

SEND CAPITAL PROGRAMME PHASE I REVIEW

Laura Greenland – Provider Services Manager

INTRODUCTION

In 2019 Suffolk County Council announced the delivery of a SEND Capital Programme. The Programme would see a total investment of £45m, from SCC and the DfE, to create 874 new education placements for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

The programme was split into two phases and the first phase is nearing its completion.

The programme has seen the delivery of three new special schools, 23 new specialist units attached to mainstream schools, as well as an increase in provision across the system in already existing settings.

In total, Phase 1 of the programme will create 825 new specialist places across Suffolk. In order to meet original commitment we require a further 49 places from Phase 2.

PHASE I REVIEW

The review of Phase I was undertaken to demonstrate the impact of the new provision, particularly the introduction of specialist units attached to mainstream schools.

It determined whether the additional provision was fit for purpose, located in the required geographical areas, was meeting the growing demand, and meeting the needs of the pupils accessing the units and schools.

NEW SCHOOLS

School	Area	Profile of Need	New Places	Open
Castle EAST	North	Communication and Interaction	120	2021/22
Sir Peter Hall	West	Social, Emotional and Mental Health	80	2022/23
Woodbridge Road Academy	South	Communication and Interaction	60	2022/23
Chalk Hill	County Wide	Social, Emotional and Mental Health and Autism	24	2023/24
TOTAL			284	

Unit	Area	Profile of Need	Key Stage	Open	Places
Beccles High	North	Cognition and Learning	KS3/4	2021/22	18
Bungay Resource Base	North	Resource Base for Children with Hearing Loss	KS3/4	2020/21	15
Oulton Broad	North	Specialist with expertise in Communication and Interaction	R / KSI	2022/23	12
Total North Units					45
Pipers Vale	South	Specialist	R / KSI	2020/21	12
Rushmere	South	Specialist with expertise in Communication and Interaction	R / KSI	2020/21	15
Saxmundham	South	Cognition and Learning	KS3/4	2021/22	18
Chantry	South	Cognition and Learning	KS3/4	2021/22	18
Murrayfield	South	Communication and Interaction	KS2	2020/21	18
Causton	South	Communication and Interaction	KS2	2020/21	18
Woodhall	South	Communication and Interaction	KS2	2021/22	18
Copleston	South	Communication and Interaction	KS3/4	2021/22	18
Saxmundham	South	Communication and Interaction	KS3/4	2021/22	18
Total South Units					15
Burton End	West	Specialist	R / KSI	2020/21	12
Exning	West	Specialist	R / KSI	2021/22	12
St Edmunds	West	Specialist	R / KSI	2022/23	12
Clements	West	Cognition and Learning	KS2	2020/21	18
Castle Manor	West	Cognition and Learning	KS3/4	2020/21	18
St Edmunds	West	Cognition and Learning	KS2	2021/22	18
Mendlesham	West	Cognition and Learning	KS2	2021/22	18
Stowupland High	West	Cognition and Learning	KS3/4	2021/22	18
Houldsworth	West	Communication and Interaction	KS2	2020/21	18
Ixworth	West	Communication and Interaction	KS3/4	2020/21	18
Newmarket	West	Communication and Interaction	KS3/4	2020/21	18
Total West Units					180
Total All Units					378

NEW UNITS

TOTAL PROVISION IN PHASE I

Type of Provision	Places Planned
New Units 2020	180
New Units 2021/22	198
Additional capacity in previous units	10
New Schools	284
Additional capacity in new units	81
MLD	24
SLD	48
TOTAL	825

GEOGRAPHICAL COMPARISON

Specialist Provision prior to Programme



Specialist Provision as of September 2022



NEW UNITS SURVEY AND VISITS

As part of the review of Phase I, specific work was carried out with the new units in order to identify the impact of recent developments.

67% of the pupils were making expected progress from their starting points.

From those that responded, 35% of pupils were accessing elements of mainstream provision. This varies from access to school trips and assemblies, PE, and subjects such as Maths, English and Science.

Pupils can now access suitable education closer to home and can attend the same school as their siblings and local friends.

“Everyone thought I was bad at my old school, and I thought I just had big feelings until I found out I had autism. I now feel like I actually fit in.”

COSTS

- Current overspend on Phase 1 of £4.6m
- The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in significant delays in construction and the availability and cost of building materials and resources.
- During the same period BREXIT occurred and this resulted in an increase baseline cost in the materials required from outside the UK.
- SCC had never built units attached to mainstream schools previously, so knowledge of the cost of these developments was very low.
- Prices continue to rise which will need to be a consideration for Phase 2 and further works that take place.

COSTS

- On places delivered to date, Suffolk have an average cost per pupil for specialist places of £9,802 for refurbishment projects and £53,711 for new builds. This compares to national benchmarking averages of £76,184 per specialist place.
- One nearby county has invested £120m to increase specialist placements by 946 places, at a cost of £127,000 per place, which is significantly higher than both the national benchmark and SCC's costs.
- This demonstrates the effective and efficient way that the SEND Capital Programme has been delivered.

