

Schools Forum June 2018

Update on 2 year old expenditure

1.0 Purpose of report

1.1 As School’s Forum is aware the 2 year old fund was provided to enable the LA to carry out its duty to provide early learning to eligible two year olds. The purpose of this report is to update Schools Forum about the expenditure of the 2 year old capital and trajectory fund to ensure the supply and demand of places for two year olds, the quality of the provision and the take up of places. The report also shares initial plans for future spend of both the capital and trajectory fund. This report is based mainly on validated end of spring term data.

2.0 Background

2.1 Take up of two year old places remains a priority in order to close the attainment gap between disadvantaged and non disadvantaged children in Walsall. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation evidences that this is the single best strategy for improving outcomes by the age of five. Walsall’s strategy for two year old take up is to ensure that there are sufficient places in each ward within ‘pram pushing’ distance. Walsall also aims to have a mix of provider types in each ward as some parents would not want their child to go to day care because they do want other adults caring for their young child but might be happy to send their child to school. Other parents may think their child is too young for school but may be happy for them to go to day-care or with a childminder.

2.2 Attainment of pupils who take up their two year old pace is not measured until the child completes their Early Years Foundation Stage. The children who have been eligible for two year old places are not recorded as a separate data set but many of them would be included in the Free School Meal group. You will see from the table below that in both 2016 and 2017 there was a gap of 18% between FSM and Non FSM children in Walsall by the age of 5. This was directly in line with National Average.

Table 1: Percentage of 5 years olds reaching age related expectations at 5 Years (Good Level of Development)

Group		Walsall 2016	National 2016	Walsall 2017	National 2017	Gap 2016	Gap 2017
All		65	69	66	71	4	5
Gender	Female	73	77	74	78	4	4
	Male	57	62	58	64	5	6
FSM	Eligible	55	54	56	56	No gap	No gap
	Non Eligible	68	72	69	73	4	4
Term of Birth	Autumn	76	79	75	80	3	5
	Spring	65	70	68	72	5	4
	Summer	54	59	55	61	5	6
SEN Status	No SEN	70	72	71	76	2	5
	SEN Support	14	26	14	27	12	13
	Statement/ EHCP	3	4	2	4	1	2
Deprived Areas	Least Deprived	81	78	81	79	No gap	No gap
	60-80	77	74	79	75	No gap	No gap
	40-60	73	71	72	72	No gap	No gap

	20-40	64	66	62	68	2	6
	Most deprived	60	62	61	63	2	2
DfE Ethnic Codes	White	66	70	66	72	4	6
	Mixed	66	71	69	73	5	4
	Asian	65	68	66	69	3	3
	Black	66	68	63	70	2	7
	Chinese	60	69	45	74	9	29

2.3 There are stark differences in early education opportunities across other parts of the country: in 94 areas, less than half of disadvantaged children are school-ready by age five. In Walsall, however the strategy and collaborative working has resulted in an improving picture particularly over the last 4 years. The School Ready Integrated Strategy for improving disadvantaged children’s outcomes includes: 1) quality improvement support for early education settings, including collaborative working groups, tailored advice and comprehensive training for early years teachers, 2) driving uptake of the early education offer for disadvantaged two-year-olds and ensuring that they do not lose places to children eligible for the 30-hour offer, 3) Early education and childcare providers invest pupil premium funds in evidence-based practice including the use of the Early Education Foundation’s toolkit.

2.4 In Walsall we are particularly strong in sharing data with Head teachers and Early Years leaders and sharing strategies for improvement. (See Table 2) Schools and settings are aware the Reading, Writing, Number and Shape, Space and Measure are the areas where FSM children do less well. Most schools direct their EYPP into these areas for improvement.

Table 2 Comparison between FSM pupils and Non FSM pupils’ good levels of development 2017

2017 EYFS outcomes	Listening & attention %	Understanding %	Speaking %	Moving & Handling %	Health & Self-Care %	Self-Confidence & Self-Awareness %	Managing Feelings & Behaviour %	Making Relationships %	Reading %	Writing %	Numbers %	Shape, Space & Measures %	People & Communities %	The World %	Technology %	Exploring Media & Materials %	Being Imaginative %
FSM	77	78	78	85	82	79	79	82	62	58	64	66	72	72	83	76	75
Non FSM	84	84	83	90	89	86	86	88	76	72	77	77	79	80	89	83	83
% Difference	7	6	5	5	7	7	6	6	13	14	13	11	7	8	5	7	8
Overall	82	82	82	88	87	84	84	86	72	68	73	73	77	77	87	81	81

2.4 Walsall is predicting an increase in Good Levels of Development for FSM children in 2018 profile scores, due to this being the first cohort of eligible two year olds that have been assessed.

