

Report of Director of Children's Services

Report to Executive Board

Date: 14th February 2014

Subject: Outcome of consultation on the proposal to increase primary provision in Farsley



Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s): Calverley and Farsley	<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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input 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

1. At its meeting in July the Executive Board gave permission to consult on a proposal to increase primary school places in Farsley by converting Farsley Westroyd Infant School and Farsley Springbank Junior School into two primary schools.
2. It was agreed to consult on increasing the capacity at Farsley Westroyd Infant School from 180 pupils to 210 pupils and raise the upper age limit from 7 to 11 with effect from September 2015.
3. It was also agreed to consult on a linked proposal to increase the capacity at Farsley Springbank Junior School from 240 to 420 and change the lower age limit from 7 to 4 with effect from September 2015.
4. This report presents the outcome of the statutory consultation on these linked proposals and seeks approval to publish a statutory notice as described below.

Recommendations

5. Executive Board is asked to approve the publication of a statutory notice to:
 - increase the capacity at Farsley Westroyd Infant School from 180 pupils to 210 pupils and raise the upper age limit from 7 to 11;

- increase the capacity at Farsley Springbank Junior school from 240 to 420 and change the lower age limit from 7 to 4 with effect from September 2015; and
- note the officer responsible for implementation is the Capacity, Planning and Sufficiency Lead.

1 Purpose of this report

- 1.1 This report contains details of a linked proposal brought forward to meet the local authority's duty to ensure sufficiency of school places. This report seeks permission to publish a statutory notice in relation to the expansion of Farsley Westroyd Infant School and Farsley Springbank Junior School.

2 Background information

- 2.1 In July, the Executive Board approved permission to consult on a proposal to expand Farsley Westroyd Infant School from a capacity of 180 pupils to 210 pupils and raise the upper age limit from 7 to 11 and expand Farsley Springbank Junior School from a capacity of 240 pupils to 420 pupils and change the lower age limit from 7 to 4 with effect from September 2015.

3 Main issues

- 3.1 The consultation was conducted from 16 September to 25 October 2013 in line with government guidance and local practice. Ward members were consulted prior to and during the formal consultation period. Public meetings and drop-in sessions were held and information was distributed through both schools, Early Years providers, local publications, local shops, churches and playgroups. A summary of the issues raised follows and copies of the written responses, public meeting notes and additional analyses referred to can be found at www.leeds.gov.uk or requested from the Capacity Planning and Sufficiency Team at educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk
- 3.2 In response to questions raised during the public consultation process specifically about the physical building solution; further public consultation events were arranged on 21st October at Westroyd and 24th October at Springbank. These events presented the emerging design options in order to provide confirmation that concerns raised during previous meetings were being addressed. Feedback at both sessions was positive and has helped the ongoing design development.
- 3.3 During the consultation period 75 responses were received, which were mainly from parents (46%) with 37% from staff and 8% from residents. 65% of the responses agreed with the proposals and 35% of the responses disagreed.
- 3.4 Both governing bodies are in favour of the proposals.
- 3.5 Numerous positive comments were received and are summarised as follows:
- These changes would create local school places for local children. This should also reduce the need for people using their cars to travel to drop their children off at school.

- Creating a 1FE primary school at Farsley Westroyd Infant School will return it to being a village school where the staff will know all the children's names.
- Having 2 primary schools (1FE and 2 FE) would be better in Farsley than a 3FE infant and junior school model. Creating two primary schools will create better staff development opportunities.
- Creating two primary schools will create consistency for the children and remove transition issues between KS1 and KS2. Siblings will be at the same school and will reduce costs for parents as they will only have to buy one uniform.
- Farsley Westroyd Infant School may be a small site however there is confidence in the management team that it will be managed well and they will ensure the best outcome for the children.

3.6 The following issues and concerns were also raised throughout the consultation period:

3.6.1 **Concern:** There is not enough internal or external space at Farsley Westroyd Infant School for the number of extra children expected.

