

Appendix 1:

Special educational needs and disability (SEND) review

Feedback on the informal consultation and engagement phase re the proposals for the reorganisation of special provision for children and young people with the most complex needs

1. Introduction

This report provides information about the informal consultation and engagement phase, which ran from February 1st to April 22nd and summarises the feedback on the proposals gathered during that period.

2. What was this consultation about?

The following is based on an extract from the consultation paper which seeks to clarify the focus of the proposals.

What the proposals were about:

- Joining together on a school or nursery site all the services our children with the most complex and severe special educational needs – that means
- all the education, disability and social care and health professionals working together as a team around the child and family
- Bringing together our six special schools and two Pupil Referral units over a four year period to form three multi-service provisions providing support for learning difficulties and for social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Providing more integrated support for children in our special provision for mental and emotional health needs as well as physical health and therapies
- Increasing opportunities for inclusion through special schools working with lead partner mainstream schools
- Keeping at least the same number of specialist places for children with special educational needs
- Ensuring we keep at least as many special school class teachers and support assistants as now
- Providing support for an extended school day for children who need this – and activities where possible at weekends and in the holidays
- Providing more support to parents wherever needed, including at home, where children have complex needs and/or difficult behaviours
- Giving parents more control through greater use of personal budgets
- Keeping all of the money we currently spend on direct support to our young people in special provision, and running it in a way we feel will be better and more efficient and affordable in tough economic times

What the proposals were **NOT** about:

- It is **NOT** about less special school places or fewer teachers or teaching assistants – we are committed to at least the same number of places (in fact a few more) and keeping the same ratio of class teachers and teaching assistants

- It is **NOT** about disrupting learning or affecting children's well-being through too much change and uncertainty – proposals are to bring in change over four years and to make sure every child has their own personal plan and pathway devised with them and their families to ensure they continue to progress and feel secure
- It is **NOT** about our special educational needs support to mainstream schools, which is subject to a separate consultation - this is about our special schools and Pupil Referral Units although we are looking for much more joint working with mainstream schools too and more opportunities for inclusion
- It is **NOT** about deciding things now – there is a lengthy period of consultation and engagement and we commit to listening carefully to all views, suggestions and alternative ideas

3. Consultation process

3.1 The initial phase of informal consultation began on 1st February 2016, after the Children Young People and Skills Committee approved the process and timeline for this stage. This included:

- Issuing a consultation paper with key questions to consider
- Arranging meetings with a range of stakeholders, alongside more bespoke meetings on request.

3.2 The consultation was promoted through:

- The council website
- Social media
- The Local Offer
- The schools' bulletin
- The Wave
- Partner organisations' own internal communication channels
- Amaze and Parent Carers' Council communications with parents
- School newsletters
- Direct communication with statutory and voluntary community groups working with children and young people with special educational needs and their families

3.3 Feedback was invited:

- via the Council's consultation portal
- via email,
- in writing
- and by leaving a voicemail on a consultation line
- via personal telephone contact

3.4 Those specifically invited to give us feedback included:

- Children and young people
- Parents and carers
- Residents
- Special and mainstream schools
- Further education colleges
- Early years providers
- Local Authority staff
- School staff
- Public health
- The Clinical Commissioning group
- Sussex Community NHS Foundation Trust
- Sussex Partnership Foundation trust
- Governors
- Trade Unions
- Brighton and Hove councillors
- Community & Voluntary Sector organisations
- Neighbouring Local Authorities
- The Anglican Diocese of Chichester
- The Roman Catholic Diocese of Arundel and Brighton
- The Police Authority

3.5 For all proposals, respondents were asked 7 questions in total and were offered the opportunity to add their specific comments at the end of each question and more generally at the end of the consultation questionnaire.

3.6 Throughout the consultation we reviewed the number and range of responses in order to make sure that all groups were represented in responses and that everyone was aware of the consultation process. We identified a number of groups whose voice seemed absent and took steps to address this. For example, we made direct contact by telephone with parents whose children attend the Pupil Referral Units, and offered to attend coffee mornings held in more distant parts of the city for parents identified by the PACC as 'hard to reach'.

3.7 Process for analysing responses

3.7.1 To analyse results volunteer parent and voluntary sector representatives joined officers to review the feedback from the consultation using an agreed framework to identify themes and record significant issues for further consideration

3.7.2 The information provided as part of this report is both statistical and from comments made by participants in the engagement period.

