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## **1. Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This short paper provides an update to the full [School Organisation and Investment Strategy](#) (SOIS) published in February 2019. The key focus, as set out in the full report, is the sufficiency, or otherwise, of primary and secondary mainstream school provision across the borough. The key issues for Westminster are to address the surplus in primary provision and the increasing demand in secondary provision.

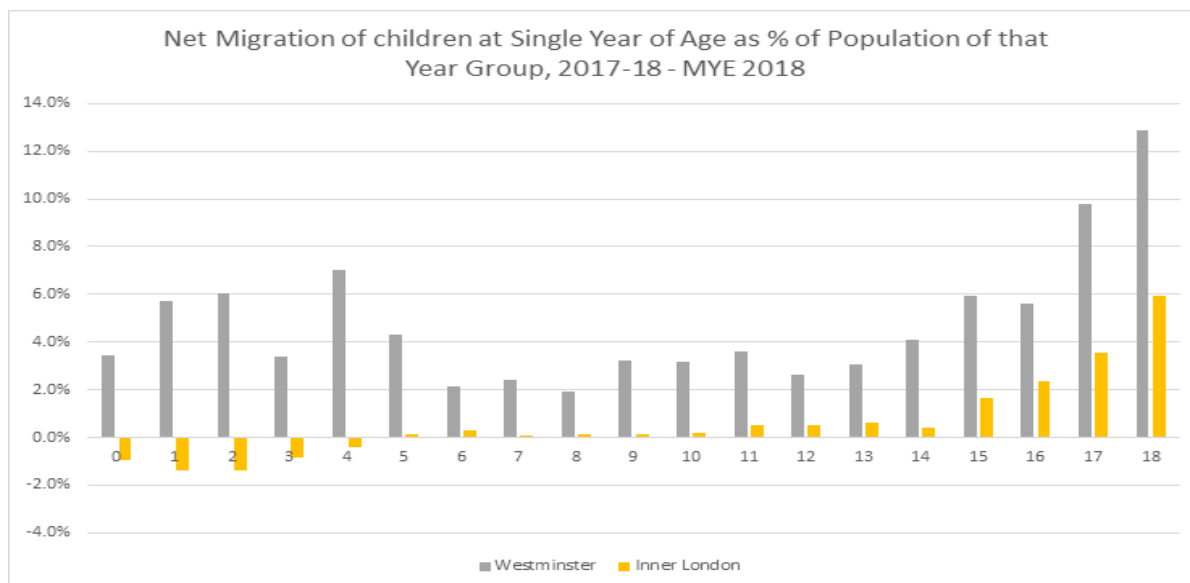
## **2. Background**

- 2.1 The Greater London Authority's (GLA) School Roll Projections (SRP) help ensure that the number of places available are planned in a timely and measured way so that the Council can meet its statutory duty to ensure sufficiency of places. The GLA projections do not take account of proposed regeneration or major development schemes which do not have planning permission, or the movement of children from the independent sector into state-funded schools.
- 2.2 Westminster continues to be a net importer of pupils from other boroughs. This is a key factor when considering our legal obligation to ensure there is sufficiency of school places that are accessible to resident families. Assessing the sufficiency, whether this be surplus or demand, must take account of the availability of school places, or lack of them, in neighbouring boroughs.

- 2.3 The number of places available in local schools exceeds the number of resident applicants across both primary and secondary state school provision, indicating at first sight that Westminster can satisfy its statutory duty to provide a place for every child who needs one in its area. However, the GLA projections indicate that demand for secondary places will create a deficit by 2023/24. Whilst this deficit is projected to decline slightly, it does not take account of major regeneration, such as that proposed for the Church Street area.
- 2.4 The DfE recommends that local authorities maintain between 5 to 10% spare capacity to allow for the flexibility to accommodate new arrivals to the area that require a school place. In Westminster the primary sector reports an overall surplus of 14.5% across the borough (with temporary caps on admissions in some schools, by agreement with the headteacher). In secondary, there is currently no surplus with a 2% deficit forecast by 2023/24. This paper addresses both primary and secondary provision in turn.

