

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

Herefordshire Council has a statutory responsibility to provide enough high quality education places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) including for those with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) relating to their SEN or Disability.

Statement of intent

Most children and young people (CYP) with SEND are educated at mainstream schools. Statutory guidance within the SEN Code of Practice (CoP), 2015, presumes that as many as possible will attend mainstream education with the support that they need. The buildings within mainstream schools need to be fit and adapted where necessary for this purpose, either supported by Herefordshire Council, in the case of council 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 mainstream school because of their need, and this is covered within the council accessibility strategy, which has been revised and is being prepared for consultation.

Specialist settings

Where pupils meet the criteria for specialist provision, parents are able to choose a place in a more specialist school setting. **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 buildings and grounds
- That enough space is available to commission places in settings that meet need within Herefordshire where possible
- That a well-planned approach to capital improvement projects in specialist SEND settings is followed, to ensure clear priorities and best value investment by the council

Herefordshire Schools Capital Investment Strategy (SCIS)

The Children and Families (C and F) Directorate of Herefordshire Council published a guidance document in 2016, describing the rationale, methodology and processes involved in capital investment for all maintained 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 important part of the overall SCIS and will be added as an appendix to the SCIS once that has been revised, consulted on and finalised).

Within the SCIS there are eleven guidance principles, which were originally developed in 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. The meaning of 'high quality' in this context
3. There will be a range of different sized schools across Herefordshire supporting future numbers of school age children, 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-vehicle access routes to schools
10. Any financial investment must represent best value for investors
11. We will carry out 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 this SEND capital investment strategy

Our approach towards capital improvement for Herefordshire specialist settings for SEND

Relevant information is routinely collected, added to, revised and analysed, to help us 1. Forecast need for places in schools, and 2. Understand where we might need to invest most urgently in school capital works, and translate this into a strategy. Listed below is a summary description of this process for SEND.

1. Document, track and analyse the number of EHCPs awarded in Herefordshire, and compare this with national and similar local authority numbers
2. Document, track and analyse the number of pupils educated in specialist settings

3. Use available information from the government, local authorities (LAs) similar to Herefordshire, and council colleagues to plan for enough places in the future
4. Investigate and note: the number of spaces available now; the suitability of spaces available; and the condition of our current sites and buildings used by children and young people with SEND
5. Look at a range of solutions to any identified accommodation problems that would help us ensure enough high quality spaces for SEND pupils now and in the future, include proposed solutions in the strategy.
6. Consult on the draft strategy using the council consultation policy and methods
7. Feed the results of consultation back to the stakeholders
8. Put the strategy forward to Hereford council cabinet for approval
9. Publish the final proposed strategy with any changes thought necessary from consultation
10. Start to take action, by taking forward the first priority proposal using Herefordshire council governance and project management approaches



Our method for capital project prioritisation

Each setting is considered using these focus areas –

- Sufficiency – how much physical capacity is there, allowing how many pupils?
- Compliance - suitability information, are the spaces suitable for the needs of, and number of pupils? (using the government building bulletin BB104 for guidance)
- Condition – what is the condition, and how cost effective is the building now and in the future and what is the likely maintenance and repair cost going to be in the future?
- Health and safety of the buildings and sites accommodated at the moment
- Designation and demand - use of forecast information to understand future type and number of spaces needed
- Cost of a proposed solution – a. cost of investigating whether the proposed solution is feasible, and b. the cost taking the project forward (land costs, construction costs and any/all other associated costs)

We have circulated this SEND capital strategy document to stakeholders in order to gain their views on the proposals within it, (as per number 6 in the approach stated above). A summary of the consultation responses is contained in Appendix 2.

Herefordshire SEND provision – Current






Mainstream education	Mainstream + specialist advice	Local specialist provision (resource bases with pupils on mainstream roll/site)	Local specialist provision (special schools)	Specialist independent schools or settings
 Increasing complexity of need with increasing specialism/intensity of input and likely increased cost 				
Vast majority of children have needs met - approx. 3000 with SEN from 23,000 total	Small proportion of children – approx. 500	Small proportion of children – approx. 100	Small proportion of children – approx. 350	Very small proportion of children – approx. 50
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 • Increasing intensity of support: 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 school staff Including relevant therapies for example	Small group sizes with trained specialist teachers, inclusion in mainstream lessons for part of the week, and relevant therapies	Small group sizes with trained specialist teachers and relevant therapies. Some outreach provided for pupils in mainstream schools	Small group sizes with trained specialist teachers, and relevant therapies
Type of Need as described in SEND Code of Practice (CoP) 2015, with Herefordshire provision at each level				
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, (BHBS). Further detailed investigation of autism place needs 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, EP	Proposed Nurture Provision KS1	Brookfield Pupil Referral Service	Yes





<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child unable to manage their emotions resulting in challenging behaviours incl. ADHD Anxiety/School Phobia/Eating Disorder/gender dysphoria 	CAMHS OT Counselling Advice from H3 CAMHS	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 OT Physiotherapy	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 independent. 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: See summary of proposals page 10-12.

