

Report of Director of Childrens Services

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Date: 10 March 2016

Subject: Learning Places for Leeds Overview



Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

All children and young people should be able to achieve well at school, from the earliest years through primary and secondary education, no matter what their background. The goal of the education system in Leeds is to enable all young people to have the best opportunities and to gain the right qualifications for rewarding employment and independence as they become young adults. Securing good quality learning places in every community is essential for every young person to have the best start in life.

Leeds City Council has a statutory duty to ensure the provision of good quality learning places and to secure an appropriate balance locally between education supply, demand, choice and diversity. It is the role of the City Council to plan, organise and commission learning places in Leeds in a way that raises educational standards, manages fluctuations in pupil numbers and creates a diverse community of good schools. The Authority seeks to exercise this function in partnership with children and families, elected members, diocesan education boards, governing bodies of schools, head teachers, local communities and other key stakeholders.

Planning for changes in demand for education places is an important function which can only be fulfilled locally, at a level above the individual schools. Estimating school places is a complex process and rapid shifts in demographic changes, economic conditions, patterns of migration, parental preference patterns, and house building create uncertainties that require robust methodologies and responsive implementation. It is imperative that the best information on housing, access to services, economic development and regeneration are brought together, alongside data held by other agencies, to inform the future needs for school places. Planning for learning needs to take

into account the requirement to provide a learning offer across a wide age spectrum from eligible 2 year olds right up to 18 year olds.

This overview summarises the work undertaken to ensure this statutory duty is being met and outlines the challenges we must meet in future.

Recommendations

Scrutiny Board is asked to:

- Note the information contained within this report.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This overview summarises the work undertaken to ensure this statutory duty is being met and outlines the challenges we must meet in future.

2 Background information

Learning Place Pressure

- 2.1 Following a decade of rapidly increasing birth rates from a low of 7,500 to a peak entering reception in September 2016 of 10,350, there is some minor fluctuation in the births.

Year starting school (Reception)	Birth cohort	Projected demand for places	Actual places allocated
2013	9,652	10,133	9,536
2014	10,202	10,403	9,972
2015	9,996	10,138	9,946
2016	10,350	10,542	
2017	10,051	10,237	
2018	9,960	10,062	
2019	10,113	10,379	

- 2.2 Since 2009 over 1400 permanent Reception places have been created, with bulge cohorts created temporarily as required. In some areas the increases in house building is placing increasing pressure on all year groups and not just those entering reception. The table below shows the birth cohorts, the projected demand for places and historically, the number of places allocated according to each year of entry.

- 2.3 In addition, an increase in the volume of in year admission requests are adding to the learning places pressure, particularly from new arrivals to the city. This is concentrated in particular areas of the city and in particularly age groups such as those requiring Year 1 or Year 2 places.

Early Years Provision

- 2.4 The DfE figure of eligible 2 year old places needed in Leeds is 4250 new places. The expectation is that around 80% of families will want to take up a place, and a target has been set of 3,400 places opened and filled by January 2016. Following the initial work focusing on place creation in the first 2 years of this project, attention has now turned to take-up. An action plan was developed to focus on promoting take up in schools where they may be able to offer places for rising 3s and working with harder to reach communities. This has yielded significant success and in December 2015 the number of 2 year olds had increased to 3118 (73% take up).
- 2.5 Unfortunately, the target for January 2016 has not been reached and the number for this term, including schools places, is 3000 or (70%). This is due largely to the significant number of 2 year olds who have 'aged out' this term; 1036 from private

providers and 145 from schools (1181 in total). It is important to note that spring term is always the worst for attendance.

- 2.6 Analysis continues to ensure that provision is being increased where it is needed (and where it is possible) and that all providers, including schools, are being encouraged to offer free early education for 2 year olds. There is a challenge in achieving 100% take up as free early education entitlement for 2 year olds is not statutory and some parents are choosing not to access their child's place.
- 2.7 Free early education places, for 3 and 4 year olds, can be accessed in a variety of settings across the city. These include school nurseries, private nurseries, pre-school groups and childminders. The take up of places as at summer 2014 was 15,363, 97% of eligible children. Take up as at summer 2015 was 16,139, 101% of eligible children. This is due to children from out of the area accessing provision in Leeds.

