

Cabinet

28 January 2025

Additions to the Education Capital Programme 2024/25

Recommendations

That Cabinet

1. Agrees that the proposal to increase the capacity of Whitestone Infant School from three form entry (270 pupils) to four form entry (360 pupils) is not taken forward at the current time.
2. Agrees that the proposal to increase the capacity of Chetwynd Junior School from three form entry (360 places) to four form entry (480 places) is not taken forward at the current time.
3. Approves the establishment of a SEND minor capital works fund as detailed in this report up to the value of £0.400 million funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation and authorises the Executive Director for Children and Young People to draw down from the fund to undertake smaller scale capital works.
4. Approves the addition to the capital programme of £0.150 million for the establishment of specialist resourced provision at Queens CofE Academy, Nuneaton to be funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.
5. Approves the addition to the capital programme of £0.085 million for the establishment of specialist resourced provision at Woodside CofE Primary School to be funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.
6. Approves the addition to the capital programme of £0.081 million for the establishment of specialist resourced provision at The Nethersole CofE Primary School to be funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.
7. Approves the addition to the capital programme of £0.038 million for the establishment of specialist resourced provision at St Benedict's Catholic High School to be funded from developer contributions.
8. Approves the addition to the capital programme of £0.072 million for increasing places at the specialist resourced provision at Boughton Leigh Junior School to be funded from developer contributions and the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.

9. Approves the addition to the capital programme of £0.150 million for the scheme at Wellingtons Day Nursery, Rugby to be funded from developer contributions.
10. In relation to the schemes covered in this Report, authorises the Executive Director for Children and Young People, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Property, to invite tenders and enter into the appropriate contracts or (where the scheme is school led) to make the necessary funding arrangements for these schemes on terms and conditions considered acceptable to the Executive Director for Resources.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report recommends proposals for allocating resources in the Education (Schools) Capital Programme to the specific projects set out in Section 3.
- 1.2 Local Authorities are responsible under the Education Act 1996 (Section 14) for ensuring sufficient school places exist in an area to meet local demand.
- 1.3 Under this statutory duty Warwickshire County Council is expected to fund any required expansions at existing schools or the delivery of new schools to ensure sufficient school places continue to exist to meet expected pupil numbers.
- 1.4 The Warwickshire Education Sufficiency Strategy 2024 – 2029 is a core strategy which sets out how the council will plan, develop and commission education provision and encompasses early years, school places, Post 16 and SEND. ‘A key objective in the strategy is providing the right places at the right time’.
- 1.5 The Education Capital Programme is driven by strategic planning as outlined in the Education Sufficiency Strategy and the annual sufficiency update to ensure Warwickshire can meet its statutory duty to provide school places. Projects are prioritised and brought forward according to the date the additional places will be required, as evidenced in the pupil forecast data, combined with the expected time required to design and deliver each scheme.
- 1.6 The 2021 census highlighted that Warwickshire’s child-age population increased by almost 7% between 2011 and 2021, an increase of nearly 10,000 pupils. As such the county has seen significant education capital investment over recent years. To accommodate this growth Warwickshire County Council has delivered over 10,000 new permanent school places in the last ten years through numerous school expansions across the county and the opening of 12 new schools, comprising seven Primary, two Secondary, one All-through and three special schools.
- 1.7 Over the next 10 years we expect a further increase in the total school age population (age 4-16) as a result of the housing developments that have

received planning permission or are building out at present. This growth will require additional school places.

- 1.8 The number of pupils with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) in Warwickshire has increased annually by 9% over the past 5 years, which is in line with national growth. There have also been changes in the complexity and type of need.
- 1.9 As part of the Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme of work, the Council is seeking to increase the number of Specialist Resourced Provision places commissioned over the next five years, from the current position of just over 200 places to over 530 places by 2028.
- 1.10 The continued development of specialist resourced provision across the county enables pupils with an education, health and care plan (EHCP), who are cognitively able to access the curriculum, to have their needs met and benefit from being located within a mainstream school environment.
- 1.11 Warwickshire now has 24 specialist resourced provisions (20 primary and four secondary), with two in North Warwickshire, seven in Nuneaton and Bedworth, six in Rugby, five in the Warwick area, and four in the Stratford on Avon area.
- 1.12 This report includes schemes to deliver a further 52 places in five specialist resourced provisions in primary schools in Nuneaton, Rugby and North Warwickshire and a secondary school in the South of Warwickshire.
- 1.13 All capital projects are delivered in accordance with Contract Standing Orders and Public Contract Regulations 2015 and moving forwards will meet the requirements of the Procurement Act 2023. They are procured either through Warwickshire County Council recognised/approved frameworks or via a competitive open market tender, with Overheads, Profits and Preliminaries and construction sub-contractor packages captured. The Strategic Asset Management team manage the design process from RIBA Stages 0-3 and appoint multi-disciplinary consultants via recognised frameworks and/or open market procurement exercises with a focus on value for money. The Investment Services team manage RIBA Stage 4-7 and appoints the contractor and provides project oversight alongside the professional team; challenging contractors' package prices against budgets allocated and providing Value Management and Value Engineering expertise to manage cost.
- 1.14 The current available funding is set out in Section 2.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 The Council receives Basic Need Grant and High Needs Capital funding from the Department for Education and also seeks to secure financial contributions from housing developers (under s106 Agreements) to fund the education

