

Appendix 1

Basic Need Strategy

Our strategy in Birmingham to meet Basic Need has 4 key strands:

- i) Make optimum use of existing space, buildings and sites to provide sufficient, suitable, high quality additional places where needed;
- ii) Work with Maintained Schools, Free Schools and Academies to meet Basic Need through co-ordinated expansion plans;
- iii) Allocate annual Basic Need Capital investment effectively and efficiently to areas where basic need requirements can only be met through either re-modelling, refurbishment or new-build projects, ensuring that the needs of our most vulnerable young people are prioritised and capital projects make best use of existing resources;
- iv) Identify alternative funding sources and models to deliver requirements including Section 106, school contributions, bidding opportunities, Local Co-ordinated Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP), Community Infrastructure Levy, future Basic Need allocations, diversion of other capital funding

Whenever possible, additional places to meet Basic Need will be introduced at the start of a Phase i.e. in Reception and Year 7. However, the unpredictable nature and location of cohort growth means that it is necessary at times to implement reactive Basic Need measures and introduce additional classes during a phase of education in order to meet our statutory duty to provide sufficient places. The level of net migration into the primary phase of education means that supplying sufficient places in Reception for all of the expected cohort growth to Year 6 would leave far too many reception places unfilled. In essence, we will continue to need to provide additional classes as cohorts move through the primary phase in order to manage the current levels of cohort growth.

In the event that the supply of school places exceeds demand in an area to a degree that threatens the sustainability of local provision, the Local Authority will consider temporary or permanent decommissioning of places in order to support a sustainable, high quality local offer.

Placing Schools at the Heart of Meeting Basic Need

To place schools at the heart of meeting Basic Need in Birmingham, we will:

- i) Share requirements for additional places regularly with all school partners and Early Years Providers;
- ii) Invite Free Schools and schools that are their own admissions authority to share and co-ordinate their expansion intentions so that requirements can be modified to factor in new provision;
- iii) Invite schools and education providers to express interest in expanding their provision in order to identify optimum solutions to meeting Basic Need and, where necessary, identify projects for Basic Need capital investment;
- iv) Ask schools to work with the Local Authority to identify additional funding streams and alternative funding models to meet Basic Need.

Criteria for Expansion to meet Basic Need

Expressions of Interest in expansion from school partners will be evaluated against the following key criteria:

- i) Location in relation to Basic Need i.e. how well the additional places are located to meet growth and, in the case of Special School provision, whether the school is able to meet the needs of the additional young people requiring a Special School place;
- ii) Standards in the school: it is expected that schools that expand will be Outstanding or Good; *¹
- iii) The capacity of the school to provide suitable accommodation on the site, within existing space and within planning / buildability constraints;
- iv) Popularity of the school;
- v) Potential of any expansion to create overprovision or reduce diversity of provision in an area. *²

Process for Decommissioning of School Places

Given the complexity and range of specific local issues that will need to be considered in the event of the need to de-commission school places, a policy and process will be developed for consultation to be reviewed annually. The following criteria are likely to be key considerations:

- i) Potential of any decommissioning to leave children and families without the option of a local school place;
- ii) Standards in the school;
- iii) The implications for the school running costs of reducing pupil numbers, in particular in relation to fixed overheads such as PFI contract obligations;
- iv) Popularity of the school.