



Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services

***Wednesday, 9 September 2020 at 10.00 am
Virtual meeting via MS Teams***

Please note that due to guidelines imposed on social distancing by the Government this meeting will be held virtually.

For further information on this please contact the Committee Officer (details below) bearing in mind the information set out at Item 3 on this Agenda.

If you wish to view proceedings please click on this [live stream link](#). However, that will not allow you to participate in the meeting.

Items for Decision

The items for decision under individual Cabinet Members' delegated powers are listed overleaf, with indicative timings, and the related reports are attached. Decisions taken will become effective immediately.

Copies of the reports are circulated (by e-mail) to all members of the County Council.

These proceedings are open to the public

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Yvonne Rees'.

Yvonne Rees
Chief Executive

August 2020

Committee Officer: **Lucy Tyrrell**
Tel: 07741 607834; E-Mail: lucy.tyrrell@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Note: Date of next meeting: 14 October 2020

If you have any special requirements (such as a large print version of these papers or special access facilities) please contact the officer named on the front page, but please give as much notice as possible before the meeting.

Items for Decision

1. **Declarations of Interest**

2. **Questions from County Councillors**

Any county councillor may, by giving notice to the Proper Officer by 9 am two working days before the meeting, ask a question on any matter in respect of the Cabinet Member's delegated powers.

The number of questions which may be asked by any councillor at any one meeting is limited to two (or one question with notice and a supplementary question at the meeting) and the time for questions will be limited to 30 minutes in total. As with questions at Council, any questions which remain unanswered at the end of this item will receive a written response.

Questions submitted prior to the agenda being despatched are shown below and will be the subject of a response from the appropriate Cabinet Member or such other councillor or officer as is determined by the Cabinet Member, and shall not be the subject of further debate at this meeting. Questions received after the despatch of the agenda, but before the deadline, will be shown on the Schedule of Addenda circulated at the meeting, together with any written response which is available at that time.

3. **Petitions and Public Address**

This Cabinet Member for Education and Cultural Services Decisions meeting will be held remotely in order to conform with current guidelines regarding social distancing. Normally requests to speak at this public meeting are required by 9.00 a.m. on the day preceding the published date of the meeting. However, during the current situation and to facilitate these new arrangements we are asking that requests to speak are submitted by no later than 9.00 a.m. four working days before the meeting i.e. 9.00 a.m. on Thursday 3 September. Requests to speak should be sent to lucy.tyrrell@oxfordshire.gov.uk together with a written statement of your presentation to ensure that if the technology fails then your views can still be taken into account. A written copy of your statement can be provided no later than 9.00 a.m. 2 working days before the meeting.

Where a meeting is held remotely and the addressee is unable to participate remotely their written submission will be accepted.

Written submissions should be no longer than 1 A4 sheet.

4. **Statutory Notice to Expand John Watson (Special) School** (Pages 1 - 20)

Forward Plan Ref: 2020/066

Contact: Barbara Chillman, Service Manager – Pupil Place Planning Tel: 07554 103418

Report by Director for Children's Services (CMDECS4)

This report follows the publication of a Statutory Notice relating to the county council's proposal to expand John Watson School.

The proposal is to expand the secondary phase of John Watson School by 16 places from September 2022 onward. This would increase the overall capacity of the school from 91 to 107 places and would secure long-term provision for sixth form pupils.

As set out under Rule 19(a) of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules, this decision is exempt from Call-In as it is deemed urgent and any delay would seriously prejudice the Council's interests, in that any delay could mean the decision would be taken away from Oxfordshire County Council.

The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to approve the expansion of John Watson School by 16 places from September 2022 onward. This would increase the overall capacity of the school from 91 to 107 places.

This page is intentionally left blank

Division(s):

CABINET MEMBER EDUCATION & CULTURAL SERVICES

9 September 2020

REPORT ON THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF JOHN WATSON SCHOOL

Report by Director for Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet Member is RECOMMENDED to approve the expansion of John Watson School by 16 places from September 2022 onward. This would increase the overall capacity of the school from 91 to 107 places.**

