

Children and Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee

3 April 2013

New School Developments

Recommendations

1. To endorse the approach taken to meet Basic Need. This relates to the provision of sufficient primary school places, following an increase in the birth rate in recent years, and its impact in particular areas of the county
2. To note the timescales involved when considering the expansion of secondary school provision as the larger primary school cohorts move through the school system
3. To note the need for new provision, which will arise from a significant increase in new housing developments, the approach the local authority will be required to take, and to decide if any additional reports are required

1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 The Local Authority (LA) has a statutory duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to provide sufficient school places for the children in its area. The way that the LA goes about fulfilling that duty is set out in the *Framework of Organising Education Provision in Warwickshire 2012* report, which was taken to Committee on 20 June 2012. This framework explains the commissioning process for school places as well as for early years and post-16 provision.
- 1.2 The main drivers for changes in school organisation are changes in demography, the school improvement agenda, secure school leadership and financial viability. There are a number of potential structural solutions available when faced with school organisation issues from opening new schools or expanding existing ones to amalgamations and federations.
- 1.3 Warwickshire has seen a steady increase in the number of four year olds starting school over the past few years. In September 2012, there were 6,263 children starting in Reception. This is an increase of 863 (or 16%) since September 2005 and it has put significant pressure on primary school places in certain areas.
- 1.4 Within this general pattern of increase, however, there are significant local variations. In line with the national picture, most urban areas are seeing population growth as a result of an increasing birth rate. However, in more rural areas this growth has not materialised and in fact many are in population decline. The pupil number forecasts suggest that for the September 2015

Reception intake, there will be fewer than 3% spare places in schools classed by the Department for Education (DfE) as being in urban areas but over 13% in the remaining schools in the county.

- 1.5 The government has recognised that there are parts of the country where the increased natural growth is putting pressure on primary school places and since 2010 has begun to release funding for LAs to install additional provision. However, the current practice of only making annual capital allocations makes it difficult for LAs to carry out long-term planning.
- 1.6 With the funding received to date, the LA has provided an extra 2,021 primary school places. A list of the expansion projects is provided at Appendix 1. Schools that have taken additional pupils at the LA's request have been provided with additional revenue funding to help with costs such as employing an extra teacher.
- 1.7 The approach taken to ensure that as many new places are created as cost effectively as possible has been to first look for solutions that do not require capital investment such as amending school priority areas. Should that not prove possible, the LA looks to utilise any existing capacity in local schools before investing capital funding in physical expansions. New schools are the most costly method of providing additional places and would only be considered should no suitable expansion option be available due to the added complication of having to find and acquire a suitable site.
- 1.8 When the birth rate was lower, many schools took the opportunity to use any spare accommodation to bring in services such as nursery or pre-school provision. The view taken to date has been to maintain those services as they offer many benefits to local families in terms of transition to school and supporting 'school readiness'. They also provide an important source of revenue for the schools.
- 1.9 Pupil number forecasts for the county suggest that the recent growth in the number of children requiring a school place is likely to flatten out over the next 3 years. However, there will still be a need to provide further additional capacity in the primary schools in certain areas due to the local fluctuations described above. This will be a particular issue in parts of Rugby, Warwick, Nuneaton and Bedworth.
- 1.10 Moreover, the need to provide additional secondary school places will require attention very shortly with some areas, such as parts of Rugby, expected to experience some pressure on places as early as 2014. Shortages of secondary school places are forecast to occur from September 2016 – most notably in parts of Nuneaton, Warwick and Rugby.
- 1.11 In order to physically expand a maintained school, the LA must consult fully, publish formal proposals and secure Cabinet approval. This process can often take three to four months and is subject to strict timelines imposed through legislation. However, academies are not required to follow this process and so may expand at much shorter notice.

