

Report to: **Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability**

Date: **10 October 2016**

By: **Director of Children's Services**

Title of report: **Notice of Motion: Selective Education**

Purpose of report: **To consider the Motion that the Council opposes selective education in East Sussex**

RECOMMENDATION

The Lead Member is recommended to recommend the County Council notes the contents of this report and adopts an amended Notice of Motion as set out in paragraph 3.1.

1 Background

1.1 The following notice of motion has been submitted by Councillor Field and Councillor Shuttleworth:

'This Council supports its School Improvement Strategy; "Excellence for All". It does not support selective Education in the Authority and believes that it will not contribute to raising educational standards across the County.'

1.2 In line with County Council practice, the matter has been referred by the Chairman to the Lead Member for Education and Inclusion, Special Educational Needs and Disability for consideration to provide information and inform debate on the Motion. The Lead Member's recommendation on this Notice of Motion will be reported to the Council at its meeting on 18 October 2016.

2 Supporting information

2.1 The Department for Education (DfE) published a green paper in September 2016: "Schools that Work for Everyone", in which it set out its belief that there is a case for relaxing restrictions on selective education, in order to provide more good school places within the system – whether through the expansion of existing grammars, the creation of new selective schools or through allowing non-selective schools to become selective – in the interests of improving education standards and increasing choice for parents.

2.2 The green paper sets out the following proposals in a consultation which runs until December 2016:

- Allow the establishment of **new selective schools**, subject to the conditions below. These would be established as free schools set up in response to local demand, with the flexibility to select 100% of their intake on the basis of ability.
- Allow **existing non-selective schools** to become selective by removing restrictions on selection, subject to the conditions below. These schools would become selective in response to local demand, with the flexibility to select 100% of their intake on the basis of ability.
- Support **existing good and outstanding selective schools** to expand, subject to the conditions below. To support this, the Department for Education will make available funding of up to £50m a year for the expansion of places on the basis of estimates, not retrospectively.

2.3 To increase the number of good and outstanding places in non-selective schools, the Department for Education would apply conditions on new or expanding selective schools. These conditions would be chosen from a menu of the following options, to meet local needs and to ensure that new or expanding selective schools contribute in a meaningful way to improving outcomes for all pupils:

- Take a proportion of pupils from lower income households.
- Establish a new non-selective secondary school, with the capital and revenue costs paid by government.
- Establish a primary feeder in an area with higher density of lower income households to widen access, with the capital and revenue costs paid by government.
- Partner with an existing non-selective school within a multi-academy trust or sponsor a currently underperforming and non-selective academy.

- Ensure that there are opportunities to join the selective school at different ages, such as 14 and 16, as well as 11.

2.4 ESCC, as set out in “**Excellence for All**”, retains its commitment to ensuring an excellent education for all children and young people in the county, irrespective of the type of school, college or setting they attend. In an increasingly diverse educational landscape, the local authority has a vital role to play as a champion for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. Excellence for All sets out how the local authority works with all schools:

- Holds all schools to account for how well they serve their learners, particularly the most vulnerable.
- Works collaboratively with all providers to ensure that children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities achieve their ambitions and become successful adults.
- Encourages good and outstanding providers to support others to improve, through strong system leadership; and promotes sustainable, formal partnerships between providers.
- Ensures a sufficient supply of good education places, underpinned by the principle that all children should be able to attend their local school and that special educational needs and disabilities should not be a barrier to this.

2.5 The Ofsted inspection of local authority arrangements for supporting school improvement in East Sussex in November 2015 reported that: ‘The impact of the local authority’s strategy for improvement, ‘Excellence for All’ and the work to ensure the quality of its own advisers and brokered services since the last inspection was clear.’

3. Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

3.1 In light of the success of the East Sussex Excellence for All strategy in improving school performance and outcomes for children and young people in the county, it is recommended that the following amended Notion of Motion is adopted:

East Sussex County Council:

- Supports its school improvement strategy: Excellence for All, which has contributed to a significant improvement in school performance and outcomes for children and young people in East Sussex.
- Believes that existing local arrangements for ensuring the supply of good educational places in the county are robust and effective in ensuring that local communities have access to good educational provision.
- Would like to consider the government’s amended proposals further following the end of the consultation period in December.

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LOCAL MEMBERS

All Councillors