

**CHILDREN
AND
YOUNG PEOPLE
IN
PUBLIC CARE**

**GUIDANCE FOR PLACING
AUTHORITIES REQUIRING
EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENTS
IN SHROPSHIRE**

EDUCATIONAL PROVISION FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN PUBLIC CARE PLACED WITHIN SHROPSHIRE BY OTHER AUTHORITIES

(i) Background and Current Situation:

In recent years there has been a dramatic and significant growth in the number of children and young people in public care placed in Shropshire by other Authorities. Pupils across the four key stages have been identified as requiring educational provision. These pupils often require well supported educational placements in Shropshire mainstream schools or alternative special provision.

In line with the “Young People in Public Care” documentation Shropshire are trying to manage more successfully the educational placement of pupils moving into the LEA.

In the absence of a national or regional protocol for arrangements between Local Authorities for the education of children and young people, the Education Directorate has decided to implement a strategy for managing and monitoring placements for pupils under statutory assessment of their Special Educational Needs (SEN) or with a Statement of their SEN. This will involve named officer contact within Shropshire Local Education Authority (LEA).

(ii) Children and young people not being assessed for or having a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN):

Shropshire LEA has delegated considerable funds for special educational needs provision to its mainstream schools. If a placing Authority or private organisation is seeking to place a child/young person without identified or assessed SEN, it will be their responsibility to negotiate placement and support directly with their local school.

It may be impossible to secure a placement at a local school if that school is oversubscribed or if Key Stage 1 classes would exceed 30 pupils.

Shropshire LEA does not have the resources to manage, or the ability to direct, mainstream school, non-SEN, placements. However the LEA can advise other Authorities/agencies on school numbers and vacancies.

Further advice and support to Headteachers can be obtained through liaison with the named officers.

(iii) **Children and young people under statutory assessment of their SEN or in receipt of a Statement of Special Educational Needs**

IN OUR EXPERIENCE SUCCESSFUL PLACEMENTS ARE MORE LIKELY TO OCCUR IF THEY ARE PROPERLY PLANNED

As soon as it is known, or thought likely, that a young person will be moving to live in Shropshire, the young person's named social worker or care provider should contact the named officer (see below at iv) with the following **minimum** information:

- A copy of the young person's current Personal Education Plan (PEP);
- A copy of the young person's current care plan and most recent review arrangements;
- Recorded views of the parents/carers and young person regarding education in the light of proposed changes in their current care placement;
- A copy of latest school/education reports;
- Details of current educational arrangements and support provided;
- The name and contact telephone number of the Headteacher/Head of Service from their current educational placement;
- Any special educational needs documentation (eg School Action and School Action Plus details);
- A copy of their Statement of SEN, if appropriate (and a copy of their latest/current annual review documentation)
- It is recommended that Authorities/agencies working with children/young people described at (ii) above provide the Headteacher with most of the information described here.)
- Details of Social Worker's name and contact number and designated contact within the Education Department.

As most children with Statements of SEN are educated within mainstream schools/settings the named officers will offer advice and make the necessary initial contacts with schools on the receipt of adequate and appropriate information.

(iv) **Role of the Named Officers:**

Shropshire LEA Children's Services (via the SEN Inter-Agency Education Officer and Administrative Assistant - Inter-Agency) will be the named officer contacts for co-ordinating proposed placements of young people (whether they are under statutory assessment of their SEN, or in receipt of a Statement of SEN).

The named officers will continue to offer advice to schools who are approached directly to take a young person (described at (ii) above) or if there are doubts regarding the SEN “status” of that young person.

Where a child or young person has special educational needs (as defined at (iii) above) the named officers will liaise with colleagues to discern the availability of placements and possibilities of appropriate provision, to be funded by the placing authority. Where a child or young person has special educational needs (as defined at (iii)) it is essential that liaison is conducted with the named officers.

SCHOOLS SHOULD NOT BE APPROACHED DIRECTLY IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES

If Headteachers are approached they will be advised to contact the named officer.

EXPERIENCE HAS SHOWN THAT PROVIDING APPROPRIATE INFORMATION TO THE NAMED OFFICER WILL LEAD TO A MORE EFFECTIVE AND TIMELY PLACEMENT FOR THE CHILD/YOUNG PERSON

(v) Discussions/contact with the named officer

It is vital to contact the named officer **prior** to any placement move. Shropshire LEA will attempt to work collaboratively with other Authorities/agencies and its own schools when it is felt that the special educational needs of that young person can be met appropriately.

Due to the increase in the number of such placements Shropshire LEA and schools are facing difficulties in placing young people. It may be the case that because of the nature of the SEN of the child/young person and the lack of such provision within Shropshire LEA that advice is given recommending that such a placement could not be provided within Shropshire LEA.

AS A RESPONSIBLE PLACING AUTHORITY IT WILL BE YOUR DUTY TO FIND OUT IF SUCH AN EDUCATIONAL PLACEMENT CAN BE MADE IN SHROPSHIRE - EARLY LIAISON IS THEREFORE VITAL

(vi) Named Officers/Contact Numbers:

SEN EDUCATION OFFICER - INTER-AGENCY:

Jeff Potts Tel: 01743 254305

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT - INTER-AGENCY:

Julie Farebrother Tel: 01743 254502