4. **More personal consultation**

We used a variety of methods to encourage responses. In total 28 meetings were scheduled within the consultation plan. These included the following stakeholders:

- Young People
- Parent Carers
- Education service teams
- Social care teams
- Head teachers
- School staff
- SENCOs
- Health services
- Governors and management committees
- Trade Unions

4.1 In addition, each special provision made their own arrangements to engage their pupils, parents, staff and governors in discussions to gather their views.

5. **Feedback submitted on the consultation proposals**

5.3.1 Respondents were encouraged to participate via the council's online portal but were also able to respond via email or a voicemail service. Both the email and the voicemail service were specifically created for this consultation and will continue to be open for the length of the review

5.3.2 187 responses were submitted via the online portal and the quantitative data in this report reflects these responses. Of the 187 respondents 20 identified as representing an organisation or group and 166 responded as individuals. (1 respondent chose not to respond to this question)

Please tell us in what capacity you are responding?		
		Frequency
Valid	No response	1
	As yourself	166
	Representative of a organisation or group	20
	Total	187

5.3.3 The feedback summarised in this document also reflects;

- 5 written responses
- 5 email responses

- The additional responses were included in the analysis and this was added to the bank of comments in the summary section at the end of this report. Feedback from telephone contact with parents and consultation events has been treated similarly.

5.3.4 There has been a wide range of respondents and this is demonstrated in the chart below. It is important to note that people could identify with more than 1 group or choose to not select a group at all. So the chart below should be viewed as the range of respondents.

Do you identify with, belong to, or work for any of the following groups or organisations?		
Base: All respondents responding as themselves		Number of Responses
Iden ^a	Children & Young People	65
	Parents and carers	86
	Residents	18
	Special and mainstream schools	73
	Further education colleges	12
	Early years providers	12
	Local Authority staff	35
	School staff	54
	Public health	4
	The Clinical Commissioning group	1
	Sussex Community Trust	7
	Sussex Partnership Foundation trust	3
	Governors	10
	Trade Unions	9
	Brighton and Hove councillors	1
	Community & Voluntary Sector organisations	13
	Neighbouring Local Authorities	1
	The Police Authority	1
Other	2	
Total		407

5.3.5 The groups represented included; Brighton & Hove Youth Council, 6 different governors groups, Amaze, 3 different special provisions, Secondary Schools Partnership and managers of Local Authority teams

6.1 Consultation Portal Data - Question 1

We are proposing that our special schools and Pupil Referral Units offer integrated education, health (e.g. speech therapy, mental health support), and care services (e.g. respite, outreach, home support) with staff working together as a team around the child.

Summary of response

Comments for this question generally matched the overwhelmingly positive responses on the portal results. The themes identified included;

- Positive on joined up services for all and improvement to process
- Positive on links to mainstream schools
- Some comments cited examples of it working currently and would like it spread further
- Positive on the additional support around the needs of the child

Some comments wanted more clarity around how the changes will be implemented and managed.

Key Quotes

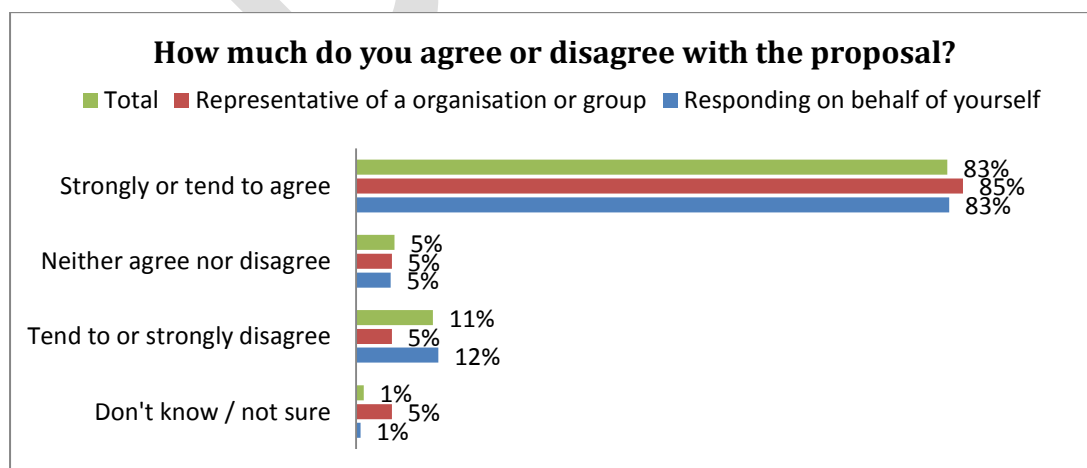
“Will lead to one story being told”

“Sounds perfect: speech therapy, mental health support, respite all working together around my child with special needs.”