Response: It is recognised that the Westroyd site is relatively small, however it is of a similar size to other successful 1FE primary schools in Leeds and the overall site and buildings are within the range recommended within national guidance. The school are a key member of the design team and are supportive of a proposed solution that requires only minor extension to the main school building, with no loss of play space or car parking. As the need is for 1 additional classroom, it has been agreed that there is a clear educational benefit to this being provided as an extension to the existing nursery building to create a Foundation unit. This will also allow the external space on the nursery site to be developed further. It is acknowledged that the site is not large and there would not be external green space on the school site for on-site PE. However, there would be suitable indoor and hard play areas, and access could be arranged for off-site provision in the same way that, for example, swimming lessons are currently provided off-site for primary schools. Schools are used to managing the safe transportation of children and this would not be a safeguarding concern.

3.6.2 **Concern:** Concerns around transition between Farsley Westroyd Infant School and Farsley Springbank Junior School during the changes, particularly with regard to sibling priorities.

Response: The transition arrangements would allow for 60 year 3 places at Springbank for three years to enable those who wished to transfer to Springbank as they had intended on entering Westroyd to do so. Children in Westroyd would automatically be entitled to stay on and complete their primary education there. This would allow for maximum parental choice. As a part of this statutory process we can describe the transition arrangements that will apply for the schools, and this overwrites the admissions policy for its duration. The proposed transition arrangements allow sibling priorities to be applied to both older and younger siblings. No admissions arrangements can ever provide an absolute guarantee of places, but these will ensure in practical terms that the children attending Westroyd

will have priority for the Springbank places. Full details of the commitments are in appendix 1.

3.6.3 **Concern:** The changes will make Farsley Westroyd Infant School vulnerable as parents will choose Farsley Springbank Junior School due to better facilities and more space.

Response: The evidence in previous infant and junior conversions is that some parents prefer to stay at the former infant school. In part, this will be influenced by their location and family situation. Ultimately, the school believe that their future as a full primary school, able to offer a wider range of extra-curricular and main curriculum activities, and to attract and retain a wider range of staff and offer a broader range of staff career opportunities will make the school more secure.

3.6.4 **Concern:** Parking and traffic is already an issue at both schools, these expansions will only make it worse.

Response: Children's Services have commenced engagement with officers within the relevant parts of the Highways department with the aim of ensuring that the impact on the surrounding road and footpath infrastructure is minimised in so far as this is possible. Options being considered at this stage are extended opening times; staggered pick up and drop off times; walking buses, and options for parents to park further away from the school and walk. Child safety is a key priority and we would try to ensure that staff cars are off the road. These proposals may reduce the number of car journeys between the two schools. It is our policy to encourage children to walk to school. If we do need to use play space for parking, then it would be re-provided elsewhere. As Springbank becomes a new primary school there are expected to be fewer car journeys by parents who have children on both sites; and children who live closer to the Springbank site will not need to travel to the Westroyd site to a KS1 school place.

3.6.5 **Concern:** The building work will disrupt the children and staff which will affect their work/learning.

Response: Building works will take place out of school hours wherever possible. Where this is not possible, work would be carried out with the minimum disruption to the pupils, staff and residents. We have considerable experience of managing building projects on school sites in a safe and secure manner, and there would be a full risk assessment carried out.

3.6.6 **Concern:** Staff at both schools are only experienced in teaching KS1 and KS2 separately, not primary aged children.

Response: All teaching staff are trained to teach the primary age range. Both schools already employ staff with experience of the 'other' age range. Both schools would need more staff in the long term, and would consider any gaps in experience when recruiting. Any remaining skills gaps would be identified and training and support would be provided.

3.6.7 **Concern:** Consider using the Scout hut site on Newlands.

Response: The specific suggestion to utilise this site was put forward as an idea to allow the potential expansion of the infant and junior schools. The suggestion was to expand Springbank as a 3FE junior school, and the infant school would use the nursery, scout hut and main infant sites to expand as 3FE infant school. Initial

investigations confirm that this is a council owned site and so could be considered. There is significant concern about the infant school having to manage a split site across three sites, given the fact that this would place reception aged pupils in a single classroom on this site and this has accordingly been ruled out. Potential use as a staff car park or a site for parental parking during drop-off or pick-up times remain as options. These will be further considered throughout the detailed design process.

