

Update on the organisational change in Leicestershire schools

1. This update provides information about the current changes in Leicestershire with regard, in particular, to academies and age range changes. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee previously considered, on 9 September 2013 the evolving educational system in Leicestershire, particularly the impact of Academies, Age range changes, and the challenges faced by the local authority in relation to meeting future demand for school places in the context of the legislative change. The following paragraphs provide for Elected members an overview of the current position.

Overall school demand and capacity

4. The current number on roll in Leicestershire schools (including academies) is 94,271. This equates to 50,412 pupils in primary schools, 42,858 in secondary schools and 1001 in special schools. Overall in the last academic year the number of primary pupils rose by 929 (1.9%), and in secondary schools the number of pupils decreased by 113 (0.3%).
5. There are currently 7695 (17.95%) places available in Secondary Schools and 3942 (7.82%) places available in Primary Schools. The number of available places in secondary schools has increased over the last year as a consequence of further age range changes and the opening of a further Studio School. Further secondary places may be added where academies bid direct to government for funding to support their expansion as popular and successful schools. In contrast the number of available places in primary schools has remained relatively stable.
6. To meet the forecast increase in primary age pupils there are plans to increase the number of primary places by 1482 in 2015/16 with a further 660 (including 210 for the Braunstone/LFE new primary school) proposed for 2016/17.
7. The additional places will be funded from the three year (2014/17) Basic Need capital allocation of £54.9million, allocated to the LA by the DfE. This will ensure that the priorities for the development of additional school places set out in the strategy (entitled 'In the Right Place - Strategy for the provision of school and other learning places in Leicestershire 2014/18) approved by the Cabinet on 19 November 2014, can be delivered and that there is a sufficient supply of school places, in the right locations at the time they are needed. A copy of the Strategy may be accessed via the following link http://www.leics.gov.uk/index/education/information_about_schools/school_organisation_place_planning/strategy.htm A refreshed version will be published in the next few weeks to reflect the latest demographic and other data.

Academy Conversions

8. The majority of secondary schools (90%), and a significant proportion (41%) of primary schools, have now converted to academy status. Overall there are now 144 academies, representing 51% of the 284 schools in Leicestershire. This figure includes 6 primary and 1 secondary sponsored academies, with a further potential, 1 primary and 3 secondary sponsored conversions during the summer.

9. Over the course of the last twelve months the number of schools seeking academy status has almost ceased, schools now progressing conversion are predominantly those directed to academy sponsorship by the DfE. It is noticeable that there has been a significant shift in the DfE position regarding academy approvals, with the majority of schools being strongly encouraged to join Multi Academy Trusts (MAT's) rather than be stand-alone converters. This has led to several expanding MAT's developing in Leicestershire (some having up to 10 academies).
10. The slowing of academy conversions is in part believed to be attributable to the growing number of Teaching Alliances and collaboratives in Leicestershire, which has provided for schools an alternative strong network of support without some of the perceived restrictions of academy conversion.
11. The table below provides a summary by District of the current position for maintained schools and academies;

	Primary Academies	Maintained Primaries	Secondary Academies	Maintained Secondaries	Special School Academies	Maintained Special School	TOTAL
Blaby	10	16	4	0	0	0	30*
Charnwood	29	19	9	5	0	2	64
Harborough	11	24	6	0	0	0	41
Hinckley & Bosworth	12	21	12	0	1	0	46
Melton	17	8	3	0	0	1	29
North West Leics	6	37	7	0	1	0	51
Oadby & Wigston	8	6	7	0	1	0	22
TOTALS	93	131	48	5	3	3	283*

*The figures exclude Oakfield Short Stay School within Blaby District

Age Range Changes

12. Coupled to the academies agenda, many schools have subsequently sought approval from the Education Funding Agency (EFA) to progress age range changes to give either 4-11, 11-16 or 11-19 status. So far 22 secondary schools and 7 primary schools have received approval to do so. It is known that there are a further 16 secondary and 25 primary schools (as part of the removal of the 10+ system – see below) are considering a change of age range for September 2016 or September 2017.
13. From 2014, for academy age range changes, the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) now acts as the decision maker on behalf of the Secretary of State. Under changes introduced to the School Organisation Regulations in January 2014, maintained schools may now propose and consult upon an age range change. However they are required to seek agreement from the Local Authority as the decision maker in order to implement any proposals.
14. The strategy for the provision of school places agreed by the Cabinet states that the LA will seek to support opportunities to address structural change to the

pattern of education, where there is clear local demand from parents, a robust case for change based on improving outcomes and partnership working between schools, and where in terms of capital funding this can be linked to basic need requirements in the locality.

15. The net effects of age range changes has been to significantly enhance the diversity and choice in our schools, but at the same time within the secondary sector, introducing also an element of competition, this is expected to help promote improved standards, but also introduce a challenge in the medium term of sustainability for some schools.
16. The table below provides information regarding the current position for age range changes for secondary schools within each District.

