

<b>DECISION-MAKER:</b>	CABINET
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	RESPONSE TO THE SCRUTINY INQUIRY REPORT ON PRIMARY SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS
<b>DATE OF DECISION:</b>	24 OCTOBER 2011
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	CABINET MEMBER FOR CHILDREN'S SERVICES AND LEARNING
<b>STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY</b>	
None.	

### **BRIEF SUMMARY**

Following a scrutiny inquiry on primary school educational attainment for children with special needs during October 2010 and March 2011, Cabinet are required to formally respond to the Inquiry recommendations.

The actions, in line with scrutiny recommendations will be incorporated into a new SEN (Special Educational Needs) Strategy which will be completed during the Autumn term 2011.

Note: since the Scrutiny Inquiry the local authority and NHS Southampton have been accredited as one of three pathfinders in the South East to pilot integrated education, health and care planning. Integrated care planning is in line with the Scrutiny Inquiry's recommendations.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

To approve the response to the Scrutiny Inquiry.

### **REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. It is necessary to approve the direction of work to be delivered following the Scrutiny Inquiry (see Appendix One).

### **ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED**

2. Do nothing – this would be in opposition to Scrutiny and the national changes to be implemented in education and health, alongside the imminent SEN White Paper.

### **DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)**

3. The Inquiry concluded with seven recommendations, six are fully accepted and one is accepted with a modification. The recommendations are:
  - (i) With national changes to be implemented in education and health alongside the imminent SEN White Paper and given existing budget constraints, Southampton City Council (SCC) in partnership with others, should focus on key actions and priorities to ensure that children in primary schools with the most complex needs are given the best life chances. These key actions and priorities are for all partners to:-
    - Ensure the Pupil Premium is used to support the most vulnerable children, recognising the link between SEN and deprivation – fully accepted.

- Continue the increased focus on early intervention and support – fully accepted.
  - Maximise the joint potential of personalised budgets and pupil premium to work most effectively for those children with the most complex needs – fully accepted.
  - Maintain the strengths of the social model for supporting children with SEN within the medical model for joint-working arrangements – fully accepted
  - Ensure the earliest possible update of the Children and Young People’s Plan and SEN Strategy, including consideration of whether a single combined plan is appropriate – fully accepted.
  - Commit to collecting, collating and co-ordinating performance information – fully accepted.
- (ii) Recognise and raise greater awareness of where schools are championing children with SEN and promote an inclusive ethos across the City through the sharing of best practice examples of the achievements of schools and children with SEN – fully accepted.
- (iii) Undertake research into the rise in the attainment gap in Southampton between SEN/Non SEN at Key Stage 2 in 2009 – accepted with modification.  
Rather than look at historic data, the proposal is that research is undertaken to identify factors that facilitate improvements in attendance and attainment of children with SEN.
- (iv) Ensure there is a continuum of support to meet each child’s needs at different times and through different services. Consideration should be given to support all children, especially those with the most complex needs, through a multi agency approach with the Learning Disability Partnership Board and to include all key services such as health, education and social care – fully accepted.
- (v) Recognising the transition of the public health role to local authorities, Southampton City Council to consider developing a multi-agency Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) strategy for the city with key partners – fully accepted.
- (vi) Agree a cross-agency protocol for parent and child involvement to enable transparency in the options for an individual child’s educational needs and ensure that communication is maintained between all agencies and families - fully accepted.
- (vii) SCC in partnership with others, to consider a partnership approach to co-ordinate and signpost all SEN information, advice and services with one clear point of contact for – fully accepted.
4. The purpose of the scrutiny inquiry on primary school educational attainment for children with special needs was to understand and consider how children of primary school age with Special Educational Needs, including children with ADHD, are supported by primary schools and the Primary Care Trust to achieve their maximum potential and prepare for secondary education.

5. The main issues raised from the inquiry which lead to the seven recommendations are:
  - The Strategy for Children and Young People and the SEN Strategy needs to be updated.
  - Overall levels of pupils with SEN remain just above average.
  - Recognition of the links between children with SEN and deprivation.
  - A drive to identify significant savings and changes to the way services are provided for PCT and the Council.
  - Agencies were not always sharing best practice; and
  - Parent's feedback showed mixed perceptions and experiences – it can be hard for them to know what is going on, especially in transition stages.
6. In considering the inquiry recommendations consultation has been carried out with the following groups:
  - Primary Head Teachers;
  - Special Head Teachers;
  - Educational Psychologists;
  - Specialist Teacher Advisors;
  - Special Educational Needs team;
  - School Standards;
  - NHS Southampton City and Solent NHS representatives;
  - Parent representatives;
  - Safeguarding managers (including representatives from Our House, Behaviour Resource Service, Fostering, Foster Carers and Independent Reviewing Officers).
7. Those who responded to the consultation welcomed the inquiry and its recommendations. Specifically the special school heads have identified that the inquiry has strengthened understanding within the wider community.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

### **Capital/Revenue**

8. The agreed actions will be carried out from within existing resources.

### **Property/Other**

9. None

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:**

10. The duty to provide suitable and sufficient provision for children and young people with Special Education Needs is set out in the Education Act 1996 as amended and extended by the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, the Education and Inspections Act 2006 and in particular, the SEN and Disability Act 2001, together with associated secondary regulations made under those Acts together with statutory guidance issued under Part IV of the Education Act 1996.

**Other Legal Implications:**

- 11. The Council must also have regard to the duty not to discriminate against or provide less favourable treatment for disabled pupils as prescribed in the Equalities Act 2010 and to have regard to it's duties under the Human Rights Act 1998.

**POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS**

- 12. None.

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**KEY DECISION?** Yes

<b>WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:</b>	All
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**SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

**Non-confidential appendices are in the Members' Rooms and can be accessed on-line**

**Appendices**

1.	Scrutiny inquiry action plan
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**Documents In Members' Rooms**

1.	Scrutiny inquiry final report
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**Integrated Impact Assessment**

Do the implications/subject of the report require an Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) to be carried out.	Yes/No
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**Other Background Documents**

**Integrated Impact Assessment and Other Background documents available for inspection at:**

Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
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1.	None	
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