

**Northumberland  
County Council  
January 2016**

## **Education and Skills Service**

# Special Educational Needs & Disability (SEND) Strategic Statement



**Northumberland  
Education**



*Northumberland County Council is strongly committed to ensuring all children reach their full potential at school no matter what their background.*

## **1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 There are 39,524 children attending school between reception and Year 11 in schools across Northumberland. There are 687 planned places allocated at specialist schools in the county for 2016/17. This equates to 1.74% of places compared to the total pupil population. This places Northumberland 3rd out of the 10 Local Authorities in the North East that offer places. In addition there are 40 planned places at our Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), representing 0.1% of the pupil population. Proportional to pupil population we have the smallest PRU across the 12 NE Local Authorities.
- 1.2 In total Northumberland receives £7.27m through the Dedicated School Grant (DSG) to fund special places and the PRU, of which £400K is allocated to the PRU.
- 1.3 Support is also provided to the Authority via the Education Support Grant (ESG) to enable it to fulfil its statutory retained duties, amounting to £3.23m in total for 2016/17. In relation to providing support for pupils with special educational needs £670k of the ESG has been calculated by the Department for Education for this purpose. This funding is not ring-fenced but in the main is allocated to a number of services grouped under the umbrella of Education and Skills support services include, educational psychology services, speech and language therapies, support for autistic spectrum disorders (ASD), communication and other associated difficulties.
- 1.4 The Education Other Than at School Service (EOTAS) provides support intended to prevent permanent exclusion from mainstream school and those with additional health needs. This is a statutory function of the Local Authority. Permanent exclusions have risen steadily over the last three years, with a total of 50 occurring in 2014/15. There have been 29 permanent exclusions this academic year, the majority from Year 10. The current forecast is that we will spend £620k supporting permanently excluded children.
- 1.5 The EOTAS service also supports mainstream schools to aid pupils who are at risk of permanent exclusion. The Local Authority identifies a number of Alternative Providers (AP) and commissions them to provide a service on behalf of schools. The Authority contributes to the cost of AP at a rate of £25 per day plus transport costs. In total last year this amounted to around £342k. It is estimated that this budget will rise significantly next year.
- 1.6 The new SEND Code of Practice 2014 (updated in 2015) introduced radical national reforms to the way local authorities and others must support children and young people. Perhaps the biggest change was in the extension of the range of responsibilities for local authorities. In the previous SEN Code the duties were very much focused upon learners 4-18 years and a small number younger or older children and young people. The new code extends the duties from birth to 25 years, bringing in hundreds of additional learners across Northumberland who

require formal planning and support to achieve their educational or training aspirations. This was reinforced by the introduction of the national '2 Year Old Offer', which guarantees disabled pre-nursery children entitlement to additional local authority support and resources.

- 1.7 In addition, the categories of SEND were changed. The previous Code included a category 'Behaviour, Emotional or Social Difficulties' (BESD). Learners with mental health issues fell outside the Code. In 2014 the government removed BESD and replaced it with 'Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs' (SEMH), bringing in a very large cohort of new learners whose needs were formerly met in other ways. The impact of this is becoming slowly apparent and will not be fully known for another year or two. The national changes are very welcome, but are certainly challenging to implement.

## **2. Initial projections on capacity, funding implications and national policy developments**

- 2.1 The introduction of the national High Needs funding reforms in 2012 and 2013, meant that local authorities have had to arrange for an appropriate number of commissioned places to be available to meet projected demand in the following year. Each specialist place usually has a value of £10,000 per year, which covers Element 1 (AWPU) and Element 2 (Notional SEN in Mainstream) of the national funding system. Providers can also receive High Needs top-up funding (Element 3) for named learners during the year. The Education Funding Agency (EFA) dictated this process of estimating how many Element 1 and 2 places could be requested and allocated to each specialist school / provider. A national spreadsheet captured the required number of places in each named specialist provision. This included maintained special schools, independent specialist schools / colleges, further education colleges, formally-constituted specialist provisions within mainstream schools / academies and pupil referral units.

