

## SEND Sufficiency Strategy consultation

The SEND Sufficiency consultation took place between 6<sup>th</sup> July and 18<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

The survey asked respondents:

- 1) How strongly do you agree or disagree with the proposed SEND Sufficiency Strategy?
- 2) Why did you say this?
- 3) Do you have any suggestions to improve the strategy?

Question 1 required respondents to select from the following options:

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

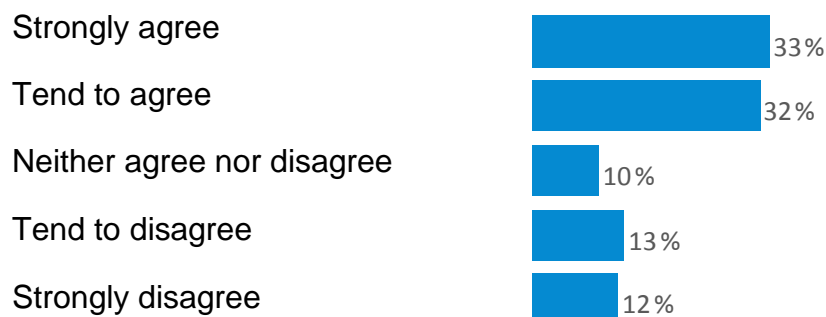
Question 2 invited respondents to expand upon their response to question 1.

Question 3 is self-explanatory.

### Consultation outcomes

The online survey provided a total of 232 respondents. 55% of these respondents said there were children or young people within their household who had special educational needs, 40% said no children or young people within the household had special needs and 5% preferred not to say. The responses provided by some participants indicated they worked in schools or other educational settings. Information identifying how many respondents were responding in their professional capacity is not available.

The results for question one, that is how strongly respondents agreed or disagreed with the proposed SEND Sufficiency Strategy are presented below.



A total of 188 respondents provided additional comments in response to the second question. 120 of these were from respondents who agreed with the strategy, 52 from those who did not agree with the proposed strategy and 16 from those who neither agreed nor disagreed.

167 respondents made suggestions about how to improve the strategy. 95 of these agreed with the proposed strategy, 55 did not agree with the proposed strategy and 17 neither agreed nor disagreed.

An overview of the themes identified to both invitations for more information for all three groups is provided below.

#### **Strongly agree/tend to agree**

As can be seen above 65% of respondents indicated they were in favour of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy. Almost all of those in favour of the strategy said this was because they believed there were insufficient special school places for pupils with special educational needs in Lancashire. Approximately one third of respondents made particular reference to the benefits of creating special educational needs units attached to both primary and secondary mainstream schools.

Some respondents, even though they were in favour of the overall strategy, suggested that more attention could have been given to particular aspects of the special educational needs provision to be made available in the future. This included for example more specialist provision for primary age pupils and in particular geographical areas, most notably in West Lancashire in the south of the county. Some respondents commented the strategy failed to address a shortfall in special educational provision for pupils entering further education or with particular types of needs including those with an autism spectrum disorder, mental health needs and/or those considered to be academically able. Others focussed more on the needs of their individual children or the schools they worked at. These comments were quite varied and each of the above themes appeared in a very limited number of responses. The relocation of Broadfield Specialist School featured slightly more often although the numbers were still quite low. Again these responses were mixed, although most were in favour of the move.

Suggestions from this group of respondents about how to improve the strategy included a further increase in both the number of special school places and the number of special educational needs units attached to mainstream schools. Again for the main part there was a broad range of suggestions with only a limited number of proponents for each. There were some exceptions to this. Training for school staff, particularly for mainstream schools, was a suggestion that appeared most frequently in the comments provided. Other ideas that were put forward by more than a handful of respondents included a review of funding arrangements, more emphasis on early identification and intervention, better communication with families and improved links between different phases and sectors in education. This feedback that will be used to support the further development of local authority services.

#### **Strongly disagree/tend to disagree**

25% of respondents strongly disagreed or tended to disagree with the proposal and as can be seen above these were distributed more or less evenly between those who strongly disagreed (12%) and those who tended to disagree (13%).

The main reasons given for disagreeing with the SEND Sufficiency Strategy related to the creation of special educational needs units attached to mainstream schools. These comments reflected some concerns about whether the staff deployed to the units would have sufficient knowledge and expertise to provide the necessary specialist support for the pupils attending them. Other respondents focussed more on the level of potential segregation for pupils attending the units and whether these units would have an adverse effect on the education of those within the units as well as other pupils in the school. There were, however, far fewer comments made by people raising concerns about the units than were made by respondents who were supportive of the proposal to create special educational needs units and who were also in agreement with the overall SEND Sufficiency Strategy.

Other comments made by respondents who disagreed with the SEND Sufficiency Strategy proposal related to its failure to address a shortfall in particular types of provision or in particular areas of the county, most notably in the far south of the county. The failure of the strategy to make adequate provision for post-16 learners, those with the most complex needs, autism and hearing impairment were identified as particular concerns for some respondents.

A few respondents raised concerns that the strategy failed to address some of the shortcomings of the local authority. Steps will be taken to address these outside of the SEND Sufficiency Strategy consultation where appropriate. Examples of these included issues associated with local authority processes rather than provision, and how the local authority ensures the views of children and young people with special educational needs and their families are taken into consideration at an individual level and collectively.

Alternative proposals that were put forward by this group of respondents also identified a need for additional training, resources and funding for all schools including mainstream and those special educational needs units. Overwhelmingly though, these respondents identified a need to create more special school places either through the development of new special schools or through the expansion, improvement and refurbishment of existing schools.

