



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

**Children and Young People Cabinet Member
Meeting
31 March 2011**

Report of the Strategic Director for Children and
Young People

ITEM 5

Homefields Primary School Expansion – Proposal for Consultation

SUMMARY

- 1.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that sufficient school places are available to meet local needs. The 2006 Education and Inspections Act indicates that local authorities also have a duty to promote diversity and increase parental choice in planning and securing the provision of school places.
- 1.2 Whilst pupil projections in the past have indicated a declining trend in pupil numbers, projections are now indicating an increasing trend. This is consistent with what many other local authorities are now seeing in their pupil projections. At present surplus places are at around 10% across Derby primary schools and 5% across secondary schools. This means that Derby does have some flexibility to deal with fluctuations in numbers. However, in the Chellaston area of the city, there is now a very close match between demand for primary pupil places and the number of places available.
- 1.3 The purpose of this report is to brief the Cabinet Member for Children and Young People on place planning priorities in the Chellaston area of the city, together with a proposal to approve formal consultation on the expansion of Homefields Primary School from a 210 to 315 place primary school from September 2013. A draft timeline for the expansion proposal is attached as Appendix 2. A draft consultation document is attached as Appendix 3.

RECOMMENDATION

- 2 To approve formal consultation on a proposal to expand Homefields Primary School from a 210 place school to a 315 place school from September 2013.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 Local authorities have a statutory duty to ensure that sufficient school places are available to meet local needs. The 2006 Education and Inspections Act indicates that local authorities also have a duty to promote diversity and increase parental choice in planning and securing the provision of school places. The Government's aspiration is that parents should gain a place for their child at their preferred school although this can't be guaranteed.
- 3.2 There is now a very close match between primary pupil numbers and places in this area of the city. According to the 2010 School Census, there are 311 primary school

aged children living in Homefields catchment area with the proposal being to increase Homefields Primary from a 210 to a 315 place school. An expansion of Homefields Primary would not only address the issues with demand from within catchment area but will provide much needed additional capacity in this area of the city.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 4.1 Following a general trend of declining pupil numbers over many years, some local authorities are now seeing pupil numbers increase. Derby is well placed to deal with fluctuations in numbers due to having a reasonable level of surplus capacity. At present surplus places are at around 10% at primary level and 5% at secondary level. However, there are specific areas and schools within the city where the balance of places needs to be improved.
- 4.2 There has been a very close match between pupil numbers and primary places in the Chellaston area for a number of years whereby catchment area pupils for Homefields Primary have not always been admitted to Homefields as their first preference school. This position is becoming more difficult with neighbouring schools such as Chellaston Infant and Chellaston Junior also being full. Schools further away are now also getting full with increasing pupil numbers. An expansion of Homefields Primary would not only address the issues with demand from within catchment area, but will provide much needed additional capacity in this area of the city.
- 4.3 For September 2009, 21 'on time' catchment area applications were refused a place at Homefields on the offer day. Chellaston Infants' School was able to accommodate all 'on time' applications from within the Chellaston area. Therefore, those applicants from within Homefields' catchment who were refused Homefields, and who had put Chellaston Infant as their second preference, were able to be accommodated at this school.
- 4.4 For September 2010, 9 'on time' catchment area pupils who put Homefields as their first preference school and Chellaston Infant as their second preference did not receive a place at Homefields. Four of these pupils also did not receive a place at Chellaston Infant and were allocated a place at Allenton Primary which is some distance away from the Homefields catchment area. Five pupils from the Homefields catchment area put Chellaston Infant as a first preference and did receive a place at that school.
- 4.5 The suggestion is to consult on a proposal to permanently increase Homefields Primary School's admission number from 30 to 45 from September 2013. This means that each year group would consist of up to 45 places, making a maximum total of 315 pupils (excluding the nursery). Council Cabinet at its meeting on 15 March approved funding of £1.6 million for an expansion of Homefields Primary. If the proposal goes ahead, we would work closely with the school to provide the additional accommodation needed and minimise the impact of any building works.

- 4.6 When considering school expansion, it is necessary to have regard to classroom organisation. The aim, wherever possible, is to achieve whole forms of entry or half forms of entry for primary schools, for example, an admission number of 30, 45, 60, 75 etc, with related school sizes of 210, 315, 420, 525 etc. For Homefields Primary, an admission number of 45 is proposed with a school size of 315 as this provides the best fit with pupil numbers.
- 4.7 Consideration has also been given to the impact of expanding Homefields Primary on other local schools. According to the 2010 school census, there are 311 primary aged pupils living within Homefields Primary School's catchment area. An expansion of Homefields Primary to a 315 place school would not only address the issues with demand from within catchment area but will provide much needed additional capacity in this area of the city. A higher admission number, for example, 60 would create a further 105 places which are unlikely to be filled by catchment area pupils and therefore could draw pupils from other school catchment areas and have a detrimental impact on their pupil numbers. There would also be the added pressure for additional capital funding.

OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 5.1 The option of not proposing an expansion of Homefields Primary was considered. However, there is now a very close match between primary pupil numbers and places in the Chellaston area of the city.
- 5.2 The option of expanding Homefields Primary by 210 places to create a 420 place, two form entry school was also considered. However, this level of expansion is likely to have a detrimental impact on pupil numbers in other local schools.

This report has been approved by the following officers:

Legal officer Financial officer Human Resources officer Service Director(s) Other(s)	Robin Constable, Solicitor, Legal Services Rita Silvester, Service Director – Performance and Commissioning, CYP
For more information contact: Background papers: List of appendices:	Rita Silvester, Service Director – Performance and Commissioning, tel. 01332 716840, email rita.silvester@derby.gov.uk None. Appendix 1 – Implications Appendix 2 – Draft timeline Appendix 3 – Draft Consultation Document

IMPLICATIONS

Financial

- 1.1 The Council's capital programme has allocated funding of £5,250,000 for school capital projects in 2011/12. Despite recent investment, there remains a significant backlog of condition issues across the primary, secondary and special schools estate, which is well in excess of £58 million. This condition backlog only covers building condition issues and excludes costs associated with betterment, asbestos identification/removal, work identified as a result of fire risk assessments, any water hygiene remedial work, or any work related to mechanical (heating and boilers) and electrical elements.
- 1.2 In view of the pressures on the Schools' Capital Programme, careful consideration has been given to the prioritisation of capital schemes. The proposal for Homefields relates to basic need and the provision of sufficient school places within a specific area of the city. Council Cabinet at its meeting on 15 March 2011, approved £1.6 million capital funding to expand Homefields Primary School. The proposal is for the scheme to be funded partially through £600,000 from the 2011/12 capital funding allocation, together with a further £1 million from the proposed 2012/13 capital funding allocation.

Legal

- 2 Statutory proposals are required for a proposed enlargement of a school that would increase the capacity by more than 30 pupils and 25% or 200 pupils, whichever is the lesser. An increase of 105 places represents a 50% increase in capacity at Homefields Primary and therefore statutory proposals are required. The process involves consultation, publication of a statutory notice and consideration of the responses received. Subject to the outcome of this process, the implementation date is likely to be September 2013 to tie in with likely construction timescales.

Personnel

- 3 School budgets are largely based on pupil numbers. Therefore, if an expansion takes place at Homefields Primary, the additional pupil numbers will result in increased revenue funding for the school to employ the additional teaching staff required.

Equalities Impact

- 4 None for consideration.

Health and Safety

- 5 None for consideration.

Carbon commitment

- 6 Work will be planned to meet relevant building regulations. Part L of the building regulations generally requires new components to be more environmentally friendly and efficient.

Value for money

- 7 None for consideration.

Corporate objectives and priorities for change

- 8 The proposal supports the Corporate Priority of building ambition, aspiration and achievement in the city's young people.



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

Proposal to expand Homefields Primary – Draft Timescale

Stages	Timeline
Seek approval to go out to consultation from Cabinet Lead Member.	16 – 31 March
Discuss and agree consultation document with Heads and Governors	1 April – 13 May
Consultation period (four weeks), including Governing Bodies, Headteachers, parents, teachers, staff, unions and ward members.	8 June 2011 – 6 July
Report outcome of initial consultation to Council Cabinet and seek approval to move to next stage which involves publishing a Statutory Notice.	26 July
Advise Heads and Governors of outcome of Cabinet meeting.	7 September 2011
Publication of Statutory Notice and circulation of Complete Proposal which marks the start of a four week representation period.	14 September to 12 October 2011
Decision by: Local Authority - Council Cabinet is the decision maker but this can be delegated to Director for Children and Young People if no objections are received during the representation period. If objections are received, the decision should be taken by Council Cabinet.	November 2011 Cabinet meeting or earlier if Strategic Director for CYP
Construction (12 months on site with 12 months lead in period)	April 2012 to April 2013
Open	September 2013



DERBY CITY COUNCIL

8 June 2011

DRAFT

Proposal to expand Homefields Primary School Consultation Document

Introduction

1. Derby City Council is consulting on a proposal to permanently increase Homefields Primary School's admission number from 30 to 45 from September 2013. This means that each year group would consist of up to 45 places making a maximum total of 315 pupils (excluding the nursery). The school's site is large enough to support this many children and investment would be made into the school building to expand it in line with an admission number of 45. The reason for the proposal is to meet an increase in demand for pupil places from within the school's catchment area.
2. If the proposal goes ahead, Derby City Council would work closely with the school to provide the additional accommodation needed and minimise the impact of any building works.
3. This consultation paper details the reason for the proposed expansion and the decision making process. Please take time to read through the document and let us know your views. The consultation period ends on Wednesday, 6 July 2011. Please forward any comments on the form provided at the end of this document. We hope you find the document helpful and informative.