- 2.2 Numbers of learners in three specific age ranges had to be specified: under-16, post-16; and adult (19-25 years). Places in these age ranges have slightly different funding streams and are not interchangeable. Local authorities would submit their figures to the EFA and make bids for additional funding where needed. The growth bids were rarely granted. The EFA would compile and review the submissions and inform all LAs and providers what final allocation would be made for the coming financial and academic year. This in-turn confirmed the core budget for all provisions for the following year.

- 2.3 This meant each year local authorities had to specify precisely how many learners were expected ... but nevertheless were usually given the same funding as previous years.

- 2.4 The new system of funding has changed significantly.

In November 2015 the EFA issued updated guidance confirming that:

- There is no additional funding for growth in numbers as an institution or as a local authority
- No collection of pre-16 numbers is being taken (with one exception: KS4 learners in FE Colleges).

- Post-16 place funding for 2016-2017 will be the same as 2015-2016, irrespective of actual need / occupancy.
- Post-16 numbers were asked for, but only where the EFA makes direct payments (6<sup>th</sup> forms, academies and FE Colleges).
- Local authorities are advised to find local solutions for differences between demand for places and actual occupancy. Negotiation with individual provisions is suggested by EFA where there are vacant places or over-subscription.

This means that the strong link between learners on roll and the provision of £10,000 place funding is no longer strictly managed or resourced by the Education Funding Agency. Local solutions within existing resources are required, which do not necessarily include full-allocations of £10K per place. The EFA has narrowed its role to focus mainly upon post-16 funding only.

- 2.5 For funding in 2017 onwards the Department for Education and the Education Funding Agency are proposing to hold a number of consultations on reforms of the education funding system, including SEND funding. A national funding formula will be produced to iron out differences across Local Authorities. Their 2015 report on current arrangements is very critical of the uneven nature of current funding and the increasing distance between the allocations made to local authorities / providers and the actual numbers of learners being supported. Consideration of a national funding formula and / or lagged learner funding based on previous actual learners on roll may propose, ending the need for local authorities to guess how many learners will arrive at each provision in the coming year.
- 2.6 The Comprehensive Spending Review in November 2015 states the government will introduce the first ever national funding formula for schools, high needs and early years. This will end the unfair system where a child from a disadvantaged background in one school attracts half as much funding as a child in identical circumstances in another school, simply because of where they live. There will be a transitional phase to help smooth the implementation of the new schools formula. The government will launch a detailed consultation in 2016 and will implement the new formulae from 2017-18. Savings of around £600 million will be made on the ESG, including phasing out the additional funding academies receive through the ESG. The government will reduce the local authority role in running schools and remove a number of statutory duties. The government will consult on policy and funding proposals in 2016.

### **3. Numbers of learners at Northumberland maintained specialist schools 2016-2017: provisional estimates**

- 3.1 The figures below summarise an initial round of place-planning conducted with the Northumberland maintained specialist schools in November 2015 – January 2016.

The process involved a review of the following key factors:

- How many learners are expected to continue, join or exit each provision term-by-term in the academic years 2015-2016 and 2016-2017
- This in-turn allows us to have a shared view on changing patterns of occupancy and average levels of occupancy over a year which would indicate a single annual figure for funded places 2016-2017
- An update on any limiting factors, including the physical limits of the site and the permissible number of admissions.

The figures are provisional and summarised below. The occupancy and costs calculations are based on academic years. When the figures are analysed on a financial year basis the average occupancy for growing provisions is sometimes slightly lower.

