

Report to:	EXECUTIVE CABINET
Date:	24 November 2021
Executive Member:	Councillor Leanne Feeley – Executive Member – Lifelong Learning, Equalities, Culture and Heritage
Reporting Officer:	Tim Bowman Director of Education (Tameside and Stockport)
Subject:	EDUCATION SPECIALIST AND BASIC NEED PROJECTS UPDATE
Report Summary:	The report provides and update on the Education specialist and Basic Need Capital projects. It provides background on the work undertaken since 2009 to increase places in the borough and outlines the work that is currently being undertaken to expand the specialist estate to meet the needs of our children and young people with Education Health and Care Plans who need specialist provision. The report seeks approval to move a number of schemes forward. The report outlines the projected costs of the schemes and seeks approval for grant agreements with the academies.
Recommendations:	<p>It is recommended that Executive Cabinet:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve a grant agreement for an initial £258,890 with St Anselm’s Catholic Multi Academy Trust to enable All Saints Catholic College to accommodate additional school places from September 2021. The capital scheme focusses on remodelling two classrooms into a fitness studio and dance studio to support the additional places. 2. Approve a grant agreement for £23,000 with The Epworth Education Trust to refurbish an external play area at Rosehill Primary Academy, allowing children in the resourced provision to have dedicated access to a suitable play area. This will provide 10 additional resourced pupil places for at least 10 years from September 2021. 3. Receive a further report on the projects for Hawthorns Primary School and Cromwell School to ensure sufficient funding and on track to deliver.
Corporate Plan:	The proposals contained within this report will support the delivery of the Community Strategy, through the delivery of sufficient and suitable places to meet anticipated increased demand in 2022/23.
Policy Implications:	To meet our statutory obligations.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer & Chief Finance Officer)	A budget of £2m has been approved from Basic Need Grant through appropriate governance for the works required at All Saints Catholic College. To date £10k has been spent against this scheme. The costs quoted in relation to the requested approval for an initial transfer of £259k include VAT. As the school are Voluntary Aided they are subject to different VAT rules and cannot recover VAT on capital items. Work with the school will be done, to see if the school can appropriately class the works as zero rated and they will need to take VAT advice around this. If this is possible the amount to be transferred could be lower. There should be open book accounting for this scheme, which should ensure appropriate allocation of funds.

A budget of £23k has been approved from High Needs Provision Grant for the works required at Rosehill School. The costs quoted for the works are approximately £23k inclusive of VAT. As outlined above this is also a VA school, work will need to be carried out in relation to VAT similar to All Saints to keep costs to a minimum. Again, there should be an open book accounting for this scheme which to ensure appropriate allocation of funds. There is remaining approved budget for Cromwell of approximately £99k. If further development is required, any additional cost implications would be subject to approval through the relevant governance process. Information is being sought regarding the revenue implications for the expansion and relocation of Hawthorns School. Dialogue with the DfE continues as a matter of urgency.

**Legal Implications:
(Authorised by the Borough
Solicitor)**

The council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient and suitable school places for the children and young people of Tameside.

Therefore the work to continually assess this need and engage with children, young people, their carers and parents is essential to the long term planning to meet this duty.

With regard to the building works it is critical that as these works are being funded from the Basic Needs Grant that they directly relate to the provision of school places especially where that funding is being provided to academies which are not under the immediate control of the council.

As the funding is being provided by way of grant agreements the terms of which cannot be as prescriptive as a contract, the Capital Team should ensure that there are sufficient monitoring and claw back provisions in the agreements to provide the council with the necessary comfort that the grant money is being spent appropriately.

Members need to be satisfied that the school will deliver what is deliverable outcome and ensure that the agreement is clear there will be no further funding.

Risk Management:

The proposals contained in this report are necessary to ensure that the Council has access to sufficient places in the borough for secondary age pupils in mainstream provision and in specialist provision. Failure to expand the current mainstream provision will result in the Council being unable to fulfil its statutory duty to provide sufficient places for children in the borough and will result in additional revenue implications should specialist out of borough places be needed to meet the needs of children with Education, Health and Care Plans.

