EHCP.

6.2 In order for Dorset County Council to continue to fulfil its statutory duties in providing appropriate education settings for all of the children of Dorset, there is a need for more places across the county to meet the needs of children with SEND. This would also enable some of the children who are currently educated outside of the county to return if appropriate, and reduce the need to use independent provision.

6.3 A summary of progress to date of the key elements regarding the specialist provision work is shown below, demonstrating what has been achieved in each of the categories of provision in section 5.

- a) Needs analysis of children with SEND
- b) Demand forecast of growth of children with a statement / EHCP
- c) Capital Investment from Dorset County Council of £550,000 to provide at least an additional 24 special school places
- d) Business case made for an additional special school for children with SEMH
- e) Additional special school for children with ASC and SEMH due to open in Dorset in September 2019 for 160 pupils
- f) The first CCN bases operational in September 2017 with capacity of 20 places so far
- g) Further CCN bases agreed to start in September 2018 / 19 with capacity of a further 58 places

- h) Review of children placed in independent special schools has already identified 14 children so far who can move back to schools in Dorset over the next 2 years
- i) Review of looked after children (LAC) placed in independent provision, with a view to move home, or to alternative placements, is ongoing and estimated to deliver additional savings. This work is being managed through the Care and Protection service, and the placements team.

6.4 This work is related to Priority 5 in the SEND delivery plan (**appendix b**), which was put in place in response to the Ofsted inspection in 2017.

**Priority 1:** A single system working together across education, health and social care for joint outcomes

**Priority 2:** Getting it right first time: appropriate, effective and timely joint assessment, planning and review of need that is personalised to the child or young person with SEND

**Priority 3:** Working with children, young people and parents and carers

**Priority 4:** Use effective monitoring and quality assurance procedures to challenge, support and develop provision

**Priority 5:** The effective and efficient management of SEN funding to ensure excellent quality, sufficiency and affordability of local SEN provision

6.5 The 5 priorities detailed above will improve the outcomes and life chances for children with SEND, and help to reduce costs for the local authority. This work is captured in the Dorset Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Strategy 2018 to 2021

## 7. Next Steps

7.1 Work is continuing across all areas of specialist provision which include further key tasks

1. Analysing referral panels for special schools to establish further demand requirements. Early indications are that the current planned capacity should be enough to meet the needs of the majority of Dorset children for the next 10 years.
2. Continuing to develop CCN bases across the rest of Dorset to prevent children needing special school provision, and avoiding the need to travel so far for education
3. Developing SEMH provision across the county to meet the needs of appropriate children, and prevent them from requiring a place at a special school, avoiding the need to travel so far for education. This will complement the Alternative Provision Strategy.
4. Further development of Alternative Provision across the county, and work to develop the premises through capital investment, to ensure the buildings are conducive to a positive learning environment
5. Implement a framework for Alternative Provision that can be accessed by the local authority, all schools and education setting, providing comprehensive offers of alternative learning, for children who cannot access a standard curriculum for a variety of reasons
6. Continue to review children's education placements in independent provision, with a view to move them back to Dorset where appropriate. Also continue to work with

Care and Protection regarding the LAC children placed in independent provision receiving care and education, to ensure that savings are realised as soon as possible

7. Continue with financial impact modelling and demand mapping, based on the actions being taken and strategies put in place.

## 8. Financial Implications

8.1 In order to deliver this strategy for children with SEND, it is necessary to commit capital investment in provision across the county, to provide additional capacity within the existing school estate. Part of the consideration for potential host schools is the amount of existing capacity that is available within the school, along with a willingness to support these children.

8.2 Value for money is a key consideration, and the preferred option is always to use existing buildings where possible to reduce the cost of investment. This is not always possible, and therefore sometimes investment in additional buildings is required.

8.3 Investment has already been provided by Dorset County Council of over £1,000,000 since June 2017, to provide 24 additional places at 2 Special Schools, and to relocate the Dorchester Learning Centre to alternative buildings on the Monkton Park site, allowing additional capacity to be created. Work is already underway at all sites, with Yewstock school completed and able to offer an extra 10 places already.

8.4 Work at Mountjoy and Beaminster schools is continuing with the extra capacity of 14 special school places due to be available for September 2018, and the work at Dorchester Learning Centre has also started, and should be complete for September 2018 as well.

8.5 It is also intended to invest additional capital to replace existing modular buildings at another of our special schools (Beaucroft) ready for September 2018. This work will be completed through a separate budget (Modular and Urgent Works Programme), and is expected to cost £668,300, providing a further 10 to 14 extra places for children with SEND.

8.6 There is also a new special school due to open in Bovington, Dorset in September 2019 funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), which will provide places for another 160 children with Autistic Spectrum Condition (ASC) and Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs, when at full capacity, although some of these places will be occupied by children from neighbouring authorities (Poole and Bournemouth).

8.7 Based on the feasibility for the 5 schools in the North and East of the county for Resourced Provision Bases, investment falls into several categories as detailed in the table below. A Base will vary in size between 10 and 16 dependant on the age of the child, and whether the school needs a new building or whether we can update an existing building. Feasibility assessment work has been carried out on a number of the sites, which have provided indicative costs for accommodation options as detailed below in **Table 12**.

8.8 Work is still continuing to agree the final solution for each site, and there has been full engagement with the schools concerned, who are working in partnership with the local authority to provide this much needed resource.