#### Combined totals for each specialist provision

| Provision   | 2015-2016         |                       |                      | 2016-2017                   |                          |                              |                      |
|-------------|-------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|
|             | Average occupancy | Current place funding | 2015/16 Cost £'000's | Average occupancy projected | Indicative place funding | Change from previous funding | 2016/17 Cost £'000's |
| Atkinson*   | 76-77             | 82                    | 1,407                | 78-79                       | 78                       | -4                           | 1,397                |
| Barndale    | 38-39             | 45                    | 701                  | 41-42                       | 42                       | -3                           | 669                  |
| Cleaswell   | 163-164           | 160                   | 2,340                | 178                         | 167                      | +7 or +18                    | 2,408                |
| Collingwood | 139               | 146                   | 1,822                | 142                         | 142                      | -4                           | 1,767                |
| Dales       | 81-82             | 76                    | 1,243                | 84                          | 85                       | +9                           | 1,347                |
| Grove**     | 41.5              | 43                    | 743                  | 42                          | 44                       | +1                           | 771                  |
| Hillcrest   | 61                | 61                    | 925                  | 66                          | 66                       | +5                           | 964                  |
| NCEA        | 101               | 101                   | 1,906                | 101                         | 101                      | +0                           | 1,906                |
| Priory      | 83                | 75                    | 1,366                | 93                          | 93                       | +10                          | 1,554                |
| Net change  |                   |                       |                      |                             |                          | +11 to +22                   |                      |

*Shaded boxes show points where school has reached / exceeded physical capacity.*

*\*Includes core roll and up to 10 funded intervention places \*\* Includes 3-4 nursery places at 0.5 FTE*

3.2 The numbers are best estimates with latest information and experience of previous patterns of in-year admissions.

3.3 Key Issues arising from this analysis

- Combined place growth in 2016-2017: indicates a shortfall of 27 places (£270,000 equivalent funding).
- Several provisions could reach their maximum admission capacity in 2016 or 2017.
- Provisions may need a formal increase in permitted total admissions to cope with growth in 2016 and beyond

3.4 Immediate Funding Recommendations for 2016

That funding identified in the High Needs top-up budget is agreed by the Schools Forum to be allocated to meet the need for increased place funding (£270k).

- 3.5 Longer Term Recommendations for 2017 and beyond
- There should be further consultation with all schools, partner agencies and the wider community. Discussions will include possible strategic solutions put forward by the Local Authority to match identified need to available funding.
  - A review of the High Needs funding block is undertaken to identify capacity for additional place funding in future years. Specific proposals for SEND provision and funding will be submitted to the Schools Forum and elected members of the council in the form of an action plan in February 2016.

## **4. Key actions so far**

- 4.1 National legal reforms have required a much larger volume of SEND statutory work during 2014-2016. The breadth of statutory responsibilities has also increased significantly. There has been a net increase in the number of learners with SEND, with patterns of growth in key areas of disability across Northumberland. The local authority has conducted training events, consultation events and localised planning activities to meet the new levels and patterns of demand for SEND support. The Department for Education monitoring visits have been successful, including the most recent in June 2015. This will be followed by a new formalised OFSTED inspection of all local authorities from 2016.
- 4.2 Local Offer development began in summer 2014 and is subject to an annual statutory cycle of consultation and development. A number of Local Offer review events took place in 2015. The feedback from these, plus ad hoc feedback already received, will inform our Local Offer development planning for 2015-2016.
- 4.3 Consultation events for all SENDCOs, Headteachers and Governing bodies took place in June. In the autumn term we will repeat our cycle of events with parents groups and groups of children / young people by theme (e.g. those at FE college, those with sensory needs). Challenges around our geography is also particularly important in Northumberland: the distance between urban centres and specialist facilities can be 25-50 miles, so Local Offer consultations often focus upon needs in the local catchment areas, not just the whole-county offer. An updated Local Offer development plan was published in the autumn 2015, followed by review again in Summer 2016.
- 4.4 Education Health & Care Plans (EHC Plans) replaced the former system of SEN Statements and post-16 Learning Difficulty Assessments. Despite the name, very few EHC Plans have elements of Health or Care provision in them because most children with SEND do not and never will need such provision. The vast majority of plans (and the Statements and LDAs which preceded them) are for education objectives only.
- 4.5 The demand for new EHC Plans is double that in previous years for SEN Statements and LDAs. The government has also insisted existing SEN Statements are converted to EHC Plans during 2014-2018. This means Northumberland has to conduct more than 1500 additional statutory transfers than would not normally have happened. Managing this is extremely challenging.

