

<b>Report to: Cabinet</b>	<b>11<sup>th</sup> Dec 2002</b>	<b>Classification: Unrestricted</b>	<b>Report No:</b>	<b>Agenda Item No.</b>
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<b>Report of: Corporate Director (Education) Originating Officer(s): Helen Jenner</b>	<b>Title: Harpley School Inclusion Support Centre Development</b>  <b>Ward(s) affected: All</b>
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## **1. Summary**

This report summarises the results of consultation on changes in provision to meet the needs of vulnerable young people aged 11-16 and recommends the publication of prescribed notices to develop new provision based at Harpley School. The recommendations are based on the informal consultation process approved by Cabinet in September 2004.

## **2. Recommendations**

2.1 That the Cabinet agree the following implementation proposals:

- The establishment of a new inclusion support base – the Harpley Inclusion Support Centre (HISC)- which would include the current Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and could accommodate current Harpley School pupils;
- The publication of notices on the closure of Harpley School. No new pupils would be admitted to the school from September 2003, and the school would close when none of the existing pupils remained on roll.
- The Harpley School site to be developed as an inclusion base, enabling non-statemented as well as statemented children to attend the provision, managed through the PRU;
- The remodelling of the relationship between specialist provision and mainstream support networks and systems.

2.2 Officers work closely with Harpley School, the PRU and parents to ensure that the plans will effectively meet the needs of the young people in their care.

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 2000 (SECTION 97)**

#### **LIST OF “BACKGROUND PAPERS” USED IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT**

Brief Description of “background paper” Supplied for register Meeting Emotional and Behavioural Needs of Pupils in Tower Hamlets 2002 Towards Inclusive Education in Schools: Policy and Strategy 1999 Consultation on Strategy to provide support for pupils emotional and behavioural needs Cabinet Paper Sept 04 2002 Feedback Paper on Consultation Nov 2002	Tick if copy	Helen Jenner 0207 364 3114
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### **3 Background**

- 3.1 In January 1999 the Education Committee approved a policy statement and strategy 'Towards Inclusive Education in Schools: Policy and Strategy'. The intention was to develop the capacity of mainstream schools to meet the needs of all learners regardless of any perceived learning difficulties or of any physical impairment they may be experiencing. The programme for implementation was set out in the accompanying Action Plan subsequently revised in 2000.
- 3.2 As has been highlighted nationally the issue of provision for pupils experiencing emotional and behavioural difficulties is an area which still challenges schools and LEAs. Tower Hamlets Behaviour Support Plan (BSP – Revised: 2001-2003) has outlined a systematic response to the issue of behavioural difficulties within the LEA. In addition, in March 2002, the LEA began an audit of behaviour provision in the authority and has produced a Behaviour Improvement Programme (BIP). The BIP will focus on 4 clusters of schools but, supported with Neighbourhood Renewal Funding, will also have an authority-wide effect through the dissemination of good practice and the use of the skills and expertise developed within the clusters.
- 3.3 Particular strengths in current provision include:
- Cherry Trees School, which is a Beacon Primary Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties (EBD) School and the base for outreach work
  - The Pupil Referral Unit (PRU), nationally recognised as being successful in re-integrating pupils into mainstream schools.
  - An effective Behaviour Support Team.
  - The appointment of a new Headteacher at Ian Mikardo School, which has brought rapid improvements to the school.
- 3.4 Particular issues that need to be addressed:
- The PRU is housed in unsuitable accommodation.
  - There is no off-site provision for girls with EBD needs.
  - Rolls are falling at Harpley School.
  - Numbers of pupils with EBD Needs re-integrated into mainstream schools are low.
- 3.5 The proposed inclusion support centre would address all these issues, and ensure more efficient use of resources. The proposed developments will support inclusive provision through clear support for schools, and flexible provision that will effectively meet more complex emotional and behavioural needs.

- 3.6 Cabinet agreed on September 4<sup>th</sup> 2002 to consult informally on the following :
- A proposal to set up a new inclusion support base – the Inclusive Support Centre (ISC) - which would include the current PRU and could accommodate currently Harpley School pupils;
  - A proposal to consult on the closure of Harpley School in 2003/4 and use of the site as the inclusion base;
  - The remodelling of the relationship between specialist provision and mainstream support networks and systems.
- 3.4 The informal consultation has taken place, with information being sent to all local schools, local statutory and voluntary groups and neighbouring LEAs and services. An open meeting has been held and closed meetings were held for parents and staff at Harpley and the PRU, with Harpley governors and the PRU management committee and with Harpley pupils. A small number of written responses were received. As a result of initial consultations a further consultation document has been circulated, addressing the issues raised and further meetings have been held.
- 3.5 The need for change and development is recognised and the development of a more flexible and responsive system is welcomed, and seen as a positive step to further promoting inclusion in schools. In particular the addressing of the needs of vulnerable young women and provision of suitable permanent accommodation for the PRU pupils are seen as particular benefits.
- 3.6 The majority of issues raised were concerns from Harpley staff, parents, pupils and governors about how the changes will effect the provision for the 42 pupils who will still attend the provision after September 2003.
- 3.7 Issues raised include:

