

Cabinet

14 March 2013

Proposal to Increase the Admission Number of Coten End Primary School, Warwick with effect from September 2014 Admissions.

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

- 1) approve the proposal to increase the published admission number of Coten End Primary School from 60 to 90 with effect from September 2014 reception admissions, and approves the publication of statutory notices;
- 2) considers the representations from parents and the school to introduce the increase from September 2013 reception admissions having regard for the adverse impact this will have on neighbouring schools.

1.0 Key Issues

- 1.1 The Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to ensure a sufficiency of school places. The Warwick area has seen a significant increase in the birth rate over recent years and this has resulted in pressure on existing primary school places. Additional capacity has already been built at Newburgh Primary School and work is currently taking place to increase the size of Emscote Infant School
- 1.2 Latest information from colleagues in Health suggests that the number of live births within the Warwick area is still increasing. The table below shows the number of pre-school age children currently living within the priority areas of the primary schools in Warwick. This will not mean that all of these children look to secure places at Warwick schools but it does show that the reception age cohort in the town continues to increase with 56 more children due to start their primary education in September 2016 when compared to September 2012.

Primary School Priority Area	PAN	Capacity	Sept	Sept	Sept	Sept	Sept
			2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Coten End Primary	60	420	75	66	86	71	88
Emscote Infant/All Saint's CE Junior	75 / 60	225 / 240	61	61	56	60	66
Newburgh Primary	60	420	97	92	101	106	104
Westgate Primary	30	210	58	64	73	74	74
Woodloes Primary	60	420	39	48	48	65	54
Total	285 / 270	1935	330	331	364	376	386

- 1.3 It should be noted that none of the primary schools in Warwick Town have proposed conversion to become Academy schools at present.

2.0 Proposal

- 2.1 The proposal is to increase the admission number of Coten End Primary School from 60 to 90 pupils per year with effect from September 2014 admissions. It is proposed that additional accommodation is provided from September 2014.
- 2.2 If approved this will see an additional 30 places at reception from September 2014. This increase will then feed through the school one year group at a time helping to enable the Local Authority to fulfil its statutory duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places. The increase would only be introduced one year group at a time to ensure stability for other schools in the town.
- 2.3 Coten End Primary is a popular, over-subscribed school and has been deemed to be outstanding by Ofsted (December 2011). Discussions have taken place with the Co-Headteachers and Governors of Coten End Primary and they are supportive of an increase in the size of the School and the opportunities this will bring. It should be noted that £2,800,000 has been identified in the 2012/13 capital programme to support the expansion of Coten End Primary School.

3.0 The Consultation

- 3.1 Permission to consult on the proposal to increase the capacity of Coten End Primary School was given at Portfolio Holder Decision making Session on 21 December 2012.
- 3.2 Formal consultation was undertaken from 7 January 2013 to 15 February 2013. Consultation documents were sent to interested stakeholders including the parents of all children currently on roll at the school, staff, governors and the student council. Copies were also made available to all other schools in the area, District Councillors, County Councillors, the Diocesan Authorities, the local Planning Authority and the local Member of Parliament. The proposal was also included on the Warwickshire County Council consultation hub.
- 3.3 The consultation period ended on 15 February with over 50 responses having been received during this time. Respondents have largely been parents of existing pupils or prospective pupils although there have also been responses from school staff, governors and the pupil Executive Committee of Coten End Primary School as well a response from another primary school in the town. Copies of all responses will be available in the Party Group Rooms and the Cabinet Office for one week in advance of Cabinet.
- 3.4 A large number of the responses are supportive of the proposal and see an increase in the number of places at the school as being a positive step. However, there are a significant number of respondents who are wholly against the proposal expressing concern about the impact the increase in numbers could have on the school ethos and the quality of teaching and learning. Some respondents have felt unable to express an opinion as to whether or not the proposal will be beneficial as

they would like to see detailed plans of where any additional accommodation would be located and hear from the school how they foresee being able to maintain the 'outstanding' provision.

