

Cabinet – 16 December 2009

Provision of Secondary School places in 2019

Portfolio:	Councillor Walker, Children's services
Service:	Walsall Children's Services - Serco
Wards:	All but especially Birchills Leamore, Short Heath and Brownhills
Key decision:	No
Forward plan:	Yes

1. Summary of report

The report advises Cabinet of the planned provision of secondary school places in 2019 in Walsall as agreed with Partnership for Schools (PfS) as part of the requirements for the Building Schools for the Future Programme and sets out proposals for changes in the supply of school places. These proposed changes will ensure we have the right number of schools with the right number of places across the borough until 2019 and beyond.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes the schedule of secondary school places as set out in **Appendix A** of this report.
- 2.2 That Cabinet notes the challenges that are likely to arise as a result of the requirements set out by Partnerships for Schools with regard to the schedule.
- 2.3 That Cabinet approves consultation on the proposal to significantly enlarge Frank F Harrison Engineering College by increasing the admission number from 180 to 240 from 1 September 2014.
- 2.4 That Cabinet approves consultation on the proposal to significantly enlarge Pool Hayes Arts and Community School by increasing the admission number from 213 to 240 from 1 September 2016.

3. Background information

- 3.1 As part of the planning work for the Building Schools for the Future Programme, Walsall is required to produce forecasts of secondary pupil numbers and to make changes to the supply of secondary school places in order to ensure that criteria specified by Partnerships for Schools are met.

PUPIL NUMBER FORECASTS

- 3.2 Details of forecast numbers for the secondary sector through to 2015 were considered by Cabinet on 16 September 2009 as part of a report on the Supply of School Places. That data was produced earlier in the summer in line with the guidance issued by the Department for Children, Schools and Families; this guidance differed significantly from the guidance issued by Partnerships for Schools, for example, academies were excluded.
- 3.3 In the intervening period, extensive additional work has been undertaken in order to produce forecasts in line with the requirements of Partnerships for Schools. Details of births for 2008 became available, and these together with updated information about admissions to secondary schools in September 2009 and associated trends in the admissions, cross-border pupil movements, cohort survival, and housing developments were factored in to the new projections which are for the 2019/20 academic year.
- 3.4 Details of the forecast numbers of secondary school pupils for the years to 2019/20 are set out in Table 1 below. This data includes all pupils in maintained secondary schools and academies in Walsall.

Table 1: Forecast pupil numbers 2010/11 to 2019/20

School Year	Number of pupils			
	Year 7 Admissions	Years 7 - 11	Post 16	Total
2010/11	3,449	17,414	3,508	20,992
2011/12	3,488	17,459	3,462	20,921
2012/13	3,326	17,330	3,476	20,806
2013/14	3,344	17,158	3,572	20,730
2014/15	3,453	17,120	3,665	20,785
2015/16	3,484	17,155	3,708	20,863
2016/17	3,619	17,286	3,709	20,994
2017/18	3,774	17,726	3,639	21,364
2018/19	3,576	17,944	3,567	21,511
2019/20	3,720	18,192	3,633	21,825

- 3.5 Table 1 shows that admissions to secondary schools and academies are forecast to increase to 3,488 in 2011/12 followed by a period of lower admissions and then to increase to 3,774 by 2017/18, with a dip of approximately 200 in the following year and an increase to 3,720 in 2019/20. This complex pattern will be challenging to manage and will present particular issues in 2017/18 when there will be particular pressure on Year 7 school places.
- 3.6 During this same period, the total number of pupils on roll in Year 7 to Year 11 will increase slightly from 17,414 in 2010/11 to 17,459 in 2011/12 and then fluctuate at a lower level until 2017/18 when a significant increase to 17,726 is forecast, after which numbers are projected to continue to increase to 2019/20.

These trends reflect the admission of larger cohorts to Year 7 over several years and smaller cohorts transferring from Year 11.