capital projects required as a result of the impact of new housing developments.

- 2.2 The DfE has confirmed that the Council has been allocated High Needs Provision Capital Allocation of £7.015 million in total for 2023/24 (additional £4.987 million) and 2024/25 (£2.028 million). There is currently £6.143 million available to be allocated.
- 2.3 All of the Basic Need capital grant for 2024/25 was allocated to schemes as part of the report presented to Council on 14 May 2024. The Department for Education has confirmed the Council will receive no Basic Need capital grant in 2025/26 and has not confirmed an allocation for 2026/27 onwards.
- 2.4 In July 2024, a report was presented to Cabinet and Council highlighting the shortfall in funding to deliver school places over the medium term and to seek £20.155 million from the Capital Investment Fund to meet the estimated shortfall in funding.
- 2.5 A report to Cabinet and Council in September 2024 used £11.158 million of the approved £20.155 million to provide new primary provision in the Nuneaton North East Planning Area.
- 2.6 The project costs outlined within this report total **£0.976 million** of which **0.788 million** is from the High Needs Capital Grant and **£0.188 million** is from received developer contributions.

Recommendation	Total (£m)	High Needs Capital Grant	S106 Funds Received
Rec 3	£0.400	£0.400	
Rec 4	£0.150	£0.150	
Rec 5	£0.085	£0.085	
Rec 6	£0.081	£0.081	
Rec 7	£0.038		£0.038
Rec 8	£0.072	£0.072	
Rec 9	£0.150		£0.150
Total (£m)	£0.976	£0.788	£0.188

- 2.7 The establishment of resourced provision is part of the strategy to limit the overspend on the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) allowing learners to be placed in more cost-effective provision, and ensuring that, where possible, more learners with an EHCP can be taught alongside, and within, a mainstream school environment.
- 2.8 Increasing the local offer of specialist resourced provision also aims to reduce travel distance and times for the learner subsequently reducing home to school transport expenditure.

- 2.9 Where it is proposed that Developer funding be used towards the costs in this report, Officers from Finance and Infrastructure have verified that the developer funding available can be used for this purpose.

3. Proposals for addition to the 2024/25 Education Capital Programme

Whitestone Infant School, Nuneaton

- 3.1 Current pupil forecasts suggest the Nuneaton South East Primary School Place Planning area, which covers the areas of Whitestone and Attleborough, will start to face a significant pressure in places as approved housing continues to build out.
- 3.2 The majority of the housing development in this area is located within, or adjacent to, the priority area for Whitestone Infant School.
- 3.3 To address the forecast shortfall in pupil places, it was proposed to expand Whitestone Infant School by one form of entry. This would have permanently increased the capacity of the school by 90 places. It should be noted that Whitestone Infant School operated as 4FE prior to pupil numbers starting to decrease in 2007.
- 3.4 A statutory consultation was carried out with key stakeholders between 21st October and 29th November 2024. Details were published in the local press and on the WCC website. Proposals were sent to the parents and carers of pupils at the school, other local schools and democratic representatives in the area. A total of 68 responses were received during the consultation period and a summary of the consultation responses is provided in Appendix 1. 27% of respondents agreed with the proposal and 8% provided a neutral response. 65% of respondents disagreed with the proposal to increase capacity.
- 3.5 Over half the respondents disagreed with the proposal to expand the school to 4FE. The reasons provided were largely focused around highways and the potential impact of the increase in traffic on parking and the safety implications this increase creates for pedestrians. Circa 20% of respondents felt a new school should be provided rather than expanding existing schools and 14% of respondents considered there not enough room on the school site to accommodate the additional children. A summary of the consultation responses is available in Appendix 1.
- 3.6 Of those respondents that agreed with or provided a neutral response to the proposal, just over a third also mentioned concerns relating to the increase in traffic at pick up and drop, the pressure on parking and consideration of walking routes and crossing points. Other reasons in agreement with the proposal included a benefit to the community and the need for more spaces. A summary of the consultation responses is available in Appendix 1.
- 3.7 As highlighted by the consultation responses, WCC recognise that this proposal is likely to have an impact on the highways infrastructure around the