3.5 Further details of concerns and issues raised are discussed below

- a) The overall size of school after expansion will be 3 forms of entry, this seems very large.

In terms of Primary school size and organisation the Local Authority wants to see schools large enough to offer a well-resourced and broadly based education to all pupils but not so large that they become impersonal.

In developing new primary schools it is considered that the minimum size should be at least 210 pupils.

With regard to an upper size limit of primary schools, in the past there has been a working assumption that new primary schools should not exceed 2 forms of entry (420 pupils). However, a number of Warwickshire's most successful schools are already larger than this. Moreover, recent evidence is that larger schools can perform at least as well as, if not better than, smaller schools in all aspects, whilst having a lower unit cost.

- b) What new accommodation will be made available and what outdoor space will have to be sacrificed?

Some discussion has taken place with the school to look at how and where additional accommodation can be added. There will need to be 7 new classrooms, additional toilets and ideally an extension to the junior age hall. A number of the existing classrooms in Key Stage 2 are small and consideration will be given to internal re-configuration to see if larger teaching spaces can be created.

Initial thoughts are that one classroom will be added at the Key Stage 1 end of the building with a new six classroom block taking the space currently housing 2 temporary classrooms.

The school would like to see a new admin/reception area located next to the front entrance and we would hope to be able to provide this for them.

It must be stressed that at this stage discussions are at a very early stage as detailed plans will not be developed unless Cabinet gives approval for the expansion.

- c) What steps will be taken to ensure disruption to existing pupils is kept to a minimum if the expansion goes ahead?

As previously noted, the leadership team and governors of Coten End Primary School are wholly supportive of the proposal to expand. They have already begun to consider how to make the transition from two to three forms of entry without compromising the current quality of education provided. The school have started to think about the build process and how the

management of the school day might change in the light of larger overall numbers in the school.

The school will be actively engaged with discussions regarding the new build etc. and we are aware that in a number of previous school expansions across the county, the experience has been seen as being extremely positive allowing a new learning experience for pupils.

- d) Are additional spaces really needed in Warwick and do they have to be at Coten End Primary?

Information provided to the Local Authority by colleagues within Health clearly shows that the number of pre-school age children within Warwick is continuing to increase. We believe that if additional school spaces aren't made available within the town children will be unable to secure a place at a school locally.

We could look at changing priority areas to ensure a better match between the sizes of the schools and the likely pupil intake and we will be looking to undertake such an exercise elsewhere in Warwick. However, this in itself won't add places it will simply support a redistribution of patterns of attendance.

A number of factors are considered when identifying where it might be possible to add places. A major factor is the willingness of the staff and governors of the school in question and Coten End Primary are keen to expand. The school has been consistently over-subscribed so is clearly popular and, with Ofsted having judged the school to be 'Outstanding', it is also obviously successful. The Government is supportive of popular and successful schools being able to expand.

The ease with which additional capacity can be added is a contributing factor. Has the site got sufficient space to expand and is it cost effective to do so? We believe that the additional buildings can be added at Coten End Primary without compromising the facilities the pupils currently enjoy.

We also give consideration to where pupils live and the numbers within the Coten End area are already on the increase. In addition, we believe there is likely to be further housing development within Coten End's area thus ensuring the longer term need for additional capacity.

- e) If we need additional school places why not build a new school somewhere else in Warwick?

The County Council has limited capital funding to support the provision of school places. Building a new school is not an unattractive idea but the lack of available land is a major issue. To build a new school the County Council would first need to buy a plot of land and then encounter the build costs. This makes the expansion of an existing school a more cost effective and achievable solution to the shortage of pupil places.

- f) What will the impact be on local traffic?

The impact on local traffic is a consideration of any planning application. The school will be asked to complete a travel plan for current pupils and estimate the impact of any expansion.

It must be stressed that the expansion is being proposed as a result of the number of children locally within Warwick and we would encourage the school to work with parents and children alike to encourage walking to school wherever possible.