**Table 12 – Capital Investment requirements**

Provision Type	Name of School/ Area	No of places	Target Date	Costs
CCN	EAST - Parley First School	10	Sep-18	£2,094,769.00
	EAST - West Moors Middle	10	Sep-18	
	EAST - Ferndown Upper	10	Sep-19	
	NORTH - Gillingham Primary	16	Sep-19	
	NORTH - Sturminster High School	16	Sep-18	
	WEST - Dorchester Middle School	10	Sep-19	
	SOUTH - Wey & Port Primary	10	Sep-19	
	SOUTH - Wey & Port Secondary	16	Sep-19	
		98		

8.9 The total capital investment for the 8 CCN Bases is approximately £2,094,769, providing an additional 98 places. Some current Speech and Language Bases, and other provision will be reducing capacity and closing over the next few years (approximately 16 places), as they have been replaced by the CCN provision in the area, leaving an increase of 82 places.

8.10 The current average cost of a placement outside Dorset is £56,000 (based on 2016 / 17), where the average local authority rate for a special school place is £19,800. Therefore local authority places cost £36,200 less than those outside the county. By placing children in the CCN Bases, the authority is expected to avoid paying costs in the region of £2,968,400 across a full financial year when they are at full capacity, (82 places x £36,200) against the cost for education outside Dorset. Some children are expected to return to the county from existing provision where appropriate, although these numbers will form part of case planning, and the numbers are not expected to be significant.

8.11 Even if there is an assumption that only 50% of the children in a Base would be avoiding an out of county placement, this would equate to avoided costs of £1,484,200 across a full year, when the bases are at full capacity. This would reduce the pressure on the High Needs Block of the Dedicated Schools Grant.

8.12 This would allow children to access appropriate education closer to home, and avoid the use of provision outside of Dorset, or in more expensive independent provision. Alternatively some of these children would require a specialist package of support in a mainstream setting which could often cost similar to a Base place.

**Table 13 – Commissioned places comparison**

Type of places	Number of places 2017	Number of Places 2020	Increased Capacity
CCN Resourced Provision Bases	159	241	+82
Dorset Special Schools	638	832	+194

8.13 As part of a central government initiative, Local Authorities are able to access a capital grant across the next 3 years to support the development of specialist provision. For Dorset, the allocation is £338,318 per year, totalling £1,014,953. Therefore the additional capital investment required to deliver this project would be in the region of £1,079,816. The implementation would be over the next 2 and a half years, allowing all bases to be operational by September 2020.

8.14 The additional investment would be provided through the School Organisation, Capital Programme and Admissions Board, which is responsible for agreeing priorities, and how to spend the capital provided by central government. This capital must be used to increase school places across the county.

8.15 The benefit of placing children closer to home will also realise further savings for the SEND transport budget. The average cost of transport for a child receiving education outside the county of Dorset is approximately £14,000, and there are currently 50 children in receipt of this support. Using this figure as a benchmark against the average cost of transport for a child inside Dorset of £6,200, there will be costs avoided of approximately £7,800 per child.

8.16 If all 50 children are using local provision in the future, this will avoid future travel costs of £390,000. Again, even if 50% of these children accessed education in Dorset instead of outside, the saving would be £195,000. There could also be additional savings on Passenger Assistant (PA) costs, but these have not been confirmed.

## 9. Risks

9.1 There are a number of risks associated with this work if it were not to take place which are detailed below.

- More independent school places would be required, which would mean that the costs of provision would continue to increase
- More children would need to be placed outside of Dorset, which would mean more children separated from their family and community. This could also lead to an increased number of residential places, as many of these children are unable to travel for a considerable distance (guidance is a maximum of 75 minutes travel time for a secondary pupil)
- More transport would be required to enable these children to access the most appropriate education settings further from their home

- Mainstream school, Special School and other education settings would become overwhelmed with additional requests for provision that they could not provide, and this may affect the education provided to other pupils if the schools decided to take on more children

9.2 In addition, there are risks that could also become apparent even if all of this provision is provided :

- An increase in the number of children who have complex SEND needs above the current estimate
- A further increase in the number of children with SEND who are not able to have their needs met within a mainstream school, creating extra demand for specialist places
- A reduction in the number of places inside Dorset due to individual school / Academy decisions
- A lack of future capital investment would affect the ability of the Local Authority to provide these places. As you will have seen above, the funding provided by central government only accounts for around half of the overall investment required just to deliver the CCN element of the additional capacity.

## 10. Summary

10.1 This work is expected to provide better outcomes for children as detailed in section 2, and also provide a preventative, early help and co-ordinated approach to providing education options for children with a statement or EHCP. These outcomes include :

- a. Children will have their SEND needs met closer to home, and therefore have reduced travel times.
- b. Children will be attending more local provision which will mean they can remain closer to their family home and local community
- c. Reduced costs to the local authority as not as many children will require specialist Independent provision outside of the county of Dorset.
- d. Better life chances for children as they will be able to access appropriate education to meet their needs, including those children who benefit from a mainstream setting

10.2 Once the building related work has been completed, we can also ensure that children within Dorset will be educated in the most appropriate school places, which are conducive to a positive learning environment.

10.3 As stated earlier, this work will be phased over the next 1 to 3 years before the full benefits will be realised, but will future proof the local authority regarding it's need to provide appropriate and sufficient specialist education provision until 2023. It is also expected that the number of independent places will reduce, as a result of the additional capacity that will be available.

## 11 Recommendation

11.1 Cabinet are recommended to approve :

4. The capital work at Beaucroft school to proceed, at a cost of £668,300 in **section 8.5** of the report, providing replacement modular accommodation, and additional capacity for children with SEND.
5. The capital investment of £2,094,769 to deliver sufficient capacity of Resourced Base Provision across the county, for children with Complex Communication Needs (CCN) as outlined in **section 8.13** of the report. This will reduce the need to place children outside of Dorset, and ensure children are able to access appropriate education close to home.
6. These capital projects will be monitored through the School Organisation, Capital Programme and Admissions Board, to ensure regular scrutiny, and value for money, as part of the schools capital programme.