- 4.6 The SEND Commissioner has recruited additional staff, using the national SEND Reform Grant, to increase our capacity by 200% by September 2015. This higher level of capacity is needed until Spring 2018, after which there will be a dramatic drop off as all transfers will be completed and only new EHC requests will remain.
- 4.7 Joint commissioning with Health, Care, schools, colleges and other partners is progressing. Data regarding changing patterns of need for school places, therapies, SEND training for staff, new school partnership provision in local areas and development work with neighbouring local authorities is being shared.
- 4.8 The SEND Commissioner is working with partners wherever there is evidence of need and a partnership solution is provided to meet those needs. This year the partnerships of schools in three localities and the partnership of SEN Schools have proposed new projects. Northumberland College would welcome new locality working for SEND with our schools in each area of the county, to ensure learners can have an improved offer leading to employment, training or higher levels of study.
- 4.9 A strategic commissioning plan will be compiled and published in 2016, describing the lines of need and development across the whole county by SEN type (e.g. autism), age and geography.
- 4.10 A new form of OFSTED inspection of SEND will be implemented by the government in 2016. It inspects local authorities and NHS by locality. The new OFSTED model has not yet been published, but will evaluate how well each LA has met the needs of SEND learners. Preparations are underway to ensure this inspection supports improvement.

## **5. The emerging pattern of needs**

- 5.1 A national DfE review of SEND funding (2015) recommends local authorities should make full use of the existing flexibilities within the current funding framework to prevent small specialist providers suffering from short-term fluctuations in pupil numbers.
- 5.2 There should be a more explicit role for local planning and commissioning of places in specialist settings, in which the local authority, in collaboration with schools, will play a central role. It is difficult to match this national government aspiration with the wider academies agenda.
- 5.3 Under the present approach, it is unclear to the local authority [and schools] how they can plan and commission – and indeed re-allocate and remove – specialist places. It is difficult for decisions about specialist place-planning to be taken at a national level. An approach based on local numbers would be more effective and beneficial to children and young people.
- 5.4 The local authority will develop a more explicit role in planning and commissioning specialist places to enable it to meet in-year changes and longer-term needs in line with their statutory responsibilities for planning to ensure sufficient school places and for identifying needs and securing SEN provision.

We propose that this approach would apply to both pre-16 and post-16 places in special schools and the support in whatever form it is provided in mainstream schools and early years settings.

- 5.5 Any agreed proposal would, however, require local education systems to develop more effective methods of analysing data and working collaboratively with schools and academies to develop long-term place-planning. The DfE is considering what steps need to be put in place to enable local education systems to develop such approaches, and how allocations of place-led funding may be handled in the meantime.
- 5.6 The prevalence of learners with High Needs is changing in Northumberland.

The education categories of SEND, as defined in the 2014 SEND Code of Practice are:

- moderate or severe or profound / multiple learning difficulty (MLD, SLD, PMLD)
- specific learning difficulty eg dyslexia (SPLD)
- physical disability (PD)
- visual impairment (VI)
- hearing impairment (HI)
- multi-sensory impairment (usually deaf-blind: MSI)
- autism spectrum disorders (ASD)
- social emotional mental health needs (SEMH)
- speech language and communication needs (SLCN)

Other kinds of needs which are not listed in the SEND Code:

- Complex needs – a combination of factors listed above.
- Reliant on medical technologies – requires specialist health equipment to breathe, drink, eat, toilet or other needs.

