




**Haringey Council**

<b>Report for:</b>	<b>Corporate Parenting Advisory Committee: 16 March 2015</b>	<b>Item Number:</b>	
<b>Title:</b>	<b>Looked After Children with SEN and Disabilities</b>		
<b>Report Authorised by:</b>	 Jon Abbey – Interim Director of Children		
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Vikki Monk Meyer – Head of Integrated Service for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.		
<b>Ward(s) affected: All</b>	<b>Report for Non Key Decision</b>		

**1. Describe the issue under consideration**

1.1 This report gives a brief overview of the needs of Looked After Children with a statement of Special Educational Need.

**2. Background**

2.1 A large proportion of Looked After Children are likely to have a Special Education Need or Disability, with on average 28% of the Looked After Children population with a statement of Special Educational Need, and 60% with some form of Special Educational Need. (Department for Schools, Children and Families, Guidance on Looked After Children with Special Educational Needs 2009).

2.2 Children with low birth weight or born prematurely are more highly pre disposed to developing special educational needs or being born with disabilities. Premature birth and low birth weight can also be caused by factors that affected the babies development in utero e.g. maternal alcohol use, maternal drug use, increased incidents of smoking and poor maternal nutrition. The above factors are also highly correlated with a high deprivation index, where the incidence of language delay in children starting school is 5 times higher than that of a population in a more affluent area.



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**2.3** The needs of the Children and Young People with SEN and Disability are wide ranging and can challenge their learning in very different ways. A disability is defined by the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 as:

“...a physical or mental impairment which has substantial and long-term adverse effect on (the person’s) ability to carry out normal day to day functions”

Whereas a child is described as having a Special Educational Need (Section 312 Education Act 1996) if they have:

“a learning difficulty which calls for a special educational provision to be made for them. Children have a learning difficulty if they

- a) have a significant greater difficulty in learning than the majority of children of the same age: or
- b) have a disability which prevents or hinders them from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for children of the same age in schools within the area of the local education authority
- c) are under compulsory school age and fall within the definition at (a) or (b) above and would do so if special educational provision is not made for them”

**2.4** Given the above factors, the majority of Looked After Children who have Special Educational Needs are primarily as a result of a cognitive difficulty or difference in learning from the ‘average’ learning style. These may manifest as an emotional or behavioural issue, with resulting attention and listening difficulties, difficulties with socialisation and emotional development at an appropriate age and stage, or other more specific learning difficulty e.g. literacy difficulty such as dyslexia.

**2.5** Children with a special educational need or disability, which is likely to require significant support over and above that available from within the mainstream schools resources, may be issued with a statement of special educational need.

**2.6** As from September 2014 the Children’s and Families Act lays out a new Code of Practice for children and young people with disabilities and SEN. This includes the changed format of the legislative support from a statement, to an Education, Health and Social Care Plan (EHC). This new format will include advice and support packages from social care in the plan, and also health services including therapies and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

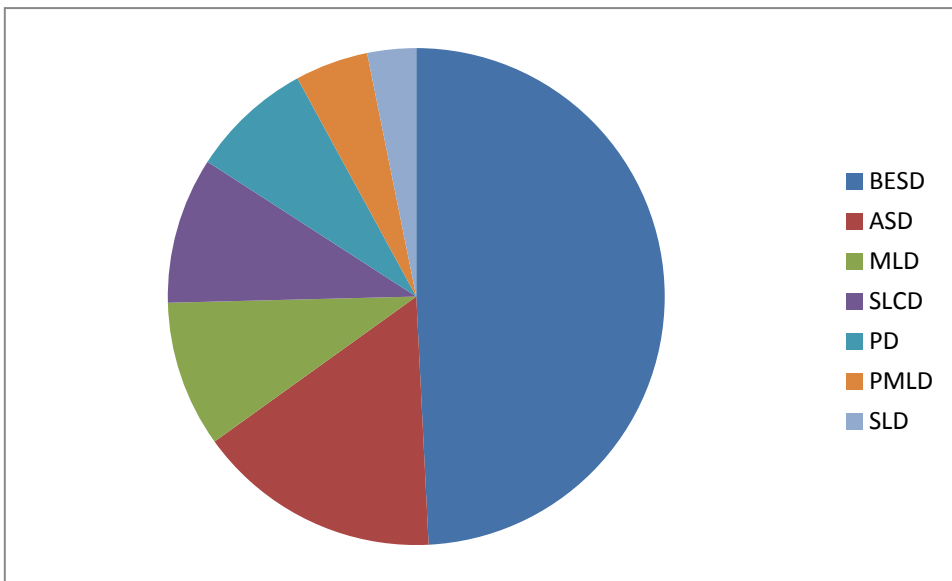
### **2.7 Population of Children and Young People in Care**

There are 63 children and young people classified as Looked After Children with a statement of special educational need. The primary category of need in the children and young people’s statements is as follows:



Numbers of Children and Young People	Primary Need
Behavioural Social and Emotional (BESD)	31
Autism (ASD)	10
Moderate Learning Difficulty (MLD)	6
Speech/Language and Communication Difficulties (SLCD)	6
Physical Disabilities (PD)	5
Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)	3
Severe Learning Difficulties (SLD)	2

The following is a pie chart to show the broad outline of category of need outlined in the children and young people's statements:



**2.8** There are higher numbers of children and young people in care with emotional and behavioural difficulties, social communication difficulties. This may be compounded by frequent school moves as a result of changes in foster placements; also impact on the consistency of children's schooling, which also creates challenges in terms of establishing and maintaining an effective learning style for the child.