### **3. Migration and Impact on Pupil Population**

- 3.1 Migration of population is a key factor for the drop in demand seen at primary level across Westminster, and London in general, and the increase in demand for secondary school places, particularly for in-year.
- 3.2 The following quote is provided by the GLA - 'The general London picture is of a moderate drop in births since the peak in 2012; a continued increase in domestic migration of families out of London that is now back to levels similar to or above what we saw before the financial crisis; and a fall in international inflows of children'. All are contributing to the recent drop in demand for primary places across the city. For Westminster there is the added factor of housing costs, benefit changes and changing cross-border flows from out-borough.
- 3.3 The following key facts are all relevant to the impact on school pupil population, current and projected, and are based on Migration Mod Year data 2017-18.
- Office of National Statistics (ONS) data suggests that the overall impact of migration of 0-18's, Westminster gained over 2,000 children (or 4.7%) of the population base.
  - Westminster and Inner London all lose children to the rest of the UK, and all gain children from international migration.
  - Migration overall - in Inner London – there is a loss of under 5's and a small gain in all ages up to the end of primary school, and then larger gains of children up to age 18.
  - Migration overall in Westminster – there is a gain in all age groups, especially high in under 6's and over 13's. By 18 year olds, one single year of net migration has added around 13% to the base population.



#### 4. Primary School Provision

- 4.1 Each primary school will have a **Published Admission Number (PAN)** that derives from each school's capacity. Even though a fixed figure is published, local factors can allow schools to increase or reduce their PAN. The former requires local agreement with the maintaining local authority (or consultation with the local authority if the school is an academy). The latter requires either a temporary measure to be put in place such as capping – or a formal public consultation if a permanent reduction is to be made. Capping a PAN for year groups is an approach agreed for schools with significant falling rolls.
- 4.2 There are currently formal agreements in place with schools to cap admission numbers either across the whole school, or for particular year groups that are experiencing a falling roll. Discussions are ongoing between the Council, Schools, governing bodies and the respective diocese to look at creative but realistic options to address falling rolls.

#### 5. Falling Rolls and permanent reductions in primary published admission numbers

- 5.1 In May 2019, 9,662 pupils were enrolled in Westminster primary schools; this is a decrease of 4% compared with the rolls returned in May 2018.

Primary	May-19 Total	May-18 Total	Difference
Total	9, 662	10,073	-411

- 5.2 Since the publication of the 2018 SOIS, proposed and agreed permanent PAN reductions have been subject to official Variations via the Office of the Schools Adjudicator.
- 5.3 Permanent reductions of primary school capacity since 2018 are represented as follows:

School Name	Previous PAN	New PAN	Previous School Capacity	New School Capacity
<b>Ark Paddington Green</b>	60	30	420	210
<b>Burdett Coutts</b>	54	30	378	210
<b>Hallfield</b>	90	60	630	420
<b>Minerva</b>	56	0	392	0
<b>Wilberforce</b>	60	30	420	210

- 5.4 In total almost 6 forms of entry have been removed from primary provision since September 2018 to address the increasing surplus. This equated to 1,190 places.
- 5.5 **Ark Paddington Green** will formally close on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2019. Pupils from Nursery to Year 4 will be enrolled to **King Solomon Academy** and remain on the same Crompton Street site now referred to as the Younger Years site. The Older Years site at Penfold Street houses pupils from Year 5 to 13.
- 5.6 **Burdett Coutts CE Primary School** will formally reduce from a PAN of 54 to 30 with effect from September 2019. This PAN will apply across all year groups. The school has been operating at 50% below its official PAN for two years with no prospect of increasing in numbers based on School Roll Projections (SRP). The Council has offered assistance to the school to let the space not required for teaching purposes.
- 5.7 **Hallfield Primary School** formally reduced the PAN across all year groups with effect from September 2018.
- 5.8 **Minerva Academy** was part of the REAch2 multi-academy trust. The DfE approved the school closure from July 2018. The school was located on a temporary site since its opening in 2012 and was significantly below capacity.
- 5.9 **Wilberforce Academy** has formally reduced their PAN from 60 to 30 with effect from September 2019 across all year groups. As above, the school has been operating at 50% below PAN for some time. The Council has agreed with the School that it will consolidate its operations into one building and relinquish half

of the site, enabling the Council and DfE to construct a new special free school (St Marylebone Bridge).