- 5.7 Overall, there is a pattern of continuing growth in key service areas, summarised here:

| <b>Data source</b>   | <b>Growth pattern</b>  |
|--|--|
| Portage Team<br>(pre-school children with significant SEND, 0-4 years)   | The number of cases referred is around 50% higher than in recent years.<br>Particular growth in learners with <b><u>autism or complex needs.</u></b><br>The introduction of the national '2 Year Old Offer' has extended the obligations of the local authority to support learners with SEND to a new year group. Previously the common starting point would be Nursery, a year later.                    |
| SEND statutory team<br>(Officers who deal with SEN statements, EHC Plans, High Needs funding applications etc. 0-25 years) | Number of new requests for <b><u>statutory assessment</u></b> is much higher per year. 200 requests in 2015 compared with 159 in 2013-2014. 300 projected in 2016<br>Particular growth in <b><u>severe mental health issues, behaviour issues, autism and demand for specialist places in and out of county.</u></b><br>New High Needs funding requests up from 260 in 2013-2014 to more than 300 in 2015. |



|  |   |
|--|---|
| LIST Teams<br>(Local authority teams of SEND specialist teachers, educational psychologists and other support to schools 4-18 years)                 | Particular growth in demand for <b><u>assessment by specialist teachers and Educational Psychology.</u></b> This limits capacity for preventative work.   |
| Sensory Team<br>(Specialist teachers and support for those with hearing or visual impairments, 0 - 18 years)   | No significant change.<br>Steady pattern of prevalence continues.<br>No growth.   |
| Schools census Spring 2015<br>(national census completed by all schools, with particular focus on SEND in the Spring each year, Nursery to 19 years) | Particular growth in <b><u>ASD, MLD and SEMH.</u></b><br><br>Large overall growth in ASD when mainstream and specialist school figures are combined.(312 in 2010; 468 in 2015, i.e. 50% growth)   |
| SEND schools and Pupil Referral Unit<br>(study of pupils currently on roll, Nursery to 19 years)   | Some <b><u>schools are full or oversubscribed.</u></b><br>Particular growth in ASD, SEMH, complex combinations of need, children reliant on medical technologies.   |
| Post-16 and Adult SEND Panel<br>(the pattern of demand for High Needs funding in 6 <sup>th</sup> forms, colleges and training, 16-25 years)          | Particular growth in learners with <b><u>severe / complex needs seeking further years of education after 18 years of age / in early adulthood.</u></b> The introduction of the national SEND Code of Practice 2014 has extended the obligations of the local authority to support learners with SEND to 25 years if they have an EHC plan and are in education. |
| CYPS (Children and Young Peoples Service – previously CAMHS)<br>(NHS service for young people with mental health needs; Northumberland and Tyneside) | Increase in referrals and initial queries. 2000+ open caseload<br><br>“7000 queries received in four week sample period in 2014-2015”   |
| NHS Mental Health Units<br>(residential / secure provision for very severe mental health needs)  | Normal pattern of cases each year would be very low (0-1 per year known to SEND teams)<br>9 learners in 2014-2015<br>This pattern increased during 2015-16  |

5.8 A pattern of prevalence can be seen in the Summary of schools census data Spring 2015 (sample is from maintained mainstream and SEND schools only):

