



City of Westminster

Cabinet

Decision Maker:	Cabinet
Date:	25 April 2016
Classification:	Open
Title:	School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2016
Wards Affected:	All
Key Decision:	Yes
Financial Summary:	Capital expenditure is funded by external grant and s106 planning contributions
Report of:	Director of Schools

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 2016 contained in Appendix B and the recommendations contained therein.

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 Detailed projections of pupil numbers over the next 10 years for Westminster are provided by the GLA School Roll Projection Service. Additional factors which the Council needs to take into consideration when planning school provision, e.g. residential developments which are not yet formally approved, school preferences and admissions policies, and the mixed provision of places through academies, free schools and the faith sector, are derived from other data sources available to the Council, and are described within the School Organisation and Investment Strategy.

- 4.2 The school population is projected to increase from 10,859 to 10,947 at primary level (excluding nursery), with a peak of 11,130 in 2021, and from 8,035 to 9,439 at secondary level (excluding sixth form) between 2016 and 2026.
- 4.3 At primary level, 26 of the 41 schools are VA schools, and 5 are academies or free schools. At secondary level, there are 11 schools, 10 of which are academies and one is a free school. In addition there are two special schools, one special free school, and one alternative provision academy.
- 4.4 Although there is a sufficiency of primary school places, some areas are expected to see an increase in demand due to new residential development in both the public and private sectors. This applies especially in north Westminster, where existing capacity is likely to fill, and some further provision may be required in the longer term. This will be analysed in further revisions of the Strategy in future years. Primary age pupils require schools close to where they live.
- 4.5 In common with London and other parts of the UK generally, there is an immediate need for more secondary school places. In Westminster, this is largely generated by the expansion of primary school provision during period 2010 to 2014 to meet projected need identified at the time.
- 4.6 Due to strong school performance, Westminster is also a net 'importer' of nearly 1,400 primary and 2,500 secondary age pupils. The Council has limited control over the allocation of places to pupils resident in other boroughs, but it does have a statutory duty to provide places based on the projected need. The School Admissions Code (the 'Code') applies to admissions to all maintained schools in England. As the majority of schools are now their own admissions authorities, especially in the secondary sector, the Council has no control over how they decide to allocate places. The Council is only responsible for ensuring that they are compliant with the Code.
- 4.7 Whilst state maintained schools in Westminster are significant net importers of pupils, this is offset by the number of resident pupils who are educated in the independent sector or in other boroughs. The proportion attending independent schools at primary level has increased over a 5 year period. There are 16,328 primary age children resident in Westminster of whom 893 attend state maintained schools in other boroughs and 7,510 attend independent schools, contrasted with 2,282 imports.

There are 9,572 secondary age children of whom 1,242 attend state maintained schools in other boroughs and 3,733 attend independent schools, contrasted with 3,681 imports. At present therefore, the numbers roughly balance in the secondary sector. The GLA projections of pupil numbers in the state maintained sector rise strongly over a 5 and 10 year period and it impossible to predict whether the numbers in the independent sector will rise by a similar amount.

- 4.8 The Council has embarked on a programme to expand secondary schools to meet the need forecasted two years ago. Phase 1 will include St George's Roman Catholic School in Maida Vale and Westminster City School in Victoria, and these will provide an additional 50 places per year group from 2017. Phase 2, comprising King Solomon Academy and Pimlico Academy, will follow from 2018 and will provide an additional 60 places per year group.
- 4.9 Although some of the proposed new places will be filled by pupils who are not resident in Westminster, it is estimated that about half of the places will be taken by resident pupils, based on the current profile of the selected schools. The capital cost of this provision will be met by external Basic Need funding and S106 contributions.
- 4.10 The Council has strong working relationships with the C of E and Roman Catholic Diocesan authorities and academy sponsors in Westminster. These have contributed to the strategy for delivering additional school places as well as supporting high levels of educational attainment. The Council will continue to foster these relationships in order to develop new and innovative solutions to school place planning and the effective use of the property portfolio.

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.
- 5.2 Revenue funding is provided through the Dedicated Schools Grant based on student numbers. However this funding is based on numbers in the October Census for the following financial year. This means that where there is growth in planned student numbers through expansion, the initial costs for the expanding school is effectively funded by a top-slice on all schools' budgets. The costs are approximately £50,000 per class, equating to just over £1,000 per school per year. This is negligible, but where there are a number of schools growing concurrently then this has a larger impact, particularly on small primary schools. The City Council has made this point in the recent consultation on National Fair Funding suggesting that the Education Funding Agency (EFA) needs to take a strategic view on funding growth.

6. Legal Implications

- 6.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

7. Consultation

- 7.1 Informal discussion with the two Diocesan authorities has taken place in the development of the Strategy.

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

B. School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2016

Appendix A

Other Implications

- 1. Resources Implications – separate reports will be prepared for specific proposals**
- 2. Business Plan Implications – the strategy conforms to the Business Plan**
- 3. Risk Management Implications - none**
- 4. Health and Wellbeing Impact Assessment including Health and Safety Implications - none**
- 5. Crime and Disorder Implications - none**
- 6. Impact on the Environment - none**
- 7. Equalities Implications - none**
- 8. Staffing Implications – none**
- 9. Human Rights Implications – none**
- 10. Energy Measure Implications – none**
- 11. Communications Implications - none**

Note to report authors: If there are particularly significant implications in any of the above categories these should be moved to the main body of the report.