

## **Decision Record – Proposal to Increase Admission Number of St Michael’s C of E Primary School, Bedworth**

**Cabinet Portfolio Holder taking decision:**

**Councillor Heather Timms, Portfolio Holder for Child Safeguarding, Early Intervention and Schools**

**Date of Decision: (NOT BEFORE 26 AUGUST 2011)**

**30 August 2011**

### **Decision taken**

Having considered the response to formal consultation, I approve the proposal to increase the capacity of St Michael’s C of E Primary School from 30 to 45 places per year at Key Stage 1 and from 34 to 50 places at Key Stage 2; approve the publication of statutory notices and authorises officers to seek approval of the Schools Adjudicator to formally apply the new admission number with effect from September 2012.

### **Reasons for Decisions**

The decision follows that taken by Cabinet on 16 December 2010 to undertake formal consultation with stakeholders on proposals to increase provision in primary schools to ensure the Local Authority would be able to fulfil its statutory duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places.

One of the locations identified as requiring additional spaces was North Bedworth. After initial formative discussions with the school, formal consultations with stakeholders took place between 6 June and 15 July 2011.

The number of primary aged pupils attending schools in the town has grown in recent years as a result of a rise in the birth rate. Between 2006 and 2010 the reception age cohort saw an increase of 35 pupils from 203 to 238 and is forecast to increase further in 2012 when there would be a need for more reception places. The increase in the admission number of St Michael’s will give a better match between the number of pupils in the nursery and the number the school can take into its reception year group. Prior to 2008, St Michael’s Primary School did have an Admission number of 45 at Key Stage 1 and 60 at Key Stage 2.

**Background Information/ factors considered in arriving at these decisions - (Summarised below but also see officer report for detail):**

### **Background**

1. St Michael’s C of E (Voluntary Aided) Primary School is one of several primary schools serving the area of Bedworth. In September 2010 the school took over the management and governance of the nursery school and children’s centre on the campus and was able to create a foundation stage class in the

children's centre building. The school is also one of only two primary schools in Warwickshire that admits pupils at the reception stage and at the start of Key Stage 2 (Year 3). This is because pupils from the nearby All Saints' C of E (Controlled) Infant School transfer to St. Michael's and other local schools at the end of Key Stage 1. At infant age the priority area for the school is to the east of and including Nuneaton Road, Leicester Road, All Saint's Square and the area north of and including King Street and Bulkington Road. At junior age the priority area is the same of that at infant age plus an area between Coventry Road, High Street, King Street, Bulkington Road (all roads inclusive), the Coventry Canal to Coalpits Fields Road and along the disused mineral railway to the Black Bank Public House.

2. The school currently has a reception admission number of 30 pupils at the reception year and a further 4 pupils at Key Stage 2 (giving a maximum of 34 pupils at Key Stage 2). The Primary School currently has 207 pupils on roll. In addition there is a 78 place (39 places in the morning and 39 in the afternoon) in the nursery class.
3. The proposal is to increase the admission number of St Michael's C of E Primary School from 30 to 45 pupils per year for Key Stage 1 and from 34 to 50 pupils at Key Stage 2. If agreed it is proposed that the changes would be introduced for Reception only in September 2012 and would feed through the school year on year. The increase at Key Stage 2 coming into effect from September 2015. It is proposed that additional accommodation is provided from September 2012.
4. The school is currently using space which would be brought back into classroom use. It would be necessary to enlarge the Foundation Stage area in the nursery/children's centre building. The Foundation area currently accommodates up to 39 nursery children in the morning and afternoons and 30 reception year children. It is proposed that the new area would accommodate the 39 nursery pupils and 45 reception class pupils. The design of the new accommodation would be undertaken in consultation with the Nicholas Chamberlaine Trust, who owns the building and representatives of the school with intention of having the extension in place by September 2012.

### **Consultation**

5. A total of 7 responses were received. 3 responses expressed concerns as set out in the officer report. In response to these it should be noted that a great deal of work has taken place to assess the impact of the increase in the birth rate across the county. We have looked at data provided by the PCT showing numbers of pre school children by school priority area. When considered in conjunction with the most up to date pupil forecasts, we are able to identify potential hot spots where demand for spaces is likely to exceed availability, Northern Bedworth is such an area. Data supports an expansion in provision on St. Michael's C of E. We do not envisage an increase in the PAN, which will be introduced one year group at a time with effect from September 2012, will have a detrimental effect on the other schools in the area.

6. The current proposal will increase capacity at Key Stage 2. However, further work is needed to ensure that the places available at Keys Stages 1 and 2 match. At the moment there are more places at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2. This has not been a problem, as without the infant class size restrictions, in the past schools have been able to take above their admission number at key stage 2.
7. Pupil forecasts suggest that the current pressure on places in Bedworth is likely to continue and that further steps will be required to ensure a sufficiency of places longer term. Steps also need to be taken to ensure that there are equal numbers of places at both Key Stages. Currently, there are more places at Keys Stage 1 than Key Stage 2. Further discussions will take place with schools in the area to look for possible solutions.

### **Financial and Legal Implications**

The total cost of the project is still to be fully assessed although is expected to be relatively low. Provision has been made within the 2011/2012 capital programme.

Report Author: Janet Neale

Head of Service: Mark gore

Strategic Director: Marion Davis

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Heather Timms

### **Checklist**

**Urgent matter: yes/no\***

No

**Confidential or Exempt (state category of exempt information)**

No

**Is the decision contrary to the budget and policy framework**

No

**List of Reports considered** [please attach or forward a copy]

Report

**List of Background Papers** *[please include directorate contact names and numbers for access to background papers]*

- School Organisation Framework Document 2005/10
- Cabinet Report 16.12.2010
- Formal Consultation Paper and responses.

**Any members and officers consulted or informed and any comments given.**

**Consulted:**

Local members:

Councillor Jackson  
Councillor Chattaway  
Councillor Clarke  
Councillor Foster  
Councillor Farnell  
Councillor Heatley  
Councillor Hicks  
Councillor Lobbett  
Councillor Longden  
Councillor McCarney  
Councillor Ross  
Councillor Tandy  
Councillor Tooth

Legal: Fay Ford *"comments incorporated into the report"* Barry Jukes

Finance: John Betts, Head of Finance, Chris Blundell, John Harmon

Nuneaton & Bedworth Borough Council

Dan Byles, MP

CYP O&S Chair and Vice Chair for information:

Cllr June Tandy  
Cllr John Ross

CYP O&S Spokespersons for information:

Cllr Peter Balaam  
Cllr Carolyn Robbins