| Year                   | Communication |             | Sensory    |           |          | Learning Difficulties |             |            |           |             |            |            | Totals      |
|------------------------|---------------|-------------|------------|-----------|----------|-----------------------|-------------|------------|-----------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|
|                        | ASD           | SLCN        | HI         | VI        | MSI      | SPLD                  | MLD         | SLD        | PMLD      | SEMH        | PD         | OTHR       |             |
| <b>N1</b>              | 0             | 1           | 0          | 0         | 0        | 1                     | 0           | 0          | 0         | 0           | 0          | 1          | <b>3</b>    |
| <b>N2</b>              | 5             | 93          | 2          | 1         | 0        | 6                     | 5           | 0          | 3         | 15          | 3          | 3          | <b>136</b>  |
| <b>R</b>               | 13            | 218         | 2          | 3         | 1        | 7                     | 23          | 8          | 4         | 46          | 13         | 19         | <b>357</b>  |
| <b>1</b>               | 13            | 225         | 12         | 1         | 0        | 6                     | 59          | 10         | 4         | 73          | 11         | 9          | <b>423</b>  |
| <b>2</b>               | 18            | 182         | 7          | 9         | 0        | 22                    | 85          | 16         | 4         | 69          | 19         | 12         | <b>443</b>  |
| <b>3</b>               | 29            | 124         | 6          | 1         | 1        | 26                    | 99          | 11         | 5         | 107         | 12         | 17         | <b>438</b>  |
| <b>4</b>               | 24            | 98          | 10         | 6         | 0        | 29                    | 130         | 14         | 3         | 91          | 15         | 12         | <b>432</b>  |
| <b>5</b>               | 33            | 82          | 7          | 4         | 0        | 40                    | 144         | 17         | 2         | 97          | 19         | 16         | <b>461</b>  |
| <b>6</b>               | 29            | 59          | 7          | 5         | 1        | 39                    | 124         | 12         | 4         | 102         | 10         | 16         | <b>408</b>  |
| <b>7</b>               | 40            | 58          | 13         | 5         | 0        | 43                    | 165         | 9          | 1         | 110         | 13         | 15         | <b>472</b>  |
| <b>8</b>               | 41            | 32          | 8          | 4         | 0        | 43                    | 141         | 16         | 2         | 119         | 11         | 16         | <b>433</b>  |
| <b>9</b>               | 36            | 35          | 9          | 2         | 0        | 35                    | 149         | 12         | 4         | 149         | 12         | 15         | <b>458</b>  |
| <b>10</b>              | 45            | 17          | 8          | 4         | 0        | 30                    | 146         | 18         | 1         | 148         | 7          | 20         | <b>444</b>  |
| <b>11</b>              | 48            | 30          | 15         | 6         | 2        | 43                    | 145         | 15         | 1         | 140         | 11         | 15         | <b>471</b>  |
| <b>12</b>              | 27            | 8           | 6          | 3         | 0        | 11                    | 27          | 11         | 1         | 29          | 9          | 7          | <b>139</b>  |
| <b>13</b>              | 18            | 4           | 5          | 1         | 0        | 2                     | 17          | 13         | 1         | 15          | 7          | 9          | <b>92</b>   |
| <b>14</b>              | 4             | 0           | 0          | 0         | 0        | 0                     | 2           | 13         | 0         | 2           | 0          | 1          | <b>22</b>   |
| <b>X no age stated</b> | 48            | 3           | 0          | 0         | 0        | 0                     | 0           | 29         | 17        | 0           | 0          | 0          | <b>97</b>   |
| <b>Totals</b>          | <b>471</b>    | <b>1269</b> | <b>117</b> | <b>55</b> | <b>5</b> | <b>383</b>            | <b>1461</b> | <b>224</b> | <b>57</b> | <b>1312</b> | <b>172</b> | <b>203</b> | <b>5729</b> |

5.9 Of the learners listed in the table above, only 1637 have additional High Needs top-up (Element 3) funding from the local authority, the remaining 4092 are supported by school (Elements 1 and 2) funding only.

5.10 Overall, the key patterns of growth compared to previous years are:

- SEMH – all age, particularly younger learners
- SLCN – younger learners
- ASD – all ages, particularly younger learners
- Severe / profound / complex needs – often from birth due to prematurity or other causes. Medical needs often within the complex nature of the cases. Younger / pre-school learners.

5.11 Other SEND categories are increasing or decreasing as we look through the age groups, but not to an extent which is significantly different to previous years. Some SEND types – such as SPLD – often don't become apparent until the child has been at school for some years.

