

Committee:	<b>Children's Services Scrutiny Committee</b>
Date:	<b>7 June 2010</b>
Title of Report:	<b>Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD); prevalence and provision</b>
By:	<b>Director of Children's Services</b>
Purpose of Report:	<b>To inform the Committee about the estimated number of children in East Sussex with autism, the services available to support them, whether demand for support in this area is increasing and if so, how this demand is being met</b>

**RECOMMENDATION: The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the work being done to support children and young people in East Sussex with autism**

## **1. Financial Appraisal**

1.1 This report provides information on the numbers of children with autism and the provision within East Sussex to meet their needs and those of their families. There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Costs for the provision described are covered within existing budgets. Proposals for future developments will be designed to seek to reduce the amount the Council spends on places at independent and non-maintained special schools and the associated transport costs.

## **2. Supporting information**

2.1 The National Autistic Society (NAS) estimates that 1 in 100 children are autistic. Population estimates for 2008 are that East Sussex has around 116,000 children aged 0-19. Using the NAS ratio would mean that there are likely to be around 1160 children with autism in East Sussex.

2.2 **Annex 1** indicates that, in January 2010, there were 710 children with a statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN) or at school action plus who have been identified with autism as their primary need. There will be also children who are above and below statutory school age with an ASD as well as a number of children with a milder form of autism who are at school action on the SEN Code of Practice. The number of school age children with autism has been growing at a steady 11% per year for some time. In general the trend in East Sussex is for the number in each age group to increase as the children get older.

2.3 The Committee received an update report on the implementation of the ASD Strategy in March 2009. There is also a paper on this agenda about the Aiming High for Disabled Children Short Breaks initiative and this has enabled the Council to increase the range of out of school activities for children and young people with autism including establishing a new 4 bedded short break unit specifically for children with autism in Eastbourne. This current report provides an update on the actions listed previously and includes a number of further initiatives.

2.4 There has been much progress in establishing specialist facilities within mainstream schools for young people with severe autism. The Committee will be aware of the recent consultations on the establishment of new facilities at Hailsham Community College, Bexhill High School and Blacklands Primary School. **Annex 2** lists the specialist provision within the maintained school sector in East Sussex. Agreement has also been reached to include a facility to replace the current provision at Filsham Valley School within the new academy in the west of Hastings. The Council has also provided capital and revenue funds for a facility within the Eastbourne Academy when it opens in its new buildings.

2.5 There has also been much progress in receiving autism accreditation through the

National Autistic Society. The Committee will recall that Torfield School in Hastings was the first in the county to achieve this prestigious award. They have now been joined by South Downs Community Special School in Eastbourne and Heathfield Community College. Heathfield is one of a very few mainstream secondary schools nationally to have achieved this. The Acorns Residential Short Breaks Centre for disabled children, in Bexhill, has also received accreditation. A list of all schools and settings currently working towards accreditation is given in **Annex 3**.

2.6 The Children's Disability Service has assumed responsibility for providing the social care support to children with autism in order to ensure that there is an appropriately knowledgeable and skilled workforce to support the children and their families. Several members of the team have already achieved the Certificate in Autism through Birmingham University and it is planned for more staff to undertake the course each year.

2.7 A review of the wide range of care pathways in local authority and health services for children with autism has been completed and a joint working group has been established to address the recommendations of the report. A key action arising is to develop a multi-disciplinary assessment process and plans are in place for this to be established in the near future. It is also intended to develop an ASD Charter which will make clear to parents and professionals the standards they can expect from the partners in the Children and Young People's Trust. Progress has also been made towards improving the move from childhood to adulthood for disabled young people including those with autism through the development of a Transition Strategy and much closer working between the Children's and Adults' Services Departments of the County Council..

2.8 The Department also continues to work closely with parents of children with autism and conference for parents is planned for 15 July. A parent pack has also been developed and issued.

### **3. Conclusion and Reason for Recommendations**

3.1 There is continued progress in East Sussex towards developing extensive, clear and high quality services and provision for children and young people with autism and their families.

The evidence is that the number of children with a diagnosis continues to grow (at around 11% per year in East Sussex) and this will place a strain on the families and also the services to support them. Work will continue to be needed in partnership with the NHS to ensure that the best value for money is achieved in this area.