“The integrated service model has been proven to work well to deliver benefits in an education setting for all children if well implemented”

“We already work very effectively with other disciplines but this proposal will enhance our ability to be more effective in school/college and share even better information with parents”

“More integrated provision for families will mean more joined up care, better communication between agencies working with the same child”



6.2 Consultation Portal Data - Question 2

We are proposing to bring together six special schools and two Pupil Referral Units to form three integrated special provisions, each with a school at its centre. This will enable us to create financially viable schools with an enhanced curriculum.

Summary of response

Comments for this question should be separated between the groups who were heavily in favour of the proposals (70%) and individuals who were less in favour (42%).

- Positives from the groups recognised the need to make the system more financially viable and increased economies of scale
- Groups also recognised the need for the current good work to continue
- Positives from individuals pointed towards a broader curriculum option for children
- Individuals also appreciated the positive in a better use of funding.

There were concerns around the location, size of schools and grouping all SEMH in one provision. Also losing the specialist skills currently on offer.

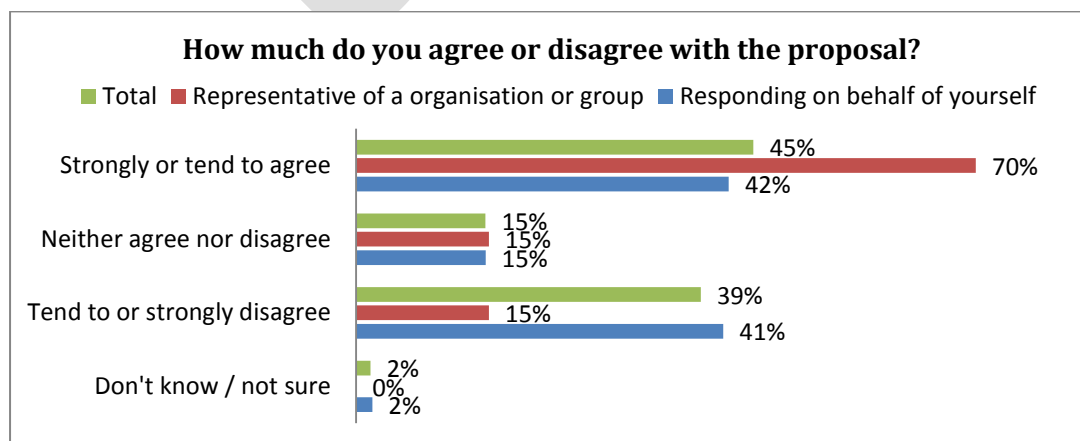
Key Quotes

“The amalgamation of the smaller schools into larger hubs will enable the SLT service to have more flexibility in the allocation of staff to schools as well as covering a wider range of needs”

“This is a no-brainer it is the logical thing to do to make best use of limited budgets”

“It is a priority to keep good special school provision available in the city so making schools as cost efficient as possible is logical. Parents value “small” schools so some care will be needed to make sure the three hubs are structured and run in a way that preserves this within the larger whole”

“I feel that grouping all disabled children together in three large services risks creating a ‘one size fits all’ for children and young people with a really wide range of needs”



6.3 Consultation Portal Data - Question 3

We are proposing that the new integrated provisions for special educational needs & disabilities each work with an identified lead partner primary and secondary school. This would promote inclusive opportunities for children and provide support for all schools.

Summary of response

Comments on this question were quite positive and followed the positive results on the portal (55%) in favour.

