



City of Westminster Cabinet

Decision Maker:	Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Young People
Date:	24 May 2017
Classification:	Open
Title:	School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2017
Wards Affected:	All
Key Decision:	Yes
Financial Summary:	Capital expenditure is funded by external grant and s106 planning contributions
Report of:	Director of Education

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 The City Council has up-dated the School Organisation and Investment Strategy based on projected pupil numbers and opportunities for providing new school places.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That approval is given to the School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2017 contained in Appendix A.

3. Reasons for Decision

- 3.1 The School Organisation and Investment Strategy sets out the Council's plans for complying with its statutory duty of providing sufficient school places for every child who needs one.

4. Background

4.1 Projections

Detailed projections of pupil numbers for a 10 years period are provided by the GLA School Roll Projection Service. As the GLA projections do not take account of proposed regeneration or major development schemes which do not have planning permission, the SOIS adds this information where it is known, alongside data from the School Admissions Team, and any other relevant factors.

The DfE recommends that local authorities maintain 5% surplus places; in Westminster primary sector has a surplus of 15% but the secondary sector has no spare capacity. The SOIS updates the projections annually.

The draft SOIS 2017 notes that major development is expected in the Church Street and Paddington areas which are at early stages of planning, and at Chelsea Barracks in the south. Using the formula adopted for calculating the 'child yield', Children's Services believes that this will result in the additional need for the equivalent of 1 Form of Entry at both primary and secondary level in the Church Street area, 1 Form of Entry at primary level mostly in other areas in the north of the Borough, and slightly less than 1 Form of Entry at secondary level across the City as a whole. The GLA projected demand of places continues to show a downward trend but this would be revised upwards when these new developments are confirmed.

4.2 Primary

At primary level, forecast demand can be absorbed within existing schools. There is no justification for expanding schools or creating new ones at present. Because of the prevailing surplus, the Council is talking to governing bodies, both diocese and academy sponsors (with the Regional Schools Commissioner) about developing a collaborative approach to ensuring future viability, including shared staffing, shared sites, partial letting of sites, and other efficiency initiatives. This also includes short term capping of numbers in certain primary year groups, alongside longer term plans to reduce Published Admission Numbers, e.g. from 2 to 1 Form of Entry or 3 to 2 Forms of Entry.

Westminster continues to 'import' nearly 1,400 primary pupils more than it 'exports' to other boroughs. This trend has remained consistent for many years and is in the main attributed to Good or Outstanding schools located near borough boundaries that are in close proximity to neighbouring borough residents. Approximately 90% of Westminster residents choose to send their child to a Westminster primary school at the first point of entry (Reception).

4.3 Secondary

The Council is proceeding with a programme to expand four secondary schools to deliver a total of 600 additional places. The principle justification for the expansions is to accommodate the additional pupils for whom the extra primary places have already been provided. The Council has sought to expand schools to benefit the highest number of resident pupils, although this is constrained by the location of schools and the physical capacity to expand.

The four schools are divided into two phases:

Phase 1 for 2018: Westminster City School and St George's RC School

Phase 2 for 2019: King Solomon Academy and Pimlico Academy

Westminster continues to 'import' over 2,500 secondary pupils more than it 'exports' to other boroughs. Between 75% and 80% of Westminster residents choose to send their child to a Westminster secondary school at the first point of entry (Year 7). This trend has been consistent for many years and, as for primary, is in the main attributable to schools rated Good and Outstanding that are desirable to parents, the proximity to schools that are located near the borough boundaries, and schools with religious affiliation that offer to applicants beyond borough boundaries in accordance with their 'oversubscription' criteria. The Council must take account of the import trends when looking at place planning and ensure it is still able to meet its legal obligation to its residents.

Regardless of the fact that Westminster imports more than it exports, which is common for many inner London boroughs at the secondary phase, the Council has a legal responsibility to ensure its residents have access to a school place within a reasonable traveling distance. Even though some Westminster residents choose not to apply to schools where they could have been offered a place, the duty remains to offer these residents a school place on National offer day (1st March). It is at this point in the process that the Council has had insufficient capacity to meet its statutory duty and is the underlying reason why the expansion of schools is necessary.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 All capital costs for new school provision will be met from Basic Need grant and s106 contributions. The Council will seek financial contributions from developers of new residential schemes in accordance with planning legislation towards the cost of expanding schools. The development of permanent facilities for new free schools, such as Minerva Academy and Marylebone Boys School, both in the Paddington Basin area, is funded by the Education Funding Agency.

5.2 Revenue costs will be met from Dedicated Schools Grant and will be agreed by Schools Forum.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 The Council has a statutory duty to ensure its resident children have access to full-time education and this is adequately met. There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

7. Consultation

7.1 The School Organisation Strategy has been discussed at Schools Forum, Policy & Scrutiny Committee and at meetings of primary and secondary headteachers.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact: Alan Wharton, tel: 020 7641 2911, email: awharton@westminster.gov.uk

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

APPENDICES

School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2017

For completion by the **Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Young People**
Declaration of Interest

I have <no interest to declare / to declare an interest> in respect of this report

Signed: _____ Date: _____

NAME: _____

State nature of interest if any

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(N.B: If you have an interest you should seek advice as to whether it is appropriate to make a decision in relation to this matter)

For the reasons set out above, I agree the recommendation(s) in the report entitled **School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2017** and reject any alternative options which are referred to but not recommended.

Signed

Cabinet Member for Children, Families and Young People

Date

If you have any additional comment which you would want actioned in connection with your decision you should discuss this with the report author and then set out your comment below before the report and this pro-forma is returned to the Secretariat for processing.

Additional comment:

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If you do not wish to approve the recommendations, or wish to make an alternative decision, it is important that you consult the report author, the Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Chief Operating Officer and, if there are resources implications, the Director of Human Resources (or their representatives) so that (1) you can be made aware of any further relevant considerations that you should take into account before making the decision and (2) your reasons for the decision can be properly identified and recorded, as required by law.

Note to Cabinet Member: Your decision will now be published and copied to the Members of the relevant Policy & Scrutiny Committee. If the decision falls within the criteria for call-in, it will not be implemented until five working days have elapsed from publication to allow the Policy and Scrutiny Committee to decide whether it wishes to call the matter in.