- 3.6.8 **Counter proposal:** Consider keeping the infant school unchanged, and change Springbank into a primary school with 30 reception places, and also keep admitting an extra 60 children into year 3 for the Westroyd children to join.

Response: The counter proposal addresses many of the concerns about this proposal and offers other options. It would require one further class base at the junior site in addition to the accommodation required for the two form entry primary school model proposed. It would create the extra 30 places, whilst retaining the option of an infant and junior as well as primary school options. It would increase access to Farsley schools for Farsley residents because a new admission point for reception would still be created at Springbank. It would ensure all KS2 children had outdoor playing field provision on site at the school.

However, on balance it is not the preferred option. Perhaps most importantly from an educational perspective it does not remove the risks of transition associated with infant and junior schools, instead it makes them more complex, risking the outcomes for children. It would mean that the benefits of consistency and continuity of care which the original proposal offers are lost, and that the transition risks remain for the majority of pupils. The schools would lose the benefits of becoming primary schools; that is the opportunity to attract and retain staff and offer greater breadth and depth of professional experience. This in turn would impact on the opportunities that the children had.

- 3.6.9 **Concern:** The potential housing at Kirklees Knoll will necessitate a new school anyway, and that should be pursued instead.

Response: The proposal is brought forward on the basis of the children who are already living in the area. Should the Kirklees Knoll project go forward this will produce further demand, estimated at half a form of entry across every year group. A S106 agreement has been drawn up with the developer that would contribute to a new school being provided on the site if the development went ahead. However the timing of this means that it could not be brought forward soon enough to meet the needs of the children already in the area. Meeting those needs in a timely manner forms an essential part of our drive to become a child friendly city, and meet our obsessions. At this stage, securing the land for a new school is an essential precaution, however there remains a significant funding gap, not least to acquire the land for the school, and all options will be evaluated if the building proposals are approved. The impact on neighbouring schools and their ability to expand would also be taken into consideration.

- 3.7 Concerns were also raised regarding the effectiveness of our communication methods, notably the lack of social media presence. Consideration has been given to these comments and measures have already been put in place to pilot a Facebook page for the next round of consultations. Additional meetings were held during the latter stages of the consultation to present the emerging design options,

and this has also been repeated in subsequent consultations. In particular there was concern about the gap between the Executive Board decision to give permission to consult in July and the delay during the summer holidays before the consultation began in September. The timings were to ensure the statutory consultation could be carried out within the first half of the autumn term, as consultation during the long summer break is considered poor practice. Improvements to our consultation processes form part of our efforts to become a child friendly city, and be open and honest in our work.

- 3.8 There was an issue with our online response form due to a problem involving some versions of Adobe Acrobat resulting in responses not submitting correctly. We were unaware of this technical issue until the very end of the consultation period, when a respondent drew attention to the problem. We endeavoured to contact all relevant parties to inform them of this issue and allowed the resubmission of responses for a further week following the original deadline. We have taken steps to ensure that this issue will not occur again by using the Talking Point facility through the Leeds City Council website. Other methods of response including paper forms and email were not affected.

4 Corporate Considerations

4.1 Consultation and Engagement

- 4.1.1 These consultations were managed in accordance with all relevant legislation and local practice. Ward members in all wards city wide were formally consulted at the public consultation stage, both individually, and through area committee meetings to ensure awareness of all proposals city wide and improved understanding of the impact of proposals in bordering wards.
- 4.1.2 Feedback was received during and after the consultation on the process of consultation itself rather than the proposal. A local parent created a website to generate further interest locally and also provided suggestions about how consultation might be improved. Some of these suggestions have led to changes in the way social media is used, better explanation of the processes involved, and additional meetings to present the emerging design options.

4.2 Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

- 4.2.1 The screening forms for these proposals have previously been published as part of a report to Executive Board in July 2013. They are therefore not attached to this report.

4.3 Council policies and City Priorities

- 4.3.1 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.
- 4.3.2 A key objective within the Best Council Plan 2013-2017 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'. In addition, "Narrowing the Gap" and "Going up a League" agenda and is fundamental to the Leeds Education Challenge.

- 4.3.3 A further objective of the Best Council Plan 2013-2017 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.

