

Cabinet

6 March 2025

Additions to the Education Capital Programme 2024/2025

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the establishment of specialist resourced provision at Dunnington CofE Primary School and approves the addition to the capital programme of £0.110 million, funded from developer contributions, to deliver the prescribed alterations.
2. Approves the establishment of specialist resourced provision at Boughton Leigh Infant School and approves the addition to the capital programme of £0.090 million, funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation, to deliver the prescribed alterations.
3. Approves the addition to the capital programme of £0.071 million to deliver the capital works at Studley St Mary's CofE Academy, funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.
4. Approves the addition to the capital programme of £0.600 million to the capital programme to deliver Disability Access Capital Works to be funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.
5. Approves the addition to the capital programme of £0.400 million to the capital programme to deliver safeguarding and security capital works, to be funded from the School Condition Allocation.
6. 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 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 24 places in three specialist resourced provisions in primary schools in Rugby and the South of Warwickshire at a total cost of £0.271 million which equates to just over £11,291 per place.
- 1.13 All capital projects are delivered in accordance with Contract Standing Orders and procurement regulations as well as the new Procurement Act 2023 in partnership with Legal and Procurement. They are procured either through WCC 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 multidisciplinary consultants via recognised frameworks/open market and challenge consultant fee bids. The Investment Services team manage RIBA Stage 4-7 and appoint the contractor and provide project oversight alongside the professional team; challenging contractors package prices against budgets allocated and provide Value Management and Value Engineering.
- 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 Capital funding of £7.015 million in total for 2023/24 (additional £4.987 million) and 2024/25 (£2.028 million). There is currently £5.355 million available to be allocated.
- 2.3 The project costs outlined within this report total **£1.271 million** of which **£0.761 million** is from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation, **£0.110 million** is from received developer contributions and **£0.400 million** is from the School Condition Allocation.

| Recommendation | Total (£m) | High Needs Provision Capital | S106 Funds Received | School Condition Allocation |
|----------------|------------|------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| Rec 1 | £0.110 | £0 | £0.110 | £0 |
| Rec 2 | £0.090 | £0.090 | £0 | £0 |
| Rec 3 | £0.071 | £0.071 | £0 | £0 |
| Rec 4 | £0.600 | £0.600 | £0 | £0 |

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|-------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Rec 5 | £0.400 | £0 | £0 | £0.400 |
| Total (£m) | £1.271 | £0.761 | £0.110 | £0.400 |

- 2.4 The establishment of specialist 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.
- 2.5 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.

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

Dunnington CofE Primary School, Stratford on Avon District

- 3.1 Dunnington CofE is a 0.5-form entry primary school, with 105 places for children aged 4-11 years.
- 3.2 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 social, emotional and mental health (SEMH).
- 3.3 In order to accommodate the specialist resourced provision, it is proposed to remodel and refurbishment an existing underutilised classroom to create a calm room, kitchenette area to install an accessible toilet.
- 3.4 A statutory consultation was carried out with key stakeholders between 13th January and 9th February 2025. 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.
- 3.5 A total of 15 responses were received during the consultation period and a summary of the consultation responses is provided in Appendix 1. 60% of respondents agreed with the proposal and 13% provided a neutral response. 27% of respondents disagreed with the proposal.
- 3.6 The respondents not in support of the proposal cited concerns relating to the school's ability to manage and accommodate more children with special educational needs in terms of staff and physical space. If the specialist resourced provision is established the school will receive support and funding from WCC to recruit additional staff to teach in this provision.

- 3.7 Those in agreement with the proposal highlighted the benefits this will have for children with special educational needs and for those that don't in terms of the classroom environment.
- 3.8 The cost of these capital works has been estimated at £0.110 million and would be funded from developer funding.
- 3.9 The developer funding earmarked for use on this scheme has been confirmed as available and the project meets the obligation wording.
- 3.10 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate £0.110 million funded as follows:

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| Developer Funding (Agreed and Received) | £0.110 million |
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Boughton Leigh Infant School, Rugby

- 3.11 Boughton Leigh Infant School is a three-form entry infant school with 270 places for children aged 4-7 years.
- 3.12 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 (C&I).
- 3.13 The establishment of this provision also creates a Key Stage 1 feeder into the already existing C&I specialist resourced provision at the partner junior school, Boughton Leigh Junior School.
- 3.14 In order to accommodate the specialist resourced provision, it is proposed to make modifications to a large classroom to create a calm room and multi-use space. The removal of a wall and installation of a new partition creates a larger classroom with two toilets and a changing facility. Outside, new flooring and a double panelled 5ft fence with gate will be installed with direct access from the SRP classroom.
- 3.15 A statutory consultation was carried out with key stakeholders between 13th January and 9th February 2025. 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.
- 3.16 A total of 17 responses were received during the consultation period and a summary of the consultation responses is provided in Appendix 1. 94% of respondents agreed with the proposal and 6% provided a neutral response. The consultation did not receive any responses disagreeing with the proposal.