Childcare Places

- 2.8 The Childcare Act 2006 requires local authorities to secure sufficient childcare for the needs of working parents of children up to 1st September after their 14th birthday, or until they reach the age of 18 in the case of children with a disability. This must be sufficient to meet the requirements of parents who require childcare in order to enable them to take up or remain in work or undertake education or training which could reasonably be expected to assist them to obtain work.
- 2.9 The proposed changes to the Childcare Bill will increase the entitlement of free early education hours from 570 to 1,140 hours per annum for eligible families. The extended entitlement will generate opportunities for providers to expand or work creatively with other settings/childminders to allow them to expand their offer to parents.
- 2.10 Childcare is offered in a range of settings across Leeds. This includes governor led provision on school sites, private nurseries and childminders. Whilst childcare is not available on all school sites, the majority of schools offer access to childcare, in some cases provision is shared between a number of schools.
- 2.11 Families with disabled children have reported that it is challenging to find a provider with the appropriate expertise to care for their child, therefore making it difficult for them to access training or work. The Children and Families Act passed in March 2014 makes wide ranging reforms to services for children and young people, including services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The publishing of a 'Local Offer' is one of the requirements of the Act. From September 2014 Local Authorities were required to publish information about ALL services in the area for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in one website. This includes information about the childcare options available to parents including the range of expertise in settings to support children with SEN (special educational needs).

Learning Places approved

- 2.12 Since the Basic Needs programme began in 2009, over 1400 additional reception places have been created. In addition, 200 new specialist leaning places have been created from September 2015, 150 at the North East SILC (Woodhouse) and 50 at the South SILC.
- 2.13 Additional secondary learning places have been approved at Roundhay High School, and learning places have been created at Temple Learning Academy, Ruth Gorse Academy as well as the opening of the Elliott Hudson College free school that has created additional learning places at Morley Academy and Farnley Academy.

Primary and Secondary Admissions

- 2.14 There are national closing dates for applications and for making offers. Secondary applications must be submitted by 31 October and offers are made on 1 March. In 2015, 83% of Leeds pupils were offered their first preference school and 96% were offered one of their top five. There were 7,962 places allocated, a rise from 7,541 last year.
- 2.15 We have allocated 8,341 year 7 places for September 2016 (7,962 last year). There were 82.4% (83% last year) who were successful with their first preference, and 95% that were offered one of their five preferences (96% last year). We have a total of 8,615 year 7 places available.
- 2.16 Appendix B provides a full briefing of the 2016 Secondary Allocations.
- 2.17 Primary applications must be submitted by 15 January each year and offers are made on 16 April. In 2015, 85% of Leeds pupils were offered their first preference with 93% offered one of their top five preferences. There were 9,854 places allocated on offer day which is an increase from 9,774 at the same point last year.

Free Schools

- 2.18 Currently seven Free Schools operate in Leeds.
- 2.19 *The Lighthouse School Leeds* which offers secondary provision for up to 50 young people aged 11 to 19 with an autistic spectrum condition (ASC) or related communication disorder.
- 2.20 *Leeds Jewish Free School* is secondary provision established on the site of the existing Brodetsky primary school. It has an Orthodox Jewish designation and provides 25 places per year group. The secondary provision is being supported by Rodillian Academy. There are currently 43 children on roll and 25 places have been allocated for September 2016.
- 2.21 *Khalsa Science Academy*. The Sikh community have opened a non-faith based 1FE primary school with a Sikh ethos. It opened next to the Temple in Chapeltown, but Education Funding Agency took over the Fir Tree site and building and the intention is for Khalsa to transfer to this permanent site in September 2016. There are currently 62 children on roll.

