

Appendix 5: Detailed Overview of Educational Benefit, Transition Planning and Professional Development.

Educational Benefits of proposed changes

A comprehensive review and audit of the specialist educational provision for children, with additional support needs was undertaken by the Educational Psychological Service. This involved a detailed analysis of the profile of educational and developmental needs of each individual child within the current specialist provision. The primary finding of the audit and review, was that the existing specialist provision in Merkland School, Castlehill Language and Communication Resource (LCR) and Twechar Language and Communication Resource (LCR) was responsible for children with a similar range of additional support needs.

These included:

- Delays or impairments in expressive and/or receptive language
- Difficulties in the area of social communication, i.e. interactions with peers and adults, that cannot be supported solely within mainstream school
- Difficulties with focus and attention
- Significant difficulties accessing the curriculum due to learning needs
- Challenging behaviour

This review formed the basis of the current proposal to create enhanced support bases in Wester Cleddens Primary School and Castlehill Primary School and to relocate Twechar Language and Communication Resource (LCR).

It was proposed that labelling resources as primarily focused on ‘language and communication’ misrepresented the far broader range of needs met by each provision. It was also noted that the staff teams in the existing LCR provision came from a range of specialist teaching backgrounds and expertise to meet the needs of this broad range of children, including: complex learning needs; nurture bases; autism specialist unit; and mainstream. The report concluded that the existence of a broad range of additional support needs in each resource was not due to children being misplaced as the point of referral. In fact, consistent with the literature research on this topic, difficulties in the area of language and social communication are associated with barriers to learning in all the areas identified above. (*Bercow Review, 2008; Lindsay et al, 2010 and Meschi et al, 2010*).

Each individual child has a unique profile of needs, with areas of strength and areas of emerging skills and understanding to be developed in the learning environment. The recommendation of the audit and review, supported by a wider review of the literature, was that individualised, personal assessment and planning was required for all children placed in specialist provision (Dockrell et al, 2012 and Lindsay et al 2010). The other key assessment to be made at the point of referral, was whether children would benefit from a resource offering opportunities to access the mainstream classroom or whether children required maximum access to small group learning in ‘standalone’ provision.

The Education Scotland consultation report acknowledges many of the anticipated educational benefits from this change:

*The proposal, if implemented, will enhance the ability of East Dunbartonshire Council to **meet the needs of more children with additional learning needs**. This will be achieved through **improved facilities, designed to better meet children's needs, located closer to their local school and community**. It will **reduce travel time for children on a daily basis** and consequently increase the time available for planned learning. The reduced associated costs, which can potentially be redirected to support improvements in teaching and learning. The proposal also supports a move towards **greater opportunities for children to be more included in events and activities organised within their own local communities**.*

Supporting children within their local communities is key to providing opportunities for inclusion and benefits children who otherwise spend additional amounts of time being transported across the authority. Having provision closer to home within their local community will foster a sense of belonging for each child.

Improved facilities, designed to better meet children's needs

A number of changes are planned to ensure increased educational benefits for those children entering the Enhanced Support Bases in Wester Cleddens Primary and Castlehill Primary, including:

- Improved, robust and consistent methods of initial assessment to ensure that each child's stage of development and additional support needs are accurately and thoroughly documented. This detailed analysis of a child's individual needs will set out the differentiation of the curriculum and adaptations to the learning environment required to ensure effective targeted intervention.
- Maximum opportunity to access mainstream education, which includes access to peers, for both social and academic development, This will be planned to ensure sufficient flexibility to ensure successful social experiences and progresses at a pace that meets the needs of both the individual child and the broader school community.
- Access to specialist teaching approaches (based on TEACCH, structured and visually supported learning) to enhance access to the curriculum and increase attainment.
- Opportunities for teaching and support staff in the mainstream school to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of specialist teaching approaches through peer support, observation and access to training which will enhance access to the curriculum across the school for all learners.
- Regular monitoring and review of progress, using precise Individual Education Plans that ensure areas for development identified at the point of referral are addressed and appropriately progressed within the learning environment.
- Discrete location of the resource within the school to allow children who are emotionally overwhelmed or anxious access to a 'safe space' which preserves the dignity and confidentiality of the individual and prevents the broader group of children being exposed to an individual's display of emotional dysregulation.
- Access to specialist teaching for individual children within the mainstream school who have additional support needs. For example, the enhanced support base may be working with children developing numeracy in a small group at an earlier level of the curriculum. Some children from the mainstream school may benefit from having access to this additional learning opportunity as part of their curriculum.

- A programme of Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) which will build the confidence and skill of staff to support all aspects of a child's emotional wellbeing and ensure maximum access to the mainstream social and academic environment

The broader educational benefits for mainstream children

Research indicates that we can be inclusive and raise attainment in tandem.

Kalambouka et al (2008) conducted an extensive and systematic review of literature in inclusion of children with special needs in mainstream schools and discovered that 81% of the outcomes included positive or neutral effects on learners in comparison to classrooms where children with additional support needs are not included. It should be noted that the EDC proposal is for a flexible inclusion model, which will be based on monitoring the beneficial impact of the included children and the mainstream population

All staff within the newly established Enhanced Support Bases will have access to enhanced training to support all children's learning, attainment and wellbeing. This will allow for greater differentiated learning opportunities for children in all classes.

Children within the mainstream will also have opportunity to work with children within the Enhanced Support Base to support their attainment in literacy and numeracy through small group teaching opportunities.