- The main positive was around promoting inclusion wherever possible and sharing of skills and experience
- Some comments pointed towards a more varied timetable that could build on specific talents from some pupils
- The negative comments pointed towards concerns on choice and location of the schools being reduced
- A high proportion of comments said that SEN is an all schools problem and shouldn't be isolated to just one lead partner school per specialism

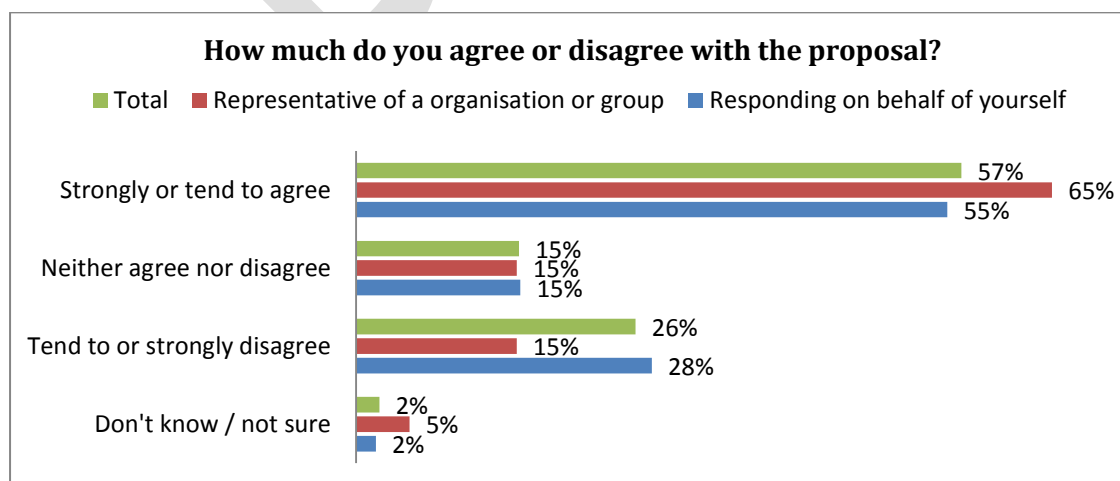
Key Quotes

“I have had experience of this model in other parts of the country and it works well both as a way to improve the knowledge and skills of staff as well as providing more opportunities for inclusion”

“We want joint working and active links between the special education provisions and more than one school. We do not see how one or two schools can do all this linking work, providing support for all schools”

“All primaries and secondary's should have a link with these schools and there should not be a stronger/more formal link with any one school”

“This would be very useful if the mainstream schools would take the occasional pupil from us who had a skill in one area of the curriculum”



6.4 Consultation Portal Data - Question 4

In these proposals we are planning to create new 'virtual' special school places for some primary and secondary children with social, emotional and health needs as an alternative to special provision. It would mean some carefully identified children getting the same high level of funding in their mainstream school as they would in a special school, with extra expert support from specialist staff.

Summary of response

Comments on this question were very mixed and it was clear that more clarification is needed on what a 'virtual school' place is. Generally comments agreed that it was a good idea but would want to know more about what the reality was.

- Positive about more choice and flexibility to suit the needs of the young person
- Concerns about links with mainstream schools and how they would cope
- Concern about having too many children with SEMH on one site
- Some comments wanted clarification on where responsibility for the pupil would lie
- Some children will always need special provision and this would be inappropriate for them'

Key Quotes

"We agree that this could be a positive option to explore"

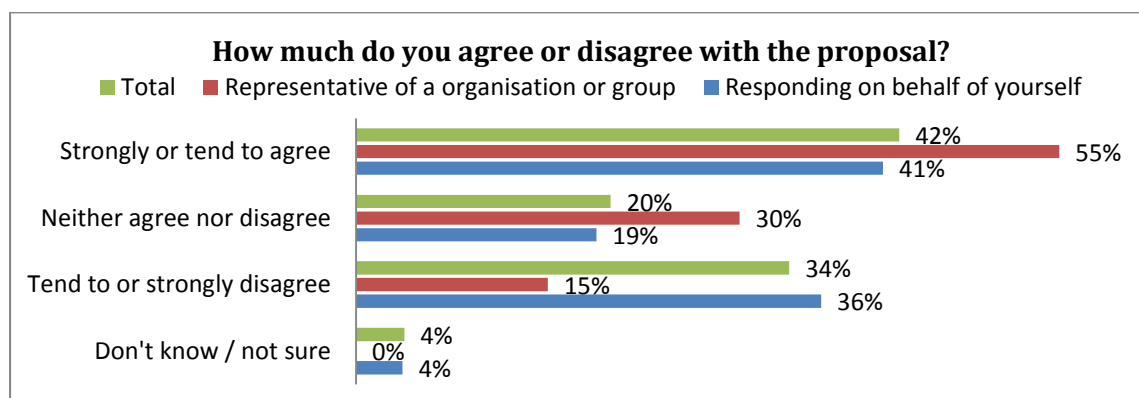
"I really like this idea for children who can take advantage of all the mainstream has to offer"