4.4 Resources and value for money

- 4.4.1 The total estimated cost of both projects is approximately £3.2m. Each project has progressed through early design stages and detailed design will commence if Executive Board approve the publication of the statutory notices. Planning applications and requests for the Authority to spend will follow for each project at the appropriate time.

4.5 Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

- 4.5.1 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 2007 as amended by the School Organisation and Governance (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2007 and the School Organisation and Governance (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2009.
- 4.5.2 Although new regulations came into force in January 2014 this proposal was brought forward under the regulations specified above and is required to continue through to completion under the same regulations.

- 4.5.3 This report is subject to call in

4.6 Risk Management

- 4.6.1 A detailed risk register would be established and would be maintained for each project. It is necessary to progress feasibility design work at risk during the public consultation stage; however the decision to proceed to detailed design stages will be dependent on approval to progress to the latter stages of the statutory process. Therefore any delay to the statutory process will increase the risk of delayed delivery of the building solution or financial risk of abortive design fees being incurred.

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 Our ambition is to be the best city in the country. As a vibrant and successful city we will attract new families to Leeds, and making sure that we have enough school places for the children is one of our top priorities. These proposals have been brought forward to meet that need, and following the appropriate consultation we now seek to move them to the next stage. They will ensure that children in Leeds

will have the best possible start to their learning, and so deliver our vision of a child friendly city.

- 5.2 The issues raised during the consultation period have been considered, and on balance, the proposals for expanding primary school place provision in Farsley by expanding Farsley Westroyd Infant School from a capacity of 180 pupils to 210 pupils and raising the upper age limit from 7 to 11 and expanding Farsley Springbank Junior School from a capacity of 240 pupils to 420 pupils and changing the lower age limit from 7 to 4 are still considered to provide the most appropriate solution for the area.

6 Recommendations

- 6.1 Executive Board is asked to approve the publication of a statutory notice to:
- expand Farsley Westroyd Infant School from a capacity of 180 pupils to 210 pupils and raise the upper age limit from 7 to 11 with effect from September 2015;
 - expand Farsley Springbank Junior School from a capacity of 240 pupils to 420 pupils and change the lower age limit from 7 to 4 with effect from September 2015; and
 - note the officer responsible for implementation is the Capacity, Planning and Sufficiency Lead.

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.

Appendix 1

Additional information regarding transition options during the proposed changes to both schools. It provides reassurances about the sibling priorities, and aims to simplify it.

1. Who gets priority for places in year 3 at Springbank during transition – will the Westroyd children be guaranteed a place?

This current priority does not strictly guarantee anyone a place now, but the transition plan keeps the 60 places in year 3 at Springbank. The current policy gives priority first to Children Who Are Looked After and those with SEN, then to siblings, next to children moving from the linked schools, before using nearest school and straight line distance as the final criteria. This priority gives a very high level of assurance that those applying to move between schools are able to do so. This will not change under the proposals, and the same level of assurance would remain as a minimum.

Just as now, some children in Westroyd may choose to enter a different primary school or move out of the area, meaning they do not need a place at the junior school.

Under the proposal some children are likely to choose to exercise their right to stay at Westroyd, meaning there would be 'spare' places at Springbank. Because of the admission policy priorities this means there would be even less chance of any child applying for Springbank from Westroyd being unable to gain a place. We do not currently see large numbers of applications from children settled at other schools to go to Springbank.

The process of making these changes includes the publication of a statutory notice which allows us to write in a legally binding transition plan which overwrites the admissions policy.

We will recommend that children at Westroyd during the transition period continue to receive priority for year 3 places at Springbank.

This is not the same as a guarantee, but gives at least the same level of assurance as exists now. We do guarantee that an admission number of 60 will continue into year 3 at Springbank during 2015, 2016 and 2017.

2. Sibling priority – can we ensure siblings get priority whichever schools they choose?

Under the current policy children who apply to join a school that their older sibling will be at get priority for a place. This includes where the older child has moved to the junior school and the younger child wishes to join the infant school.

During consultation we were clear that we have no plans to change the sibling priority and it will remain. Again, we can ensure that this continues to apply during transition, by including the details of the statutory notice. Furthermore some extensions to this sibling priority during the transition period can also be considered.

