
REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

Subject: THE NATIONAL CHALLENGE AND STRUCTURAL CHANGE TO SECONDARY PROVISION IN LEEDS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Executive Board with the context and proposals for the next phase in developing secondary school provision in Leeds, with specific reference to the National Challenge response.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 As part of the National Challenge, the government has set a new floor target for secondary schools at Key Stage 4 of 30% of its young people achieving 5 (A*-C) including English and Mathematics at GCSE. Local Authorities are required to consider structural options for schools at high risk of not achieving the floor targets by 2011. The options include closure, mergers, federation, academy or trust status.

3.0 MAIN ISSUES

- 3.1 Fourteen secondary schools, including the David Young Academy, were identified by the DCSF as part of the National Challenge. But, our analysis following the outstanding GCSE results this year five schools in Leeds are still at risk of not achieving the floor targets by 2011. In developing a structural response, the Council has the opportunity to further its ambitions for young people in Leeds by aligning its policy and strategies for the National challenge, 14-19, the Building Schools for the Future programme (BSF) and the development of provision for learners with special educational needs.
- 3.2 This paper describes a unique window of opportunity to review provision in the East and North East of the City and to develop proposals which would build on the considerable progress to date and ensure that brilliant learning places are accessible in localities

4.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To ask the Executive Board to commission a review of provision in East and North East Leeds consulting with schools, ward members, young people and

communities and bring forward an options paper to Executive Board later this year.

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

EXECUTIVE BOARD: 8 October 2008

**SUBJECT: THE NATIONAL CHALLENGE AND STRUCTURAL CHANGE TO
SECONDARY PROVISION IN LEEDS**

Electoral Wards Affected:

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Equality & Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

Eligible for Call-in

Not Eligible for Call-in
(Details contained in the Report)

1.0 PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the report is to provide Executive Board with the context and proposals for the next phase in developing secondary school provision in Leeds, with specific reference to the National Challenge response.

2.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The Council has a clear purpose for education and learning in the context of narrowing the gap, going up a league and social and economic regeneration:

- Brilliant learning and outcomes for all our young people
- Brilliant learning spaces for young people and staff
- Local schools at the heart of strong, vibrant and successful communities

2.2 These aims have been translated into purposeful objectives for delivering the transformation for our young people in Leeds:

- To continue to rebuild and remodel secondary provision in Leeds
- To ensure all young people in Leeds have the skills, confidence and

- outcomes to be successful in further education, training and employment
- To meet the statutory duty to match provision to demand and preferences
- To provide choice and diversity to communities in Leeds
- To deliver successful regeneration through the education strategy
- To ensure robust partnerships to deliver against the Leeds Children and Young People Plan objectives
- To establish the local and regional commissioning arrangements to fulfil the new statutory duties transferred from the LSC

2.3 The Government have set out their agenda to ensure that education provision is fit for purpose and develops locally to prevent failure and to provide young people with a personalised and appropriate learning choice. The four key national drivers which are shaping our Leeds strategy are:

The National Challenge

The Government want all schools to achieve the national floor targets of 30% 5(A*-C) including English and mathematics by 2011. Local authorities are expected to consider 'structural' change strategies where schools are at high risk of not achieving the floor targets; which could include closure, mergers, federation, academy or trust status. The Government has introduced new powers for local authorities and the Secretary of State to intervene where progress is deemed inadequate

Building Schools for the Future

Expressions of interest (EOIs) are invited for new programmes for 2009 onwards and the Department of Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) will be looking for local authorities with the vision and capacity to deliver. EOIs will need to demonstrate joined up resourcing with inclusion and 14+ provision and proposals will need to improve sustainability and achieve low carbon buildings

14-19 strategy:

New funding arrangements and responsibility transfer to local authorities under the new duty ("Machinery of Government" 2007) and Learning Skills Council (LSC) capital investment programme. New models of delivery and governance will be needed to deliver the learner entitlement and curriculum offer (Framework for Excellence – FE quality assurance). The Youth strategy will need to support the delivery of improved outcomes including NEET and support young people staying in learning to 19 years (from 2013)