- 1.12 Natural growth through increased birth rates is not the only pressure that the capacity of the school estate will be put under over the next 10 to 15 years. The proposed increases in housing across all five districts will bring new families to Warwickshire and will require a significant increase in school capacity.
- 1.13 Over the next 10 years, it is proposed that in excess of 50,000 new homes will be built in the county: potentially increasing the pupil population by 20,000. To cope with this number of additional children, the equivalent of 50 new one form entry primary schools would be required along with the equivalent of nine new six form entry secondary schools plus new early years and special school provision.
- 1.14 A number of these new developments are already underway or are in the later stages of development. As a result, there is an existing practice of working closely with colleagues in the Districts and Boroughs to ensure that any development is accompanied by the necessary education infrastructure.
- 1.15 Often, this has involved securing funding to expand existing schools; however, to provide this level of additional capacity, there will be no alternative but to build new schools. There is a presumption in legislation that any new schools will be academies or free schools: the LA now has no power to open new community schools but would be involved in the development process of creating new schools to mitigate the impact of new housing developments. Existing providers such as the Church Dioceses may still put forward proposals for new Voluntary Aided schools: these proposals would require LA approval.
- 1.16 The government's academies and free schools agenda has made developing a strategic plan for providing the necessary additional school places more difficult. The LA has no power to expand academies; however, they can expand independently with agreement from the Secretary of State. Free schools can also open outside of the LA's planning processes. Currently, the relationship with new academies is working well with discussions already taking place with many about the changing demand for places in their area (see Appendix 1).

2.0 Options and Proposals

- 2.1 The Access and Organisation team will continue to monitor areas of population growth across the county, analysing pupil number forecasts and school capacity measures to identify situations where an intervention may be required. Details are taken regularly to the Capital, Access and Organisation Board to ensure that appropriate action is taken and there are formal internal performance monitoring processes in place.

- 2.2 Where there are potential shortfalls in provision, solutions will continue to be found in the manner explained above to find appropriate, cost-effective ways of securing the additional places required.
- 2.3 A programme to provide additional secondary school places will be developed to ensure sufficient capacity over the next few years. This programme will look at options as to how this can be achieved and the solutions identified put to Cabinet before being consulted upon.
- 2.4 It will be impossible to develop further expansion programmes without engaging with schools that have converted to academies, particularly at secondary school level where most of the county's schools have already converted. It is important to engage with those academies to understand their expansion plans and be supportive if those plans align with the LA's strategic priorities. This may require some expenditure of the LA's Basic Need funding allocation on academy school sites if the LA needs the academy to expand.
- 2.5 In light of the forecast demand explained above, it is proposed that a further, detailed report be taken to Cabinet. This will be a joint report from the People and Resources groups and will set out an investment strategy outlining the resources required to provide sufficient school places to meet the likely demand over the next few years.
- 2.6 While there is currently only one free school in Warwickshire, it is important for the LA to be aware of any proposals to open new free schools. This will require close engagement with the DfE and a robust internal process to ensure early interaction with potential providers. The LA will in all likelihood be asked to take a position on whether or not they support each free school proposal. This will not necessarily affect the DfE's final decision on whether or not the new school can go ahead.

3.0 Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 3.1 Sufficient additional places have been provided to meet the expected demand for Reception and Year 7 places in September 2013. However, this situation will continue to be monitored and further action taken if necessary.
- 3.2 There is a need for additional primary school places in September 2014 and September 2015 and three expansion proposals are already at the consultation stage. Details are provided in Appendix 1. Options for how the remaining additional places will be provided will be developed over the next few months.
- 3.3 Proposals for providing the first additional secondary school required will also be developed over the next few months. Proposals for future increases in secondary school capacity will be developed once there is greater clarity over funding levels, academy expansion plans and free school proposals. This will be set out in more detail in the proposed report to Cabinet.

- 3.4 The County Council will continue to work on an ongoing basis with partners in the district authorities to ensure that potential developers provide the appropriate education infrastructure as part of their schemes and will work with the DfE and other partners to find suitable providers for the new schools. Details will be brought to members once there are specific proposals for new developments that require increased school provision.

