

HEREFORDSHIRE CAPITAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY FOR SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) 2020-2030 FOR CONSULTATION

Herefordshire Council has a statutory responsibility to provide sufficient high quality education places for children and young people with SEND including for those with an education, health and care plan (EHCP) relating to their SEN or Disability.

Statement of intent

The majority of children and young people (CYP) with SEND are educated at mainstream schools. Statutory Guidance within the SEN Code of Practice (CoP), 2015, maintains a presumption to mainstream education for all pupils. Where pupils meet the criteria for specialist provision, parents are able to choose to seek a place in more specialist provision. The fabric of the buildings within mainstream schools needs to be fit for this purpose, either supported by Herefordshire Council, in the case of maintained schools, or the Government Education, Skills Funding Agency in the case of academy schools. In certain cases Herefordshire Council may also contribute to improvements in academy schools for special education, where appropriate.

Only a small number of pupils will need physical adaptations to the school because of their need. Where pupils do require a physical adaptation of a mainstream school as a result of their disability, this is covered within the Council's Accessibility Strategy which has been updated and is also currently being prepared for consultation. The focus of this Herefordshire Capital Investment strategy for SEND is on specialist SEND schools and settings.

With regard to specialist settings where admission requires an EHCP, our statement of intent is as follows: –

- That all Herefordshire children and young people with education, health and care plans for SEND are educated in high quality, fit for purpose learning environments
- That sufficient capacity is available to commission such places in settings that meet need within Herefordshire where possible
- That a strategic approach to capital improvement projects in specialist SEND settings is established, to ensure clear prioritisation and best value investment

Herefordshire Schools Capital Investment Strategy (SCIS)

The Children and Families Directorate of Herefordshire Council published a guidance document in 2016, describing the rationale, methodology and processes involved in capital investment for schools in Herefordshire. The current version may be found on Herefordshire Council website. The SCIS is currently undergoing its five-year review, and the 2021-2026 version is due to be published in Spring 2021. This document, (the SEND Capital Investment Strategy) is an integral part of the overall SCIS and will be appended to the SCIS once it has been consulted on and finalised).

Within the SCIS there are a set of eleven stated principles underpinning the strategy, which were developed by consultation with a wide range of stakeholders. In summary, those principles are -

1. High quality learning environments are more likely to deliver best outcomes for children
2. Clarification of the meaning of 'high quality' in this context
3. There will be a range of different sized schools across Herefordshire supporting future population trends, including faith schools. There is no preference as to whether or not schools are academies
4. High quality popular schools will be supported to expand where necessary
5. There will be no preferred size or organisation of schools
6. All schools should plan five years ahead (financially) for continuity
7. As a whole across Herefordshire there should be no more than 10% surplus school places
8. We will be increasingly responsible towards the environment
9. We will promote non-vehicular access routes to schools
10. Any financial investment must represent best value for investors
11. We will carry out detailed consultation on any changes or investment proposals.

Note 1 – for all of the text under each of the headings above, see the full document on the council website.

Note 2 – in most but not all circumstances these principles will apply to SEND capital investment

Our strategic approach towards capital improvement for Herefordshire specialist settings

A range of information is routinely collected, added to, revised and routinely analysed, supporting the forecasting of basic need for places, prioritisation of investment proposals, and the bringing forward of projects (informed more fully by this iterative process rather than a snapshot in time). Listed below is a broad description of the process.

1. Document, track and analyse the annual number of EHCPs awarded in Herefordshire, and compare with national and statistically neighbouring local authority figures
2. Document, track and analyse the SEND population educated in specialist settings
3. Use available data from central government, statistical neighbours and internal intelligence to forecast commissioning need for place planning into the future
4. Investigate and record the sufficiency, suitability and condition of current sites and buildings used to place children and young people with SEND
5. Examine investment options that will provide sufficient SEND places for the future, and continue to improve the quality of accommodation at Herefordshire SEND settings
6. Propose a Directorate prioritised investment programme (for prioritisation methodology see below)
7. Consult on the proposals in the programme using the council consultation policy and methodologies
8. Publish the final proposed programme
9. Take forward the next priority proposal using Herefordshire council governance systems