## 6. Capping of Year Groups

- 6.1 Capping the admission number of specific year groups has become the strategic approach used by many councils to address a growing surplus of places in primary schools. This temporary measure is put in place to allow a school to review the delivery of required resources, remain financially viable, and to continue to deliver high quality education to pupils. Capping of year groups is an agreement between the Council and the School. The capping approach was in place for Burdett Coutts and Wilberforce prior to the decision to permanently reduce the PAN. Capping may not always result in a permanent reduction and is dependent on several factors.
- 6.2 In areas where there are known regeneration plans for new housing, but these have not yet been formally approved, a permanent reduction to a PAN is unlikely. Other creative measures are often put in place to utilise space within the school whilst caps are in place, particularly if they are to be long term.
- 6.3 A rebuild and expansion of **Christ Church Bentinck CE School** from a 1FE to 2FE, which was agreed in 2012 when there was a need for more primary places, is an example of a school that is currently experiencing a falling roll, but is located in an area of future regeneration. The Church Street masterplan covers the largest regeneration area in Westminster. Whilst the additional places are not currently required, to reduce the PAN of this school permanently is not a realistic option. The school is currently operating as a 1FE. The school is using the surplus space as an additional resource, which will be relinquished when the demand for new pupil places materialises.
- 6.4 Further caps from a two to one form entry are in place at **St Edward's CE School** in current Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, and **Pimlico Primary Academy** in Year 5. There are no plans to permanently reduce the PAN for either school at the time of preparing this paper.
- 6.5 The Education & Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) guidance advises that falling rolls funding should only be granted where schools will revert back to original numbers for the schools within 3 years. Westminster's current process agreed by the Schools' Forum is that funding should relate to fall in roll numbers of more than 5% year on year. The Schools' Forum, at the meeting on 21st January 2019, agreed to create a Fund for schools with falling rolls of £0.347m from the 2019/20 schools block of the DSG. The agreed criteria for the falling rolls fund agreed by the Schools Forum on 26<sup>th</sup> March 2019 is shown below:
- Schools must meet the OFSTED criteria of good or outstanding to qualify (mandatory criteria).
  - Schools with less than 5% reduction do not qualify. The first 5% of the roll reduction will not be funded.

- Funding will be pegged at 80% of the Age Weighted Pupil Unit (AWPU) rate for each sector.
- Schools with former bulge classes where rolls are reducing as expected do not qualify.
- Schools with balances above the following levels do not qualify – primary 8% and secondary 5% (based on balances at 31.03.19)
- Allocations are limited to a maximum of one year only.

6.6 All schools that were eligible for funding on the basis of the above criteria were required to submit a case supporting the use of the funding in 2019/20. This included examination of balances, whether schools need the additional funding and what actions they are taking to restructure and deal with the reducing numbers of pupils.

## 7. Primary Reception Application Trends

7.1 The number of applications that are submitted each year for a Reception school place is a key indicator to a change in trends. The following tables show the application and trends for the previous three years. For 2019 a slight increase in resident numbers is shown compared to the previous year.

Year of Entry	Reception Total Places Available*	Resident Application Cohort	Total Preferences Submitted**	Vacancies Remaining After Offers
2019	1589	1158	3400	313
2018	1710	1136	3579	356
2017	1752	1236	4200	367

\*Total Places Available takes account of capping.

\*\*Applicants can name up to six schools. This figure represents the total preferences for schools located in each borough.