Background Information:

The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Catherine Moseley – Head of Access Services, by:



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1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 All local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places to meet demand in their area. Planning for fluctuations in demand for school places is an important function which needs to be carried out at a local level and will differ depending on the phase of learning, for example, pupils will travel further to secondary schools than primary schools. The compact geography of the borough and the mix of types of school, for example, single sex means that place planning happens at a level higher than wards or towns.
- 1.2 School place planning is a complex process that takes account a range of factors including the number of births in the borough, in year movement and cohort survival rates (how many children move from one year to the next) as well as parental preference and planned housing development. With rapid shifts in economic conditions for families and changing patterns of migration, planning for basic need for school places requires a proactive approach to best respond to both short and medium-term demand for places.
- 1.3 The Council has been proactive in tackling the issue of a 27% rise in births and a 24% increase in pupils starting primary schools over the last few years whilst also managing to maintain high levels of meeting parental preference.
- 1.4 The Published Admission Number (PAN) has been increased at many primary schools and overall by almost 18% from 2734 places in 2009/10 to 3195 places currently and we are now increasing secondary school places. In 2010, there were 2582 pupils in Year 7 and for September 2021, there are 3239 places available. With the cooperation of secondary schools across the borough, it is predicted that will be sufficient places for predicted demand for the next few years. However, major new housing developments will require additional places to be factored over a number of years.
- 1.5 As the numbers of pupils in mainstream schools increases, so does the number of pupils in specialist provision. In 2014/15, there were 519 children with a statement of special educational needs. As of January 2021, there were 1738 children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan. There has been some expansion of specialist provision in the borough but more is needed to ensure that needs are met appropriately and within the borough if possible.
- 1.6 The Council's strategy and plans to meet future forecast demand are approved by Executive Cabinet at least on an annual basis when school admission arrangements are also determined. The latest approval was on 27 January 2021. Progress on all education capital projects is reported to Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel.
- 1.7 Most of these increases in pupil numbers and admission numbers have necessitated capital work to expand the accommodation available in some of our schools. This has been funded through the Basic Need Grant from the Department for Education. Between 2011 and 2019, the Council received a total of £42,745,350 to fund additional places in the borough. A further £12,231,816 has been allocated for 2021-22 and £6,348,338 for 2022-23. In addition to Basic Need Funding, the Council has also received an allocation of £1,075,921 for the period 2018 – 21 from the special capital fund for provision in specialist settings and an allocation of £1,223,336 for 2021-22 in relation to High Needs Provision grant.
- 1.8 The Council and other responsible bodies in the borough receive separate funding to address school condition issues.

2 PRIMARY SCHOOL CAPITAL PROJECTS

- 2.1 The increases in primary school places began in 2009 when the birth rate began to rise. Over the years, an additional 3334 places have been created in 36 of our primary schools.
- 2.2 This increase has been achieved through a mixture of permanent and temporary increases. For example at Holden Clough a new school was built through the Priority Schools Building Programme and increased the intake of the school from 30 per year group to 60; or at Ashton West End where remodelling of the accommodation enabled the school to increase their admission number from 45 to 60 per year group on a permanent basis.
- 2.3 We have also been able to open two completely new schools; Inspire and Discovery Academies in Ashton and Hyde respectively which can accommodate up to 120 pupils per year group.
- 2.4 There have also been some temporary increases where schools have taken a bulge class, a one off temporary increase in the admission number of the school, and this has been achieved through remodelling internal space, for example, making an IT suite into a classroom or adding temporary demountable classrooms. The pupils in the first four bulge classes that we put into primary schools in September 2013 left Year 6 in summer 2020.
- 2.5 There are still two projects to expand primary schools that are not yet complete. They are at Aldwyn Primary School where we are increasing the Published Admission Number from 45 to 60 and St John's Primary School where we are increasing the Published Admission Number from 30 to 45. Work is now underway at both schools.