school and the concerns that this presents to local residents. As part of the feasibility process, the project team has engaged with Highways and Road Safety through the pre application. This engagement has included the commissioning of Highways consultants whose ongoing input has included the undertaking of observations and questionnaires of the current use, both on the surrounding public highway and within the school grounds to include parking areas, access and delivery areas. However, the LA requires further information to fully understand potential highways measures and associated costs before being able to present a recommendation to Cabinet members to approve at this stage.

- 3.8 In line with the DfE guidance for 'Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools', the Local Authority must decide a proposal within 2 months of the end of the consultation period. As this will not be possible due to the need for further consideration outlined in paragraph 3.7, Cabinet is asked to not recommend the proposal for approval at the current time until further information from the pre application process can be assessed.

Chetwynd Junior School, Nuneaton

- 3.9 Current pupil forecasts suggest the Nuneaton South East Primary School Place Planning area, which covers the areas of Whitestone and Attleborough, will start to face a significant pressure in places as approved housing continues to build out.
- 3.10 The majority of the housing development in this area is located within, or adjacent to, the priority area for Chetwynd Junior School.
- 3.11 To address the forecast shortfall in pupil places, it was proposed to expand Chetwynd Junior School by one form of entry. This would have permanently increased the capacity of the school by 120 places. It should be noted that the Chetwynd Junior School previously operated at 4FE prior to numbers reducing from 2007.
- 3.12 A 4-week statutory consultation was carried out with key stakeholders between 21st October and 22nd November 2024. Details were published in the local press and on the WCC website. Proposals were sent to the parents and carers of pupils at the school, other local schools and democratic representatives in the area. A total of 64 responses were received during the consultation period and a summary of the consultation responses is provided in Appendix 1. 22% of respondents agreed with the proposal and 14% provided a neutral response. 64% of respondents disagreed with the proposal to increase capacity.
- 3.13 Over half the respondents disagreed with the proposal to expand the school to 4FE. The reasons provided were largely focused around highways and the potential impact of the increase in traffic on parking, traffic management and road safety issues associated with the access to the school through Caroline Close. Almost half of respondents mentioned the increase in traffic and

parking at pick up and drop off and a third mentioned the parking and traffic in Caroline Close and the safety concerns this presents to pupils and parents. Other comments included the need to ensure safe walking routes and crossing points are available and the need for traffic management as a result of the likely increase in traffic and parking. A summary of the consultation responses is available in Appendix 1.

- 3.14 Of those respondents that agreed with or provided a neutral response to the proposal, just under a third recognised that additional school places would be needed as a result of housing in the area. A quarter also commented on the access issues to Chetwynd Junior School through Caroline Close and just under half also highlighted concerns relating to an increase in traffic and the pressure this will put on parking in the area. A summary of the consultation responses is available in Appendix 1.
- 3.15 As highlighted by the consultation responses, WCC recognise that this proposal is likely to have an impact on the highways infrastructure around the school and the concerns that this presents to local residents and parents. As part of the feasibility process, the project team has engaged with Highways and Road Safety through the pre application. This engagement has included the commissioning of Highways consultants whose ongoing input has included the undertaking of observations and questionnaires of the current use, both on the surrounding public highway and within the school grounds to include parking areas, access and delivery areas. However, the LA requires further information to fully understand potential highways measures and associated costs before being able to present a recommendation to Cabinet members to approve at this stage.
- 3.16 In line with the DfE guidance for ‘Making significant changes (‘prescribed alterations’) to maintained schools’, the Local Authority must decide a proposal within 2 months of the end of the consultation period. As this will not be possible due to the need for further consideration outlined in paragraph 3.15, Cabinet is asked to not recommend the proposal for approval at the current time until further information from the pre application process can be assessed.

