

Date:	30 March 2015
Classification:	Open
Title:	School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2015
Report of:	Director of Schools
Cabinet Member Portfolio	Children's Services
Wards Involved:	All
Policy Context:	Theme 2 of the Westminster City Plan 2006-2016 'A better city for children and young people'.
Financial Summary:	Capital expenditure is required to implement the proposals are detailed in the Strategy, funded by external grant and planning obligations
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1. Executive Summary

The School Organisation and Investment Strategy is a key corporate document, contributes to meeting a statutory duty, and informs other Council strategies such as planning policies and asset management plans.

2. Key Matters for the Committee's Consideration

The committee is requested to:

- I. Note the requirement for additional secondary school places.
- II. Note that there is currently an adequate supply of primary school places.

- III. Note the requirement for additional Alternative Provision at primary level which is proposed to be delivered by an extension of the Beachcroft AP School.
- IV. Note that the relocation of St Marylebone Bridge Special School is managed by the Education Funding Agency in partnership with the GLA but may require some capital funding from the Council.
- V. Recommend that the Cabinet Member approves the Strategy and the budget provision to implement its proposals.

3. Background

- 3.1 In Westminster, detailed projections of pupil numbers over the next 10 years are provided by the GLA School Roll Projection Service. Although the methodology is under review, the Service does not include all the factors the Council needs to take into consideration when planning school provision, e.g. residential developments which are not yet formally approved, school preferences and admissions policies.
- 3.2 The school population is projected to increase from 10,945 to 11,792 at primary level (excluding nursery), and from 7,765 to 9,258 at secondary level (excluding sixth form), between 2015 and 2025.
- 3.3 At primary level, 26 of the 41 schools are VA schools, of which 5 are academies or free schools. At secondary level, there are 11 schools, 10 of which are academies and one is a free school. In addition there are two special schools, one special free school, and one alternative provision academy.
- 3.4 Although there is a sufficiency of primary school places, there is a need for more secondary school places. This is a national issue as well as affecting London. In Westminster there are two main reasons for this:
 - I. The expansion of primary school provision during period 2010 to 2014 to meet projected need identified at the time, where pupils are now moving up the system. This reflects the national position.
 - II. Secondary schools are performing strongly, and Westminster is a net 'importer' of over 2,000 pupils. The law prohibits the Council from restricting applications for places to residents of Westminster only.
- 3.5 The Council calculates that there is a need to provide about 400 new secondary school places during the next 10 years, having taken into account the new Marylebone Boys School. This is less than a whole new school (typically at least 600 pupils plus sixth form) but is a city-wide issue, and therefore all existing schools were invited to express an interest in expansion. Four schools (ARK King Solomon Academy, St George's RC School, Westminster City School, and Pimlico Academy) have been selected and work is underway to prepare detailed appraisals and business cases.

3.6 There is a need to provide additional Alternative Provision places at primary level. It is proposed to deliver 12 places at the Beachcroft AP School. In addition, the Council may need to contribute to capital costs associated with the permanent site for the St Marylebone Bridge Special School, which is in temporary accommodation but is expected to re-locate to the former St Marylebone Police Station in a scheme managed by the Education Funding Agency in partnership with the GLA.

4. Financial Implications

4.1 Expansion of existing schools is expected to be more cost effective than building a whole new school, which would exceed the projected need. Each of the four schools are subject to detailed appraisal and cost analysis, but if they proceed are expected to cost c£20M. Costs associated with further Beachcroft AP provision and the St Marylebone Bridge Special School require additional capital.

4.2 The unallocated Basic Need grant for 2015-17 together with previous unspent allocations is £17.7M. No further Basic Need grant has been allocated for 2018. There is a small amount of unallocated s106 contributions of c£1.5M. Further s106 contributions will depend on schemes with planning permission proceeding and is not certain. In order to include Beachcroft AP provision and the St Marylebone Bridge Special School it may therefore be necessary to expand secondary schools on a phased basis until further capital resources become available.

5. Legal Implications

5.1 There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

If you have any queries about this Report or wish to inspect any of the Background Papers please contact: Alan Wharton, email awharton@westminster.gov.uk, tel: 020 7641 2911

Appendices

1. School Organisation and Investment Strategy 2015

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None