Executive Summary

2. On 18 December 2018, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet approved a new Special Educational Needs & Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy to ensure sufficient school places are provided for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) as Oxfordshire's population grows. This strategy sets out how an emerging shortage of special school provision is resulting in an increased use of high-cost independent & non-maintained special school placements, resulting in a growing High Needs block revenue pressure and overspend. The shortage of special school places is also affecting the county's ability to complete an Education and Health Care Plan for pupils with SEND within the required 20-week period. The proposed expansion of John Watson School by 2022 is one of the actions noted in the Strategy.
3. Under Section 19 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, a local authority can propose the expansion of all categories of maintained school. It is proposed to expand John Watson School by 16 places from September 2022 onward. This would increase the overall capacity of the school from 91 to 107 places.
4. Such expansion requires a statutory consultation and decision-making process. The decision must be made in accordance with the *Education and Inspections Act 2006* (as amended), *The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013* and decision makers must have regard to the statutory guidance, "*Making significant changes ('prescribed alterations') to maintained schools*", October 2018 ("the Guidance"). Further details of the relevant legislation and guidance are set out below.
5. A statutory notice has been published, and the required representation period has ended. 3 responses were received, all of which expressed overall support for the proposed expansion.

Introduction

6. This report follows the publication of a Statutory Proposal/Notice (Stage 1) and a Representation (Stage 2 formal consultation) period relating to the county council's 'prescribed alteration' proposal to expand John Watson School. The proposal is made with the support of the school's leadership team and Governing Body. The Cabinet Member is now required to make a decision on the proposals in accordance with the statutory prescribed alteration procedures.
7. Although there is no longer a statutory 'pre-publication' consultation period for prescribed alteration changes, there is a strong expectation that schools and local authorities will consult interested parties in developing their proposal prior to publication, to take into account all relevant considerations. This proposal has been informed by the open consultation carried out by the county council between 25 January and 22 February 2018. The purpose of this consultation was to allow all those with an interest in provision for children and young people with SEND to feed back their views on the proposed plan, including the proposed expansion of John Watson School. The consultation was conducted via the county council's consultation website, and advertised on the Local Offer Page of the council's website, in School News, by direct email to SEND provision serving Oxfordshire, via social media, SENCO newsletter and direct mailing to parent support groups in Oxfordshire. This consultation received 31 responses, 20 of which specifically agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal to expand John Watson School (65%). The proposal to expand John Watson has also been publicised through Cabinet reports and other communications related to the Special Provision Fund and the SEND Sufficiency Strategy, as well as the 2018 and 2019 Pupil Place Plans.
8. The proposed expansion would be part funded from the Special Provision Fund government grant. To meet the conditions of this funding, the county council worked with a High Needs Review Steering Group to review provision for children and young people with SEND. This Steering Group included representatives from the county's special and mainstream schools, and was one key mechanism through which education providers were consulted on this proposal.

Publication of the proposal

9. The statutory notice (Annex 1) was published in the Oxford Mail on 19 June 2020 and was also posted on the county council website. The Representation period ran until 17 July 2020, which is the statutory 4-week period required under the relevant legislation. The statutory notice was accompanied by a Full Proposal document (Annex 2), which was available to read online at the Oxfordshire County Council public website, or by request.

Representations

10. 3 responses were received during the 4-week statutory Representation period, all of which were in support of the proposal.

Legal background

11. Local authorities have a statutory duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure there are sufficient schools for their area. This duty will be met with the expansion of John Watson School, in order to address the expected increase in demand for places from planned, permitted and completed housing development in some of the areas served by the school, including Barton, Benson, Thame, Chinnor and Watlington.
12. Expansion of schools is covered by *The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013* ('the Prescribed Alterations Regulations') which should be read in conjunction with Parts 2 and 3 and Schedule 3 of the *Education and Inspections Act (EIA) 2006* (as amended by the *Education Act (EA) 2011*) and *the Prescribed Alterations Regulations*.
13. The expansion of a maintained school is subject to the "Guidance", as set out in "*Making Significant Changes ('Prescribed Alterations') to maintained schools*" published October 2018. This Guidance is for proposers and decision-makers. The Guidance states that the statutory proposal must contain sufficient information for interested parties to make a decision on whether to support or challenge the proposed change. The proposal should be accessible to all interested parties and should therefore use 'plain English'. The full proposal must be published on a website (e.g. the school or LA's website) along with a statement setting out:
 - (a) how copies of the proposal may be obtained;
 - (b) that anybody can object to, or comment on, the proposal;
 - (c) the date that the representation period ends;
 - (d) and the address to which objections or comments should be submitted.A brief notice (including details on how the full proposal can be accessed e.g. the website address) must be published in a local newspaper. Within one week of the date of publication on the website, the proposer must send a copy of the proposal and the information set out in the paragraph above to the governing body and any other body or person that the proposer thinks are appropriate.
14. The representation period must last for four weeks from the date of the publication. During this period, any person or organisation can submit comments on the proposal to the LA to be taken into account by the decision-maker. It is also good practice for representations to be forwarded to the proposer to ensure that they are aware of local opinion.
15. The county council confirms that it has adhered to the above Guidance.

