



**CHILDREN AND FAMILIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

**MONDAY 24 MARCH 2014**

**QUESTIONS SUBMITTED UNDER STANDING ORDER 35**

The following questions are to be put to the Chairman of the Children and Young People's Service Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Questions by Mrs Sue Whiting**

**Re: Data relating to children and young people with Dyslexia.**

"Now that the Children and Families Act 2014 has received Royal assent and the provisions within the Act are required to be active from September 2014 could the chair please answer the following questions with regard to the provision available in Leicestershire?"

1. A report to the Children and Young People's Service Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2011 stated that 8 children with Dyslexia were being educated 'out of county' at a cost of £118,602, yet in June 2013 Councillor Ould stated that "Leicestershire does not hold information about specific provision for dyslexia across the county." In a separate letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2013 he stated that "Local offer will require schools and local authorities to produce information about the services available to children and young people with special needs, including Dyslexia". Does Leicestershire now have information about the provision for children with Dyslexia both within the county and any further out of county provision that is still needed to cater for children with dyslexia "because the educational needs of the individual young person are highly specialised?"

2. In Leicestershire Criteria for Cognition and Learning: Specific Learning difficulties multi agency protocols include the Rose review on Dyslexia, Guidance on Dyslexia Friendly schools and Equality Act 2010.

Feature 3 for identification states low self esteem, anxiety, frustration, task avoidance. Speech and language difficulties may also be apparent.

- (a) What are the current waiting times for a child to access the services of CAMHS [Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services],

Educational Psychologists and Speech and Language Therapists?

- (b) If a child is 'at risk' of becoming a young offender, are these waiting times in any way different?
  - (c) What will the impact of cuts to Educational Psychologists, CAMHS, Speech and Language and Young Offenders Service be on these waiting times?
3. On 28<sup>th</sup> October 2010 Councillor White wrote "We do not hold data on Leicestershire children that would allow us to provide an analysis of co-morbidity - the extent to which children with one area of difficulty (dyslexia) also experience another area of difficulty (mental health difficulties).

However, case work experience in our Educational Psychology Service suggests that there is a strong link.....

Children's anxiety provides the bridge from one area of difficulty to the other. Many young people with Dyslexia experience anxiety, and if this is not dealt with, it can lead to longer term mental health problems."

Does Leicestershire now have provision for gathering and monitoring this data so that early correct teaching and health provision can be provided?

4. In December 2013 Olivia Loder aged 11 wrote to Michael Gove, "The reason I'm writing is to tell about how state schools treat dyslexics and that we feel like we have no potential and feel like the thing you found on the bottom of your shoe and that's not nice."

The reason I am asking these questions is because I still get contacted by parents who are desperately trying to help their children to have the correct provision of education. By the time they contact me I usually have to tell them how to access CAMHS either via the school medical officer or their own GP. A recent contact had already gone to their GP and CAHMS, but the education provision was not there.

- (a) Does Leicestershire now have any information on schools which have qualified staff, as set out in Leicestershire Criteria?
- (b) Are there any primary schools that are dyslexia friendly or at least dyslexia effective in identifying and putting early provision in place so that children don't develop anxieties and need CAMHS referrals?"

## Reply by Mr Spence CC

1. Mr Ould CC was correct to say that “Leicestershire does not hold information about specific provision for dyslexia across the county.” However, we do hold specific information about children educated out of county because we have a particular responsibility for them. The 2011 statement reflected our knowledge that of the children being educated out of county, 8 of them were dyslexic.

Under the Special Educational Needs (SEN) Code of Practice, schools and early years settings are expected to implement a range of observations and assessments and measure the child’s progress against interventions as part of a ‘graduated response’. Schools and early years settings can seek advice from a range of agencies/services e.g. Area SEN Co-ordinator (SENCO), Specialist Teaching Services, Early Help, Area Special School Outreach and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as well as LPS. Schools and Parents can make a request for statutory assessment and access additional top up funding if necessary to contribute to a child’s support needs in school.