Methodology for capital project prioritisation

Each setting is considered under the following focus areas –

- Sufficiency – how much physical capacity is there, allowing how many pupils?
- Compliance - suitability information, are the spaces suitable for the designated need and number of pupils? (usually taking the government building bulletin BB104 for guidance)
- Condition – how cost effective is the building in the short, medium and long term and what is the maintenance liability going forward?
- Health and safety
- Designation and demand -use of forecasting information to determine future type and volume of need
- Cost implications – cost of feasibility and high level cost of any improvement option

We are now circulating this SEND capital strategy document in order to consult on the proposals stated within it, (as per bullet 7 in the approach stated above). After reading this consultation document, please take the opportunity to complete the short consultation questionnaire using the link at the end of this document.

Herefordshire SEND Continuum of Provision – Current and Proposed

Mainstream school/setting	Mainstream plus specialist advice	Local Specialist Provision – Resource Bases with pupils on mainstream roll/site	Local Specialist Provision – Special Schools	Specialist Independent Schools or Settings
				
<i>Vast Majority of Children have needs met - Approx. 3000 with SEN from 23,000 pupils</i>	<i>Small Proportion of Children – approx. 500</i>	<i>Small Proportion of Children – approx. 100</i>	<i>Small Proportion of Children – approx. 350</i>	<i>Very Small proportion of Children – Approx. 50</i>
Additional cost range per pupil – 0-£9k	0-£9k	£11k-£19k	£16k-£30k	£25k-£100k
All mainstream schools should offer:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High Quality Teaching All staff trained in breadth of Needs Advice from SENCO Escalating intensity of intervention: Herefordshire Graduated Response https://www.herefordshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/16977/intervention_guidance_for_send_in_schools_and_other_educational_settings.pdf 	Includes expertise from outside of the school staff Inc. Relevant therapies for example	Small group sizes with trained specialist teachers Inclusion in mainstream lessons for part of the week Relevant therapies	Small group sizes with trained specialist teachers Some outreach/in reach to/from mainstream Relevant therapies	Small group sizes with trained specialist teachers Relevant therapies
Type of Need as described in SEND Code of Practice; 2015 with Herefordshire Offer				
Autism	Educational Psychology Outreach from Hampton Dene	Communication and Social Interaction (COSI) Group, Child Development Centre Language and Communication centre (LCC) Hampton Dene Primary The Bridge, Bishop of Hereford Further detailed investigation of autism population planned	Some children with autism and learning difficulty or challenging behaviour have needs met in local special school	Yes, usually ASD with challenging behaviour
Speech, Language and Communication Needs	Speech and language therapy	LCC Hampton Dene Primary	No	No
Social Emotional and Mental Health	Behaviour Support Team	Proposed Nurture Provision KS1	Brookfield Pupil Referral Service	Yes

Mainstream school/setting	Mainstream plus specialist advice	Local Specialist Provision – Resource Bases with pupils on mainstream roll/site	Local Specialist Provision - Special Schools	Specialist Independent Schools or Settings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child unable to regulate their emotions resulting in challenging behaviours incl. ADHD Anxiety/School Phobia/Eating Disorder/gender dysphoria 	Ed. Psychology CAMHS Occ. Therapy Counselling Advice from H3 CAMHS Ed. Psychology	Proposed Nurture Provision KS1 Home and Hospital Teaching Team – H3 Hub	No	Yes, usually Tier 4 specialist NHS beds
Hearing Impairment and Visual Impairment Mainstream schools meet most need	Physical and Sensory Service (PASS)			Yes, placements extremely rarely used
Physical Disability Mainstream schools meet most need	PASS Team Occ. Therapy , Physio	No – All mainstream schools should be able to meet need		Yes, placements extremely rarely used
Learning Difficulties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specific All mainstream schools should be able to meet need: Specialist teachers employed by school Moderate All mainstream schools should be able to meet need: Specialist teachers employed by school Severe and Profound 	Specialist teachers purchased from indep. providers Specialist teachers purchased from private providers Advice from special schools		No Only where a child has significant other complex needs Barrs Court (11-19) , Blackmarston (2-11) , Westfield 2-19) and Beacon College (16-19)	No Only where a child has significant other complex needs Yes, usually combination of Severe LD, ASD and attendant challenging/high risk behaviours