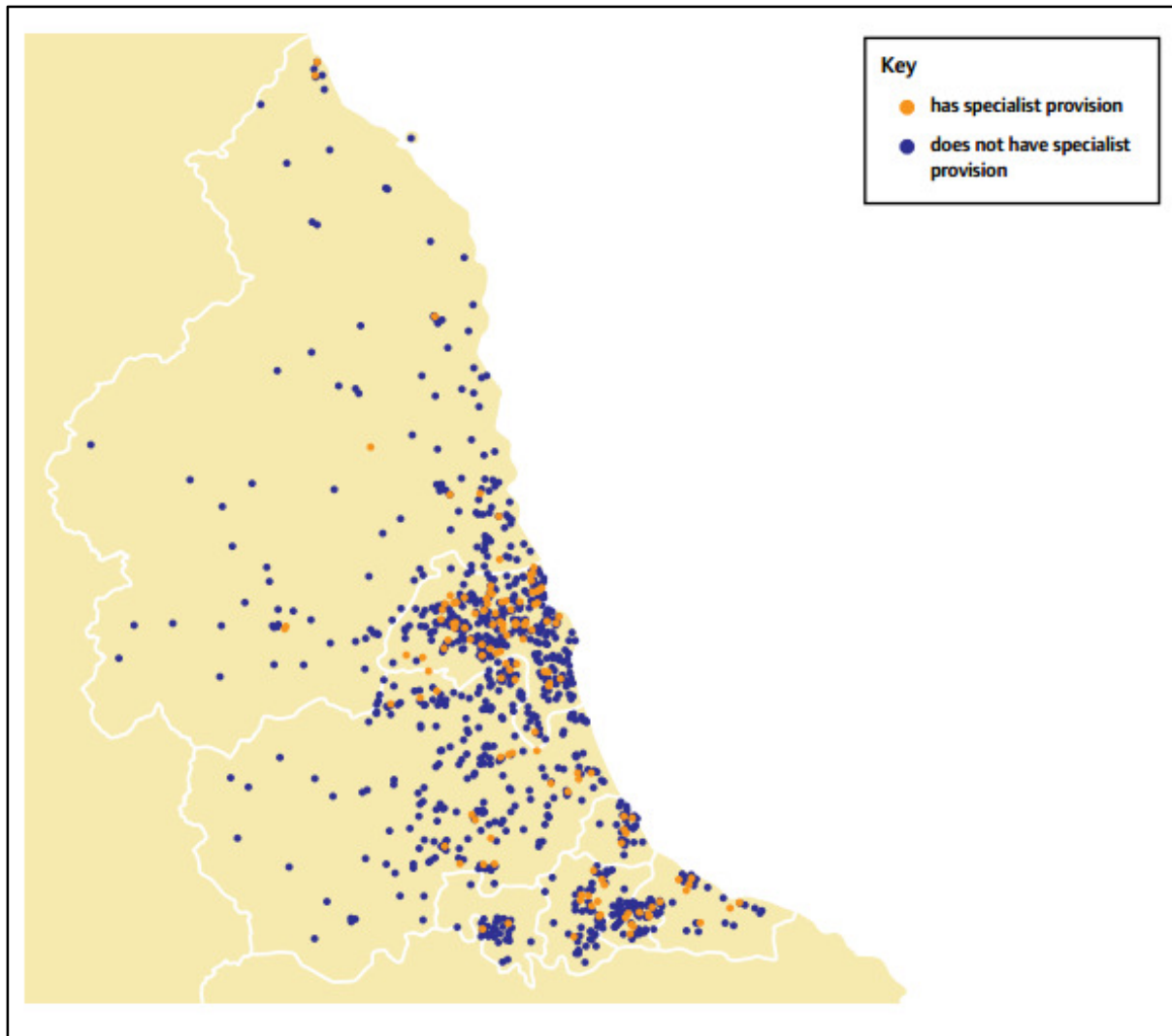


Figure 16: Good and outstanding schools in the North East. Orange dots are specialist provision for those with special educational needs (OFSTED Annual Report, 2015). OFSTED highlighted Northumberland and west Durham to demonstrate exceptional distances between specialist provisions.