Representation from parents for placements ‘out of county’, i.e. in independent or non maintained special schools, are infrequent, indicating that families, schools and professional are in agreement that children’s needs can and are being met by the graduated response as set out above.

2. (a) CAMHS services are commissioned by Leicestershire Partnership Trust on behalf of the NHS. There has not been sufficient time between receiving this question and needing to provide the response to be informed of the waiting times – this will be provided as soon as the information is received.
- (b) CAMHS Community Teams provide specialist assessment and interventions for children and young people with significant mental health difficulties. Waiting time targets following referral are as follows: urgent referrals are assessed within 24 hours; routine referrals are assessed within 13 weeks. For emergencies there is a 24 hours ‘on call’ service which accepts telephone referrals from GPs or A&E (0116 2252900 or UHL Switchboard 0300 303 1573). The risk assessment tool used through the referral process identifies the vulnerabilities present, including youth offending.
- (c) Educational psychologists continue to be accessible to schools through a twice yearly planning meeting with school SENCOs. For children too young to be in schools, referrals are allocated at Early Years Panel. Direct contact with concerned parents is always available from the LPS Advice Line: 0116 3055100. The Advice Line is available every working day during office hours.

As a result of the County Council’s budget pressures and the Medium Term Strategy agreed on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2014, a number of

services will have their budgets reduced. For the Psychology Service the budget reduction is 18% and the service will be reorganised as part of the transformation of Children and Young Person's Services as an outcome of reforms needed to address the demands of the Children and Families Act. Every effort will be made to minimise impact on early year's settings, schools, children and families. These changes are unlikely to impact CAMHS waiting times because these services work at an earlier level of support than required for those children and young people with significant mental health difficulties. However, there is a need to review the current pathways for mental health support at all levels and at the meeting of the Health and Well Being Board on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2014, a proposal was agreed to begin this review which will include all relevant stakeholders and will be led by Public Health.

In respect of the waiting times for SALT the national target, which is contractually binding with the Leicestershire Partnership Trust contract with the CCG's is 18 weeks referral to treatment. The providers will be expected to maintain these times despite any cuts to provision. These are monitored monthly through performance mechanisms.

3. As previously stated; 'We do not hold data on Leicestershire children that would allow us to provide an analysis of co-morbidity - the extent to which children with one area of difficulty (dyslexia) also experience another area of difficulty (mental health difficulties)' i.e. in this case anxiety. However, it should be noted and is recognised in the question, 'case work experience in our Educational Psychology Service suggests that there is a strong link' between dyslexia and anxiety, consequently, casework on individual specific cases, assessment and interventions are alerted to this, as are other professional e.g. Learning Support Service and it is also part of dyslexia training in schools.
4. (a)&  
(b) Leicestershire does not keep a central record of staff in schools across Leicestershire who have undertaken additional training or qualifications for specific types of SEN. The Local Offer as part of the SEN and Disability Reform as required by the Children and Families Act will cover support available to all children and young people with SEN from universal services such as schools. Schools will be required to be part of this Local Offer. Leicestershire County Council's intention is to ensure this includes national and local expectations regarding the support that all schools could provide for all types of SEN and disability based on National guidance and research. The Local Offer will therefore require all schools to set out their specific expertise in areas of SEN and Disability. All children assessed will be provided with information about the Local Offer and the Parent Partnership will continue to play a key role in promoting this new approach.



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The following questions are to be put to the Chairman of the Children and Families Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

**Question by Mr Richard Carter on behalf of residents of 4, 6, 8 and 10 Homestead Close, Cossington**

**Re: Cossington Church of England Primary School**

“Residents who live in close proximity to Cossington Church of England Primary School are increasingly confused and concerned about the mixed messages that are being given by the LEA [Local Education Authority] about the school, and the effects that the different proposals would have on their homes.