- 2.22 *Elland Academy - Schools Partnership Trust (SPT)*. This Alternative Provision Free School provides alternative provision for students with behavioural needs and some with mild autism across the 3–19 age range, with 152 places available. The expectation is that pupils attend the Academy as a short term intervention but remain on their mainstream school roll.
- 2.23 *The Ruth Gorse Academy*. The plan for the Ruth Gorse Academy is being led by the Leeds Sustainable Development Group (LSDG), in partnership with the Gorse Academies Trust – a charitable company which already oversees the Morley, Farnley and Bruntcliffe Academies in Leeds. The Ruth Gorse Academy will have 1580 pupils when full. In their first year they had 95 year 7 places, in 2015 they offered 190 Year 7 places based in temporary accommodation on the Morley Academy site. From 2016 they are expected to relocate to their permanent site on Black Bull Street to the south of the city centre, offering 252 Year 7 places. There are currently 290 children on roll and 250 places have been allocated for September 2016.
- 2.24 *The Elliott Hudson College* opened in September 2015 as part of the Gorse Academies Trust which includes the Morley, Farnley, Ruth Gorse and Bruntcliffe Academies in Leeds. The Elliott Hudson College is a Sixth Form College for around 1000 16-19 year olds, offering A-Level provision. The opening of the College has seen the closure of sixth form provision in the other Gorse Academies creating additional 11-16 year old learning places in these academies. With just Year 12's currently in the provision, around 400 students are on the roll of the College, expected to grow to just over 800 students in 2016 when the College has Year 12's and Year 13's.
- 2.25 *Temple Learning Academy* opened in September 2015 in East Leeds. Initially the school offers 2FE primary provision, starting with reception. It was anticipated that from 2016 it would also start to grow a 4FE secondary phase. Site acquisition is complete and building works scheduled, however it is now unlikely that the secondary phase will open in 2016, instead it will open in 2017. There are currently 46 children on roll.
- 2.26 We meet monthly with both the Education Funding Agency and the DfE and receive updates of any applications made to establish further free schools in the city and to coordinate basic need planning with the national Free School programme. We continue to engage potential education providers to work together to ensure that any new provision created is available in those areas of the city with the greatest need and is joined up with our existing place planning.

Secondary Provision

- 2.27 Projections have previously indicated that 4 new schools are required before 2019 in the following areas: Inner East, Inner North East, Outer South and Outer North West. We are currently looking at potential expansions of existing schools/academies in the area, which could potentially deliver an additional 2FE within the Inner East. An additional 50 places have been created at Roundhay in the Inner North East. The whole East will be impacted by the East Leeds Extension, initially by the 2000 houses that form part of the Northern Quadrant, where the need for an additional school has been identified based on projections

in these areas by 2020. Evaluation of potential sites is being undertaken to meet this need.

- 2.28 The Outer North West and Outer South areas had previously projected potential need for up to 5 schools between them by 2022, with 2 of these 5 being by 2019. However, changes to 6th form provision (such as the Elliott Hudson College) will release some space within schools to allow for expansion and this is being investigated alongside current/best use of space.
- 2.29 Some of the changes that have occurred this year (such as increases at Morley Academy, Farnley Academy, Rodillian Academy and Ruth Gorse) will change projections within the areas where these schools are located and although demand for places in these areas is starting to increase, these changes have been implemented by the schools themselves without financial assistance from the Council.