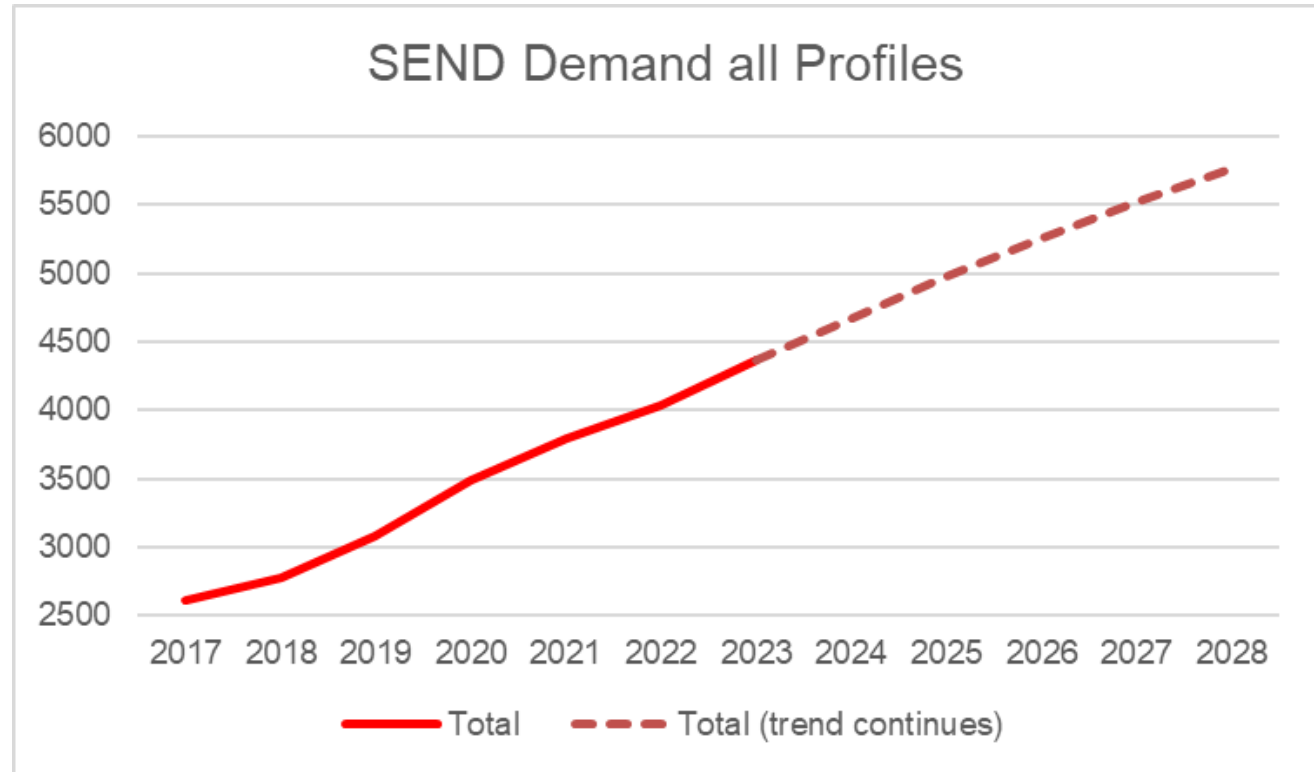
COST AVOIDANCE

Academic Year	Average cost per pupil
2019/20	£61,527.73
2020/21	£62,894.77
2021/22	£74,186.66

- There is a reduction in the number of new placements in the independent sector. However, those places are at a higher cost per place.
- The average costs for pupils within our specialist units in Suffolk in Autumn term 2021 was £16,875.00. The average cost of a pupil placed in one of Suffolk's special schools is £19,781.60
- This is a 77% and 73% saving per pupil compared to the independent sector.
- Without the level of development, it is possible that the pupils who are now accessing the new provision could have been placed in the independent sector. This could have cost in excess of £10m year on year.

SEND SUFFICIENCY

Over the last two academic years there has been a 16% increase in the demand for specialist placements. As the graph demonstrates, based on the January Census, this is likely to continue.



PLACEMENTS

- Despite the increase in specialist places over the last two years, there are already settings which are full and unable to offer a place to pupils who have been identified as being suitable for a unit placement.
- When the building work was undertaken, where possible some units were built with additional capacity to support growing demand over time. Two years into Phase I, some of this increased capacity has already been commissioned for the next academic year to meet the growing demand.
- Many of the units, once full will remain that way for up to 3 years as the cohort moves up within the Key Stages. Therefore, this has a significant impact on available places.
- Currently, 1 in every 3 pupils with EHCPs are accessing specialist provision. Therefore, it can be predicted that 136 of the pupils with EHCPs in January 2022 will need specialist provision, be it either a special school or specialist unit. If the 7% increase continues, then a further 145 additional places could be required in 2023/24.

SUMMARY

As can be seen, the SEND Capital Programme that has been underway in the last two years has shown huge impact.

Despite creating a large number of new SEND places, it is clear that this programme is not complete.

Demand continues to increase, and Suffolk continues to require additional places.

PHASE 2 PROPOSALS

- Complete the works at Castle EAST.
- Develop a further 3 units in the areas that are indicating highest demand – ideally with space to grow numbers over time to meet the growing need.
- Consideration as to whether a Phase 3 is required to create additional places above those already committed.