#### **Respondents who neither agreed or disagreed**

10% of respondents fell within this group. Most of the comments provided by these respondents related either to specific projects, such as the proposal for the Haven site or the failure to address gaps in provision in specific locations or for a particular type of special educational need. These comments also tended to relate to the circumstances of individual pupils.

A limited number of respondents within this group made specific reference to alternative provision and pupil referral units; this type of provision did not appear in the responses provided by people who agreed or did not agree with the proposed SEND Sufficiency Strategy. The other main difference was that respondents within this group sought more information about the potential impact of the proposals contained within the strategy and of the need for specific types of provision.

Suggestions about how the SEND Sufficiency Strategy could be improved from this group of respondents were also mixed, although they tended to fall within three main themes. The first of these related to addressing gaps in provision generally and for specific types of need, such as autism and social, emotional and mental health needs. The second theme that emerged related primarily to a need to improve the quality of support available within mainstream schools and at an earlier stage. These issues seemed to be linked to current practice in schools, funding and the availability of training. The third and final theme was associated with the need for more information and more opportunities for stakeholders to put forward their views. It should be noted however there were fewer than ten responses that included a reference to any of these themes.

## **Consultation results**

### **Broadfield Specialist School**

There were 77 respondents, of whom 79% strongly agreed or tended to agree with the proposal; 5% did not agree or disagree and 16% strongly disagreed or tended to disagree.

61% of respondents had children and young people already attending the school.

Improved facilities, more space and the need for more special school places were the reasons given by most respondents who were in agreement with the proposal to expand and relocate Broadfield Specialist School. Better facilities were associated with increased opportunities for developing a range of skills and knowledge by some respondents. There were a few respondents who, although supportive of the proposed change to the school, pointed out the drawbacks to their own personal circumstances. These primarily related to the disruption to their child's education and the increased travelling time, that affected both pupils' travelling time and their own if they needed to go and collect their child for health reasons or to attend parents' consultation meetings, for example.

Other reasons, in addition to those identified above, given by people who were not in agreement with the proposal to relocate Broadfield Specialist School included difficulties with attending after school activities and a sense of loss that the school would no longer be part of Hyndburn. This was seen to have an adverse effect on both pupils and the community. It was also the case that a limited number of these respondents identified the benefits the move and expansion of the school would bring, even though they disagreed with the overall proposal.

### **Sir Tom Finney Community High School**

There were 14 respondents, 85% of whom strongly agreed or tended to agree with the proposal to expand the school. The rest disagreed or tended to disagree.

Respondents who agreed with the proposal indicated this was because more pupils would benefit from the specialist knowledge, skills and experience of the school staff and the facilities already available within the school. Other reasons related to the location of the school and the building's existing underutilised space.

The limited number of concerns that were raised were associated with an increased volume of traffic and the impact the expansion of the school might have on individual pupils.

43% of respondents identified themselves as staff and 29% as the parents or carers of children and young people attending the school already, or those who hoped their child would attend in the future.

### Special Educational Needs units attached to four mainstream schools

School		Percentage of respondents			Overview of comments
	Number of respondents	Strongly agreed/ tended to agree	Did not agree or disagree	Strongly disagreed/ tended not to agree	
Barrowford Primary	21	90%	5%	5%	Most of those who were supportive of the creation of a special educational needs unit made reference to existing expertise and the nurturing environment already provided by the school. There were 3 comments that identified concerns, although 2 of these were from respondents who were in support of the proposal. These related to the potential impact of this provision on mainstream pupils and whether there was sufficient space available to accommodate a unit. 7 respondents identified themselves as parents of children with special educational needs.
Lytham CEP	53	71%	4%	26%	$\frac{3}{4}$ of respondents that provided a comment stated the proposal would fill a gap in provision for pupils with autism in the local area, that it would build on current good practice within the school or that it would bring particular benefits to children with special educational needs. Concerns raised by approximately 30% of respondents related primarily to the impact pupils attending the unit might have on the education of others, class sizes and the level of support that is available for pupils with special educational needs. 46% respondents were parents or carers of children already attending the school and 34% identified themselves as school staff. 86% respondents did not have children with special educational needs.

School		Percentage of respondents			Overview of comments
	Number of respondents	Strongly agreed/ tended to agree	Did not agree or disagree	Strongly disagreed/ tended not to agree	
St Leonard's CA CEP	54	86%	2%	12%	More than 80% of respondents that provided a comment identified benefits associated with the proposal. These included filling a gap in provision within the local area, building on existing strengths within the school and the advantages to all pupils of an environment that catered for mainstream pupils alongside those with special needs. There were 4 comments that identified concerns. These related to the impact on individual children without special needs and whether the school had the resources required for a special educational needs unit. 89% of respondents had children attending the school and 60% of respondents did not have children with special needs.
Weeton Primary	58	53%	16%	32%	Those in favour of the proposal indicated this was because the special educational needs unit would promote and enhance inclusive practice which was seen to be of benefit to the whole school population. Other reasons given for supporting the proposal were that it would increase the options available to families in the local area and would provide the support needed to more children. Those not in agreement with the proposal raised concerns about the potential impact on their child because the unit would be for children with social, emotional and mental health needs. Another concern that was raised related to the amount of movement in a school where there is perhaps more transition than in most schools due to changes in military postings. 61% of respondents had children already

					attending the school. 70% of respondents did not identify themselves as having children with special needs.
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