SEND Minor Capital Works

- 3.17 It is proposed that £0.400 million of the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation is set aside to enable the authority to undertake small scale capital works/alterations as part of establishing SEND resourced provision in schools. This SEND Minor Works Fund could include small scale alterations within academies and maintained schools as well as making adaptations to existing resourced provisions to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the pupils.
- 3.18 The available funding will increase flexibility when undertaking capital projects which require smaller capital expenditure at schools to establish new specialist resourced provision or to adapt existing provision where the need to implement the capital works within a particular time frame will be missed or delayed.

- 3.19 It is proposed that the ability to draw down from the SEND Minor Works fund is delegated to the Executive Director for Children and Young People. This would allow works to be booked in and carried out more promptly, often in line with the school holidays, allowing the new provision to be opened quicker and during an academic year. For the purposes of draw down from the Fund, a scheme will be considered “minor works” if valued at below £70,000. Above that value, schemes would need to go through the usual project governance processes.
- 3.20 Previously established SEND minor works funds have been used to approve and implement up to 17 SEND projects.
- 3.21 There are currently further specialist resourced provisions being explored with primary and secondary academies and maintained settings which could range between £40,000 to £70,000 each to implement. This has helped formulate the SEND minor capital works fund amount of £400,000 which would provide scope for further works if more schools were added to the pipeline between now and July 2025.
- 3.22 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate funding as follows:

High Needs Provision Capital Allocation	£0.400 million
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Queens CofE Academy, Nuneaton

- 3.23 Queens CofE Academy is a three-form entry junior school, with an Ofsted rating of ‘Good’, with 360 places for children aged 7-11 years.
- 3.24 As part of meeting the demand for specialist provision and increasing the local spread of specialist resourced provision it is proposed to establish specialist resourced provision for up to 8 pupils with an EHCP whose primary needs are communication and interaction.
- 3.25 In order to accommodate the specialist resourced provision, it is proposed to remodel an existing large, underutilised classroom area. The redesign will include a calm room, and modifications to the existing kitchenette and WC off the main classroom.
- 3.26 As part of establishing the specialist resourced provision, the academy trust will be required to submit a ‘significant change’ application to the Department for Education for approval.
- 3.27 The cost of these capital works has been estimated at £0.150 million and would be funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.
- 3.28 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate £0.150 million as follows:

High Needs Provision Capital Allocation	£0.150 million
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Woodside CofE Primary School, Baddesley Ensor

- 3.29 Woodside CofE is a one-form entry primary school, with an Ofsted rating of 'Good', with 210 places for children aged 4-11 years.
- 3.30 As part of meeting the demand for specialist provision and increasing the local spread of specialist resourced provision it is proposed to establish specialist resourced provision for up to 8 pupils with an EHCP whose primary needs are communication and interaction.
- 3.31 In order to accommodate the specialist resourced provision, it is proposed to modify a large classroom by repurposing a current storage room within the classroom to create a calm room and installing a new disabled WC and changing facility and a separate toilet area.
- 3.32 As part of establishing the specialist resourced provision, the Academy Trust will be required to submit a 'significant change' application to the Department for Education for approval.
- 3.33 The cost of these capital works has been estimated at £0.085 million and would be funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.
- 3.34 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate £0.085 million as follows:

High Needs Provision Capital Allocation	£0.085 million
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The Nethersole CofE Primary School, Polesworth

- 3.35 The Nethersole CofE is a one-form entry primary school, with an Ofsted rating of 'Requires Improvement', with 315 places for children aged 4-11 years. The school is working towards a 'Good' Ofsted with new headship from April 2024 and a school improvement plan is in progress.
- 3.36 As part of meeting the demand for specialist provision and increasing the local spread of specialist resourced provision it is proposed to establish specialist resourced provision for up to 8 pupils with an EHCP whose primary needs are communication and interaction.
- 3.37 In order to accommodate the specialist resourced provision, it is proposed to remodel an existing large classroom area to create a new toilet, calm room, multi-use room and new partitioning.
- 3.38 As part of establishing the specialist resourced provision, the Academy Trust will be required to submit a 'significant change' application to the Department for Education for approval.
- 3.39 The cost of these capital works has been estimated at £0.081 million and would be funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.