2.5 FSM data in Walsall must be considered alongside other vulnerable group data as many children have multiple barriers to attainment. Table 1 also demonstrates that other vulnerable groups by the age of 5 include boys, summer born children, disadvantaged (IDACI data) and in particular SEN support children.

2.6 At ward level the poorest outcomes are in Palfrey (50% GLD) and Pleck (56% GLD)

3.0 Current Position - Supply and Demand

3.1 Currently there are 7 nursery schools that offer places to two year olds, 16 maintained primary or infant schools, 49 private nurseries and playgroups and 84 childminders. There has been a slight decrease in the

number of schools offering 2 year old places due to low take up and financial viability. There has been an increase in private places available due to Kangaroo Pouch extending two year provision at 3 sites to include Edgar Stammers and Bloxwich Children’s Centres and Rosehill.

3.2 To date the total capital spend on creating places is £1,677, 346.00 with a remaining balance of £705, 770.00. £536,643.00 of the trajectory funding has been used for resourcing, transition arrangements and quality of provision, with a remaining balance of £663,366.00. See Table 3 and 4 below.

Table 3

Capital to Create 2 year Old Places - DSG reserve (taken from last report to Schools Forum – currently being updated)		
Allocation of £2,383,116	£	Use of fund
Expenditure - 2015/16	1,102,359	Phase 1 and 2 capital projects creating 404 plus 726 places
Expenditure - 2016/17	61,881	Phase 1 and 2 capital projects creating 404 plus 726 places
Expenditure - 2017/18	665,106	Phase 3 (Children’s Centre configuration) creating at least 64 places at Edgar Stammers, Bloxwich and Rosehill
Total Spend to date	1,829,346	
Balance remaining	553,770	

Table 4

2 Year Old Trajectory - DSG reserve		
Allocation of £1.2m	£	Main use of fund
Expenditure - 2015/16	462,526	Resource provision, market the offer to families, transitional fund
Expenditure - 2016/17	40,508	Transitional Fund, market offer to families, Quality Audits
Expenditure - 2017/18	50,600	Improving provision through Achievement for All, market offer to families
Total Spend to date	553,634	
Balance remaining	646,366	

3.4 Table 5 below demonstrates that there are enough places overall for eligible two year olds to access a place. At ward level, however, it appears that there are insufficient places in Bloxwich East, Pleck, Short Heath and Willenhall North. (see yellow highlights) It must be noted that determining sufficiency can never be 100% accurate as some parents choose places outside of the ward they live in and children cross LA boundaries.

Table 5 – End of Spring Term sufficiency and demand data at ward level.

Ward	Total Number of Part Time 2 year old Places available (Childcare)	Total Number of Part Time 2 year old Places available (Schools)	Total Number of Part Time 2 year old Places available	Total 2 year olds requiring a place	Number of spare places available	% of spare places available
Aldridge Central & South	120	32	152	59	93	61%
Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	142	32	174	48	126	72%
Bentley & Darlaston North	246	56	302	184	118	39%
Birchills Leamore	294		294	254	40	14%
Blakenall	194	132	326	245	81	25%
Bloxwich East	10	72	82	139	-57	-70%
Bloxwich West	160	64	224	122	102	46%
Brownhills	116	56	172	86	86	50%
Darlaston South	322	140	462	198	264	57%
Paddock	86		86	58	28	33%
Palfrey	196	64	260	224	36	14%
Pelsall	114	48	162	38	124	77%
Pheasey Park Farm	162		162	32	130	80%
Pleck	88	50	138	235	-97	-70%
Rushall-Shelfield	78	40	118	64	54	46%
Short Heath	4	24	28	63	-35	-125%
St Matthew's	204		204	171	33	16%
Streetly	144		144	19	125	87%
Willenhall North	54	32	86	111	-25	-29%
Willenhall South	164	16	180	143	37	21%
Out of Borough				46		
	2898	858	3756	2539	1263	34%

3.5 A plan to improve sufficiency for eligible two year olds in these wards is in place. It includes the recruitment of two year old childminders. It also includes engaging schools and private providers in discussions about increasing supply. More specifically:

- Bloxwich East – Little Bloxwich C of E will be approached to discuss possibilities for two year old places
- Pleck- Reedswood will be offering two year old places from September but there is still a need for more places. Abu Bakr (private provider) and Hillary School will be approached to discuss possibilities.
- Short Heath – Lane Head Nursery School will be offering from September 2019. They will be approached to discuss possibilities to offer from January 2019.
- Willenhall North – New Invention School will be approached to discuss possibilities.

4.0 Current Position - Take up and further analysis of gaps

4.1 There were 1902 children on the November DWP list eligible for places. By the end of Spring Term 1215 of them were accessing their place giving a 64% take up rate.