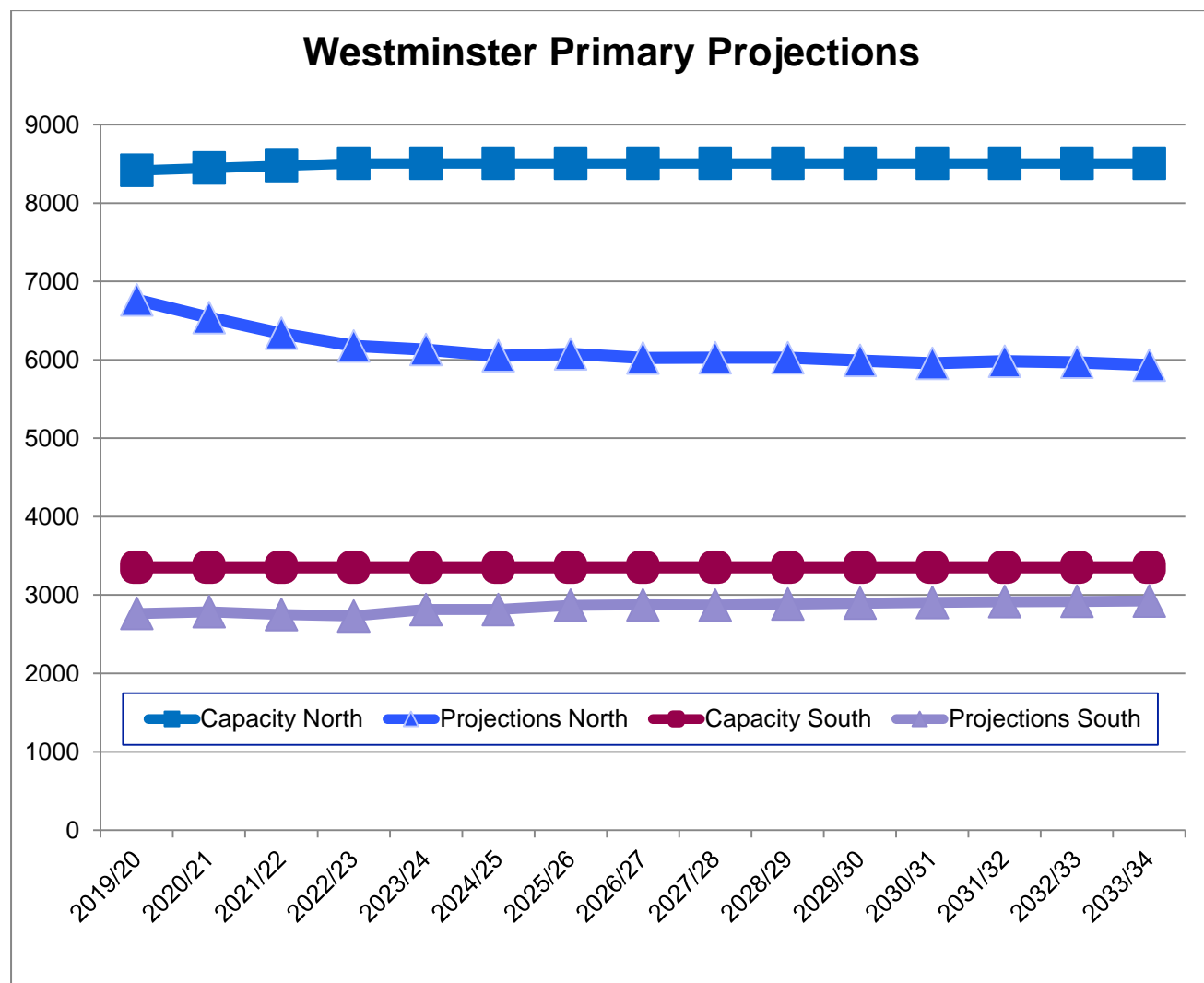
7.2 **Vacancies Remaining After Offers** is the figure before the allocation of 'alternative offers' is made. The LA has a duty to provide an offer to all its resident applicants if they are not successful in gaining a school of preference<sup>1</sup>. After the allocation of places, the surplus reduces to 17% with the majority in the north of the borough.

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<sup>1</sup>. If the local authority is unable to offer a place at one of the parents' preferred schools it **must**, if there are places available, offer a place at another school.

## 8. Primary Projections

- 8.1 Westminster Pupil Place projections are divided into two planning areas for primary school place planning purposes – North (N) and South (S). The PANs represent the number of places that will be available in each year and is indicated in the below table as the capacity. There are minimal changes to the projections as reported in the SOIS 2018 report.