Capital investment required: green – project underway; blue proposed; purple possible requirement following further needs analysis

Notes: This diagram is to explain in broad terms how Herefordshire Council and its partners seek to meet the breadth of SEND across the county. It is important to stress that the Council does not operate blanket policies and in so far as it is compatible with the efficient use of

resources, it will seek to meet parental preference. It is also important to stress that children do not fall neatly into the types of need described. Placement decisions are therefore determined using the advice of specialist professionals from a range of services/agencies.

Overview for SEND strategic place planning and capital improvement

Type of setting Note – maintained settings, by Herefordshire council.	No. of future spaces needed	Current number of commissioned places	Suitability, sufficiency and condition
Total number of special school places	365 (225 LD 2-16, 60 Post-16 LD and 80 SEMH)	(Total of first three rows in table minus intervention places – 355)	
Learning disability special schools 2-16 (Barrs Court academy, Blackmarston maintained, Westfield maintained)..	Blackmarston 85, Barrs Court 80, Westfield 60,	Blackmarston 89, Barrs Court 115 (includes post 16) Westfield 61 (includes post 16). See proposal on page 5, option D ref current post 16 provision at Barrs Court and Westfield schools	2-11 accommodation at Blackmarston good, condition, sufficiency and suitability at Westfield for 2-19 poor, access and sufficiency at Barrs Court for 11-19 poor.
LD 16-19 Beacon College academy	Beacon College 60	0, new college opens September 2021	Poor accommodation for current 16-19 students at BCT and Westfield new accommodation at Beacon College due September 2021
Social emotional mental health school for 7-16 year olds	Brookfield School 80 places plus 8 FTE places for short term intervention work currently provided at the school. The aim is to achieve a modest reduction in numbers from 90 to 80 through outreach work in mainstream schools and adding school nurture groups	Brookfield 90, plus 8 FTE intervention places for pupils still on roll mainstream school.	Current accommodation non-compliant. No girls' toilets, no sports facilities and poor off site accommodation. Improvement project underway
Pupil Referral Service (alternative provision)	Under consultation: propose 65 full time equivalent (fte) places commissioned by LA, (50 fully funded for permanent exclusions, 15 for schools to purchase on Tiered Intervention Programme)	Until Sept 2020 80 places 50 fully funded by LA, 30 for purchase at full cost by schools	Current split site accommodation non-compliant, condition poor at KS3 centre, access for vehicles and suitability poor for KS4 centre.
Home and hospital teaching service	H3 25 fte commissioned places for up to 50 part-time pupils, accommodation planned for up to 24 at any one time.	53 part-time pupils	Under compliant and cramped accommodation, teaching spaces unsuitable for teaching methodologies

Type of setting Note – maintained settings, by Herefordshire council.	No. of future spaces needed	Current number of commissioned places	Suitability, sufficiency and condition
Resourced Provision Hampton Dene Primary LCC (Language and Autism Bases both with a KS1 and a KS 2 class) Bishop of Hereford Bluecoat School (Autism Base for 8 pupils)	Sufficiency needed is under investigation, see pages 6 and 7 below	Currently has 45 primary and 8 secondary places commissioned	Accommodation at KS1 and 2 setting good, accommodation at KS3/4 setting good but no capacity for increasing provision
Independent and non-maintained Provision	Provision sought when needs require and particular pupil needs not supportable in-county	Varies – Approximately 50 day and residential places including multi-agency funded places	No information, out of county. No changes planned as these are private organisations responsible for their own capital investment.