The benefits for wellbeing and inclusion are evident. Children within both provisions will work together to understand and respect each other. An inclusive and supportive resource throughout the school will lead to a strong sense of community with a shared vision of respect and tolerance.

Transition planning

East Dunbartonshire Council (EDC) recognise that the process of transition is critical to the effectiveness of the development of Enhanced Support Base in Castlehill and Wester Cleddens. The transition planning for this consultation has been in place for the past year, with key aspects of policy and procedural changes taking place at Council level. The main aspects of transition is with regard to the new provision at Wester Cleddens, however, it is envisaged that most of the pupil population of Twechar LCR will attend this new enhanced provision. Castlehill have an existing population of children and will make the usual transition arrangements for the children identified to access their resources:

- Gathering referral information
- Allowing visits and team around the child meetings (where required)
- Planning for teaching and learning arrangements for individual children

Wester Cleddens Enhanced Support Base is a new resource which is being created in one part of the school building. The adaptations will be carried out over the summer of 2018. Staff will be appointed in April/ May 2018. The children who will be attending Wester Cleddens fall into two categories:

- Children who have transferred from Twechar LCR and have fulltime places in their local nursery and school. They will attend on a part time basis for approximately 2 or 3 sessions per week or will receive outreach.
- Children who will have a fulltime place in the Enhanced Support Base (ESB) and will range from P1-7.

Proposed transition procedure and timeline

- **April** - The children that will be offered a placement have been identified through the existing referral processes in the Council.
- **April/May** - Appointment or transfer of ESB staff teams and initial audit of needs of training.
- **May/June** - Staff team training and collaboration on creation of learning environment, learning and teaching approaches and plans for physical environment.
- **May/June** – Enhanced transition procedures will be in place. Contact to be arranged between by Head Teacher/SMT with new children and their families to discuss transition arrangements, Q&A session with parents will take place, show in plans of document and finalisation of practical arrangements (taxis, uniform etc.)
- **August 2018 : Phased introduction of new children**

Start of term- all children with fulltime place to be introduced to the ESB on a phased basis. The resource staff will have arranged introductory and play based activity for the first two weeks to settle in children, ensure familiarity, and increase confidence within their new provision, allowing the parents/ carers to become familiar with the provision.

Following this children, who previously attended Twechar LCR will have an opportunity to visit the resource and access sessions in the ESB on a phased basis. As these children are already within a split placement in their catchment school or nursery, they will remain there until the transition progress is complete.

- **August/September and then ongoing-** Additional Professional Learning and support for staff for outreach will take place in order to support the outreach programme which will then be phased to support children within additional needs within EDC.

Professional Learning and Development

East Dunbartonshire Council recognise that in order to support the development of provision to meet learners' needs at all levels then a planned programme of training is provided for all leaders, teachers and support staff. The authority wide Continuous Professional Learning programme is updated annually and is based on a rigorous needs analysis of all training needs in all establishments. Each school and nursery can also negotiate additional training and support from link professionals, such as the Psychological Service and Speech and Language Therapy, on a topic particularly relevant to their quality and improvement planning.

The annual programme has two elements:

- Additional Support Needs Programme which can be accessed by all education staff; and
- Core training aimed at all staff in specialist resources.

The core training programme for specialist staff is based on the principles of developing consistency in learning and teaching approaches and strategies across specialist service, shared practice and support across specialist learning communities and a process of coach/consult where initial training is reinforced through reflective peer and management support and collaborative practitioner enquiry.

Core training includes:

- **Leadership skills** – coach consult approach, team leadership (developing the reflective team) and managing stress within the team
- **Leaders and teachers** - organising and structuring the learning environment, teaching and learning approaches (based around TEACCH and creating a language and communication friendly/ autism friendly environment). de-escalation strategies; emotional coaching and CALM training;
- **Support staff** – de-escalation, emotional coaching and CALM training

This training is available to staff in the mainstream school as well as the specialist staff in the Enhanced Support Bases. Specialist staff also undertake additional qualifications.

Timeline for Professional Learning with regard to the development of ESB in Wester Cleddens and Castlehill.

- **April/ May 2018** : needs analysis carried out by Education Officer (Early Years and Primary) and Psychological Service
- **May 2018** : in-service day and twilights following focus on:
 - Structuring the learning and teaching environment
 - Team development and communication;
 - Meeting the staff team in the mainstream school
- **August 2018** : two in-service days CALM/ Emotional Coaching/ Child Protection/ De-escalation approaches and policy

- **The programme would then be on going depending on the needs of staff;**

Collegiate calendar for forthcoming year (dependent on needs analysis)

- Team building activity
- Communication strategies
- Monitoring and tracking
- Co-working with peers on inclusion
- Managing review meetings (SMT)
- Outreach approaches- monitoring and tracking
- Assessment of learning-
- Creating a total communication environment
- Sensory profiles

All staff will also have access to **The Additional Support Needs Professional Learning Programme**. This details training that can be accessed by a range of staff according to need (by learner profile, school improvement plan or audit of training needs). The calendar will include topics such as Child Protection procedures, legal guidelines, managing sensory issues, Language and Communication Friendly Environments, and authority guidance on dyslexia, dyscalculia, developmental co-ordination disorder (DCD), English as an Additional Language (EAL), understanding autism and Adverse Childhood Experiences. The training programme will be updated each session and will be led by the ASN team, Educational Psychology Service, Occupational Therapy and Speech and Language Therapy.