- 3.7 Young people in Walsall access a wide range of provision at age 16 including school sixth forms, Walsall College and other FE colleges in neighbouring authorities, and also apprenticeships and work based learning. This diversity is a strength enabling young people to access provision appropriate to their needs.
- 3.8 As a result of the raising of the participation age, 100% of the 16-18 cohort will be required to participate in learning after 2015 in either school settings, FE settings, or work based learning including apprenticeships. The government's target is that 1 in 5 learners will be doing an apprenticeship by 2020. Given the uncertainties about the economic climate in the medium term, this target may be overambitious and a target of 15% by 2018/19 may be more appropriate for Walsall. The forecasts for post16 pupil numbers reflect the transition to this and of those in full time education, it is projected that 65% (ie 55% of the cohort) will be in school sixth forms and 35% (ie 30% of the cohort) will attend FE colleges.

PROPOSED SUPPLY OF SCHOOL PLACES

- 3.9 Over the summer and autumn there have been various discussions with representatives from Partnerships for Schools regarding the appropriate provision of school places in Walsall. The funding Walsall will receive through the Building Schools for the Future Programme for the Wave 6a schools is based upon the number of pupils that are forecast to be on roll at those schools in 2019/20. In order to ensure that capital resources are used most effectively to secure educational transformation, Partnership for Schools expects that funding will not be used to fund the provision of places that are not required or could be considered surplus. Officers developed proposals for the supply of school places based upon the Council's duty to ensure that sufficient school places are available in the borough. These proposals and variants were considered by Partnership for Schools and were revised to take account of the proposed closure of Sneyd Community School in August 2012 and also the proposed University Technical College which Cabinet has asked officers to explore in more detail.
- 3.10 Surplus places at secondary schools in Walsall are largely concentrated in a small number of schools. This factor, and the location of secondary schools in Walsall, made it challenging to meet the criteria increasingly required by Partnerships for Schools and whilst officials recognised the challenges Walsall faces, requests for flexible consideration were rejected. As a result, officers have worked to produce forecasts which meet the stringent criteria set out by Partnerships for Schools. These criteria included a requirement that school places were planned in such a way as to demonstrate that in 2019/20 the overall the level of surplus places would not exceed 5% and that the level at any individual school would not exceed 10%.
- 3.11 Meeting these criteria in 2019/20 will result in lower levels still in the following year, 2020/21, and at one stage in the negotiations it appeared that 2020/21 might be considered as the planning year, however, this was not possible. As a result, there will be a particular pressure on the supply of Year 7 places in

2017/18 and it is planned to manage this by the admission of an extra form of entry at some schools (physical space will be available in schools because some of the cohorts in older year groups will be significantly smaller). There are likely to be similar pressures in later years and these will be managed by ensuring that the design of Wave 6a schools are flexible to enable expansion at a later date, however, any such developments would need to be funded through Basic Need as further resources would not be made available for Wave 6a schools through Partnerships for Schools. There will be further opportunities to revise the pupil forecasts and associated pupil place planning as later waves of BSF are taken forward in Walsall and over this same period there will be more clarity regarding the timescales of major housing regeneration programmes in Walsall.

- 3.12 In order to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between the supply of and demand for school places consideration has been given to a wide range of factors including the pattern of provision of secondary schools, trends in pupil numbers in the various areas, patterns of cross border pupil movements, the relative accessibility of schools, and the pattern of housing developments and sites with planning permission for residential development. As a result of this changes in the number of places at a small number of schools are proposed. Details of the proposed admission numbers at all schools for the period to 2019 are provided in **Appendix A**.
- 3.13 It is proposed to significantly enlarge Frank F Harrison Engineering College by increasing the admission number from 180 to 240 from 2014, the date when redevelopment of the school accommodation and facilities is expected to be completed.
- 3.14 It is also proposed to significantly enlarge Pool Hayes Arts and Community School by increasing the admission number from 213 to 240 from 2016, the date when redevelopment of the school accommodation and facilities is expected to be completed.
- 3.15 At Brownhills Community Technology College it is proposed to reduce the number of places from 168 to 150 from 2015. The school has had an increasing number of surplus places in recent years and its location makes it less easy to access than some other schools in Walsall. It is envisaged that the proposed reduction in admission number would help to secure a level of surplus places below 10% in 2019 and ensure the future sustainability of the school
- 3.16 It is proposed to change the overall admission number at Aldridge School from 259 to 260 from 2017.
- 3.17 For the planning purposes the admissions numbers for St Francis of Assisi Catholic Technology College and Shire Oak Science College have been adjusted by four and two respectively to include the places in the designated SEN resourced provision established some years ago. The admission number at Pool Hayes Arts and Community School includes two places in the designated SEN resourced provision.
- 3.18 It is envisaged that the proposed University Technical College (UTC) would have 120 places in Years 10, 11, 12 and 13 giving a total of 480 places. The intention