**the importance of the name “School” to Harpley parents and pupils,**  
this would be addressed by enabling pupils to remain on the school roll until they leave the school or join the roll of another school;

**concerns about Key Stage 4 provision,**  
the existing Key Stage 4 provision would be maintained for the next 2 years and reviewed during 2004/5 to ensure it still reflected the needs of the pupils at the school and the Inclusion Support Centre;

**the need for staff training,**  
a programme of staff training would be set up with the School Development Team, Educational Psychologists and the Support for Learning Service;

**the importance of support for parents whilst the new provision is developed,**  
the Parents Advice Centre will contact all Harpley parents to offer individual support and advice, and the PRU will support their parents through this period of change;

**the need to clarify referral routes,**

officers are revising referral routes as part of the Strategy for Meeting Emotional and Behavioural Needs and the Behaviour Improvement Plan, the new proposals will be part of this process;

**the relationship between the new provision and mainstream secondary schools,**

if proposals proceed officers would visit each of the mainstream secondary schools to discuss the new centre and its relationship to the schools;

**concern that vulnerable young people may find rapid change difficult to manage**

pupils from the PRU and new pupils will be gradually integrated so that the current Harpley pupil group do not feel swamped;

**concern that behaviour standards at Harpley may be affected**

gradual introduction of new pupils will enable staff to ensure standards of behaviour are maintained;

**concern that current Harpley pupils may have to move schools,**

by a gradual integration of the school and inclusion centre current Harpley pupils would not need to change schools.

3.8 If the proposals proceed the programme will be as follows

Dec 02	Publication of statutory notices
Dec/Jan/ Feb	Statutory consultation period
Feb/Mar	Council response to any objections raised
Apr 2003	If objections raised School Organisation Committee decision on whether proposals can go ahead.
Sept 2003	Formal implementation

**4 Information for Parents**

- 4.1 In order for this change to be implemented, parents must be fully involved and supported. Parents are already involved in regular meetings if their children's emotional and behavioural needs are not being successfully met in school. There are regular school based reviews, and the Pupil Referral Unit works closely with those parents who have been excluded from school. If pupils have a statement of special educational need parents are also invited to an annual review of the child's statement.
- 4.2 The Parents Advice Centre provides support to parents whose children experience special educational needs and supports them through the statement process. Through The Children's Fund the PAC is now also able to provide support for parents of children who have been excluded from school.

- 4.3 The LEA, through the PAC, will contact parents of children who would be on the Harpley School roll in September 2003 individually to discuss the proposed changes and the implications for their future. The PRU will discuss implications with parents of pupils on their roll for September 2003.

#### ***5. Equal Opportunities Implications***

- 5.1 Social inclusion is a key Equalities priority. Ensuring emotional and behavioural needs can effectively be met is an entitlement for our young people. The Strategy seeks to ensure that systems can respond flexibly to the needs of young people without segregation and stigma. The strategy will improve support for girls with emotional and behavioural needs in the Borough.

#### ***6. Anti-Poverty Implications***

- 6.1 The provision of appropriate support for all children to access a broad curriculum is a key component of regeneration strategies. Children who are able to attain well because they have had good inclusive support for emotional and behavioural needs will be more easily able to access employment and develop successful life skills.

#### ***7. Concurrent Report of the Head of Legal Services***

- 7.1 This report asks members for authority to publish notices in accordance with the Schools Standards and Framework Act 1998.
- 7.2 The School Standards & Framework Act 1998 provides detailed provision for the opening, closure or change to the structure of schools including the publication of the proposals and an objection period during which objections may be sent to the LEA. The statutory process for publication of proposals is described at paragraph 3.9 of the report. Proposals must be published in a local newspaper, and posted at the main entrances to the school, and at some other conspicuous place in the area served by the schools. Once proposals have been published objections to the proposals may be lodged by any person.

#### ***8. Comments of Chief Financial Officer***

- 8.1 This report is about consultation on the proposed setting up of a new inclusion support base. The proposals are designed to be cost neutral and to make better use of existing resources.

## ***9. Risk Assessment Implications***

- 9.1 Stakeholders may raise objections when notices are published. These would need to be evaluated by the Schools Organisation Committee before a decision on the proposals could be made.
- 9.2 Changes in the staffing structures could lead to staffing reductions. Posts available in the new structure mean there will be no compulsory redundancies. Staff and unions will be involved in discussions over any redeployment issues.

## ***10. Sustainable Action for a Greener Environment***

- 10.1 There are no implications arising from the recommendations of the report.

## ***11. Recommendations***

- 11.1 That the Cabinet agree the following implementation proposals:
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- 11.2 Officers work closely with Harpley School, the PRU and parents to ensure that the plans will effectively meet the needs of the young people in their care.