

# BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

## REPORT TO CABINET

30 JANUARY 2018

### REPORT OF THE INTERIM CORPORATE DIRECTOR – EDUCATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT

#### PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH AN AUTISTIC SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD) LEARNING RESOURCE CENTRE (LRC) AT PENCOED PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### 1. Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet's approval to consult formally with the parents, staff and governing body of Pencoed Primary School and other interested parties on the proposal to establish a LRC for pupils with ASD at Pencoed Primary School.

#### 2. Connection to the corporate improvement plan/other corporate priorities

- 2.1 These proposals are related both to the Corporate Plan 2016-2020 and the Education Inclusion Programme and, in particular, the following corporate improvement priority:

- Supporting a successful economy

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 In December 2011, Cabinet received an update on the review of support and provision for the inclusion of children and young people with ALN.
- 3.2 Currently, in conjunction with this proposal there is also a proposal to establish a Welsh-medium ASD LRC at Ysgol Gyfun Gymraeg Llangynwyd which is at public notice stage of the consultation process.
- 3.3 In addition, a proposal to open an ASD LRC in one of the Welsh-medium primary schools will be submitted to Cabinet to undergo a consultation exercise once the feeder primary school has been identified.
- 3.4 The Council supports the principles that, when possible, children should be educated within a mainstream school environment and as near to their home as possible. The proposal to open an ASD LRC at Pencoed Primary School would afford those children with ASD living in the east locality of Bridgend County Borough to be educated locally.

#### 4. Current situation/proposal

- 4.1 A copy of the consultation paper is annexed at **Appendix 1**. The proposal, if approved, would mean that:

- an LRC at Pencoed Primary School for a maximum of 8 pupils with ASD would be established from 1 September 2018;
- there would be a graduated intake from 1 September 2018 and the admissions for the LRC would be decided upon through an admissions panel;
- the LRC would be an integrated part of the mainstream school, providing an appropriate environment in which pupils can develop and thrive within their peer group and have normal access to mainstream curriculum, where appropriate; and
- the LRC would provide specialist learning facilities within the school. It would also provide specialist expertise in respect of ASD to mainstream classes.

4.2 From the pupils' point of view, they would have access to individual, small-group and whole-class experiences, as appropriate. Their progress would be closely monitored and individual plans regularly reviewed.

4.3 Other mainstream pupils at Pencoed Primary School with ASD would also benefit from this proposal as it seeks to widen the specialist learning facilities within the school and provide expertise and advice to all staff.

## **5. Effect upon policy framework and procedure rules**

5.1 There is no effect upon the policy frameworks or procedure rules.

## **6. Equality impact assessment**

6.1 The Council has a duty to consult and fully consider the implications of any proposal on all members of the local community who may be affected unfairly as a result of the proposal being carried out.

6.2 A full equality impact assessment will be undertaken in parallel with the consultation process. The outcomes and actions identified by this assessment will be included in a report to Cabinet on the consultation process.

## **7. Financial implications**

7.1 The funding for the learning resource centre would be allocated through the mainstream school's delegated budget, via the school's formula allocation, and using a combination of the age-weighted pupil unit (AWPU) element, plus a per place factor.

7.2 Funding levels would be derived from notional current staffing needs. If pupil numbers remain constant, then the cost of the provision would be largely unchanged. The number of places would be reviewed annually and agreed with the headteacher to enable staffing stability and to assist in school planning.

7.3 These proposed funding arrangements are similar to those implemented for secondary schools in 2013-2014, that were part of the annual consultation with governing bodies and the School Budget Forum on changes to the schools' funding formulae. One-off funding for the set-up costs would be £10k.

7.4 As part of the medium-term financial strategy budget-setting process for 2017-2018, a total of £263k was allocated under budget pressures to establish additional learning resource centres for pupils with ASD in two Welsh-medium schools and two English-medium schools with effect from the academic year 2017-2018. This allocation will be used to fund the LRC at Pencoed Primary School if the proposal goes ahead.

## **8. Recommendations**

8.1 Cabinet is recommended to agree to consult formally on the proposal to establish a LRC for pupils with ASD at Pencoed Primary School and for the outcome of the consultation to be reported back to Cabinet so that an informed decision can then be made on the proposal with effect from 1 September 2018.

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## **Background documents**

Education Inclusion Programme: Reviewing and developing support and provision for the inclusion of children and young people with ALN (report to Cabinet, December 2011).