Decision-making

16. The decision-making power in terms of determining the proposal in this case lies with the Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services. In considering the proposals for a school expansion, the Cabinet Member can decide to:
 - reject the proposals;

- approve the proposals without modifications;
 - approve the proposals with such modifications as the local authority thinks desirable, having consulted the governing body;
 - approve the proposal – with or without modification – subject to certain conditions (such as the granting of planning permission) being met.
17. Where a LA is the decision maker, it must make a decision within a period of two months of the end of the representation period, which in this case requires a decision to be made by the 17 September. Where a decision is not made within this time frame, the LA must refer the proposal to the Schools Adjudicator for a decision.
 18. The *Guidance* states that “decision-makers will need to be satisfied that the appropriate fair and open local consultation and/or representation period has been carried out and that the proposer has given full consideration to all the responses received. Decision-makers should not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view. Instead, they should give the greatest weight to responses from those stakeholders likely to be most affected by a proposal – especially parents of children at the affected school(s)”.
 19. The *Guidance* sets out the following factors which should be considered in deciding this proposal.
 20. **Education standards and diversity of provision:** Decision-makers should consider the quality and diversity of schools in the relevant area and whether the proposal will meet or affect the needs of parents; raise local standards and narrow attainment gaps.
 21. John Watson School has an Ofsted rating of “Good”. The guidance states that it is expected that additional places will only be provided at schools that have an overall Ofsted rating of “Good” or “Outstanding”. The expansion will be supportive of high educational standards and parental choice and would increase the number of places available at good schools.
 22. **Equal opportunities issues:** The decision-maker must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which requires them to have “due regard” to the need to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it. The characteristics that are protected in relation to the Public Sector Equality Duty are: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.
 23. Expansion of this school would increase equality of opportunity in terms of access to special school places. It would make it easier and quicker for pupils with SEND to access appropriate education.
 24. **Community cohesion:** When considering a proposal, the decision-maker should consider its impact on community cohesion.
 25. Expansion of this school would help to enable children with SEND living in the surrounding area to access special school education. Access to a local school is a key element in creating community cohesion.

26. **Travel and accessibility:** Decision-makers should satisfy themselves that accessibility planning has been properly considered and the proposed changes should not adversely impact on disadvantaged groups. The decision-maker should bear in mind that a proposal should not unreasonably extend journey times or increase transport costs, or result in too many children being prevented from travelling sustainably due to unsuitable walking or cycling routes. A proposal should also be considered on the basis on how it will support and contribute to the LA's duty to promote the use of sustainable travel.
27. Expansion of this school would prevent the need for children to be transported to schools further afield, and help to minimise journey times and vehicular transport.
28. **Funding:** The decision-maker should be satisfied that any necessary funding required to implement the proposal will be available and that all relevant local parties (e.g. trustees or religious authority) have given their agreement.
29. The estimated capital cost of the project is around £3m. As noted in the Council's SEND Sufficiency of Places Strategy, the project is expected to be funded from the Special Provision Fund and S106 developer contributions.

Financial and Staff Implications

30. The financial implications of this report are linked to the capital works that will be carried out should the proposal be approved. These capital works will be subject to formal approval in accordance with OCC Capital Governance requirements.
31. The school will need to meet any additional costs for staffing, curriculum resources and maintenance costs from its delegated budget share. The funding formula on which the school's budget share is calculated will allocate additional financial resources based on increased pupil numbers.

Equalities Implications

32. As outlined above, expansion of this school would increase equality of opportunity in terms of access to special school places.
33. A Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA) has been completed for this proposal (Annex 3).

KEVIN GORDON

Director for Children's Services

- Annexes:
- Annex 1: Public Notice
 - Annex 2: Full Statutory Proposal Document
 - Annex 3: Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA)

Contact Officer: Barbara Chillman, Pupil Place Planning Manager, 01865
323804
August 2020



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Proposed Expansion of John Watson School

Notice is given in accordance with The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England) Regulations 2013 that Oxfordshire County Council intends to make a prescribed alteration to John Watson School, Steve Drywood Building, Wheatley Park Campus, Holton, Oxford OX33 1QH, from 01 September 2022.

The Local Authority, working with the Governing Body of the school, proposes to expand the secondary phase of John Watson School by 16 places from September 2022 onward. This would increase the overall capacity of the school from 91 to 107 places.

