

# Consultation on changes to resource bases for pupils with special educational needs



# Consultation on changes to special educational needs resource bases in Camden schools

## What is being proposed?

Camden Council is consulting on proposed changes to special educational needs (SEN) 'resource bases' in mainstream schools.

Resource bases mean extra building space, teaching or other professional time or learning resources within a mainstream school to help meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).

## Why do we want to make changes to resource bases?

A review of our school resource bases took place in 2011 – the first time we had done this.

This included extensive consultation with parents, carers, teachers, heads and other professionals, including NHS staff. The review compared our provision to other similar areas of London and England and looked at future needs. It found our provision is unequally spread, with some areas of the borough having a very different level of resource than others.

The review proposed changes to how our services are organised but also to the resource bases in Camden schools.

We have consulted parents and professionals informally and there was initial agreement on the need to address the inequitable distribution of resources across the borough.

**We are now consulting you on proposals that would mean changes to provision at specific schools.**

**Please note that where we are proposing to reduce or change provision at a particular school, we would put transitional arrangements in place for at least three years to minimise disruption to current pupils.**

Our intention is to cause as little disruption to individual pupils, parents and staff as possible.

**The main aim is to make better use of resources, rather than cut costs – we will not save any money as a result of these changes.**

## Which schools are affected?

The following schools would be affected by the changes:

### **Beckford Primary School**

Beckford has a physical disability resource base. We are proposing that it closes, with the resource changed to support all Camden's schools to be accessible for pupils with a physical disability. Since the Beckford resource base was established, it is now expected that any mainstream school be accessible to pupils with a physical disability. There would still be some primary physical disability resource base places in Kentish Town Primary School for pupils with more profound needs.

### **Christopher Hatton and Rhyl primary schools**

Both schools have language resource bases and we are proposing to close these. The resource from these bases would go into a proposed new service to support pupils with speech, language and communication needs and/or autism spectrum disorder (ASD) across all Camden schools. This change reflects the review's findings that language provision was inequitably distributed, with provision for autism needing to be increased. Primary language resource base places would still be available at Torriano Infant and Junior schools for pupils with more profound needs.

### **Torriano Infant and Junior Schools**

Torriano Infant School has a language resource base. We propose to extend this resource base into Torriano Junior School, expanding the number of places from eight to 12 between the two schools. This would allow the borough to retain some primary language resource base places for pupils with more profound needs in a central, easily accessible location.

### **Regent High and Hampstead secondary schools**

Both of these schools have a physical disability resource base. We are proposing that these be changed to admit pupils with a physical disability and/or learning difficulties. Since the resource bases were established, it is now expected that any mainstream school should be accessible to pupils with a physical disability, and learning difficulties is a type of SEN where Camden is currently predicting increased demand for support.

### **The following schools have a resource base but are unaffected by these proposals:**

- Kentish Town Primary School – physical disability and autism spectrum disorder
- Netley Primary School – autism spectrum disorder
- Acland Burghley Secondary School – autism spectrum disorder.

## Special educational needs and disabilities improvement test

We believe our proposals meet the government's 'SEND improvement test' in the following ways:

- Pupils across Camden will have improved access to education and the curriculum due to the increased support that mainstream schools will be able to access from the proposed new support services.
- There will be an increase in the number of suitable places for children with SEND in mainstream schools, which will more than outweigh the proposed reduction in resource base places, as well as being more equitably distributed.
- Camden's 'local offer for pupils with SEND' will comprise a range of places from mainstream schools, resource bases and special schools, according to the needs of the pupil, all with access to high quality professional support services from both education and the NHS. These proposed changes form an important part of this local offer.
- No current pupils will be disadvantaged by the changes due to a minimum three-year transition period which Camden is committed to providing should these changes go ahead.

## When would these proposed changes take place?

It is proposed that the new arrangements would start from September 2013. Where provision is closing or changing, the transition period would therefore begin. This would mean that existing pupils could continue without disruption, but that new pupils would not be admitted or would be admitted on the basis of the revised admissions criteria.

## Next steps

The results of this consultation will go to Camden's Cabinet in July. If Cabinet Members agree, statutory notices would then be published over the summer and a final decision would be taken by the Director of Children, Schools and Families in September 2013.

## We want your views – have your say

**Do you agree / disagree with the proposals?** (Please circle your response).

**Do you have any other comments?** (Use a separate sheet if necessary).

**I am a parent / pupil / teacher / governor / other** (please circle whichever applies).

## Public meeting

You are invited to a public meeting on **Wednesday, 22 May from 5.30 to 6.30pm** in Committee Room One, Camden Town Hall, Judd Street, London WC1H 9JE.

**This consultation runs until Friday 14 June.**

## Send your responses

**You can submit a written response by post to:**

David Robinson, admin officer  
Children, schools and families  
Camden Council  
Crowndale Centre, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor  
218 Eversholt Street  
London NW1 1BD.

**Or by email to:**

[david.robinson@camden.gov.uk](mailto:david.robinson@camden.gov.uk)