Supporting Documents

1. Education Act 1996
2. DfE Guidance on Expanding a Mainstream School
3. Warwickshire Pupil Number Forecasts
4. *A Framework for Organising Education Provision in Warwickshire 2012* – report to Children and Young People Overview and Scrutiny Committee (20 June 2012)

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Peter Speers	peterspeers@warwickshire.gov.uk
Head of Service	Sarah Callaghan	sarahcallaghan@warwickshire.gov.uk
Strategic Director	Wendy Fabbro	wendyfabbro@warwickshire.gov.uk
Portfolio Holder	Heather Timms	cllrtimms@warwickshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1: School Expansion Details

a) In Progress and Completed Primary School Expansions

DfE No.	School	Education Area	Original PAN	Revised PAN	Capacity Added	Build Required
3002	Alveston Primary	Southern	20	30	70	Yes
3587	Barford St Peter's CE	Southern	17	20	21	Yes
2598	Boughton Leigh Infant	Eastern	80	120	120	Yes
2590	Boughton Leigh Junior	Eastern	100	120	80	Yes
2053	Bridgetown Primary	Southern	45	60	105	Yes
2640	Camp Hill Primary	Nuneaton & Bed.	45	60	105	Yes
3315	Canon Evans CE Infant	Nuneaton & Bed.	80	90	30	No
3302	Canon Maggs CE Junior	Nuneaton & Bed.	85	89	16	No
3594	Cawston Grange Pri.	Eastern	30	30	0*1	No
2332	Emscote Infant	Central	60	75	45	Yes
2635	Exhall Cedars Infant	Nuneaton & Bed.	56	60	12	No
2585	Glendale Infant	Nuneaton & Bed.	75	90	45	No
2032	Hurley Primary	North Warwickshire	25	25	0*2	No
2638	Kingsway Primary	Central	25	30	35	Yes
2621	Lillington Primary	Central	30	60	210	Yes
2405	Long Lawford Primary	Eastern	40	45	35	Yes
2325	Newburgh Primary	Central	30	60	210	Yes
2633	Newdigate Primary	Nuneaton & Bed.	30	45	105	Yes
2419	Oakfield Primary	Eastern	30	45	105	Yes
2614	Race Leys Junior	Nuneaton & Bed.	68	70	8	No
5206	Shipston Primary	Southern	54	60	42	Yes
3207	Shustoke Primary	North Warwickshire	27	27	0*2	No
2620	St John's Primary	Central	30	30	0*2	No
2641	St Michael's CE (KS1)	Nuneaton & Bed.	30	45	45	Yes
	St Michael's CE (KS2)		45	50	20	
2622	Sydenham Primary	Central	30	60	210	Yes
2610	Temple Herdewyke Pri.	Southern	12	12	0*2	No
3210	The Ferncumbe CE Pri.	Central	17	20	21	Yes
3204	The Willows CE Primary	Southern	45	60	105	Yes
2629	Wembrook Primary	Nuneaton & Bed.	80	90	70	Yes
3192	Wolston St. Margaret's	Eastern	24	30	42	Yes
-	Total	-	1365	1708	1912	-

*1: School took one off 'bulge' class without physical expansion

*2: School have taken above PAN where necessary without permanent expansion

b) Planned Primary School Expansions

DfE No.	School	Education Area	Original PAN	Revised PAN	Capacity Added	Build Required	Expansion Required
3154	All Saints CE Junior	Central	60	75	60	Yes	Sep 2013
2623	Coten End Primary	Central	60	90	210	Yes	Sep 2014
2043	Quinton Primary	Southern	15	30	105	Yes	Sep 2013

c) Planned Secondary School Expansions

DfE No.	School	Education Area	Original PAN	Revised PAN	Capacity Added	Build Required
4113	Shipston High School	Southern	77	90	65	No*3

*3: School likely to require further expansion, which will incur capital expenditure

d) Changes to Academy Planned Admission Numbers

DfE No.	School	Education Area	Original PAN	Revised PAN	Capacity Change
4240	Alcester Academy	Southern	174	150	-120
5407	Alcester Grammar	Southern	94	120	130
4241	Ashlawn School	Eastern	256	280	120
4238	Bilton High	Eastern	285	210	-375
4004	Etone College	Nuneaton and Bed.	150	155	25
4601	King Edward VI School	Southern	75	81	30
4620	Lawrence Sheriff School	Eastern	94	120	130
5403	Myton School	Central	256	275	95
5406	Rugby High School	Eastern	94	120	130
4730	St Benedict's Catholic High	Southern	109	140	155
3595	St Nicholas CE Primary	Southern	50	60	70
4002	Stratford Grammar School for Girls	Southern	75	112	185
-	Total	-	1712	1823	575