"a lot would need to change in mainstream schools for this to work"

"concerned about the process by which the individual children are identified, who will be responsible for determining the enhanced curriculum to meet the child's needs"

"Most parents would prefer their child with SEMHS to stay in a mainstream school if this is possible. But schools will need to be on board and the support for them in place for this proposal to succeed"

"Again the deciding factor MUST be what is best for the child, not what is best for the local authority budget"



6.5 Consultation Portal Data - Question 5

We are proposing more support for parent/carers, if their children have complex needs and challenging behaviour. This will be provided by staff from the new integrated provisions who know the children well. They will use their skills to help families in whatever way works best for them, including at home.

Summary of response

Comments on this question matched the very positive responses on the portal results (89% for groups and 84% for individuals).

- Positives were around existing pilots that had already been successful in some schools and they wanted them rolled out further
- Comments identified the need for support to continue at home and that it doesn't stop when school day finishes.
- Other comments pointed towards the important links between parents and schools who vitally need each other
- Some small concerns around how it will be managed and who will manage it

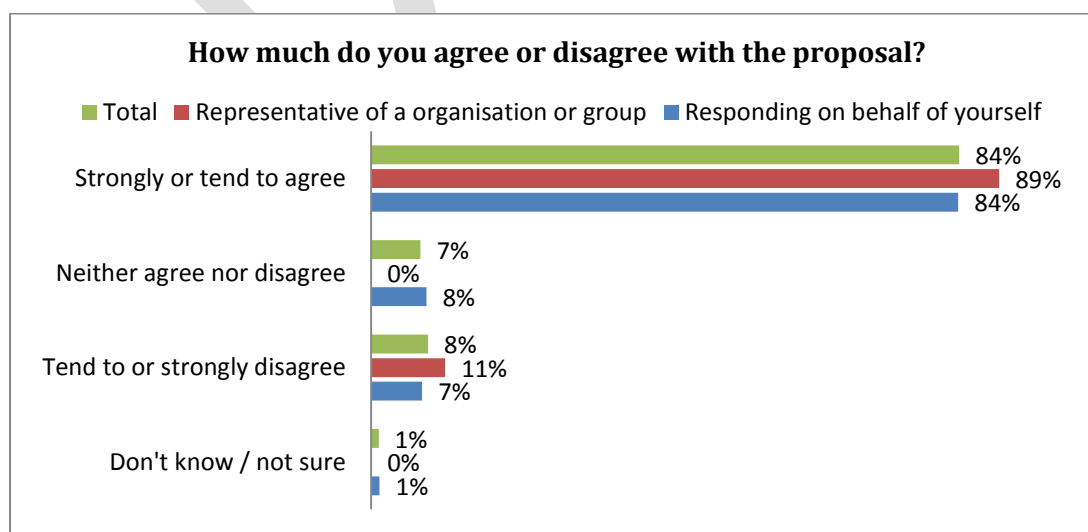
Key Quotes

"A real priority for us. We have piloted this work very successfully already and want to be able to roll out a clear programme of support which builds on our already established mechanisms to support families not just the child/young person"

"Working closely with families has always got to be a better way of working"

"Families will have more support in their own homes where they are often isolated and don't get any support. Strategies used in schools can be mirrored more effectively at home to enable children to have consistent approaches used in all aspects of their lives"

"Parents and carers are vital partners in shared working to meet the needs of pupils with SEMH. More support for parents is vital"



6.6 Consultation Portal Data - Question 6

We are proposing that our specialist provision for preschool children becomes full time and that it is set within an inclusive nursery setting. This means that there will be children with and without disabilities playing and learning together. The inclusive nursery will offer integrated education, health and care services to meet the needs of children with disabilities and will be fully accessible as a building.

Summary of response

Comments on this question matched the very positive responses on the portal results (85% by groups and 66% by individuals).

