

Education & Children's Services Scrutiny

19.9.12

PRIMARY PLACE PLANNING

Lead Director: Rachel Dickinson



Useful information

- Ward(s) affected: All
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1. Summary

Background and summary of current position:

- Local Authorities have statutory duties to ensure that there are sufficient pupil places in their area. Local authorities must also ensure that there are sufficient schools in their area and that they promote diversity and increase parental choice.
- This September there are 4223 reception places available in City schools
- Current projections suggest that by 2015/16 we will however require an additional **682 reception places**. Across all primary year groups 4774 additional places are projected to be required by 2015/16 to meet demand from this point onwards.
- To determine how the City will meet this challenge a review of our current school capacities has been undertaken. This has identified a number of possible ways forward. This report updates on the progress made, the challenges that remain and the type of decisions that will be required in the future.
- Dialogue with schools and governing bodies has identified and created an additional 148 short term places for September 2012, however not all of these places can be maintained permanently.
- School Organisation planners have explored a range of options and gains that could be made to meet future demand. These are set out in the report. It is clear that most of these strategies will need to be implemented in order to significantly raise capacity. Following discussion with Assistant Mayor Councillor Dempster and the Executive further feasibility work is now being undertaken to identify the most cost effective strategic options for consideration and decision. Upon completion of this work a fuller report will be brought before Scrutiny and Executive.
- In the interim estimated net projected gains and potential indicative costs known to date of preferred options considered are detailed in **Appendix 1**.

2. Main report:

2.1 Current capacity and forecasted demand:

- The City birth rate continues to rise. The latest figures from ONS for 2010/11 births show a 5.1% rise compared to 2009/10.

Year of Birth	No. Births (ONS)	Intake Year R	Intake Forecast
2007/08	5128	2012/13	4540
2008/09	5159	2013/14	4636
2009/10	5186	2014/15	4666
2010/11	5451	2015/16	4905
2011/12	5532*	2016/17	4976*

* Forecasted births and intake based on 3 year weighted averages

- For September 2012 Reception intake there are 4223 places available.
- Current projections suggest that an additional 682 Reception places will be required by 2015/16. Across all primary year groups 4774 additional places are required to meet demand in future years.
- This reception year requirement is equivalent to nearly 23 Forms of Entry (with a class size of 30).
- The need for additional school places for 2016/17 could be significantly higher if the validated ONS 2011/12 births are as forecast and they are accompanied by further applications from new arrivals to the City and the UK and there is an influx of pupils due to the recent Benefits System review and the cap on Housing Benefits.
- Forecasted demand could however be lower for a number of reasons, including continued daily outflow / migration / of City pupils to County schools, additional unplanned new school provision being established within the City e.g. Academies and Free Schools, an increase in home schooling due to reduced satisfaction of parental preference in admissions, a reduction in future birth rates and net 'out migration' of population etc.
- In view of the above a strategic approach needs to be taken to meeting the projected shortfall in school places to ensure needs are met in the most cost effective manner possible and that 'over provision' does not occur leading to surplus places in primary schools.
- *No single strategy will secure the increased capacity required therefore a range of options will need to be explored.*

2.2 Summary of work undertaken to date:

- Suitability surveys have been carried out at all maintained infant, junior and primary schools to identify potential additional 'classroom areas'.
- Discussions with Headteachers & their Governing Bodies has led to 148 additional short term Reception places being created for September 2012 in areas where parental demand is high. Not all these places can however be maintained permanently into the future without investment.

- 2013 Published admission numbers (PAN's) have been raised at schools who have historically taken above their PAN generating an additional 60 reception places.
- Additional capacity will be considered in form of temporary mobile classrooms if required if applications for school places continue as forecasted during 2012/13 academic year. This is not however a preferred long term solution.
- After implementation of the above 'quick wins' a revised forecasted shortfall of **622 reception places** remains for **2015/16**.

2.3 Strategic Options being progressed to meet forecasted shortfall :

- (1) The Council will, where practically possible, make this September's temporary PAN increases permanent by carrying out capital projects to existing accommodation. (This would generate **43 Reception places**)
- (2) The Council will increase capacity at schools where there is sufficient site area to sustain a PAN increase by extending existing schools. (On current estimates this would generate a further **195 or 210 Reception places**). Dependent upon the outcome of feasibilities at a number of other schools, additional capacity could be provided (**potentially 45 places**).
- If all of above options were delivered in conjunction with existing surplus capacity in City schools then an additional **283 Reception places** could be provided by these means. *This represents 45% of the projected demand for reception places required for September 2015/16. The challenge of closing the gap within current legal frameworks and resources remains and requires more creative thinking and careful consideration of the strategic implications of these.*

2.4 Closing the gap: additional options for consideration:

It is clear that the above options will still leave the local authority with a shortfall of primary school reception places (**339 reception places**) and a number of other strategic options need to be considered urgently to enable new provision to be explored and commissioned, these include:

- (3) **Creation of 'satellite / spilt site' schools.**

Existing schools could expand and operate across a number of sites and additional capacity could be achieved by having each site operate on a 'phase' basis e.g. KS1 (infant) and KS2 (junior) sites. The proposed BSF consolidation of West Gate school onto one site means that this option could include support the development of Christ the King School on a vacated West Gate site - (creates **25 Reception places**). Discussion has commenced with the Headteacher, Governing Body and Diocese on realising this potential option.