1. Strategic options considered for learning disability (LD) schools

	Option	Comment
A	No change	Not feasible on the basis of ongoing maintenance and suitability issues at Westfield, cramped conditions at Westfield and Barrs Court and poor access/parking at Westfield and Barrs Court. In addition, serious issues raised in fire risk assessment for Westfield. There is also a need to create modest capacity increase in provision for LD across the county
B	Close all LD schools and build one county through 2-19 school	Not feasible on basis of travel time for very young pupils, previous investment at Blackmarston, successful bid for government funded 16-19 school and lack of site availability for very large school in a central location
C	Relocate Barrs Court School to another central location, expand to accommodate 2-16 pupils and close Westfield	Not feasible due to travel time for very young pupils, and demographic of need in the north of Herefordshire
D	Improve/rebuild Westfield school to take 60 pupils from 2-16, phase out Westfield and Barrs Court sixth form after the new post 16 college opens. Discuss concerns regarding Barrs Court School site shortcomings with DfE and ESFA, to look at possibility of funding for relocation to a new site	Preferred option, keeping travel time as low as possible for young pupils, transport costs as low as possible, and creation of a small increase in available places for 2-16 pupils. In addition this option retains the potential for supporting applications for places from out of county.

Proposed course of action – pursue option D by undertaking a feasibility study into best way to achieve improved accommodation for a 60 place Westfield school for 2-16 year olds. Consult in 2021 on proposal to close by phasing out the Westfield sixth form starting from one year after opening date for the Beacon Post-16 College.

2. Strategic options considered for the SEMH school (Brookfield only SEMH school)

	Option	Comment
A	No change	Not feasible on the basis of non-compliance with BB104, lack of girls' toilets and lack of sports facilities. Note, Brookfield is the only Hfds. school with SEMH designation
B	Remodel and extend at current site	Explored possibilities by commissioning a feasibility survey in 2018/19
C	Rebuild at current site or at another site to be identified	As above

Action undertaken- as a result of the feasibility study commissioned in 2018/19 agreed option to remodel and extend current facilities. Project funded and underway.

3. Strategic option for alternative provision (Herefordshire Pupil Referral Service - HPRS one school on split sites)

	Option	Comment
A	No change	Not feasible on the basis of high cost of ongoing maintenance and repair, non-compliance, cramped conditions and poor access
B	Expand one of the current sites to accommodate all pupils on roll	Preferred option but may be difficult due to lack of space at either.
C	Dispose of both sites and build a new PRU for all pupils on a new site to be identified	May be difficult, new site would be needed, which may be difficult in a City location, but would enable equity release from sale of both current sites.
D	Build a new key stage accommodation for one or both on current site(s)	Unsatisfactory, leaves school on split sites and would not represent value for money.

Proposed course of action- proposed way forward is to commission a feasibility survey to look at the options available, high level cost and best solution for further examination.

4. Strategic options for home and hospital teaching service

	Options	Comments
A	No change	Not feasible on the basis of cramped conditions, poor compliance and increased numbers of pupils since setting opened
B	Remodel the current building to improve compliance and suitability of spaces for pupil need	This would provide a short term solution to suitability of spaces, but not relieve cramped conditions. Site unsuitable for further expansion (co-located at Riverside Primary School)
C	Pursue the feasibility of using the post-16 hub on Symonds Street currently occupied by Barrs Court	Best option, investigate design and cost with council property services and timeline with Barrs Court Trust.

	Options	Comments
	Trust sixth form, when vacated. Vacate current H3 site and relocate the service to the Symonds Street building after internal modifications have been made.	

Proposed course of action - proposed option is to produce a business plan for option C, and investigate design, time and cost implications. Interim measures to be put in place to mitigate present capacity issues at H3 as a potential project is developed.

5. Strategic options for primary resourced provision for autism

	Option	Comment
A	No change	Emerging need for extra capacity. Use of out of county solutions or private settings may cause longer travel times for young children, and poor value for money
B	Establish a second primary school resourced provision	May expand the provision above that of similar authorities, but this may be necessary to reflect local need and geographical factors. To be discussed
C	Expand the current primary resourced provision	This would lead to a disproportionate number of children with an EHCP in a single mainstream primary school

Proposed course of action – proposed next step is to conduct further work on the capacity needed at KS1 and 2, and the trend at national and statistical neighbour level. This will enable a proposed option to be brought forward