Why are we proposing an expansion?

4. Local authorities have a legal responsibility to ensure that sufficient school places are available to meet local needs. Local authorities also have a duty to promote diversity and increase parental choice in planning and securing the provision of school places. The Government's aspiration is that parents should gain a place for their child at their preferred school although this can never be guaranteed.
5. At present, school surplus places are at around 11% across Derby primary schools. This means that Derby has some flexibility to deal with fluctuations in pupil numbers. Projections across all areas of the city are regularly monitored by Derby City Council. The proposal to expand Homefields Primary is due to an increasing demand for places from within the school's catchment area.

Why are we proposing an increase to 315 pupil places (admission number of 45)?

6. When considering school expansion, it is necessary to consider classroom organisation. The aim, wherever possible, is to achieve whole forms of entry or half forms of entry for primary schools, for example, an admission number of 30, 45, 60, 75 etc, with related school sizes of 210, 315, 420, 525 etc.
7. Homefields Primary School currently has an admission number of 30 meaning that the school offers a total of 210 places. The demand for places within Homefields has now reached a point where it is considered appropriate to expand the number of places available by 105 to create a 315 place school with an admission number of 45.
8. An admission number of 45 is proposed as this provides the best fit with pupil numbers in the area. A higher admission number, for example, 60 would create a further 105 places which are unlikely to be filled by catchment area pupils and therefore could draw pupils from other school catchment areas and have a detrimental impact on their pupil numbers.

What are the views of Headteachers and Governors?

9. The Headteacher and Governors of the above schools have given their support for the proposal to increase pupil places.

What are the implications for staff?

10. School budgets are largely based on pupil numbers. Therefore, if an expansion takes place at Homefields Primary, the additional pupil numbers will result in increased revenue funding for the school to employ the additional teaching staff required.

Will there be an impact on other schools?

11. School expansion requires careful consideration and needs to be seen in the context of school place provision across the wider area. The proposal to increase Homefields Primary, as outlined in this paper, is to meet an increase in demand for places from within the school's catchment area. There is no intention to reduce the size of schools elsewhere as a result of this proposal. The demand for places within Homefields Primary School's catchment area has now reached a point where it is considered appropriate to expand the number of places available by 105 to create a 315 place school with an admission number of 45.
12. In terms of secondary provision, pupil numbers and projections will continue to be monitored. Projections are suggesting that Chellaston School will continue to be able to accommodate requests for places from within catchment area.

How can I submit comments on the proposal?

13. We are very interested in your views and welcome your comments. Please respond to us by using the response sheet attached to this paper. Should you wish to discuss any specific aspects of this proposal, please contact:

Hayley Millward, School Organisation and Provision Team, Children and Young People's Department.

Tel: 01332 716827 or E-mail: hayley.millward@derby.gov.uk

What are the next steps?

14. Local authorities are required to consult and publish a public notice on proposals to increase the number of pupils by 25% or 200 places (whichever is the lesser). **Please use this consultation document as an opportunity to comment on these proposals.**
15. The four-week consultation period for responses will end on **Wednesday, 6 July 2011**. The outcome of this consultation will be reported to Council Cabinet for consideration and decision to progress to the next stage. Subject to Council Cabinet approval, a formal public notice will be published with a further four-week statutory consultation period as required under legislation.

Proposal to expand Homefields Primary School

Consultation Response Form

We are very interested in your comments on this proposal. Please use this response sheet to let us have your views. (Please use continuation sheets if you wish).

Do you support the proposal to expand?

Yes, I support the proposal ☐

No, I do not support the proposal ☐

Undecided ☐

Comments

Signed.....

Date.....

Status.....

(e.g. parent, governor, school, agency, other)

Completed forms to be returned to: Hayley Millward, Children and Young People Directorate, Middleton House, 27 St Mary's Gate, Derby DE1 3NN E-mail: hayley.millward@derby.gov.uk

Consultation closing date: **Wednesday, 6 July**

Continuation of comments...

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