Notes: The diagram above sets out 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. Taking all information about needs into account, and considering most efficient use of resources, it will seek to meet parental/pupil preference. It is also important to stress that children do not fall neatly into the types of need described. Placement decisions are therefore made using the best available information at the time the decision is made drawn from the advice of specialist professionals from a range of services and agencies.

Overview of SEND strategy place planning and capital improvement

1. <u>Type of setting</u> maintained by the council. (LD - learning disability, SEMH - social emotional and mental health CURRENT TYPE AND PHASE	2. <u>Number of places and age groups</u> proposed in each school/setting PROPOSED NUMBERS	3. <u>Number of places</u> available. CURRENT NUMBERS	4. <u>Current accommodation</u> suitability, sufficiency and condition CURRENT ACCOMMODATION QUALITY
Total number of special school places proposed and current 	365 (225 2-16 age LD, 60 Post-16 age LD and 80 7-16 age SEMH)	355 (total of numbers in bold in the next three rows below, not including Brookfield short term intervention places)	
Settings 			
LD <u>2-19</u> special schools - Barrs Court academy school 2-19, Blackmarston council maintained school 2-11, Westfield council maintained school 2-19. 	Blackmarston 85 2-11 age, Barrs Court 80 11-16 age, Westfield 60 2-16 age (subject to consultation on proposed closure of Westfield Sixth Form, to be completed in 2021)	Blackmarston 87, Barrs Court 118 (includes 45 post 16) Westfield 63 (currently includes 13 post 16). See proposal on page 8 about current sixth form 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 future <u>16-19</u> special school Beacon College opening September 2021, proposed to replace sixth form provision at Westfield and Barrs Court 	Beacon College 60 Opening September 2021, will be able to accommodate minimum 60 students.	0 at Beacon until Sept 21. See above for sixth form numbers currently at Barrs Court and Westfield	Note - poor accommodation for current 16-19 students at Barrs Court and Westfield new accommodation at Beacon College from September 2021
SEMH 7-16 Brookfield academy school 	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	Brookfield 90 , plus 8 FTE intervention places for pupils still on roll at a mainstream school.	Current accommodation non-compliant. No girls' toilets, no sports facilities and poor off site accommodation. Improvement project underway

	80 through outreach work in mainstream schools and supporting school nurture groups		
Alternative provision 11-16 Herefordshire pupil referral service (PRS) council maintained. 	Under consultation: propose 50 full time equivalent (fte). 40 fully funded for permanent exclusions, 10 for schools to purchase on a Tiered Intervention Programme	65 places 50 fully funded by LA, 15 for purchase at full cost by schools. Numbers have recently fallen, review in light of Covid impact on numbers	Current split site accommodation non-compliant, condition poor at 11-14 centre, access for vehicles and suitability poor for 14-16 centre.
Alternative provision 11-16 Home and hospital teaching service H3 	H3 25 fte commissioned places for up to 50 part-time pupils, accommodation planned for up to 24 at any one time.	50 part-time pupils	Under compliant and cramped accommodation, teaching spaces unsuitable for appropriate teaching methods
Resourced Provision 2-116 Hampton Dene Primary LCC (Language base and Autism base both with a 2-7 age and 7-11 age class) Bishop of Hereford Bluecoat School – The Bridge (Autism Base for 8 secondary pupils) 	Spaces needed at both age ranges is under further investigation, see pages 9 and 10 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 – a range of organisations in and out of county 	Individual case by case, not possible to forecast. Provision sought when needs require and particular pupil needs not supportable in-county	Varies – approximately 50 day and residential places including places funded by a range of agencies, not just education	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 lack of site availability for very large school in central location
D	Improve/rebuild Westfield school to take 60 pupils from 2-16, (subject to consultation on proposed closure of Westfield Sixth Form, 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 their 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 at Westfield School. In addition this option retains the potential for supporting applications for 2-16 places from out of county. Results of the consultation during 2021 on a proposal to close Westfield sixth form phase will inform the scope of the feasibility study into capital improvements for the school

Proposed course of action – pursue option D by undertaking a feasibility study into the best way to achieve improved accommodation for Westfield school. The scope of the feasibility study will be informed by the results of a consultation on the proposed sixth form closure. **Consult in 2021** on a proposal to close by phasing out the Westfield sixth form starting from September 2022. Discuss an approach to DfE with Barrs Court Trust regarding the accommodation issues at Barrs Court School.

