

Report of Director of Childrens Services

Report to Scrutiny Board (Children's Services)

Date: 30 March 2017

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.

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 of those who were due to enter reception in September 2016 of 10,350, there is some minor fluctuation in the births. However, this now appears to have stabilised at or above the 10,000 per year group mark.
- 2.2 Since 2009, almost 1,600 additional reception year 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.

Year starting school (Reception)	Birth cohort	Projected demand for places	Actual places allocated on Primary Offer day
2013	9,652	10,133	9,355
2014	10,202	10,403	9,774
2015	9,996	10,138	9,854
2016	10,350	10,542	10,103
2017	10,051	10,378	
2018	9,960	10,300	
2019	10,113	10,497	
2020	10,223	10,505	

- 2.3 Actual places allocated on Primary Offer day is usually slightly lower than projected demand, as not all parents have applied for a place by offer day (despite best efforts to follow up those who haven't applied).
- 2.4 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 particular age groups such as those requiring Year 1 or Year 2 places. The inner city areas have seen the highest levels of in-year pressure.
- 2.5 In the 2015/16 academic year a total of 210 in-year places were created across Key Stage 1 in primary schools in Burmantofts, Harehills and Woodhouse. A further 35 additional Year 1 places were created for the 2016/17 academic year. The in-year pressure appears to have decreased in these areas however there is a concentration of pressure within the Holbeck area for Key Stage 1 places.

Solutions are being progressed which should resolve these cases whilst creating some capacity within the area.

Primary and Secondary Admissions

- 2.6 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. We have allocated 8,455 year 7 places for September 2017 (8,341 last year). There were 85% (82% last year) who were successful with their first preference, and 97% that were offered one of their five preferences (96% last year). Appendix A provides a full briefing of the 2017 Secondary Allocations.
- 2.7 Primary applications must be submitted by 15 January each year and offers are made on 16 April (although this will be 18th April in 2017, as 16th April is Easter Sunday). In 2016, 87% (85% in 2015) of Leeds pupils were offered their first preference with 96% (93% in 2015) offered one of their top five preferences. There were 10,103 places allocated on offer day which is an increase from 9,854 at the same point last year.

Early Years Provision

- 2.8 Leeds has approximately 4,250 eligible 2 year olds at any one time. Of those on average 74% take up their place (in the autumn term). Leeds has set its own target of 80% of eligible children accessing a Free Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) place. Families are able to take up a funded place at a variety of settings, including schools, private nurseries, child minders and preschools. There are a number of reasons why parents do not access a place and the Family Outreach workers and Early Years sufficiency team are working hard to promote and engage those families who do not or cannot access their free entitlement.
- 2.9 Places in schools are currently being targeted as they are able to offer places to eligible children for the last term before the universal entitlement at 3 years old. 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.
- 2.10 Free Early Education Entitlement places, for 3 and 4 year olds, can be accessed in a variety of settings across the city. The take up in summer term 2015 was 16,139, 101% of eligible children (This is due to children from out of the area accessing provision in Leeds) and take up at summer 2016 was 15,379, 94%.

Learning Places approved

- 2.11 Since the Basic Needs programme began in 2009, almost 1,600 additional reception places have been created (the equivalent of 53 Forms of Entry and over 11,000 primary schools places from Reception to Year 6). In addition, further reception and primary schools places have been developed in the city through the free schools at Temple Learning Academy, Khalsa Science Academy and Dixons Trinity (which is opening for September 2017).

- 2.12 Additional secondary learning places have been approved at Roundhay High School, and learning places have been created at Temple Learning Academy and Ruth Gorse Academy free schools as well as the opening of the Elliott Hudson College free school that has created additional learning places at Morley Academy, Bruntcliffe Academy and Farnley Academy.
- 2.13 200 new specialist learning places have been created in our SILCs from September 2015, 150 at the North East SILC (Woodhouse) and 50 at the South SILC. The Council's investment in SEMH provision will also ensure Springwell Leeds have the capacity for up to 360 places for children and young people with SEMH from September 2018 across the city over 4 sites.