3 SECONDARY SCHOOL CAPITAL PROJECTS

- 3.1 As with primary schools, the Council has worked with our secondary school headteachers to increase places as the numbers come through from primary schools. The first increases in secondary school admission numbers took place in 2012. Since that time, an additional 2310 places have so far been created across all year groups in 10 of the 16 secondary schools. This represents an 11% increase with plans for further increases over the next three years.
- 3.2 As the number of places has risen, so has the number of children starting at secondary schools in September. In 2010, there were 2582 pupils in Year 7 and for September 2021, 3114 places were allocated, a 20% rise in demand.
- 3.3 Again, the additionality has been achieved through some internal remodelling of space, temporary demountable classrooms and the opening of Laurus Ryecroft School.
- 3.4 There are several on-going capital projects with our secondary schools including at Rayner Stephens High School, St Thomas More RC College and All Saints Catholic College. Schemes are currently being developed with St Thomas More RC College, All Saints Catholic College and Rayner Stephens High School and provisional budgets have been allocated through the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel. Phase 1 of the All Saints scheme forms part of the recommendations in this report. The scheme at St Thomas More RC College is being planned by the Salford Diocese in conjunction with the school. Other schemes will be subject to further governance reports.
- 3.5 In partnership with our secondary schools, we have been able to close the gap for additional places in September 2021 and 2023. For September 2021, there is no child without a school place despite this being the biggest predicted year group.

Increase secondary school places for secondary aged children at All Saints Catholic College

- 3.6 All Saints Catholic College is a secondary school in Dukinfield that is part of the Shrewsbury Diocese. Plans are in place to add an additional 30 school places per year at All Saints Catholic College from September 2021. The Shrewsbury Diocese and the school have carried out their own feasibility study on the remodelling work needed to accommodate additional pupils. The feasibility study includes design proposals up to RIBA Stage 2 (**Appendix 1**). The study contains an options appraisal based on the brief provided by the school and budget available.
- 3.7 The school has a chronic shortage of suitable accommodation to meet increased need for the specialist physical education curriculum that additional pupils will need. For example, the school is currently using a previous staff room as a changing room. The main objective of Phase 1 of the proposed works is to remodel two classrooms to create additional capacity for PE in the school in a fitness studio and dance studio.
- 3.8 These works comprise of Phase 1 of the overall scheme. The work is being phased to ensure that teaching can continue with minimum disruption to the school. All Saints and their consultants Atkins have undertaken a tender exercise and wish to appoint contractors to undertake the work described and are requesting a drawdown of £258,887 against the previously agreed £2 million budget.
- 3.9 The total cost of all phases of the work (**Appendix 1**) is estimated to be £2m and which has previously been agreed through Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel and Executive Cabinet on 29 July 2020. This has been allocated to the project from Basic Need Funding. If the recommendation to enter into a grant agreement for this work is agreed, All Saints Catholic College will have £1,741,110 for further phases of work.
- 3.10 The works will be commissioned by the Shrewsbury Diocese with oversight within the Council's Capital Projects Team and a grant agreement would be put in place to fund the project. It is recommended that a grant agreement of £258,890 is agreed with the St Anselm's Catholic Multi Academy Trust to support this work. Ongoing monitoring of the project would be through the grant agreement and reported to the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel.

4 SPECIALIST PROVISION CAPITAL PROJECTS

- 4.1 As with primary and secondary schools, there have been some permanent increases in places across the special school estate. For example, an additional 60 place Autism Spectrum Condition unit was built at Samuel Laycock School and Oakdale Primary School has expanded provision through remodelling of nursery space and the Children's Centre. Following the fire at Cromwell School in 2016, some additional accommodation was provided as part of the rebuild.
- 4.2 However, there has been a significant increase in children requiring specialist provision over recent years. The SEND Forward Plan 2019-22 was developed with parents and carers, schools and other education providers and professionals working in the area of SEND, and children and young people to set out what the Council will do to develop and improve education provision for children and young people with SEND in Tameside. The plan will also develop and be refined as time goes on so, if needed, to ensure the actions are the right ones.
- 4.3 One of the intentions clearly set out in the Plan is that the Council wants all children and young people with SEND in Tameside to be able to attend a school or provision as close to their home as possible.