The school has in the past reached an agreement with the District Council that parents can make use of the parking provision in St Nicholas Park at either end of the school day to ensure safe drop-off and pick up of children without adding congestion to Coten End.

g) How will the expansion be managed?

The County Council has considerable experience of managing school building programmes and any contractors employed have to adhere to strict working practices and procedures.

All steps are taken to ensure that disruption to local residents as well as the school community is kept to a minimum. The site will be effectively managed to ensure that deliveries are only made during pre-determined times.

The Building Contractor will work closely with the school and the County Council to ensure that problems do not escalate and that any potential issues are identified and rectified.

Building work will be phased to ensure the new buildings are delivered in the most useful way for the school. Any internal works required will where possible be undertaken during the school holiday periods.

h) How can we ensure that other schools will not be adversely affected by the proposed expansion of Coten End Primary School?

The Local Authority is clear that the increase in pupil numbers is largely due to birth rate and so is impacting on school places in the lower age groups. As a result we would only introduce any increase by one year group at a time starting with reception in 2014. Effectively this would mean that Coten End Primary School would increase by up to 30 pupils annually from September 2014 through until September 2020. The school will not be fully 3 forms of entry until September 2020.

With only one year group added annually we believe that there is likely to be little movement of children away from other schools.

The proposal is also to introduce the increase from September 2014 when we believe the numbers in the area will have started to increase further and so impact on other schools should be minimal.

- 3.6 Although mindful of the concerns expressed by a number of respondents to the consultation, Officers believe that there will be a need for additional places in Warwick from September 2014 and that the expansion of Coten End Primary School provides a cost effective solution. As a result Officers recommend to Cabinet that they consider supporting the proposal to increase the admission number of the school at entry to reception from September 2014.
- 3.7 Cabinet will be aware of the problems experienced by a number of parents in September 2012 at where they could not secure places for their younger children at the same school as elder siblings. A number of respondents to the consultation on the proposed expansion to Coten End Primary School have asked that Cabinet considers introducing the additional form of entry for September 2013 admissions. In addition to a number of parents, the school governing body and leadership team have also asked for an increase in the admission number to be introduced from September 2013.
- 3.8 The latest information from admissions shows that there are over 90 first preferences for admission to Coten End Primary School for September 2013. However, almost 30 of these are for children living outside of the priority area and to admit them could exasperate the issue regarding out of area siblings not being able to secure places in the future as the number of pupils within Coten End's priority area continues to increase.
- 3.9 There is concern also, that to allow Coten End to admit additional numbers in September 2013 will have an adverse impact on a number of other schools in Warwick with one in particular 'losing' approximately 12 children. Such a reduction would clearly have a significant impact on the budget allocation for the school and the ability to manage staffing longer term. A number of other schools within the town will also 'lose' 5 or 6 pupils each if Coten End is allowed to admit an additional form of entry in September 2013 and this is something Cabinet should be mindful of when making their response.

4.0 Timescale Associated with Next Steps

- 4.1 If approved, details of the proposal and implementation date.
- 4.2 The authority is under a statutory duty to ensure there are sufficient school places in the County. Under section 19 of the Education and Inspections Act (EIA) a local authority is required to publish a proposal to make a prescribed alteration to a maintained school. A prescribed alteration is one designated by regulations. The relevant regulation in this matter are the School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations Regulations) (England) Regulations 2007 ('the prescribed Alterations Regulations 2007'). Under paragraph 1(1) of Part 1 of schedule 4 to these regulations an enlargement of the premises of a community school which would increase the capacity of the school by (a) more than 30 pupils; and (b) by 25% or 200 pupils (whichever is the lesser) is a prescribed alteration that a local authority is required to publish under section 19 of the EIA. Therefore the proposal to increase the admission number of Coten End Primary School as set out above is a prescribed alteration that the authority is required to publish if the proposals are to be taken forward.