Free Schools

- 2.14 Currently eight Free Schools operate in Leeds, with another one opening in September 2017:
- *The Lighthouse School Leeds*: Secondary provision for up to 50 young people aged 11 to 19 with an autistic spectrum condition (ASC) or related.
 - *Leeds Jewish Free School*: Secondary provision on the site of the existing Brodetsky primary school. An Orthodox Jewish designation providing 25 places per year group, supported by Rodillian Academy.
 - *Khalsa Science Academy*: Non-faith based 2FE primary school with a Sikh ethos. Initially opened in Chapeltown, before transferring to its permanent site of the old Fir Tree Primary School in September 2016.
 - *Elland Academy*: Alternative Provision Free School, as part of Delta Academies Trust, providing alternative provision for students with behavioural needs and some with mild autism across the 3–19 age range, with 152 places available.
 - *The Ruth Gorse Academy*: Part of the Gorse Academies Trust. The school has now relocated to its permanent site on Black Bull Street to the south of the city centre, from September 2016, offering 252 Year 7 places.
 - *The Elliott Hudson College*: Opened in September 2015 as part of the Gorse Academies Trust. A Sixth Form College for around 1,000 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 addition 11-16 year old learning places in these academies. The College will have its first cohort of students sit their A-Level exams this coming summer 2017.
 - *Temple Learning Academy*: Opened in September 2015 in East Leeds. Initially the school offers 2FE primary provision, starting with reception. Its secondary phase will now open in September 2017.
 - *UTC Leeds*: The first University Technical College to open in West Yorkshire. An academy for 14-18 year olds specialising in an Advanced Engineering and Manufacturing curriculum, backed by the University of Leeds and major employers within the city region for 600 learners (150 per year group).

- *Dixons Trinity Through School*: Located on Roundhay Road and will open 1FE of its Primary phase in September 2017, expanding to a 2FE Primary and 4FE Secondary school from September 2018.

- 2.15 Two further Free Schools were due to open in September 2017; Roundhay Park Primary, run by the Fair Access Schools Trust; and CAPA College, performing arts sixth form provision. However, the EFA has yet to confirm the final site location for Roundhay Park Primary and CAPA College. LCC is working with all parties to review places in the area. The Roundhay Park Primary and CAPA are now due to open in 2018.
- 2.16 Two other free school were successful in the Wave 11 bidding round in March 2016. These are Elements Primary Free School (to be located in Middleton), and Stephen Longfellow AP Academy. Elements is due to open in September 2018 and the Stephen Longfellow Academy to open in September 2017.
- 2.17 In the latest Wave 12 round of free school application five applications were submitted with three are through to interview stage. They are: A proposed Secondary School (from the Cockburn Academy Trust); Horsforth Schools Sixth Form Free School; and Southbank Primary (from the Gorse Academy Trust).
- 2.18 We meet regularly with both the Education Funding Agency and the DfE and receive updates of any applications made to establish further free schools in the city. We continue to engage with potential education providers to work together in ensuring that any new provision created is available in those areas of the city with the greatest need and is joined up with our own place planning.

Childcare Places

- 2.19 The Childcare Act 2016 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.
- 2.20 The 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 (from 15 hours per week to 30 hours per week). 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. A strategy and action plan to ensure there is sufficient capacity to meet the increased entitlement is being developed with partners and childcare providers.
- 2.21 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.
- 2.22 The Children and Families Act 2014 and the resulting Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice provides statutory guidance to the local authority

around childcare provision for children and young people with SEND. One of the requirements of the Act is for a 'Local Offer' website that ensures families can access clear information about all services for those aged 0-25 with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND). The specialist search engine returns information about the support and services available in Leeds for children and young people.

- 2.23 In addition, the Leeds Family Information Service website enables families to search for childcare in Leeds, with the option of searching for provision that supports children and young people with SEND. The introduction of the Disability Access Fund in 2017 will provide £615 for each eligible (those in receipt of Disability Living Allowance) child every year and will be paid to providers to ensure all children can access the free childcare entitlements for three and four year olds.

Primary Provision

- 2.24 For September 2017, a further 210 permanent reception places (7FE) will be in place, along with up to another 300 bulge reception places (10FE) to meet the expected demand for places.
- 2.25 Projections for September 2018 anticipate a further 330 places needed, to be met by a combination of Free Schools, permanent expansions and bulge cohorts.
- 2.26 The permanent expansions, free school openings and a steadying of the birth cohort around 10,000 children per year means that projections for 2019 and 2020 will only require modest expansions or bulges in the primary phase.