We will recommend that:

- 1) The statutory notice confirms the admissions arrangements during the transition period for the two schools, ensuring this policy continues even though they would technically become primary schools rather than infant and juniors, and ensuring the link works across both schools. This would mean that:
 - a) Younger siblings applying for a reception place at Westroyd in 2015, 2016 and 2017 where an older sibling has already moved up to Springbank will continue to get sibling priority for Westroyd because it is a linked school, i.e. the same as now even though they've become primary schools by this point.
It should be noted that in this case the younger child would be entering a primary school and would not have the opportunity to move to Springbank in year 3.
 - b) Younger siblings applying for a reception place at Springbank in 2015, 2016 and 2017 where the older child has already moved to Springbank will get sibling priority for Springbank because it is the same school. Likewise younger siblings joining Westroyd in 2015, 2016 and 2017 where an older sibling has not left Westroyd will also get sibling priority for Westroyd. In these cases there is no need to rely on the linked school part of the policy, they are simply joining the same school.
This includes where the older child is moving into year 3 at the same time as the younger child joins reception, as we will continue to allocate the junior places immediately before allocating the reception places.
 - c) Younger siblings applying for a reception place at Springbank in 2015, 2016 and 2017 that have an older sibling who has entered reception at Westroyd in 2012, 2013 or 2014 but has not yet moved into year 3 at either school will get sibling priority for Springbank. That is, the younger child would gain sibling priority for Springbank based on the older child's attendance at Westroyd.
- 2) Agree an exception that during the transition period sibling priority is not just given to younger siblings by older ones attending the linked schools, but also given to older siblings by younger ones. This will mean that in example c above, when an older child comes to move up into year 3 they will receive sibling priority for Springbank from a younger child already there.

Year 3 places will be allocated before reception places to make sure the sibling priority applies for the younger child where both seek to enter Springbank in the same year.

Further information is available in a separate transition plan document below.

TRANSITION TABLES

Westroyd Infant School, transition to primary school table

Start Date	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Sept 2013	60	60	60	No entry to these year groups			
Sept 2014	60	60	60	No entry to these year groups			
Sept 2015*	30	60	60	0-60	No entry to these year groups		
Sept 2016	30	30	60	0-60	0-60	No entry to these year groups	
Sept 2017**	30	30	30	0-60	0-60	0-60	No entry to year group
Sept 2018	30	30	30	30	0-60	0-60	0-60
Sept 2019	30	30	30	30	30	0-60	0-60
Sept 2020	30	30	30	30	30	30	0-60
Sept 2021	30	30	30	30	30	30	30

Springbank Junior School, transition to primary school table

Start Date	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Sept 2013	No entry to these year groups			60	60	60	60
Sept 2014	No entry to these year groups			60	60	60	60
Sept 2015*	60	No entry to these year groups		0-60	60	60	60
Sept 2016	60	60	No entry to year group	0-60	0-60	60	60
Sept 2017**	60	60	60	0-60	0-60	0-60	60
Sept 2018	60	60	60	60	0-60	0-60	0-60
Sept 2019	60	60	60	60	60	0-60	0-60
Sept 2020	60	60	60	60	60	60	0-60
Sept 2021	60	60	60	60	60	60	60

The grey boxes indicate the year groups that will not have any children admitted in those particular years.

* 2015 - Primary schools established, admitting 30 children into reception at Westroyd and 60 children into reception at Springbank.

** 2017 - The last year that children moving into year 3 at the Infant school, have the option to transfer to the junior school.

TRANSITION TABLES

Key:

	Children in year 2 at Westroyd in 2013 will move to Springbank into year 3 in 2014
	Children in year 1 at Westroyd in 2013 will have the option to stay through to year 6 or join year 3 at Springbank in 2015
	Children in reception at Westroyd in 2013 will have the option to stay through to year 6 or join year 3 at Springbank in 2016
	Children starting reception at Westroyd in 2014 will have the option to stay through to year 6 or join year 3 at Springbank in 2017
	Children starting reception at Westroyd or Springbank in 2015 will remain at the respective schools, through to year 6.
	Children in years 3, 4, 5 and 6 at Springbank in 2013 will remain at the school and will not be affected by the transition