- Positive comments about inclusion at an early age and that gives children the best start
- Comments also pointed towards the positives for non SEND pupils to reduce barriers
- Comments mentioned the importance in staff expertise for Early Years as separate to other provisions
- Further clarification is required on what is full time for a nursery and how transport will be managed

Key Quotes

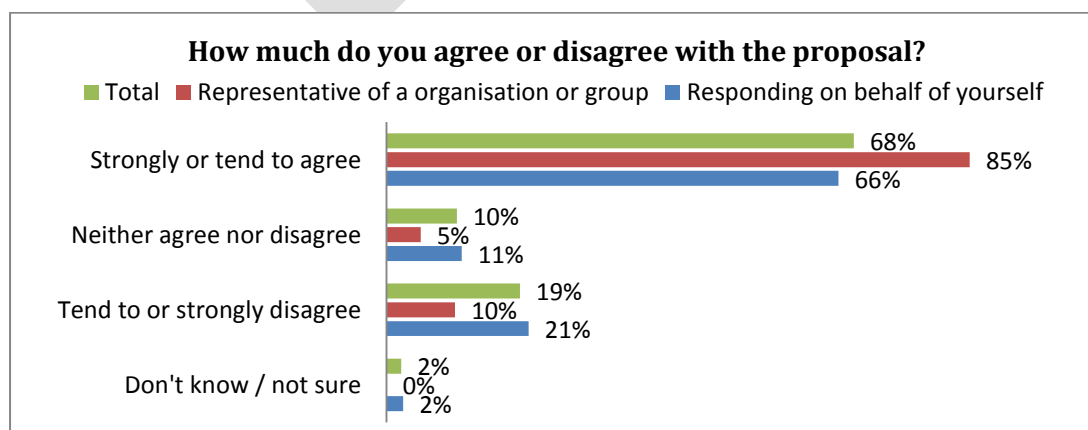
“Early intervention is essential to provide the best educational start for all children and pre-school is the best place to start”

“It could only be a good thing and children would learn at a very young age to be more inclusive”

“Depending on age of child, full time may not be the best option”

“In principle this is a positive proposal but we have concerns that children whose parents are not able to transport them to this single provision will miss out on the support they need”

“The best start – being together early on would create an inclusive community from the outset. Great idea”



6.7 Consultation Portal Data - Question 7

What do you value most about the changes we are proposing to our special provision? Please select up to 3 and rank in order of priority by placing the numbers 1, 2, or 3 in the space provided, 1 being the highest priority:

What do you value most about the changes we are proposing to our special provision?		
Those responding as yourself	Frequency	Percentage
Teaching staff, care staff and health professionals working together as an integrated team on one site to support children with complex needs	51	31.5%
Keeping the same number of specialist places for children with special educational needs and in fact slightly increasing the number	51	31.5%
Ensuring we keep at least as many teachers and support assistants for our children in special provision	27	16.7%
Providing support for an extended school day for children who need this – and activities where possible at weekends and in the holidays	9	5.6%
Keeping all of the money we currently spend on direct support to our young people in special provision, running it in a way we feel will be better but more efficient and affordable in tough economic times	9	5.6%
Increasing opportunities for inclusion by special schools working with lead partner mainstream schools	7	4.3%
Providing more support to parents wherever needed, including at home, where children have complex needs and/or difficult behaviours	7	4.3%
Giving parents more control through greater use of personal budgets	1	0.6%
Total	162	100.0%
Missing	No response	4
Total	166	

7. Additional points raised from consultation events

7.1 Comments that were raised as part of the online portal and analysed above have not been repeated in this section below. The section below summarises additional comments that were noted as part of the open comments at the end of the consultation portal and from the individual feedback collected.

7.2

Summary of additional comments raised as part of consultation

“Getting it right in the Early Years is so important in terms of establishing parental confidence in the local authorities ability to meet the needs of children with complex SEND.”

“Main concern: too large a school and classes, this could be achieved by having small classes staggered timetables to give smaller groups outdoor sessions”

“Pre-school children already receive great support through PRESENS. The quality of their staff is key to this quality. I have never heard parents express the need for the service to be changed.”

“Transition from primary to secondary school is often a trigger point for pupils with learning difficulties therefore it is advisable for this to be factored in with these proposals”

“Our main concern is that this simply will not happen or that only parts will be implemented. It will require determination and dedication to see it through – this may be a challenge for the Local Authority at a time of such turmoil”

“I believe this consultation should be taken extremely seriously and all the parents and professionals involved should be the people who take this forward”

“I feel there needs to be an appropriate secondary provision for young people who can manage a mainstream education, but cannot manage the scale of local secondary schools”

“I don’t think it is feasible to suggest that all education staff, care staff and health professionals are based on one site – there are too many obstacles to this and I strongly feel that, despite being based on NHS site, I can still work as part of an integrated teams- it is happening already”

“I am concerned with personal budgets. Parents have enough to cope with without having to organise their own respite”