3.17 The cost of these capital works has been estimated at £0.090 million and would be funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.

3.18 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate £0.090 million funded as follows:

High Needs Provision Capital Allocation £0.090 million

Studley St Mary's CofE Academy, Studley

3.19 Studley St Mary's CofE Academy is a two-form entry junior school with 240 places for children aged 7-11 years.

3.20 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.

3.21 In order to accommodate the specialist resourced provision, it is proposed to remodel an existing large classroom and a second smaller room to create a multi-purpose space with a calm area. External works will also be carried out to create an outdoor play area.

3.22 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.

3.23 As an academy, if the proposal receives approval for the capital works the Academy Trust will be required to undertake a consultation as part of submitting a request to the DfE to establish the Specialist Resourced Provision. Funding would only be released upon completion of these processes.

3.24 The cost of these capital works has been estimated at £0.071 million and would be funded from the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation.

3.25 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate £0.071 million as follows:

High Needs Provision Capital Allocation £0.071 million

Disability Access Capital Works

3.26 As a public sector organisation, Warwickshire County Council has a legal duty, under the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty, to identify and consider the potential impact in terms of equality.

- 3.27 The Equality Act 2010 requires each Authority to have an accessibility strategy. The Act also requires each school to have their own Accessibility Plan that identifies the requirements of children with additional needs.
- 3.28 Adaptations are required to ensure that pupils with physical disabilities, sensory and/or complex health access needs, are able to access mainstream education and have their specific needs met.
- 3.29 It is proposed that this funding is used when officers are notified that a school requires capital works, for example, the provision of a “changing place” hygiene facility, outdoor ramping, widening of door thresholds, to facilitate access for a specific pupil.
- 3.30 Under the Equality Act there is a duty to make reasonable adjustments to enable access. Whilst some of the projects can have a significant cost, this is offset against a longer-term investment in school access, whilst enabling children and young people to attend their local community school saving on school transport costs.
- 3.31 It is proposed that £0.600 million of the High Needs Provision Capital Allocation is set aside to enable the authority to meet its obligations under the above acts and protocols.
- 3.32 It is proposed that the ability to draw down from the Disability Capital Access Works fund is delegated to the Executive Director for Children and Young People.
- 3.33 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate £0.600 million funded as follows:

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| High Needs Provision Capital Allocation | £0.600 million |
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Safeguarding and Security Capital Works

- 3.34 Most of the existing school estate fencing was erected when schools were first constructed, some being built many decades ago. Currently the Estates Maintenance Grant only covers repairs to existing fencing, it does not cover the upgrading and replacement of fencing if it is deemed inadequate for safeguarding purposes by individual maintained schools and academies.
- 3.35 It is proposed to introduce a phased approach to addressing the safety/security concerns that currently exist across the maintained school estate.
- 3.36 In May 2024, Cabinet approved £0.400 million, funded from Schools Condition Fund. This has helped rectify the fencing and security at seven schools in Warwickshire.

- 3.37 There are a further 36 schools that have been identified with fencing and other security/safety concerns – the total estimated cost of addressing the issues is circa £1.3 million. This list is subject to change as schools convert to academy status and more schools come forward with concerns.
- 3.38 It is proposed to allocate a further £0.400 million of funding from the School Condition Allocation to continue to address inadequate perimeter fencing. Further conversations with Health and Safety and the school effectiveness team will be undertaken to prioritise those schools for 2025/2026 funding.
- 3.39 The Executive Director for Children and Young People will approve the draw down of funding from this allocation in consultation with the Executive Director for Resources.
- 3.40 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposal to allocate £0.400 million funded as follows:

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| School Condition Allocation | £0.400 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.
- 4.3 All school capital projects are developed in accordance with statutory regulations which include the revised Building Regulations 2021. These regulations include significant changes to the regulations around ventilation, energy efficiency and overheating, electric vehicle charging and a number of smaller supporting elements of the regulations. Schools will therefore be built to required standards that are expected to produce lower carbon dioxide emissions 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 |
|--------------------|--|--|
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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s): Cllr Jill Simpson-Vince; Cllr Daren Pemberton; Cllr Justin Kerridge
Other members: Chair and Spokespersons of the CYP Overview & Scrutiny Committee.