is that the UTC would serve a wide area and that in the region of 40 places in each year group would be taken up by pupils from neighbouring authorities.

- 3.19 In terms of meeting the criteria set by Partnerships for Schools, the forecast levels of surplus places in Walsall are set out in Tables 2 and 3 below.

Table 2 Forecast surplus places in 2019 excluding proposed University Technical College

Enlargement of 2 schools and reduced places at 1 school		
Overall % of surplus places	4.7% (4.5%)*	2019/20
Number of schools with 10% or more surplus places	0	2019/20
Least number of places available in a Year Group	Y9: 9	2019/20
Changes in admission numbers	From	To
Frank F Harrison	180	240 from 2014
Pool Hayes	213	240 from 2016
Brownhills	168	150 from 2015

*takes account of changes in admission numbers

Table 3 Forecast surplus places in 2019 including proposed University Technical College

Enlargement of 2 schools and reduced places at 1 school		
Overall % of surplus places	5.3% (5.1%)*	2019/20
Number of schools with 10% or more surplus places	0	2019/20
Least number of places available in a Year Group	Y9: 9	2019/20
Changes in admission numbers	From	To
Frank F Harrison	180	240 from 2014
Pool Hayes	213	240 from 2016
Brownhills	168	150 from 2015

*takes account of changes in admission numbers

- 3.20 Cabinet is recommended to approve consultation on the proposals to significantly enlarge Frank F Harrison Engineering College by increasing the admission number to 240 from 180 from 2014 and to significantly enlarge Pool Hayes Arts and Community School by increasing the admission number from 213 to 240 from 2016. Subject to approval by Cabinet it is proposed to commence consultation in January 2010 and details of the proposed timescale for decision-making are set out in section 4.2 below.

4. Resource considerations

4.1 Financial:

- 4.1.1 High levels of surplus places are inefficient and are not cost effective; they also impact adversely on the level of revenue funding all schools receive through the formula.
- 4.1.2 The capital costs of the proposed enlargement of Frank F Harrison Engineering College and Pool Hayes Arts and Community School would be contained within the Building Schools for the Future Programme and the financial resources made available to the Council.

4.2 Legal:

- 4.2.1 All LAs are required to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between the supply of and demand for school places in order to secure provision of an efficient and cost effective education service. In the event that LAs do not implement strategies to address imbalances between the supply of and demand for school places, the Secretary of State may direct that action is taken.
- 4.2.2 The proposed increase in the number of places at Frank F Harrison Engineering College and Pool Hayes Arts and Community School are subject to statutory procedures. These specify that there must be a period of consultation before the proposing authority decides whether it wishes to proceed with the proposals. As both of these proposals form part of the Council's strategic plan for the provision of school places in the borough, it is appropriate that the proposing authority is Walsall Council. Although the two proposals are not linked, it is proposed to take them forward in tandem and to consult on both proposals from 11 January 2010 to 21 February 2010 and to report to Cabinet on the outcome of consultation at the meeting to be held on 17 March 2010. Subject to approval by Cabinet to proceed, statutory proposals would then be published following which there would be a representation period of four weeks during which objections could be made. A further report would be brought to Cabinet so that the final decisions could be made in the light of any responses received and the proposal be 'determined'. It is expected that the final decisions would be taken in June 2010.
- 4.2.3 Subject to the completion of the statutory processes detailed above, the admission number for Frank F Harrison Engineering College would be increased to 240 from 2014 and the admission number for Pool Hayes Arts and Community School would be increased to 240 from 2016.