**Contextual information.**

1. In evidence to an appeal in March 2012 about insufficient capacity at Rothley Church of England Primary School (Land at Brookfield Farm March 2012 APP/X2410/A/11/2161715) the LEA stated that “there would be no spare capacity in 2015 at either Mountsorrel or Cossington primary schools.” It then went on - “It was the LEA’s view that because of physical site constraints at Rothley Primary School, the additional capacity was likely to be provided at Cossington, subject to a feasibility study.” The LEA clearly signaled that there were strong grounds to seriously consider increasing the capacity of Cossington school.
2. The Development Control and Regulatory Board at a meeting on 13th February 2014 refused an application for a further 5 year temporary permission for 3 mobile classrooms at Cossington Church of England Primary School. The Applicant informed the Board that it had “no plans” in place in the event of a refusal. Accordingly, the Board granted an 18 month extension with the recommendation that permanent classrooms be built instead of the temporary mobiles. They also indicated that they would “be minded” not to renew any subsequent applications for temporary classrooms.

3. Residents concerns about Cossington Church of England Primary School:
- temporary mobile classrooms have been sited at the school for over 35 years
  - temporary mobile classrooms provide over 50% of the teaching space
  - 88% of the school intake comes from outside the school's catchment area
  - 82% of the school intake comes from Sileby school catchments
  - high volumes of traffic are generated because of out-of-catchment journeys, which create a highway hazard
  - the mobiles are sited in a narrow corridor of land which is bounded on two sides by residential properties that are only 5 metres away at their narrowest point
  - indoor PE activities takes place in a Hall which is 5 metres away from the boundaries
  - the staff car park is sited in a narrow corridor of land that is bounded by residential properties
  - residents adjoining the school suffer considerable noise, light and traffic nuisance because of the close proximity of the school

### Questions

1. Is there capacity at the two Sileby Primary Schools to enroll all the children in their catchment areas?
2. Cossington school has been left stranded by demographic change and significant constraints on its site render its suitability for further development problematic, so what plans does the Board have for the School?

### **Reply by Mr Spence CC:**

1. There are currently 652 pupils that live in the catchment area of Sileby and there are 525 places available at the two schools in the village; Highgate Community Primary (210 places) and Sileby Redlands Community Primary School (315 places). The 84 remaining pupils choose to attend other schools. Historically Redlands retain 54% (238) of their catchment pupils and Highgate retain 61% (127) of their catchment pupils. There is crossover of pupils attending either Highgate or Redlands from each other's catchment area. However, of those not attending one of the two schools in the village, 88 are on roll at Cossington Primary School and 115 pupils choose to attend other schools nearby.

In order for Sileby Highgate and Sileby Redlands Primary Schools to take all of their in-catchment pupils both would need some extension. The Development Control and Regulatory Board was advised on 13th February 2014 that there are already phased proposals to increase Highgate Primary to 420 places in the future to address additional pupils

from housing gains in the area. There are currently no plans to extend Redlands Primary, particularly as gaining access onto the site would need careful negotiations with third parties.

2. The planning of school places falls within the remit of the County Council's Children and Young People's Service. There are no significant constraints on development of the Cossington School site. However, it should be noted that parts of the site sit within a conservation area, and this would require careful consideration, but the temporary classrooms and hall are positioned just outside of the conservation area. All of the temporary accommodation on the site is of a good condition, hence there are currently no plans made for replacement.

In terms of demographics, there are 18 pupils that live in Cossington, 14 of which choose to go to their in-catchment school, the remaining 4 pupils choose to attend other schools. Cossington Primary school is made up of 13% in-catchment and 87% out-catchment (the majority of which come from Sileby). The school is designated as rural by the Department for Education. In accordance with the County Council's draft strategy for the future provision of school places, the Council is committed to maintaining a good network of provision in all parts of Leicestershire, particularly rural areas, with a presumption against closing schools unless absolutely necessary for educational reasons or should they become unsustainable. The future development of accommodation at the school is now under review by the Children and Young People's Service following the recent Development Control and Regulatory Board decision.

The attached catchment map shows the relationship and close proximity of Cossington Primary to the two primary schools in Sileby.

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