6. Strategic options for secondary resourced provision for autism

	Option	Comment
A	No change	May not enable Herefordshire to meet need, and lead to expensive out of county placements or use of costly private settings
B	Establish an additional secondary school resourced provision	May expand the provision above that of similar authorities, but this may be necessary to reflect local need and geographical factors. To be discussed
C	Commission the creation of extra capacity from an existing provider at an off-site setting to support those with a greater complexity of need	Needs to be supported by an in-depth study of actual, potential and latent demand within current and emerging pupil population

Proposed course of action - next step is to conduct further work on the capacity and type of provision needed at KS3 and 4, and the trend at national and statistical neighbour level. This will enable a proposed option to be brought forward

Note – following on from the further work needed to determine both primary and secondary resourced provision proposed options, the strategy will be updated in due course.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION PROPOSALS FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO SEND SETTINGS 2020-30

This consultation will follow Herefordshire Council's consultation process methodology

Setting	Scope and scale	Funding	Comment
Barrs Court 11-19 LD academy school	Collect information re condition, suitability and sufficiency and support discussions between Barrs Court Trust and the DfE regarding solutions to the cramped 11-16 conditions and poor vehicle access and parking. Support BCT phasing out of sixth form provision	To be explored, likely to be DfE academy condition improvement funding and any available government grants	BCT needs to provide current condition report and commission internal and external suitability survey to support discussions with DfE
Beacon Post-16 LD academy college	Work with the DfE to complete the new build. Start to commission places in Sept 2021	Successful bid for government funding for total cost, and DfE delivery model	Underway, completion August 2021. School consultation conducted in line with bid conditions. <u>Not included in this consultation.</u>
Westfield 2-19 LD school	Conduct a feasibility study into the best option for improved Westfield school provision for 60 2-16 LD places, and consult on the closure of post-16 Westfield LD provision.	Feasibility study costs from current council forward plan budget for preliminary works to inform capital proposals	Draft proposal for procurement of feasibility work underway in readiness for finalising and cabinet approval after consultation on SEND capital strategy
Brookfield 7-16 SEMH academy school	As a result of a feasibility study in 2018/19 capital improvements are underway for the Brookfield school to bring off-site provision onto one site, remodel current secondary provision and provide a new sports hall for all pupils.	Special provision government grant and council funding already existing in the forward plan	Project underway, at developed design stage. . School consultation conducted for special provision fund, in line with fund conditions. Council capital legacy funding in place from 2016. <u>Not included in this consultation.</u>
Alternative provision (PRU) for 11-16 pupils disengaged from mainstream	Conduct feasibility exercise into the options presented in the alternative provision table (page 5 above)	Funding for feasibility work to be informed by corporate capital funding methodology April 2021 onwards	Discuss proposal for feasibility work at Children and Families Capital Strategy board
Resourced Provision for pupils autism needs and an EHCP	Conduct further investigative work on needs and sufficiency required, (as stated in tables on pages 6 and 7 above) followed by feasibility work to determine proposed option	Investigative work to be completed by council officers. Funding availability for	Discuss proposal for feasibility work at Children and Families Capital Strategy board

Setting	Scope and scale	Funding	Comment
	for both primary and secondary RP for autism. Update SEND capital strategy for consultation on resulting RP proposals	feasibility work to be informed by corporate capital funding methodology April 2021 onwards	
Home and hospital teaching service (H3) for pupils too unwell to attend mainstream school	Commission work into design and high level cost of internal modifications to Symonds Street building currently in use for post 16 Barrs Court Trust LD provision, in order to accommodate the H3 provision	Funding for any proposed work to be discussed when design and costs information is available. Likely source of funding to be the annual government schools maintenance and repair capital grant	Proposal for commissioning of design development and costing work to be taken to Directorate capital programme board for discussion in the first instance.

Responding to this consultation

To respond to this consultation paper, please complete the short questionnaire using the link <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/D7GVKBN>

The closing date and time for responses is **Tuesday 9th February 2021**

Following receipt of all responses by the closing date, results of the consultation will be analysed. Frequently asked questions and council responses will be published by **Tuesday 23rd February 2021**

Final publication of the strategy following consultation will be by **31st March 2021**