## 6. Specific Proposals

- 6.1 The range and quality of specialist provision across Northumberland is good and often outstanding. However due to geography and the emerging pattern of changing need the provision needs to be mapped out and potential changes considered. In addition to this some special schools are considering becoming parts of multi-academy trusts. The local authority will work within the current special school partnership to discuss potential changes to the organisation of schools.
- 6.2 Currently the PRU is too small to cope with demand. It is proposed that it increases its capacity by 20 places. It is important to preserve the PRU as a short-stay facility that centres around the assessment of young people in Key Stages 2 and 3 and facilitating their return to supported education in the mainstream or the creation of an EHCP to signpost them towards appropriate specialist provision. The Local Authority is in the early stages of looking at capital investment in the PRU to expand its current provision, potentially across other sites. However this would increase the High Needs block by £200k.

- 6.3 Local alternative provision can provide solutions to the challenge of providing SEND support to mainstream learners and overcoming the significant challenges of travel faced by many pupils. The Local Authority will engage with providers of AP to ensure that resources can be further developed to meet these challenges.
- 6.4 Increasingly mainstream schools will be expected to provide SEND support on site. This is particularly the case in the Primary Sector. The Local Authority will engage with partnerships of schools to explore the scope to establish local Additional Resource Provision (ARPs) which are a common feature of provision in other parts of the country. This may include provision in schools or peripatetic provision and partnership working.
- 6.5 The Local authority will review the current management arrangements for the LIST teams to ensure that support services are available across all parts of the county and that evaluation of the impact of these services can be more accurately assessed. A more joined up approach will be established between EOTAS, LIST and our Social Care teams.
- 6.6 Currently a small number of pupils with complex needs travel outside the county for specialist support, often in independent schools. Although small in number the cost implications for this group is very large, around £3.2 m The Local Authority will consult with schools in Northumberland to establish whether there would be potential for the establishment of a centre of excellence within the county. This would involve financing capital works.
- 6.8 Partnership working across the NE may be an option

**Some questions and ideas to stimulate debate/consultation about increased demand with potentially fewer resources:**

1. How many specialist schools are considering becoming part of multi-academy trusts?
2. How many mainstream schools are considering expanding their SEND provision?
3. How many Free Schools will be established in the county, how many will be specialist, alternative provision, studio schools, etc?
4. How many mainstream schools would welcome the opportunity to establish at Additional resource centre (ARC) or additional resource provision (ARP)?
5. What power/responsibilities will the local authority have to make changes?
6. Could the Dales school become an all-age provision for ASD and SEMH?
7. Could Hillcrest school specialise in ASD? There is also on-site capacity to consider expansion or Primary development.
8. Could Atkinson House increase capacity and become mixed gender to include girls?
9. Could the Priory School expand its provision to include PMLD or SEMH provision, or will it want to join a locality based MAT?
10. How will the Grove School cope with the demand in the north of the county? How could it expand?
11. Could Grove, Barndale and Priory extend their local capacity through pre-school and post -16 development?
12. Could Cleaswell and Collingwood extend local capacity through pre-school and post- 16 development? Should they have expanded focus on ASD/SEMH?
13. How will Berwick Academy, NCEA, JCSC, Astley and other secondary schools work with the LA to develop new provision?
14. How will the PRU cope with demand unless it expands, possibly into a split site facility?

15. How can we expand our alternative provision but maintain quality?
16. Could we create a new central specialist site to end the need for out of county placements for learners with complex needs?
17. SEMH has many different strands. The different SEMH provisions will need to reflect the diversity in the SEMH patterns of need.

We are sure that there are many more questions – but this document is intended to start the debate to ensure we have high quality provision for all children with special educational needs in the long term across Northumberland.

**NOTE: This annual report is supplemented by a detailed self-evaluation report that contains a more detailed data and financial analysis.**