- 4.4 Tameside currently maintains 2017 Education Health and Care Plans (EHCPs). The number of plans maintained has been rising steadily since 2017. The number of EHCPs in Tameside has more than doubled since 2017, when the Local Authority maintained 828 plans. Tameside is now in line with our statistical neighbours, with EHCPs representing approximately 3.4% of the population. We can confidently conclude therefore that the growth in EHCP's was appropriate and necessary. However, this exponential growth in EHCPs has placed significant additional strain on specialist providers and resource bases across Tameside. The rapid rate of the growth in EHCPs in Tameside has been such that it was never going to be possible to plan and deliver provision sufficiency at the same rate. This has inevitably created pressure on placements for children with EHCPs, and particularly across the specialist sector, where all schools are currently oversubscribed. This is also true of our specialist resource bases. It is therefore imperative that we create additional provision in order to appropriately accommodate these vulnerable learners.
- 4.5 There are currently 286 pupils attending schools and colleges outside of Tameside. These are attending other local authority special schools, independent, non-maintained schools or special free schools or special academies outside of Tameside. This means a number of pupils are often not being educated close to their home. This puts more pressure on the budget, both for special school provision and for transport particularly for more complex needs including ASC. The remainder of these children and young people attend a range of establishments such as further education colleges and other local authority mainstream schools.
- 4.6 During consultations with parents on developing the forward plan, it became clear that there was a gap in post 16 provision for young people with complex needs. Parents put forward the need to develop additional choice at the end of year 11. The forward plan agreed that some young people with complex needs are not ready to transition to specialist college provision at the end of Year 11 and there needs to be more Post 16 places in special schools for those that need that provision. Attention needs to be given to the provision to meet the needs of certain students as they move into adulthood.
- 4.7 The Forward Plan identified the following priorities for additional provision:
- Develop sixth form provision at Cromwell High School
 - Increase special school places for primary aged children at Hawthorns School
 - Create a short term nurture provision for Key Stage 1 pupils within Thomas Ashton School
 - Increase the amount of resourced provision across the Borough with a focus on the main areas of need: SEMH, ASC and the prevalence of MLD so that there are at least three Resource Bases, capable of supporting 10 pupils, in each Neighbourhood. This would entail either having existing space refurbished, or extensions built.
- 4.8 Projects to expand Cromwell High School to establish sixth form provision have completed over summer 2021. The project to provide additional places at Hawthorns Primary School through a new building continues and will be the subject to further reports to Executive Cabinet before the end of the year.

Increase the Amount of Resourced Provision Across the Borough

- 4.9 The SEND Forward Plan identifies the need to develop additional resourced provision across the borough to meet the needs of pupils identified as requiring enhanced provision but not a special school place.
- 4.10 Targeted provision is provision that is more specialist than mainstream schools, providing a higher level of support for children and young people with SEND, but not a special school. This may be shorter term provision to support a child into the most appropriate provision, or a longer term placement attached to a mainstream school. Tameside resource bases do not all provide a longer term option for placement, which means that children and young people may move straight from mainstream to special school when their needs could be met in a

longer term targeted mainstream placement. This is a gap in the borough's provision.

- 4.11 There are currently resource bases in the borough at St John Fisher Primary School and St Thomas More RC College for ASC provision; Linden Road Primary for Hearing Impaired Provision; Russell Scott Primary, The Heys Primary School and Oakfield Primary School for pupils with moderate learning difficulties (MLD).
- 4.12 Over a 3 year period, the Council aims to establish 12 additional resource bases for those children requiring a more specialised level of support and intervention, and those struggling to be effectively included within mainstream settings. It was proposed to open four additional primary-aged SEND resource bases, ready to accommodate learners from September 2021. Rosehill, Oakfield and Greenside are now fully operational.

Increase Special Provision Places for Primary Aged Children at Rosehill Primary Academy

- 4.13 Rosehill Primary Academy is an academy school in Ashton-under-Lyne and part of The Epworth Education Trust. The school has been identified as a site where the current resource base provision can be expanded for September 2021. The school already have suitable internal space which requires some minor alterations but require funding to refurbish an external play area, allowing children in the resourced provision to have dedicated access to a suitable play area. The works will be commissioned by The Epworth Education Trust with oversight from the Council's Capital Projects Team and a grant agreement would be put in place to fund the project. Quotes have been received from the school and it is recommended that a grant agreement be agreed with The Epworth Education Trust for £23,000 (there is £4,000 in approved budget for associated project costs). Ongoing monitoring of the project would be through the grant agreement and reported to the Strategic Planning and Capital Monitoring Panel.

5 SUMMARY OF PROJECTS

School	Method of delivery	Budget already agreed	Already committed in prior phases	Estimated scheme costs	Additional funding recommendation	Grant Agreement
All Saints Catholic College	Grant Agreement	£2,000,000	£10,000	£2,000,000		£258,890
Rosehill Primary Academy	Grant agreement	£23,000		£23,000		£23,000

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 As set out at the front of the report.