Children's Services

The Every Child Matters agenda seeks to achieve the success and well-being of children and young people through the provision of Extended services for the community and the wider role of schools in family engagement and support

2.4 The ambitions of Leeds together with these national drivers lead to clear priorities for secondary provision:

- Addressing the needs of children and young people at risk of not achieving
- Developing new models of governance including trusts and academies to accelerate progress where necessary
- Implementing the Leeds 14 - 19 strategy and consultation on new patterns of confederated local provision

- Aligning capital investment opportunities including LSC and Wave 13 Building Schools for the Future (programme and EOI for December 2008)
- Meeting sustainability objectives, reduced travel and low carbon buildings
- Keeping focused on improving standards and making the necessary step changes

2.5 Leeds has come a long way in its journey to deliver to these priorities. It has made step changes over the last five years against some of the key measures of performance - highest ever achievement at 16, lowest ever exclusion rates and the best attendance ever. The contributing strategies have been:

- Significant PFI and BSF investment in learning environments
- New models for schools governance e.g. Garforth Trust and David Young Academy
- Education Leeds' School Improvement Policy and strategy
- Rationalising secondary provision

2.6 This report seeks to take forward the work to ensure appropriate secondary provision for the communities in East and North East Leeds, in the context of these clear national and local agendas.

3.0 **MAIN ISSUES**

Schools at high risk of not meeting the National challenge

3.1 At its July 2008 meeting, the Executive Board approved the response to the DCSF with regard to the National Challenge. Five schools are assessed as being at high risk of not achieving the floor targets. Of the five, Intake and South Leeds are subject to consideration for Academy status, and the consultation is underway this term. We need to consider options for the other three schools, Parklands and the two Central Leeds Learning Federation schools: Primrose High School and City of Leeds. The performance, organisation and admissions arrangements for the three institutions are described in the following sections.

Parklands Girls' High School

3.2 Parklands Girls' High School is a small secondary school for girls located in Seacroft. There were 669 girls (11-16) on roll in January 2008 with a further 97 girls in the sixth form. Numbers have been declining and there are expected to be 111 pupils in Year 7 (2008/9) against an admission number of 140. Its intake is predominantly from the local Seacroft and Killingbeck areas, and from the inner wedge communities towards Harehills. The school was given a notice to improve by Ofsted in March 2008, being judged to require significant improvement in students' achievement and attendance. At Key Stage 3 standards are well below floor targets. At Key Stage 4 it is likely that about 20% of pupils will achieve five or more A*-C grades including English and Maths.

3.3 Parklands is a target school for attendance which stands at 87% which is well below the target. Persistent absence is over 15% and has not improved this year. Financial management at the school is good and the school carried forward a small surplus into the current financial year.

Central Leeds Learning Federation

- 3.4 The Central Leeds Learning Federation comprises the two institutions of City Of Leeds High school and Primrose High school. City of Leeds High School is a small school which has long struggled for viability. There were 573 pupils (11-16) on roll at the last school census in January 2008, with a further 52 pupils in the sixth form. There are expected to be 103 pupils in the 2008/9 Year 7 against an admission limit of 150. The school does not provide for its local community in terms of admissions, since parents generally preference other schools. With the high levels of surplus places and its central location, City of Leeds is often the nearest school with available places for new arrivals to the city. This highly transient population brings its own challenges for the school.
- 3.5 Primrose High is a small but growing school. It had 809 pupils on roll at the January 2008 pupil census with a further 68 in the sixth form. There are expected to be 180 pupils in the 2008/9 Year 7 against an admission limit of 180. Primrose High has effectively filled the available places with local children although not the first preference for many. At Key Stage 3, in 2008, standards in both federated schools remain significantly below floor targets. At Key Stage 4, although preliminary results indicate improvement this year, standards are still be well below the floor target, with City of Leeds around 13% and Primrose around 19%. A result of 20% or over would place Primrose in the top quartile of schools for progress from Key Stage 2. However, both Federation schools are target schools for attendance and while there have been improvements this year, both will be unlikely to meet their targets. Attendance at Primrose is 85% and at City 86%. The number of persistent absentees has been reduced but is still high and attendance in year 11 in both schools is a concern and has a significant detrimental effect on achievement.