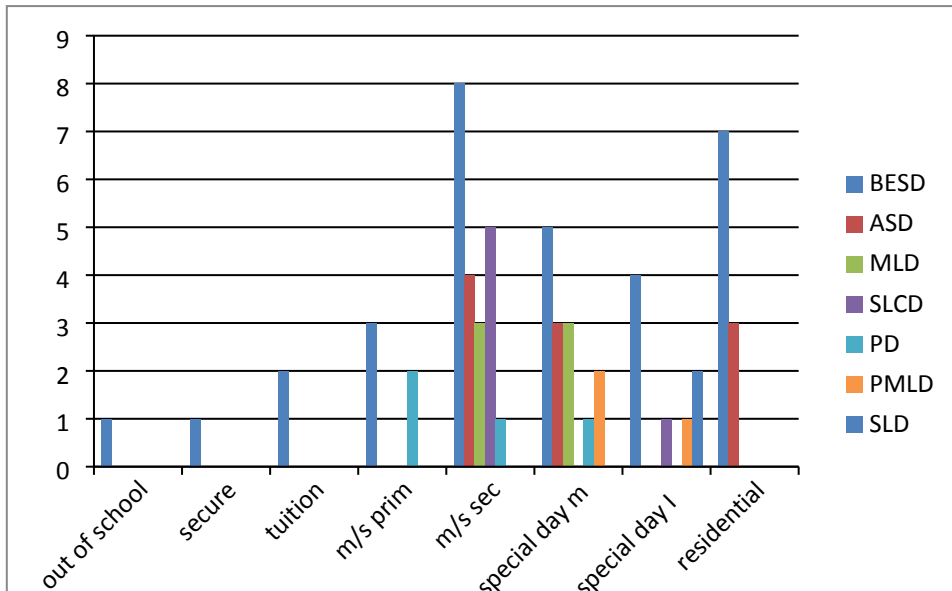




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highest numbers of children in are in Special Schools (22 in total) with 21 at mainstream secondary school.

2.14 The following shows the numbers of children and type of school placement in each group:



2.15 Children and Young People with Behaviour, Emotional and Social Difficulties are more likely to be educated out of London in a residential setting, with children with Autism the second most likely. Whilst the reasons for this are not completely clear at this stage, analysis of a small sample of children’s cases seems to indicate is it due to factors such as their high levels of activity, and poor sleep patterns and with highly challenging behaviour. The behavioural challenges presented by these children can mean that overnight vigilance, and a change of adult, is needed to ensure the interaction the child receives is positive and choices are not made by the adult due to fatigue. At this stage this is most often found in a residential school. In a day Special Schools this behaviour approach is called ‘change of face’ whereby the adults tag team each other when managing a child through a particularly difficult episode.

2.16 Children with BESD are most likely to be out of school, often due to a breakdown in foster placement leading to a move to another borough. They are also the children and young people most difficult to place in school settings.

2.17 Whilst accurate numbers of children with co-occurring mental health difficulties are not represented here, the highest contributory factor for choosing a residential setting is a Young Person’s challenging behaviour as a result of a significant mental health difficulty.

2.18 The child or young person’s primary category of need is not a high indicator of their school placement, outside of residential.



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2.19 Not included in this information are a further 24 children attending residential special schools out of the Borough. These children and young people predominantly have a diagnosis of Autism.

### **3. Summary:**

There are significantly more statemented children of secondary school age, who are also more likely to have Behavioural Emotional and Social Difficulties. As this is a very broad category of need, more analysis is needed about the individual children's educational challenges and diagnosis, across both health and education. The conversion from a statement to an education, health and care plan will be particularly key for this group of children and young people, in identifying and setting outcomes for their individual needs.

### **4. Comments of the Chief Finance Officer and financial implications**

NA

### **5. Comments of the Assistant Director of Corporate Governance and legal implications**

NA

### **6. Equalities and Community Cohesion Comments**

NA

### **7. Head of Procurement Comments**

NA

### **8. Policy Implication**

NA

### **9. Reasons for Decision**

NA

### **10. Use of Appendices**

NA

### **11. Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985**

Disabilities Discrimination Act 1995

Education Act 1996

Children and Families Act 2014