Other options are currently being explored.

- (4) **Changing the Age range of schools.** Current legislation allows the local authority to propose changes to an existing maintained mainstream school to change the age range and capacity through statutory procedures. This could include lowering the age range of an existing secondary school to include primary provision. Effectively this could mean some of our secondary schools

becoming ‘all-through’ provision: this might create an additional **60 Reception places per school**)

Alternatively further development could occur where the local authority has other suitable sites for providing ‘new’ education provision. This might be achieved by bringing a range of existing City Council assets into use as educational provision. This is being explored further and Scrutiny will be fully updated on this in a future report once feasibility studies have completed.

A proposal to grow the St Mary’s Field school through statutory proposals to an ‘all-through’ primary school has already been discussed with the school and governing Body and has been supported. A commission has been issued to Property Services to carry out feasibility options for the expansion and meetings are planned with the school in the coming autumn term. A formal Executive decision would however be needed to commence formal consultation for any statutory proposal in the autumn term and a further report on this is being prepared. As part of this potential development there would be an expectation that Imperial Avenue Infant school would also increase its capacity to match its co-terminus Junior School (Folville). (Collectively these actions would create **30 Reception Places**)

- **(5) Competition for a new school(s)** If the local authority determines there is a good case for a new school it would need to hold a ‘competition’ for a publicly funded school **or** alternatively invite an appropriate proposer to bring forward proposals for such a new school. Scrutiny will wish to note that the Education Act 2011 makes a presumption that any new school will be an Academy / Free school and that the Authority’s ability to participate in the provision of any new school would be limited.

The establishment of a new school by this route would create **a maximum of 90 Reception places** (3 form entry) for each site / building proposed)

2.5 Summary of Options 1 - 5

- The potential “yield” that the above options might generate together with estimated costs as known to date is shown in **Appendix 1** and varies dependent upon how many are implemented.
- Scrutiny is invited to indicate preferred strategies for further exploration.

2.6 Resources available to fund additional pupil places – “Basic Need”

- Basic Need funding of £16,912m is currently available from 2011/12 to 2012/13 allocations for capital projects. Additional funding for future years will be allocated by central government and targeted to local authorities deemed to have the greatest need. It is thought likely that Leicester City will receive an element of Basic Need funding for 2013/14 as the latest ONS validated data shows continued increase in births in the City.

2.7 Decision required and next steps

- Following completion of feasibility studies Scrutiny and Executive will be requested to indicate their preferred options to enable further discussion and exploration with a new school/ governor stakeholder group to occur and further Property Services capital project feasibility studies to be commissioned as soon as possible.

3. Details of Scrutiny

Primary Place Planning – a process summary note was presented to Cabinet Session on 06 December 2011 and Children, Young People and Schools Scrutiny Commission on 29 February 2012.

On-going dialogue with Schools, Governors, Diocesan partners and promoters continues.

The Assistant Mayor has requested that a stakeholder group be convened in September to provide external input & scrutiny to the strategy as it develops.

5. Financial, legal and other implications

5.1 Financial implications

Evaluation and costings of the preferred option(s) after feasibility studies have been commissioned will be required.

However the Basic Need capital funding available for 2012/13 is £16.912m. Funding for 2013/14 and beyond is not likely to be known until late 2012.

Kate McGee, Principal Accountant, Education & Children's Services
Ext 39-7490

5.2 Legal implications

There are no direct legal implications at this stage and detailed legal advice regarding appropriate legislative routes and requirements will be taken once an appropriate steer is given.

Kamal Adatia, City Barrister & Head of Standards

5.3 Climate Change and Carbon Reduction implications

Overall the increase in pupil numbers will result in an increase in city wide carbon

emissions due to the increased transport requirements and increased building use. Whilst some of the options set out will just add to this general trend and should be addressed through projects such as travel planning and on-going work to reduce the carbon emissions of schools, some options will have wider impacts. Some options are likely to result in increased transport requirements moving children from homes to schools outside their immediate area although given the numbers this is not likely to be significant. The options that involve extensions to buildings, bringing back into use buildings and building new schools would result in increased carbon emissions. Any works to expand/create new buildings should be done to a high sustainability standard to try and limit the increases in carbon that will result from these buildings.

Helen Lansdown, Senior Environmental Consultant – Sustainable Procurement

5.4 Equality Impact Assessment

5.5 Other Implications (You will need to have considered other implications in preparing this report. Please indicate which ones apply?)

6. Background information and other papers:

7. Summary of appendices:

Appendix 1 – Table of reception places per option.