The North East

- 3.6 Substantial numbers of young people travel from East Leeds to Boston Spa School and Wetherby High School. For Boston Spa this represents approximately 60% of the school population. The average travelling to learn distance for Wetherby and Boston Spa is 4.0 miles and 5.3 miles respectively.
- 3.7 Both schools are scheduled for refurbishment as part of Wave 13 of BSF and there has been some consideration as to whether this investment might be better used to develop new build provision of higher quality and which would better reflect the local need. Any such option would increase demand for provision in East Leeds.

Developing options

- 3.8 Education Leeds has looked carefully at girls' only provision and recommends that it should be accessible to as wide a population in the City as possible to enhance its long term viability. A central location offers the greatest potential for generating demand from across Leeds although it would then place pressure on the admissions to the Federation. Any potential relocation of a school in the East would leave a significant shortfall in places in East Leeds. It would be necessary to build new provision to cater for the demand in East Leeds.
- 3.9 In conclusion, demand exists for the equivalent of three institutions in inner east Leeds, as well as girls only provision in a central location, and there needs to be improvement in the delivery of high quality and sustainable provision. Therefore

any solution needs to meet these basic requirements.

3.10 Essentially, addressing these issues involves the consideration of:

- the Central Leeds Learning Federation;
- re-providing girls only provision at a more accessible location;
- Academy status for any of the schools;
- additional new provision in east Leeds; and
- rationalisation of provision in the North East

3.11 There are significant delivery timeframe constraints in considering the re-provisioning solutions, both to secure the resources needed, to align the different planning processes and to meet the requirements placed on us in planning school places.

3.12 Allowing sufficient time to address the many challenges, the earliest at which substantial new provision in East Leeds could be delivered would be three years. Although four years may be more realistic.

Conclusions

3.13 Leeds has the unique opportunity at this moment to reshape provision in East and North East Leeds to respond to the local and national imperatives for brilliant learning for all our young people. This opportunity can be summarised as:

- To demonstrate Leeds' leadership to deliver its vision, respond to the challenges
- To establish new governance arrangements, providing the impetus and capacity for accelerating progress for the existing cohorts in the target schools
- To rationalise NE and East Leeds provision to better match supply and demand, reduce travel and generate sustainable schools
- To build on the progress being made by schools in the East to ensure that all young people are successful and to help drive regeneration
- To maximise capital resources to deliver our aims
- To demonstrate successful working with partners to deliver e.g. LSC, FE sector, potential sponsors
- To work with the key learning providers to remodel the 14+ offer to meet the needs and aspirations of young people, families and communities, and ambitions of the city

4.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNCIL POLICY AND GOVERNANCE

There has been limited stakeholder engagement in this option appraisal process; and it would be advantageous to delay refurbishment of the Parklands site to allow sufficient time to build consensus and develop the options for East and North East Leeds.

5.0 LEGAL AND RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There is funding through the Wave 1 phase 3 BSF programme for Leeds of £9m to refurbish the existing Parklands school.

5.2 The establishment of any new provision in inner East Leeds would require the Council to hold a competition to determine the provider. Any Council proposal

would be judged alongside other proposals that may come forward, by the Schools' Adjudicator. This process could in itself take upwards of fifteen months.

6.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 6.1 To ask the Executive Board to commission a review of provision in East and North East Leeds consulting with schools, ward members, young people and communities and bring forward an options paper to Executive Board later this year.

Background Papers

Executive Board, 16 July 2008 – The National Challenge

DCSF Reference Paper; The National Challenge

Executive Board, 19 January 2005 - City of Leeds and Primrose Federation Report

Executive Board, 21 September 2005 - Combined Secondary Schools PFI Scheme