Secondary Provision

- 2.27 The increase in cohort sizes is now beginning to impact on Secondary places. Projections currently indicate that 5 new schools are required before 2020 across the following areas of the city: Inner East, Inner North East, Inner South, Inner West and Outer South. We are currently looking at potential expansions of existing schools/academies across the city, in addition to new free schools that are opening.
- 2.28 A proposed expansion to deliver an additional 2FE within the Inner East is in addition to the 4FE from the opening of the Dixons Trinity free school from September 2018. An additional 50 places have been created at Roundhay in the Inner North East. The whole of the East will be impacted by the East Leeds Extension, initially by the 2,000 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 the additional need, expected to be the equivalent of two new schools in total.
- 2.29 The Inner South demand would largely be met by the new Free School submission from the Cockburn Academy Trust, if successful, alongside a small expansion to the existing Cockburn High School. Options for the Inner West and Outer South are being explored further.

- 2.30 It is anticipated that remaining capacity needs will come through increases in the PAN of some schools, modest increases in accommodation to existing high schools, and changes in the configuration and arrangement of sixth form provision creating additional pre-16 capacity within existing schools.

Post 16 Provision

- 2.31 The Council 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.
- 2.32 There is no prescription in the approaches being considered, with schools and colleges considering various options including collaboration on subject delivery, formal and informal joint Sixth Forms, closure of sixth form provision and establishing new separate sixth form provision.
- 2.33 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 sixth forms, creating some capacity for secondary provision.
- 2.34 Horsforth High School are awaiting the outcome of their Post 16 Free School submission in Wave 12.
- 2.35 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 schools to develop an appropriate way forward for these areas. Discussions are taking places with schools and colleges across the city.

Specialist Places

- 2.36 Demand for school places for children and young people with Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) continues to increase as previously identified. Additional work is being undertaken to project the increases in demand for school places for CYP with SEND and the Council will produce a SEND Strategy for place planning of sufficient and appropriate SEND provision. Underpinning this strategy will involve the LA undertaking a review of SEND provision in Leeds to consider how best to develop existing and commission new provision which is in the right areas and in line with what partners, CYP and families want, taking into account the changing needs of children and young people. This will also include collaboration with our neighbouring boroughs to ensure that provision can be commissioned efficiently and in order to achieve the best possible outcomes for our CYP.
- 2.37 Capacity has been increased and recently an additional 100 places have been created at North East SILC Woodhouse and this will grow to 150 places by July 2018. South SILC has also recently increased its capacity by 50 places.

- 2.38 The LA has also placed significant investment in provision for children and young people with SEMH needs and by September 2018, Springwell Leeds will have the capacity for up to 360 places across the city over 4 sites. The LA continues to work with the Wellspring trust to put in place interim arrangements for pupils until the new buildings become available.

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 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. Whilst 2016 was the largest birth cohort that has entered Reception classes, for 2017 there is still an anticipated city wide need for an additional 500 places (of which 210 are permanent places) required in primary just to meet the birth rate increases. The majority of these have been agreed with Governing Bodies, with some to be secured subject to preference data confirming demand for places.
- 3.3 However, part of the permanent places was due to be met through the opening of the Roundhay Park free school. Due to issues in identifying an appropriate site, Roundhay Park will now not open until September 2018. Alternative temporary solutions with local school have had to be found at very short notice to meet the anticipated demand.
- 3.4 Attached in Appendix B is the project dashboard from February 2017 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.
- 3.5 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 indicative cost of a new 9 FE secondary school is in the region of £30-35m.

- 3.6 Attached in Appendix B is the Learning Places Programme Dashboard Report from February 2017 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 between projects dependant on the scope of works and the site specific abnormals. The schools currently being brought forward for expansion are our more challenging sites, many have highways issues along with an increased level of abnormals which attracts additional scheme costs. Contractor costs have risen significantly in Leeds, whilst their capacity to take on additional work is reducing due to the amount of work available in the city and the true effect of Brexit on the market and costs has also yet to be fully realised. The Learning Places Programme is utilising a range of procurement routes in order to maximise value from the market.

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.

- 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. 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 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.
- 4.12 The current basic need programme consist of schemes which are shown in Appendix B.

Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.13 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

- 4.14 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.
- 4.15 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.
- 4.16 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.
- 4.17 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, almost 1,600 additional reception places have been created.
- 5.3 The outcome of the latest primary admissions round (in 2016) was positive with 87% of parents (85% last year) offered their first preference and 96% (93% last year) offered one of their top five preferences

- 5.4 The outcome of the latest secondary admissions round (in 2017) was positive with 85% of parents were offered their first preference school (82% last year) and 97% 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.