School Name	Date of Change
Wreake Valley College – 11-19 No change required	
De Lisle Catholic – 11-19 No change required	
Long Field School	2008
John Ferneley College	2008
Belvoir High School and Melton Vale Post 16 Centre	2008
Humphrey Perkins School	2013
Martin High School Academy	2013
Woodbrook Vale School	2013
Limehurst Academy	2013
Rawlins Community College	2013
South Wigston High School Academy	2013
Saint Martin's Catholic Voluntary Academy	2014
South Charnwood High School	2014
Bosworth Academy	2014
Winstanley Community College Academy Trust	2014
Market Bosworth School	2014
*Mount Grace High School Academy Trust	2015
*John Cleveland College	2015
Lutterworth High School Academy Trust	2015
The Roundhill Academy	2015
Hastings High School	2015
Lutterworth College	2015
Brockington College	2015
Redmoor High School Academy Trust	2015
Kibworth High School & Community Technology College	2015
**Charnwood College (High & Upper) (Subject to DfE approval)	2015
***Longslade Community College (Subject to DfE approval)	2015
***The Stonehill High School (Subject to DfE approval)	2015
The Robert Smyth Academy	2016
Welland Park Academy	2016

Guthlaxton College Wigston	2016
****Bushloe High School	2016
****Abington Academy	2016
****Countesthorpe Community College (Awaiting DfE approval)	2016
****Leysland High School (Awaiting DfE approval)	2016
Thomas Estley Community College (Awaiting DfE approval)	2016
Gartree High School Oadby (Consulting)	2016/17
Manor High School Oadby (Consulting)	2016/17
The Beauchamp College (Consulting)	2016/17
Castle Donington College (Awaiting DfE approval)	2016/17
Shepshed High School	2016/17
Hind Leys Community College	2016/17
Newbridge High School	No Change
The Heathfield Academy	No Change
Ibstock Community College	No Change
King Edward VII Science and Sport College	No Change
Ivanhoe College Ashby-De-La-Zouch	No Change
Castle Rock High School	No Change
Brookvale High School Groby	No Change
Groby Community College	No Change
William Bradford Community College	No Change
Ashby School	No Change

Removal of 10+ system

17. There are four Leicestershire areas where schools still operate on a 10+ system i.e. primary schools are designated 4 to 10 years, and pupils will only attend to the end of year 5, before transferring to a secondary school for key Stage 2 statutory tests. These areas including Shepshed, Castle Donington, Wigston, and Oadby are therefore out of step with provision elsewhere in Leicestershire.
18. Although pupil performance will vary between schools, at a national level there is evidence that they will achieve better when statutory tests are taken in a primary rather than secondary setting. Locally, the disparity of the school system is also seen as a source of confusion for parents, and challenge when pupils transfer schools, particularly so where they may seek a place in a school outside of the local area.
19. In giving approval to the strategy for school place planning, the Cabinet have agreed the inclusion of a further priority to address the removal of the 10+ system in the four remaining Leicestershire areas subject to there being strong local demand for change, evidence that this will lead to improved outcomes and a more sustainable pattern of education, and the necessary approvals of the Department for Education (RSC) where the change involves academies.
20. To progress these changes will require careful financial planning in order to identify sufficient capital for additional classrooms in certain primary schools.

The Strategy for school places specifically states (Key priority 5), that the allocation of basic needs capital is specifically for the development of additional school places arising as a consequence of increased births and general demographic change. To ensure the appropriate use of capital funding, therefore requires that there will also be basic need growth evident in a 10+ schools area (as age range changes alone will not normally create additional places).

21. Provision has subsequently been agreed in the 2015/16 basic need capital programme approved by the Cabinet on 6 February for the removal of the 10+ system in the Wigston area (as this is linked to changes to the secondary schools and development of the replacement Birkett House Special School). The draft capital programme for 2016/17 currently includes provision for the removal of the 10+ system in the remaining three areas of Shepshed, Castle Donington, and Oadby.

New Schools

22. Work has recently commenced to invite expressions of interest from Academy proposers to operate the new 210 place (4-11 years) primary school to serve the Braunstone Town and Leicester Forest East areas. The school, to be built on land owned by the LA on Holmfield Avenue West, is expected to open in September 2016. Cabinet will be asked to make a decision on a preferred Academy proposer in June, prior to seeking a final decision from the Secretary of State.
23. Plans are also progressing to enable a move and expansion for the Holliers Walk Primary in Hinckley, to be developed on the Mount Grace High site (Mount Grace will move and merge with John Cleveland College in summer 2015). The expanded 630 place primary school will help meet the growing demand for primary places in Hinckley and is expected to open in September 2016.
24. The new Studio School in Lutterworth, The Sir Frank Whittle Studio School opened in September 2014, and compliments the existing two studio schools in Coalville (Sept 2011) and Hinckley (Oct 2012). Studio Schools are designed for 14-19 year olds of all abilities. They are generally small schools, working closely with local employers, to offer a range of academic and vocational qualifications, as well as paid work placements linked directly to employment opportunities in the local area.
25. Discussions are in progress regarding the development of several primary and secondary schools on the proposed Sustainable Urban Expansions(SUE's), in particular those for North East of Leicestershire (Barkby and Thurmaston) and Lubbethorpe. There is no specific date agreed yet for the development of these schools the first perhaps being constructed for 2017/18.

Development of the replacement Special School for Wigston

26. There are plans for Abington and Bushloe academies to merge in the summer to form a single 11-16 school as part of the Wigston Academies Trust. It is expected that Guthlaxton College will also join the MAT at the same time, as a post 16 provider. The proposals will require significant reconfiguration of the

campus, for which a masterplan has been developed. As part of the masterplan it has been agreed with the respective governors (whom hold the freehold for a large proportion of the site) that the LA will construct the replacement Birkett House Special School on the campus. It is planned that the new school will open in September 2017.

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