- 3.40 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate £0.081 million as follows:

High Needs Provision Capital Allocation £0.081 million

St Benedict's Catholic High School, Alcester

- 3.41 St Benedict's Catholic is a four-form entry secondary school, with an Ofsted rating of 'Good', with 798 places for children aged 11-18 years.
- 3.42 As part of meeting the demand for specialist provision and increasing the local spread of specialist resourced provision it is proposed to establish specialist resourced provision for up to 20 pupils with an EHCP whose primary needs are communication and interaction.
- 3.43 In order to accommodate the specialist resourced provision, it is proposed to modify the third floor in the existing Sixth Form building which currently consists of three large classrooms, one teaching room and two large science labs. As part of this proposal one science lab will be decommissioned and an office space for staff, a breakout space and two smaller rooms will be repurposed as calm areas.
- 3.44 As part of establishing the specialist resourced provision, the Academy Trust will be required to submit a 'significant change' application to the Department for Education for approval.
- 3.45 The cost of these capital works has been estimated at £0.038 million and would be funded from developer contributions.
- 3.46 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate £0.038 million as follows:

Developer Funding (Agreed and Received) £0.038 million

Boughton Leigh Junior School, Rugby

- 3.47 The specialist resourced provision at Boughton Leigh Junior School, known as "The Launchpad", was established in 2020 as an 8-place provision for pupils with Communication and Interaction Needs (C&I).
- 3.48 In order to continue to meet demand for provision for pupils with an EHCP, it is proposed to increase the number of places available at the specialist resourced provision from 8 to 16.
- 3.49 This can be achieved within the current accommodation with some internal reconfiguration and external refurbishment to create an indoor and outdoor learning environment with associated sensory spaces.

3.50 The cost of these capital works has been estimated at £0.072 million and would be funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.

3.51 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate £0.072 million as follows:

High Needs Provision Capital Allocation	£0.072million
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Wellingtons Day Nursery, Rugby

3.52 Nationally the government-led expansion of funded places for working parents sees all Local Authorities needing to increase early years place sufficiency to meet demand.

3.53 Having recently lost the use of their previous premises, the Nursery plans to purchase a former British Legion building in Long Lawford and refurbish it to enable delivery of nursery provision.

3.54 The work required will include significant internal refurbishment and reconfiguration as well as external works to provide adequate play and parking facilities. It is proposed to contribute £0.150 million of developer funding towards this refurbishment.

3.55 Long Lawford is an attractive village for working families and a high proportion of residents are in work with young families. The request for use of developer funding will support the expansion and creation of new early years and childcare places in this area of need.

3.56 The project will create an additional 69 places for 0-4 year olds in the Long Lawford area.

3.57 The provider will be contributing £0.325 million towards the project themselves.

3.58 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate £0.150 million as follows:

Developer Funding (Agreed and Received)	£0.150 million
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4. Environmental Implications

4.1 The County Council will look to use modern methods of construction to achieve efficiencies and benefits particularly in terms of time, cost, and the environment.

4.2 Environmental risk assessments, together with mitigation statements to reduce any potential environmental impacts, are required for any capital project and will be completed prior to finalisation of scope of works.

- 4.3 All school capital projects are developed in accordance with statutory regulations which include the revised Building Regulations 2021. These regulations include significant improvements to requirements around ventilation, energy efficiency and overheating, electric vehicle charging and other supporting elements. Schools will therefore be built to required standards and are expected to produce lower carbon dioxide omissions compared to previous standards.
- 4.4 As part of the feasibility work on capital projects, net zero options and associated costs have been explored and considered where practicable to do so.
- 4.5 Extensions to existing buildings make environmental improvements a challenge. However, where possible new build elements will be fossil fuel free and will be net zero carbon enabled.
- 4.6 Proposed schemes aim to ensure the sufficiency of, and accessibility to, provision in local settings avoiding the need to travel further afield to access education or childcare provision. The provision and access to local education provision supports the promotion of active travel and the health and wellbeing, economic and environmental benefits this can bring.

5. Supporting Information

- 5.1 None

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Summary of Responses to Consultations

Background Papers

1. Equality Impact Assessment

	Name	Contact Information
Report Author	Emma Basden-Smith, Claire Thornicroft	emmabasdensmith@warwickshire.gov.uk , clairethornicroft@warwickshire.gov.uk
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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Cllr Richard Baxter-Payne; Cllr Caroline Phillips; Cllr Andrew Wright; Cllr Marian Humphreys; Cllr Piers Daniell; Cllr Jill Simpson-Vince; Cllr Heather Timms.

Other members: Chair and Spokespersons of the Resources and Fire and Rescue Overview and Scrutiny Committee & CYP OSC Chair & Spokes.