Post 16 Provision

- 2.30 The Local Authority are continuing to work closely with schools, colleges and training providers to consider the future configuration of Post 16 provision across Leeds. Increasing funding pressures, improving outcomes for young people and helping to meet basic need are driving the focus to review existing Post 16 provision.
- 2.31 There is no prescription in the approaches being considered and schools and colleges are considering various options that could improve the future economic sustainability, learner outcomes and helping to meet basic need. Options being considered include collaboration on subject delivery, formal and informal joint Sixth Forms, closure of sixth form provision and establishing new separate sixth form provision.
- 2.32 The Elliott Hudson College opened in September 2015 and offers a 1,000 place A-Level provision as part of the Gorse Academy Trust. The opening of The Elliott Hudson site has resulted in Morley Academy, Farnley Academy, Bruntcliffe and Swallow Hill closing their own sixth forms and creating some capacity for secondary provision.
- 2.33 Schools and colleges in other areas of the city are considering the future of their sixth form provision, and discussions are taking place between the council and these schools to develop an appropriate way forward for these areas. Discussions are taking places with schools and colleges across the city including those in the south, the east, the west, the northwest and the north.
- 2.34 The Governments Area Based Reviews for Leeds, led by DfE and DBIS, will cover West Yorkshire and include all FE and Sixth Form Colleges. West Yorkshire will be in the first wave of areas reviewed with the process having begun in November. The Review is to assess the current Post 16 provision in the area and consider whether it is fit for purpose with a stated aim of having less but bigger colleges. We are currently awaiting the outcome of the Review

Specialist Places

- 2.35 Demand for school places for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) continues to increase as previously identified. From Sept 2013 to March 2015 an additional 34 CYP were placed in Resourced provision – an increase of 10.6% over the 18 month period. For the same time period an additional 27 CYP were given places in a SILC (an increase of 2.7%). It is important to note that this figure does not include the management of CYP with SEMH needs through the Elmete SILC and out of area placements. At NE SILC Woodhouse 41/50 places are filled and all 25 places at the South SILC expansion were filled before Christmas.
- 2.36 Additional work was undertaken to project the increases in demand for school places for CYP with SEND and the impact on mainstream as well as Resourced and SILC provision. The historical patterns of the proportions of pupils with each SEND category from the data was applied to the most recent Primary and Secondary projections.
- 2.37 Total projected increased for CYP classified as needing specialist help was as follows; 2015 - 9,783 and 2019 - 10,667. This is an increase of 884 CYP (9%). All types of SEND show a projected increase in numbers, however the types of needs with the biggest projected increases in actual numbers of CYP are:
- SEMH 2015 – 2594 to 2019 – 2852 (an increase of 9.9%)
 - Moderate LD 2015 – 1945 to 2019 – 2145 (an increase of 10%)
 - SLCN 2015 – 2762 to 2019 – 2959 – (an increase of 7.1%)
- 2.38 In September there will be another 50 places at North East SILC Woodhouse and then a further 50 in September 2017. South SILC will take on another 25 this September and then they will be at full capacity.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 Projection of demand continues to be a challenging process. Birth rates and up to date health information give broad indicators to the need required across the city and within localities. However, the increasing fluctuation in the volume of new arrivals into the city (both domestically and internationally) is increasing the pressure for learning places and the uncertainty in predicting need in the future.
- 3.2 In addition, the proposal to allow ‘summer born’ children to defer their entry into a reception place by a year could cause further uncertainty in the number of reception places that are accepted. Until there is a pattern of behaviour established, it is difficult to estimate the impact of this proposal.
- 3.3 As birth rates fluctuate there is a need to balance carefully the need for temporary and permanent places. This is for two reasons: firstly to ensure that the limited capital funding available is targeted appropriately, and secondly to minimise the likelihood of over-provision in an area which then leads to less popular schools becoming vulnerable. With 2016 the largest birth cohort to enter Reception classes, there is an anticipated city wide need for an additional 750 places (of

which 600 are permanent places) required in primary just to meet the birth rate increases. To date 465 additional places have been agreed with Governing Bodies, with a further 210 places secured subject to preference data confirming demand for places.

