

# Economic Development, Education, Community and Place Shaping Policy and Scrutiny Committee Policy and Scrutiny Committee

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<b>Classification:</b>	General Release
<b>Title:</b>	School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2018
<b>Report of:</b>	Director of Education
<b>Cabinet Member Portfolio</b>	Children's Services <a href="http://www.westminster.gov.uk/cabinet">www.westminster.gov.uk/cabinet</a>
<b>Wards Involved:</b>	All
<b>Policy Context:</b>	...
<b>Report Author and Contact Details:</b>	Wendy Anthony x 6432 <a href="mailto:wendy.anthony@rbkc.gov.uk">wendy.anthony@rbkc.gov.uk</a>

## 1. Executive Summary

The City Council has updated the School Organisation and Investment Strategy (SOIS) based on its annual review of pupil place projections together with its review of the necessary investment required in schools to provide school places for every resident pupil who needs one, in line with the Council's statutory duty.

## 2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

Key questions and issues on the School Organisation and Investment Strategy include:

- I. As a result of the current surplus of primary school places, the Council will continue to work with the diocesan authorities and academy sponsors as well as community schools to identify opportunities to make more effective

use of the school portfolio and to use resources, including staffing, in the most efficient way.

- II. The Council is obliged to make additional provision for secondary places in order to fulfil its statutory duty, and the approved expansion programme, which responds to this requirement, is partly completed.
- III. The Council will seek financial contributions through the planning system to reflect the impact of new dwellings, which create a need for more school places, and this potential demand should be factored into regeneration proposals throughout the City.

### **3. Background**

#### Projections

The Greater London Authority's (GLA) School Roll Projections (SRP) help ensure that the number of places available are planned in a timely and measured way so that the Council can meet its statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of places. 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 other local factors, such as admissions trends.

The DfE recommends that local authorities maintain between 5 - 10% surplus places; in Westminster the primary sector has a surplus of 12.5% but the secondary sector currently has no spare capacity.

The draft SOIS 2018 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', the anticipated resulting need will be for the equivalent of a one Form of Entry at both primary and secondary level in the Church Street area, one Form of Entry at primary level mostly in other areas in the north of the Borough, and slightly less than one 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.

#### **3.2 Primary phase**

At primary level, forecast demand can be absorbed within existing schools. There is no justification for expanding schools or proposing new ones at present. Because of the prevailing surplus, the Council is in discussion with governing bodies, both diocesan authorities, and academy sponsors (with the Regional Schools Commissioner) about developing a collaborative approach to ensuring future viability. These include shared staffing, shared sites, partial letting of sites, and other efficiency initiatives. They also include short term capping of numbers in certain primary year groups to reduce Published Admission Numbers, e.g. from two to one forms of entry.

Westminster continues to be a net 'importer' with a 23% import rate compared to 10% exported 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 that apply for state education choose to send their child to a Westminster primary school at the first point of entry (Reception).

### 3.3 Secondary phase

The Council has completed Phase 1 of the expansion programme with additional places offered at Westminster City Boys (20) and St George's RC School (30) for the September 2018 entry. Phase 2 will deliver a further 300 places a year from September 2019 at King Solomon Academy. Pimlico Academy may also offer extra places in the future, but expansion discussions are at an early stage. The Council is currently in discussion with the DfE to secure the vacated Paddington Basin primary free school site to enable the expansion of Marylebone Boy's School by one form of entry. 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.

Westminster is a net 'importer' with a 46% import rate compared to 22% exported 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', the proximity of schools near the borough boundary, and schools with religious affiliation that offer places 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, as 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 would be eligible for a place, the duty remains to offer these residents a school place on National Offer day (1<sup>st</sup> March). It is at this point in the process that the Council recently had insufficient capacity to meet its statutory duty, and is the underlying reason why the expansion of secondary schools has been necessary.

## **4. Financial Implications**

- 4.1 All capital costs for new school provision will be met from Basic Need grant and s106 (planning) contributions. The Council will seek financial contributions

from developers of new residential schemes in accordance with planning legislation towards the cost of expanding schools.

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

## **5. Legal Implications**

5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

**If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact Wendy Anthony ext: 020 7745 6532**  
[wendy.anthony@rbkc.gov.uk](mailto:wendy.anthony@rbkc.gov.uk)

## **APPENDICES:**

Draft School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2018

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None