3.2 The Committee is asked to consider and comment on the work being done to support children and young people in East Sussex with autism.

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Local Members: All

Background Documents: Information regarding Autism support within East Sussex

## Annex 1 Prevalence Data

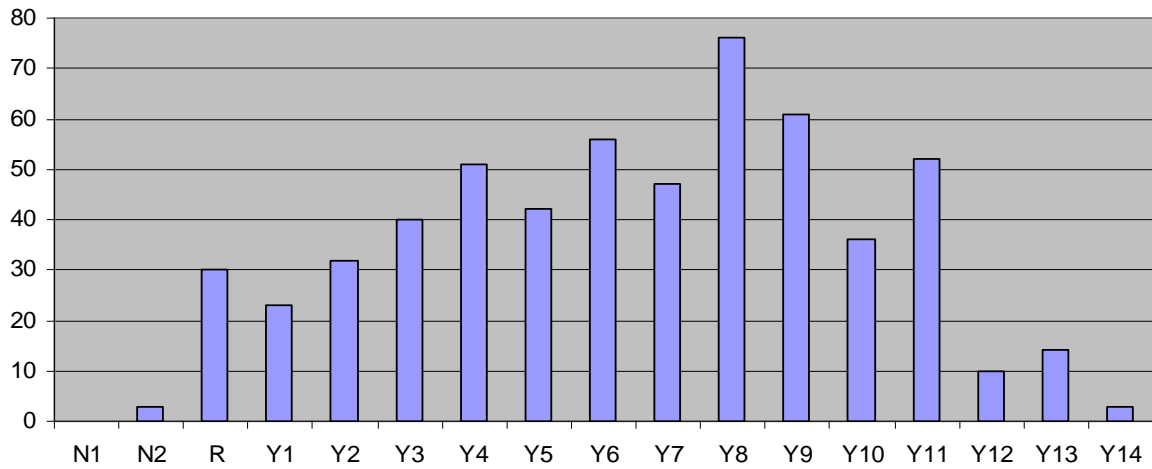
Table 1: Number of children and young people with ASD with a statement or at school action plus (SA+) for the past 3 years by district

District	2008		2009		2010	
	SA+	Statement	SA+	Statement	SA+	Statement
Eastbourne	20	68	16	77	23	78
Hastings	48	140	54	141	77	144
Lewes	14	50	17	58	19	72
Rother	28	88	36	107	38	117
Wealden	26	94	28	104	32	110
Total	136	440	151	487	189	521
Grand Total	576		638		710	

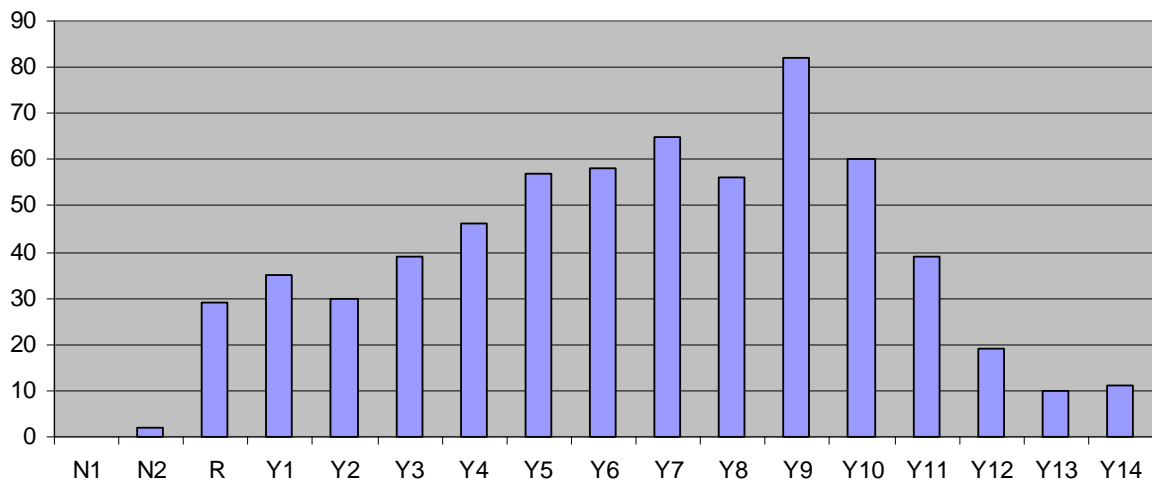
Table 2: Number of children and young people with a statement for ASD by type of school placement for the past 3 years