- 3.4 As the increases are now beginning to impact on the availability of secondary school places careful consideration is being given to the existing capacity, the potential changes to sixth form provision in the city and the emergence of free schools. The cost of a new secondary school is in the region of £20m or more and where necessary may also require the purchase of suitable land. The annual allocation of funding to meet Basic Need from central government has been in the region of £18-20m, although this will rise to £33m in 2017/18 to take account of the increased demand for secondary places resulting from the expansion of primary places since 2010. The allocation for 2018/19 is due to be announced imminently, and it is anticipated that the level of funding will be slightly reduced to reflect the additional places created within Free Schools.
- 3.5 Attached in Appendix A is the project dashboard from mid-February 2016 which provides costs and status reports on each of the current building projects that are currently underway to meet the need for both temporary and permanent places. This highlights that costs can vary significantly between projects dependant on the local factors and ease with which some land can be built upon and sites that provide more significant challenges. Contractor costs have risen significantly in Leeds, whilst their capacity to take on additional work is reducing due to the amount of work available, which is affecting the ability to accurately estimate project costs and projections are being modified to take account of this. A number of different procurement routes are also being utilised in order to test the market.
- 3.6 In planning and meeting demand, there has been a change in approach from the Education Funding Agency in their relationship with local authorities. The EFA are actively seeking to acquire sites or areas of demand to encourage Free School applicants to meet the learning places need for an area. Council officers are engaging in dialogue with the EFA to identify areas that may need a Free School solution.
- 3.7 In the latest wave of Free School applications, Dixon's Academy received approval for a 2FE primary and a 4 FE secondary through school; and the Fair Access Group in Roundhay received approval for a 2FE primary school. Both have engaged with the Council prior to application and approval and are due to open in Sept 2017.

4 Corporate Considerations

- 4.1 Detailed in the 'Learning for Leeds – Setting our strategic direction for ensuring sufficient good quality school places' report which was seen and agreed by the Executive Board in July 2013.

Consultation and Engagement

- 4.2 All permanent expansions of school places include a public consultation. The legislation was changed in January 2014 to no longer require a statutory

consultation in an effort to speed up the process of school place changes. As a consequence a paper was taken to Executive Board to outline the process of consultation that would take place.

- 4.3 Once the need to increase the number of places has been identified a stakeholder engagement event is held based on the Outcomes Based Accountability methodology. A range of interested stakeholders is invited including ward members, head teachers, governors, early years providers, neighbourhood forum representatives, Diocesan representatives, and local parents. The output from this event is then posted online and a discussion forum is created. From this specific expansion proposals are identified and a short period of public consultation, where face to face drop in sessions are held at the local schools affected, takes place. A summary of this whole range of consultation is then taken in a paper to Executive Board for permission to publish a statutory notice which offers a further 4 week representation phase.
- 4.4 Regular consultation takes place with Exec Members and Ward Members at key stages throughout the design phases of an expansion project. Pre-planning meetings are held with officers from Planning, Highways and building control prior to the submission of the planning application, along with consultation with statutory consultees such as Sport England. In accordance with the Basic Need Programme Approval by Executive Board in September 2014, all schemes are considered and supported by the Deputy Chief Executive, Director of City Development and Director of Children's Services through Basic Need Programme Board.
- 4.5 Ward members are provided with regular updates on activity in their area and across the city.

Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.6 An EDCI screening tool is carried out for every school expansion, and where necessary a full impact assessment.

Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.7 The proposals are being brought forward to meet the Council's statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places for all the children in Leeds. Providing places close to where children live allows improved accessibility to local and desirable school places, and thus reduces the risk of non-attendance.
- 4.8 A key objective within the Best Council Plan 2015-2020 is to build a child friendly city. The delivery of pupil places through Basic Need is one of the most baseline entitlements of a Child Friendly City. A good quality school place contributes to the achievement of targets within the Children and Young People's Plan such as our obsession to 'improve behaviour, attendance and achievement'. It is therefore important that when bringing any proposal forward, there is a degree of certainty that any change would not have a negative impact on the teaching and learning.
- 4.9 A further objective of the Best Council Plan 2015-2020 is to ensure high quality public services. We want to promote choice and diversity for parents and families

and deliver additional school places in the areas where families need them. Meeting this expectation while demonstrating the five values underpinning all we do is key to the basic need programme.