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 Herefordshire 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
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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 PRS 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 (H3)

	Options	Comments
A	No change	Not feasible on the basis of cramped conditions, poor compliance and increased numbers of places needed since the service 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 (situated currently on Riverside Primary School site)
C	Pursue the feasibility of using the post-16 hub on Symonds Street currently occupied by Barrs Court Trust sixth form, when vacated. Vacate current H3 site and relocate the service to the Symonds Street building after internal modifications have been made.	Best option, investigate design and cost with council property services and timeline with Barrs Court Trust.

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, to be discussed with Hampton Dene school leaders
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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 similar local authority level. This will enable a proposed option to be brought forward. Target date for completion of further investigation, autumn half term 2021.

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 (numbers coming through) and 'hidden' (pupils not yet known) demand within current and future 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 similar local authority level. This will enable a proposed option to be brought forward. Target date for completion of further investigation autumn half term 2021.

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.

NEXT STEPS AND SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS FOR CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO SEND SETTINGS 2020-30

- **Consultation on the strategy with stakeholders – closed on 9 February 2021**
- **Consultation on the strategy with Scrutiny Committee – meeting on 23 March 2021**
- **Summary of above responses sent out as feedback to stakeholders – 30 March 2021**
- **Final strategy presented to Herefordshire Council Cabinet for approval – 22 April 2021**

Note - The consultation on the strategy follows Herefordshire Council's consultation process, and changes thought necessary after consideration of responses will be made before the strategy is brought to Herefordshire Council Cabinet for decision. A summary of consultation responses and changes will be produced as feedback for stakeholders when all responses have been received, and after discussion at the Children and Families Scrutiny Committee.

Setting	Scope and scale	Funding	Comment
Barrs Court Trust 11-19 LD academy school	Collect information ref condition, suitability and capacity and support discussions between Barrs Court Trust and the DfE about solutions to the cramped 11-16 conditions and poor vehicle access and parking. Support BCT in phasing out of sixth form provision	To be explored, likely to be DfE academy condition improvement fund and any available government grants	BCT 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 buildings. Start to commission places on opening in Sept 2021	Successful bid for government funding for total cost, and DfE project managing the build.	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 accommodation. Scope of feasibility work to be informed by the result of a 2021 consultation 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	The appointment of a feasibility contractor is underway in readiness for cabinet approval of the strategy. Feasibility work will include a possible sixth form element, until the council decision on the future of the sixth form at Westfield is made.
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 previously, in line with fund conditions. Council capital legacy funding in place from 2016. <u>Not included in this consultation.</u>
Alternative provision (PRS) for 11-16 pupils disengaged from mainstream	Conduct feasibility exercise into the options presented in the alternative provision table (page 8-9 above)	Funding for feasibility work to be informed by council capital funding principles April 2021 onwards	Discuss proposal for feasibility work at Children and Families Capital Strategy board. Target date for feasibility proposal to be drafted, end of November 2021 
Resourced Provision (RP) for pupils	Conduct further investigative work on needs and spaces required, (as stated in tables on pages 9-10 above) followed by	Investigative work to be completed by council officers.	Discuss proposal for feasibility work at Children and Families Capital Strategy board. Further investigation

autism needs and an EHCP	feasibility work to produce a proposed option for both primary and secondary RP for autism. Consult on resulting RP proposals and update SEND capital strategy	Funding for feasibility work to be informed by council capital funding methods April 2021 onwards	completed by autumn half term 2021, target date for feasibility proposal to be drafted, end of February 2022.
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 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. Proposals for H3 solution to be drafted by end of year 2021.

Meaning of terms used in the strategy

SEND - special educational needs and disabilities

CYP – children and young people

EHCP – education health and care plan

Maintained schools – those funded and maintained by the council

Academy or free schools – those funded and maintained directly by the government

DfE – department for education

ESFA – education and, skills funding agency (the group providing funds for academy/free schools)

Capital projects – projects to improve buildings and or sites

SCIS – the council schools capital investment strategy describing the capital approach to all maintained local authority schools

LD – learning disability

SEMH – social, emotional, mental health

CoP – SEND code of practice document (DfE Statutory Guidance 2015)

C and F – Herefordshire Council Children and Families Directorate

LA – local authority

SENCO – special educational needs co-ordinator in a school

COSI – communication and social interaction group

LCC – language and communication centre

BHBS – Bishop of Hereford Bluecoat School
EP – education psychologist
CAMHS – child and adolescent mental health service
OT- occupational therapy
H3 – home and hospital hub
ADHD – attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
PASS – physical and sensory service
HPRS – Herefordshire pupil referral service
Fte – full time equivalent places
BB104 – government building bulletin number 104 covering SEND accommodation
BCT – Barrs Court Trust
KS1 and 2 – primary school age children
KS3 and 4 – secondary school age children
Post-16 – sixth form age young people