

## **Deputation to the Children, Schools and Families Scrutiny Committee on 19 December 2023.**

**Submitted by Anthony Stoll, Chair of Governors of Netley School and Centre for Autism.**

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision in Camden in relation to Netley Primary School and Centre of Autism.**

This school year the Netley mainstream reception intake of 60 children included 14 children with complex autism spectrum condition (ASC) (of a profile that is unsuitable for mainstream education and more suited for specialist provision), from right across the borough. This is significantly higher than any other primary school in Camden and on top of the normal SEND profile we would expect. A number of the parents are waiting for availability in specialist provisions and as there is a lack of places available, their needs are not able to be fully met within a mainstream school due to lack of space.

This creates both funding and accommodation pressure which unless resolved impacts negatively on the education of the other 46 children.

Attendance is also poorer the further a child lives from the school, and parents need to be made aware of the advantages of attending their local school. All our mainstream primary schools can educate children with SEN.

To be clear, Netley also has a separate context (Woodland unit) for children with ASC, who are not able to access a mainstream education, but what we are addressing here is the issue of mainstream enrolments and inadequate provision for parents who want specialist provision.

**First deputation request:** We request that Camden Council commission more specialist provision places, through the creation of more additional resources provision's (ARP) linked to mainstream schools or the creation of a new Specialist School, as Netley (and other mainstream primary schools) cannot continue to provide adequate support for children who do not have a mainstream education profile.

**Second deputation request:** Camden Education be instructed to follow the suggestion of SEND 135 partnership (Fleet, Gospel Oak, Netley, Rhyl) to set up a hub for SEND provision similar to the behaviour satellite at Rhyl.

#### **Accommodation issue.**

This year Netley has been able to provide a large intervention space that can be used by reception SEND children to rotate through in groups and individually by timetable for the additional support they need. But that's it, we do not have another room for next year as the current children will continue to need the space. They will not be able to access the Year 1 curriculum, or the classrooms will not be suitable to accommodate 14 complex Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) children who have the profile of Specialist Provision. We cannot take so many SEND children, with needs that are complex into reception next year. Please find a way to ensure

that schools like Netley are not disproportionately allocated high numbers of children with complex needs.

#### Funding issue

We are concerned that the funding received for the children with complex needs would not seem to fully cover their cost to the school. This means the cost of providing the class is greater than the funding provided for the remaining mainstream children. This is unsustainable. Full details to follow

#### Attendance issue

Children with autism who live within walking distance of the school manage 95% attendance. Children with autism who live further away only manage 65% attendance. If they are not in school, they are falling behind the learning in their class, and additional provision must be made for them to catch up. They would have better attendance at a nearby school within walking distance and achieve better sooner.

In conclusion, the challenges faced by Netley Primary School in accommodating a significantly higher number of children with complex ASC profiles within the mainstream intake have placed immense pressure on both funding and accommodation. It is crucial for the education and well-being of all our children that these issues are addressed promptly. We kindly request that Camden Council take immediate action to commission more specialist provision places, whether through the creation of additional ARP's linked to mainstream schools or the establishment of a new Specialist School. Furthermore, we urge Camden to consider the proposal of setting up a hub for SEND provision, similar to the successful behaviour satellite at Rhyl. Addressing accommodation and funding concerns is essential to ensure that schools like Netley can continue to provide a high-quality education for all children, regardless of their individual needs. Additionally, improving attendance rates, particularly for children with autism who live further away, will enable them to thrive academically and socially. We believe that working collaboratively with parents and the council, we can create a more inclusive and supportive educational environment for all our children.