## 9. Secondary School Provision

- 9.1 As outlined in the full SOIS 2018 report, the majority of Westminster schools are high performing and popular, with the geographical location of many making the school a popular and local choice for residents in neighbouring boroughs. This historical trend results in over-subscribed schools and 'first choice' outcomes being reduced. Admissions law prevents the Council being able to restrict applications from residents outside the borough from applying

to its schools<sup>2</sup>. In addition, many schools are academies or free schools and have greater autonomy over admissions policy. Consequently, the Council has limited influence or control over their admissions policies.

- 9.2 Westminster is a net 'importer' with 46% imports compared to 22% exported to other boroughs. Between 75% and 80% of Westminster residents choose to send their child to a Westminster secondary school at the first point of entry (Year 7). This trend has been consistent for many years. The Council must take account of the import trends when looking at place planning and ensure it is still able to meet its legal obligation to its residents.

## 10. Increasing Capacity at Secondary Level

- 10.1 Expansion is often the more cost-effective option to provide additional school places as opposed to the high cost of building new schools, particularly when dealing with changing levels of demand and scarcity of land. The Council has completed Phase 1 of the expansion programme with additional places offered at Westminster City Boys and St George's RC School for the September 2018 entry. With effect from September 2019, Ark King Solomon Academy, which is in Phase 2, offered an additional 30 places for the Year 7 entry, which will deliver a further 150 places by 2023. A further 30 places were offered at the new Marylebone Boys school in September 2019 with the proposal to increase the capacity of the school permanently to accommodate an extra form of entry (from 4FE to 5FE). This is an inexpensive option that will see the vacated primary Minerva Academy free school site at Paddington Basin to accommodate the Marylebone sixth form.
- 10.2 The potential expansion of Pimlico Academy is still being considered. Discussion with Future Academies, the sponsor of Pimlico Academy, are at an early stage.
- 10.3 In May 2019, 8,679 pupils were enrolled in Westminster secondary schools; this is an increase of 3.6% compared with the rolls returned in May 2018.

Secondary	May-19 Total	May-18 Total	Difference
<b>Total</b>	8,679	8,361	+318

<sup>2</sup> R v Greenwich London Borough Council, ex parte John Ball Primary School (1989) 88 LGR 589 [1991] Fam Law



## 11. Secondary Admission Trends

- 11.1 The number of applications that are submitted each year for a secondary school place is a key indicator to a change in trends. The following tables show the application and trends for the previous three years.

Year of Entry	Total Places Available Based on PAN	Resident Application Cohort	Total Preferences Submitted*	Vacancies Remaining After Offers
2019	1707	1140	6910**	0
2018	1707	1163	7434	0
2017	1657	1150	7319	0

*\*Applicants can name up to six schools. This figure represents the total preferences for schools located in each borough.*

*\*\* King Solomon Academy was not included in Pan London Coordination for 2019 as no external places are available for parents to apply. The school had been included in previous years and received in excess of 400 preferences. The decision was made to remove following advice from the DfE.*

- 11.2 Irrespective of the high imports to Westminster schools, which is common for many inner London boroughs at the secondary phase, the Council has a legal responsibility to ensure its residents have access to a school place within a reasonable traveling distance. Even though some Westminster residents choose not to apply to schools where they could be offered a place, the duty remains to offer residents a school place on 1 March, National Offer Day (NOD) if it is able to do so. It is at this point in the process that the Council has had insufficient capacity and is the underlying reason why the expansion of schools is necessary. Each year, Westminster schools will often offer above their PAN on National Offer Day to accommodate as many unplaced residents as they are able to.
- 11.3 All Westminster secondary schools are their own admissions authority (Voluntary Aided and Academies). As such the decision to offer above PAN rests with the School/Governing Body. The Council however will seek support from schools that can offers places to residents unsuccessful in their choice of school(s). Marylebone Boys and Westminster Academy absorbed 40+ unplaced residents soon after NOD for the 2019 admission entry.

- 11.4 Schools with agreed growth in pupil numbers of at least half a form of entry, usually due to planned expansion and building works, will be allocated funding via the school funding formula. Other increases will be funded from January after the October pupil count. The Schools' Forum is considering allocating some of the DSG reserves for schools which have taken additional Westminster pupils to meet basic need requirements.