4.3 Given the forecast need for additional school places in the area Cabinet is asked to consider approving the publication of the necessary statutory notices.

5.0 Finance

5.1 Capital funding of £2.8m for this proposal was approved by members as part of the People Group, Schools Capital Programme 2012/13. The estimated cost of this proposal remains unchanged.

Background Papers

None

Supporting Papers

Portfolio Holder Report 21 12 12.

Consultation document attached as an **Appendix A**.

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Portfolio Holder	Councillor Timms	

Consultation Paper

**Proposal to Increase the Admission Number of
Coten End Primary School, Warwick with effect from
September 2014 Admissions.**

1. The Proposal

The proposal is to increase the admission number of Coten End Primary School from 60 to 90 pupils per year with effect from September 2014 admissions. It is proposed that additional accommodation is provided from September 2014.

2. Background

Coten End Primary School is a Community school in Warwick serving the Myton Road area including Bridge End. Area to the east of but excluding Mill Street, St. Nicholas Church Street, Priory Park and Wathen Road and east along Millers Road. The northern boundary follows the Grand Union Canal as far as the Charles Street Bridge, across to Emscote Road (excluding Waterloo Court) and along the railway line to the River Avon. The eastern boundary is just east of Myton Crofts on Myton Road and Europa Way. The southern boundary is formed by the Parish boundary for Bishops Tachbrook as far as the River Avon. In October 2012 the school had 433 pupils on roll, an admission limit of 60 pupils per year, and a capacity of 420 pupils.

3. Why are the changes necessary?

Warwickshire is experiencing, and is forecast to continue to see, a significant growth in pupil numbers which is feeding into primary schools. The fall and rise in the birth rate in Warwickshire follows the national trend very closely with births falling each year between 1991 and 2001 before entering a rising trend from 2002 until 2009.

Pupil numbers in the area, and more widely across Warwick, are forecast to continue to rise. If we do nothing, it is likely that there will be insufficient places in reception from September 2014. This would result in children from within the area having to travel to a school outside the area to secure a place in a school.

Latest information from colleagues in Health suggests that the number of live births within the Warwick area is still increasing. The table below shows the number of pre-school age children currently living within the priority areas of the primary schools in Warwick. Whilst not all of these children will look for places in state schools, the information does show that the number of children looking to enter school continues to rise.

Number of pupils living in Warwick and due to start school in			
Sept 2012	Sept 2013	Sept 2014	Sept 2015
330	331	364	376

4. What is the impact of the change?

(a) Building

The design of the new accommodation would be undertaken in consultation with representatives of the school to provide accommodation for an intake of 90 pupils per year from September 2014.

(b) Funding

The Warwickshire Cabinet has approved the allocation of sufficient funds to support the delivery of the project from the Learning and Achievement Capital Programme. The estimated cost of the proposal is £2.8m

5. When would the changes take effect?

If approved, a Published Admission Number (PAN) of 90 pupils will apply to admissions to Coten End Primary School from September 2014 onwards.

An increase of the PAN from 60 to 90 would see the overall capacity of the school increase by 30 places in each year group to give an overall capacity of 630. Usually we would only look to expand a school by one year group at a time. However, discussions will take place with the school to determine how best to approach the increase in capacity.

6. What happens next?

This consultation paper is being sent to all parents, to prospective parents, staff, the governing body and the Student Council of Coten End Primary School. Copies will also be sent to other schools in the area, Warwick District Council, local Parish Councils, Diocesan Education Authorities, admission authorities and the Local Member of Parliament.

The key milestones, subject to responses at each stage, are as follows:

Consultation on proposals	:	7 January to 15 February 2013
Consideration by Elected Members	:	March/April 2013
Statutory Consultation	:	April/May 2013
Consideration by Elected Members	:	May/June 2013

We want to know your views. The deadline for responses is 15 February 2013

Please send your comments on the proposal by e-mail to:

consultations@warwickshire.gov.uk

or in writing to:

Access and Organisation (REF JAN)
Learning and Achievement
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