Resources and value for money

- 4.10 Funding for new school places is provided by the government in the form of an annual basic need capital grant allocation and this has previously been supplemented with bid rounds for targeted funding. The funding provided to local authorities is rationed by the government based on the projections of places required nationally and locally. Some funding adjustments are made to the allocations to fund the national Academy and Free School programmes.
- 4.11 The 2015/16 allocation of £19,430,969 amounted to £11.3k per primary place and £14.2k per secondary place which would provide £2.38m for 210 primary places (1FE admission) or £17.04m for 1,200 secondary places (equivalent to a secondary school with eight forms of entry). It should be noted that the funding allocation for 2017/18, announced last year (33,141,952), will equate to £12.3k per primary place (£2.58m for 210 primary places) and £15.4k per secondary place (£18.48m for 1,200 secondary places). An announcement regarding the 2018/19 allocation is due imminently.
- 4.12 The DfE scorecard, which was issued for the first time in 2014, has highlighted that Leeds was one of the best performing local authorities in terms of value for money on basic need schemes over the period 2009/10 to 2013/14, although there has been a slight drop in the permanent expansion cost per pupil place from 51% lower than the national average (based on projects delivered between 2010/11 and 2012/13), to 24% lower than the national average (on projects delivered between delivered in 2013/14). This is due to the factors highlighted in section 3.3, specifically in regard to the increased complexity of expansion projects and the sharp rise in contractor costs in Leeds.
- 4.13 The discrepancy between funding provided by government and the cost of new places is most noticeable where new schools or large expansions have to be delivered. This appears to be because the DfE assumes that abnormal costs and site costs will be met by local authorities and these costs are not generally assumed to be covered by these funding allocations. The DfE has recommended a standardised set of designs for new schools and extensions and will expect councils to adopt these or at least to pursue build solutions which use industry standard low cost elements to reduce the overall cost of new places. However, the ability to construct 'standardised extensions' is largely dependent upon existing building layouts and individual site constraints.
- 4.14 The current basic need programme consists of schemes which are shown in Appendix A.

Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.15 The processes that have been and will be followed are in accordance with the Education and Inspections Act 2006 as set out in the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013.

Risk Management

- 4.16 Projects to deliver new places in schools are routinely carry a range of risks from their inception and it is essential that the council continues to review its approach to ensure the risks can be effectively managed. Risks will arise from a number of causes for example because project delivery timescales are limited, most school sites are constrained, funding is very limited and because new school places must be available from the respective Autumn term (September) to meet the council's statutory duty.
- 4.17 Timescales on projects tend to be constrained because of the nature of predicting when demand for places (arising from increasing birth rates, net inward migration, impact of 'summer birth' decisions or increased housing) will be sufficient to justify the permanent school places. The new centralised demographic projections team and a corporate approach to decision making will assist with ensuring there is a pipeline of deliverable schemes.
- 4.18 Basic need projects can be further complicated by issues with existing school sites or for the need to find sites for new schools in the right locations. An expansion at a school must be planned to minimise disruption to teaching and safeguarding and should be designed so that the operational effectiveness of the school is not compromised. Achieving planning consent for new school places is often complex and requires detailed local consultation, good liaison with planning and highways and innovative designs. In some areas new schools must be planned and where possible this is done using existing council sites but in future it may be necessary to acquire land for new schools.
- 4.19 A cross council approach to dealing with site issues is already in place and this has been enhanced through a strategic project management group allowing proper escalation of issues and risks and most importantly to problem solve and deliver solutions when risks materialise.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 An outline strategic approach and key principles have been agreed by the Executive Board.
- 5.2 Since the Basic Need Programme began in 2009, over 1400 additional reception places have been created.
- 5.3 The outcome of the latest primary admissions round was positive with 85% of parents (85% last year) offered their first preference and 93% (94% last year) offered one of their top five preferences
- 5.4 The outcome of the latest secondary admissions round was positive with 83% of parents were offered their first preference school (84% last year) and 95% were offered one of their top five (96% last year).
- 5.5 We are working with the EFA and DfE to coordinate basic need planning with the national Free School programme.

6 Recommendations

Scrutiny Board is asked to:

- Note the information contained within this report.

7 Background documents¹

7.1 None

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.