4.3 Staffing:

There are no direct implications as a result of this report.

5. Citizen impact

The efficient provision of school places enables greater resources to be targeted at teaching and learning thereby contributing to the raising of standards. The proposal to increase the number of places available at Frank F Harrison Engineering College and Pool Hayes Arts and Community School will enable more parents to secure a place for their child at these popular schools.

6. Community safety

There are no safety implications as a result of this report.

7. Environmental impact

There are no direct environmental impacts as a result of this report.

8. Performance and risk management issues

8.1 Risk:

All LAs are statutorily required to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between the supply of and demand for school places in order to secure provision of an efficient and cost effective education service.

8.2 Performance management:

The overall percentage of surplus places and the number of schools with more than 25% surplus places are performance indicators

9. Equality implications

The efficient provision of school places enables greater resources to be targeted at teaching and learning thereby enhancing equality of opportunity.

10. Consultation

The report has not been subject to any community consultation.

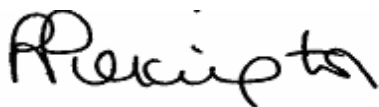
Background papers

Data relating to births, PLASC.

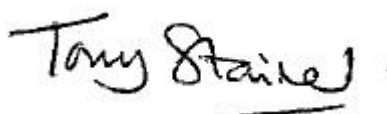
Partnerships for Schools: Pupil Places Planning guidance

Author

Susan Lupton
Head of Planning and Development Services
☎ 01922 686231
✉ susan.lupton@walsallcs.serco.com



Signed:
Executive Director:
Pauline Pilkington
Date: 7 December 2009



Signed:
Managing Director, Walsall Children's
Services – Serco: Tony Stainer
Date: 7 December 2009



Signed:
Portfolio Holder: Councillor R Walker
Date: 7 December 2009

Planned admission numbers to 2019

Appendix A

School Name	Adm No 2010	Adm No 2011	Adm No 2012	Adm No 2013	Adm No 2014	Adm No 2015	Adm No 2016	Adm No 2017	Adm No 2018	Adm No 2019
Aldridge	259	259	259	259	259	259	259	260	260	260
Alumwell	195	195	195	195	195	195	195	195	195	195
Barr Beacon	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260	260
Blue Coat	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
Brownhills	168	168	168	168	168	150	150	150	150	150
Grace Academy, Darlaston	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240
Frank F Harrison	180	180	180	180	240	240	240	240	240	240
Joseph Leckie	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240
Pool Hayes Community #	213	213	213	213	213	213	240	240	240	240
Queen Mary's Grammar	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96
Queen Mary's High	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96	96
Shelfield Community Academy	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240
Shire Oak #	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240	240
Sneyd	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
St Francis of Assisi ##	184	184	184	184	184	184	184	184	184	184
St Thomas More	243	243	243	243	243	243	243	243	243	243
Streetly	243	243	243	243	243	243	243	243	243	243
Walsall Academy	168	168	168	168	168	168	168	168	168	168
Willenhall	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270	270
Number of places available	3,715	3,715	3,715	3,715	3,775	3,757	3,784	3,785	3,785	3,785
Number of places required	3,449	3,488	3,326	3,344	3,453	3,484	3,619	3,774	3,576	3,720
Surplus places in Year 7	266	227	389	371	322	273	165	11	209	65
% surplus places in Year 7	7.16%	6.11%	10.47%	9.99%	8.53%	7.27%	4.36%	0.29%	5.52%	1.72%

Admission number includes 2 places in resourced provision

##Admission number includes 4 places in resourced provision