	2008	2009	2010
Mainstream	181	204	205
Mainstream facility	14	16	21
Maintained special	201	212	235
Independent and Non-maintained special school and other independent	41	47	50
Other eg PRU, home educated	3	8	10
Total	440	487	521

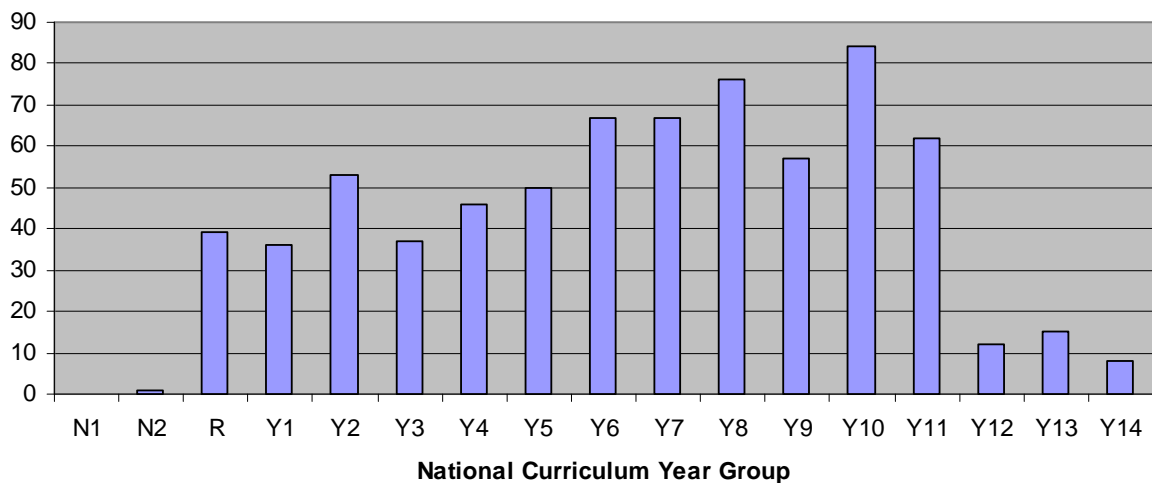
**Numbers of Children and Young People with ASD with a statement of SEN or at School Action Plus in January 2008**



**Number s of Children and Young People with ASD with a statement of SEN or at School Action Plus in January 2009**



**Numbers of Children and Young People with ASD and a statement of SEN or at School Action Plus January 2010**



**Specialist Provision for children with ASD in schools**

**Mainstream specialist facilities:**

Manor Primary School, Uckfield  
Heathfield Community College, Heathfield

**Proposed Mainstream Specialist Facilities (currently undergoing consultation):**

Blacklands Primary School, Hastings (September 2011)  
Bexhill High School, Bexhill (September 2010)  
Hailsham community College, Hailsham (September 2010)  
Academy West Hastings (September 2011)  
Eastbourne Academy (September 2010)

**Special schools**

Glyne Gap School, Bexhill (Primary, Secondary and FE)  
Grove Park School, Crowborough (Primary, Secondary and Post 16)  
Hazel Court Secondary School, Eastbourne (and FE)  
Saxon Mount School, Hastings (Secondary)  
The Lindfield School, Eastbourne (Secondary)  
The South Downs Community Special School, Eastbourne (Pre-school and Primary)  
Torfield School, Hastings (Pre-school and Primary)

**National Autistic Society Accreditation**

**Accreditation received:**

Torfield School, Hastings  
Acorns Respite Unit, Children's Disability Team, Bexhill  
Heathfield Community College, Heathfield  
The South Downs Community Special School

**Working towards Accreditation:**

Bexhill High School  
The Lindfield School  
Manor Primary School  
The Bungalow Respite Unit, Children's Disability Team, Eastbourne  
Saxon Mount  
New Horizons Special School  
Grove Park Special School