4.2 Current ward data, see Table 6, demonstrates high levels of two year old take up in Aldridge Central and South, Aldridge North and Walsall Wood, Bentley and Darlaston North, Bloxwich East and Brownhills. The data shows low levels of take up in Pheasey Park Farm and Streetly but it may be that the children from those wards are accessing their entitlement in the neighbouring nurseries within Birmingham. There is also low take up in Pelsall and Short Heath. In Short Heath this may link to the limited availability.

Table 6 – Take up of places from children on the current DWP list – End of Spring Term 2018.

Ward	Children on November 17 DWP List	Children in a Setting	% Take Up	Number of children not accessing a place from current DWP list	Spare places available (from Current sufficiency data)
Aldridge Central & South	39	32	82%	7	93
Aldridge North & Walsall Wood	30	26	87%	4	126
Bentley & Darlaston North	125	94	75%	31	118
Birchills Leamore	200	129	65%	71	40
Blakenall	190	117	62%	73	81
Bloxwich East	109	80	73%	29	-57
Bloxwich West	90	58	64%	32	102
Brownhills	51	51	100%	0	86
Darlaston South	150	100	67%	50	264
Paddock	45	28	62%	17	28
Palfrey	176	108	61%	68	36
Pelsall	27	12	44%	15	124
Pheasey Park Farm	27	8	30%	19	130
Pleck	183	104	57%	79	-97
Rushall-Shelfield	46	30	65%	16	54
Short Heath	55	20	36%	35	-35
St Matthew's	130	72	55%	58	33
Streetly	17	7	41%	10	125
Willenhall North	90	49	54%	41	-25
Willenhall South	122	58	48%	64	37
Out of Borough	0	32			
Total	1902	1215	64%		

4.3 Table 6 also demonstrates that insufficient places are available in the 8 wards highlighted in either red or yellow. The yellow highlighted ward names are those already identified in section 3.4 as needing more places. The red highlighted wards of Birchills Leamore, Palfrey, St Matthew's and Willenhall South are those with limited places for the remaining children not accessing a place in that ward. Plans are being made to increase sufficiency in those wards too, again using the remaining capital and trajectory fund.

5.0 Increasing Take up using trajectory fund

5.1 Although the current take up figure of 64% is a similar percentage to statistical neighbouring authorities, it is a decrease for Walsall by 7%. Alongside increasing the number of two year old places it is also necessary for

frontline services to support eligible families to take up the offer. The main services that can encourage take up are the health visiting service, early help and social care services, children's centres and schools and settings.

- 5.2 Plans are in place to repeat attendance at all team meetings, bi- annually, to ensure all frontline professionals understand the importance of the offer, eligibility criteria and the process to support families to take up their place, including using Family Information Service and the childcare directory.
- 5.3 A post has also been created and an appointment made, using trajectory fund, for a temporary officer to work alongside health visitors in the first instance to ensure consistent messages are given out about the importance of taking up the place, the options available and the process. The post holder will also develop resources that frontline services can share with parents to help them promote the development of their two year old child.
- 5.4 In addition the School Ready Engagement officers (from the Children's Centre) are working with all 80 infant and primary schools over the next few months to promote the offer to parents, through a school gate campaign.
- 5.5 All Family Information Staff will complete a quality audit questionnaire to test their ability to market the offer, follow processes to give out the codes and share good information with parents. They will also receive additional training where necessary.

6.0 Financial Processes

- 6.1 Capital and trajectory spend on the expansion of two year old places continues to be approved by the Capital and Asset Sub Group, using the agreed criteria. This includes evidence of demand, school/ settings financial viability, a good or outstanding Ofsted grade for EYFS and an application within the financial limits of the grant. Any applications that are not within the financial limits of the grant may be consider by the Capital Board.
- 6.2 The Capital and Asset Sub Group also makes decisions on school expansions for older age children and having an Early Years Team Representative in the group ensures that consideration is given to expansion of nursery and two year old places, where necessary, whilst at the feasibility stage.

7.0 Summary

- 7.1 In summary there is still funding available to carry out plans and create additional places in the wards of:
 - Pleck, Short Heath, Bloxwich East and Willenhall North
 - Birchills Leamore, Palfrey, St Matthew's and Willenhall South
- 7.2 Place creation will be achieved through discussion with schools, potential new private providers and through recruiting new childminders.

- 7.3 Take up of places will be improved by the new post holder working with health visitors, through the 'School Gate' Campaign and through the School Ready Improvement Officer visiting all frontline services twice each year to give key messages and promote marketing materials.
- 7.4 The quality of places will be improved by the continuation of the 'Achievement for All – Achieving Early' project and further training for two year old staff. A small capital match fund will be administered, from September this year, for existing 2 year old provision to improve the quality of their outdoor learning environments, up to £500 from the fund with a match funding requirement.

8.0 Recommendations

- 8.1 Schools Forum will continue to make the remaining funds available in order to further improve sufficiency, quality and take up.
- 8.2 A further report will be brought to Schools Forum in January to include an update of the actions taken and the improved outcomes.

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