For the **2019 entry** offers made on NOD are follows:

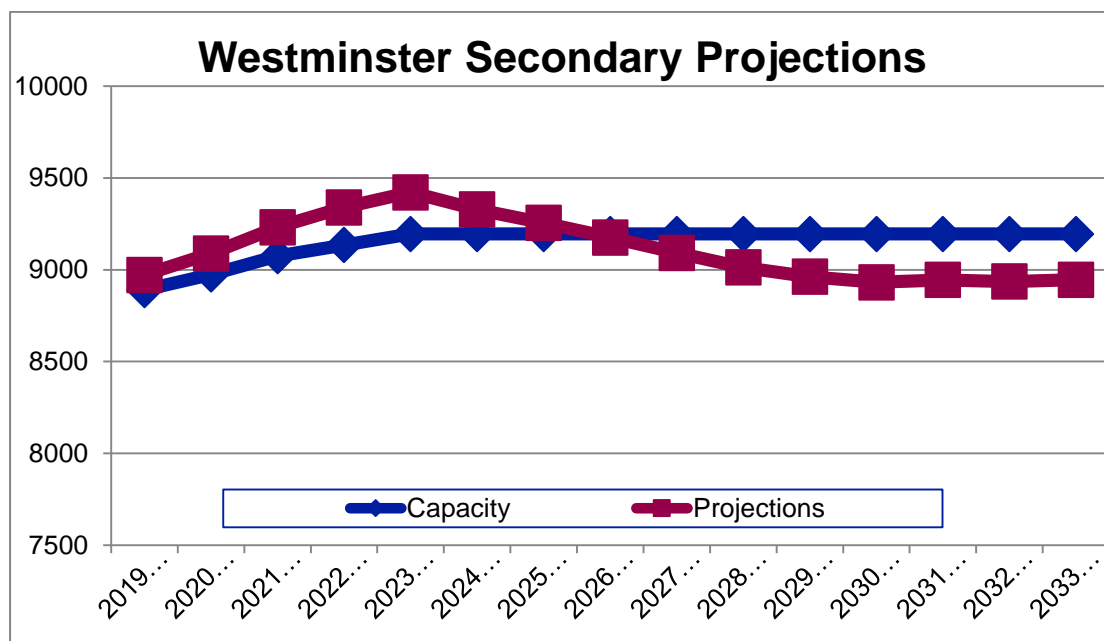
School	Published Admissions Number PAN	Offers made on NOD
Ark King Solomon Academy	0*	0*
Grey Coat Hospital	151	151
Harris Academy St John's Wood	210	210
Marylebone Boys' School	120	150
Paddington Academy	180	180
Pimlico Academy	210	210
St. Augustine's CofE High School	168	168
St. George's Catholic School	180	210
St. Marylebone CofE School	168	168
Westminster Academy	180	240
Westminster City School	150	150
	<b>1717</b>	<b>1837</b>

*\*King Solomon Academy is an all-through school so Year 6 pupils transfer through to Year 7. This school is therefore not part of the Pan London Coordinated Admissions process.*

- 11.5 The majority of resident applicants that were not successful with their choice of school, were allocated a school on NOD or soon after. Whilst not all applicants will accept the offer made to them, the statutory duty of the Council could be met in providing a school place.
- 11.6 Since NOD there has been movement which is always expected between March and the start of the Autumn term, as pupils that have been offered opt to accept places in the independent sector instead, or move out of the local area. Mobility will release places to accommodate new arrivals to the area. Between August and throughout September approximately 40-60 new Year 7 applications will be submitted.

## 12. Secondary Projections

- 12.1 Westminster's secondary projections are provided as one planning area for secondary school place planning purposes. The PANs represent the number of places that will be available in each year and is indicated in the below table as the capacity. There are minimal changes to the projections as reported in the SOIS 2018 report.



### 13. Conclusion

- 13.1 Due to the current surplus of primary school places, the Council will continue to work with the diocesan authorities and academy sponsors as well as community schools to identify opportunities to make more effective use of the school portfolio and to use resources, including staffing, in the most efficient way.
- 13.2 The Council is obliged to make additional provision for secondary places in order to fulfil its statutory duty. The completed expansion programme to date, the proposed expansion of Marylebone Boys School, and the Ark King Solomon Academy expansion all help to meet this requirement.