This Notice is an extract from the full proposal, which can be viewed under the Current Consultations listings on the Oxfordshire County Council public website at <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/johnwatsonexpansion>. Copies can also be requested by contacting:

Barbara Chillman (Pupil Place Planning Manager)

Tel: 01865 323804 or Email: school.planning@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Within four weeks from the date of publication of this Notice, any person may object to or make comments on the proposal by sending them to the Local Authority using the online feedback form located on the Oxfordshire County Council website as detailed above, or by email or post to the above addresses.

Signed: Jane Portman, Interim Director of Children's Services

Publication Date: 19 June 2020

This page is intentionally left blank



OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

FULL STATUTORY PROPOSAL

The School Organisation (Prescribed Alterations to Maintained Schools) (England)
Regulations 2013

Expansion of John Watson (special) School (secondary phase)

1. School and LA details

School: John Watson School (secondary phase)

Address: Steve Drywood Building, Wheatley Park Campus, Holton, Oxford OX33
1QH

Local Authority: Oxfordshire County Council

2. Description of alteration

John Watson School provides up to 91 places for pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD) and profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD) aged 2-19. The school is co-educational.

Oxfordshire County Council, working with the Governing Body of the school, proposes to expand the secondary phase of John Watson School by 16 places from September 2022 onward. This would increase the overall capacity of the school from 91 to 107 places and would secure long-term provision for sixth form pupils.

To accommodate this expansion, the county council would replace an aged relocatable classroom unit with permanent accommodation. Comments about the design of the additional accommodation should be submitted through the planning permission consultation.

3. Evidence of demand

On 18 December 2018, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet approved a new *Special Educational Needs & Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy* to ensure sufficient school places are provided for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) as Oxfordshire's population grows. This strategy sets out how an emerging shortage of special school provision is resulting in an increased use of high-cost independent & non-maintained special school placements, resulting in a growing High Needs block revenue pressure and overspend. The shortage of special school places is also affecting the county's ability to complete an Education and Health Care Plan for pupils with SEND within the required 20-week period. The Strategy states that an additional 200 special school places would be required in Oxfordshire by 2022

to reverse the recent dependence on the independent non-maintained special school sector and ensure needs can be met through the local authority's provision.

The proposed expansion of John Watson School by 2022 is noted in the Strategy. The school currently offers 91 places, and Pupil Census Data from October 2019 shows that, at this time, there were 82 pupils on roll, including 37 in the secondary phase. Planned, permitted and completed housing development in some of the areas served by the school, including Barton, Benson, Thame, Chinnor and Watlington, is expected to increase demand for places at the school. If the school does not expand, pupils with SEN living in these areas may have to travel further to attend a special school in future, reducing community cohesion and increasing transport costs.

The proposed expansion would be part funded from the Special Provision Fund government grant. To meet the conditions of this funding, the county council worked with a High Needs Review Steering Group to review provision for children and young people with SEND. This Steering Group included representatives from the county's special and mainstream schools, and was one key mechanism through which education providers were consulted on this proposal.

This proposal has been informed by the open consultation carried out by the county council between 25 January and 22 February 2018. The purpose of this consultation was to allow all those with an interest in provision for children and young people with SEND to feed back their views on the proposed plan, including the proposed expansion of John Watson School. The consultation was conducted via the county council's consultation website, and advertised on the Local Offer Page of the council's website, in School News, by direct email to SEND provision serving Oxfordshire, via social media, SENCO newsletter and direct mailing to parent support groups in Oxfordshire. This consultation received 31 responses, 20 of which agreed or strongly agreed with the proposal to expand John Watson School (65%). Of those who disagreed or strongly disagreed, the main concerns related to:

- The need for additional SEN places in other areas of the county, such as South and West Oxfordshire.
 - The proposal to expand John Watson School has resulted from ongoing work with Oxfordshire's special schools to identify needs and opportunities for investment. A review of special school provision was undertaken as part of the SEND Strategy to identify any opportunities for expansion.
 - A new special school is planned in Didcot for pupils with Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. Other special schools have increased their capacity within the last few years, and opportunities for further expansion of existing special schools will be considered on a case-by-case basis depending on feasibility and funding from developer contributions.
- The need for special school provision for pupils with SEMH needs.
 - New special schools are planned in Bloxham and Didcot to cater for children with SEMH needs. Northfield School in Oxford, which caters for boys with SEMH needs aged 11-18, will also be rebuilt and expanded.

The proposal to expand John Watson has also been publicised through Cabinet reports and other communications related to the Special Provision Fund and the SEND Sufficiency Strategy, as well as the 2018 and 2019 Pupil Place Plans.

4. Objectives

The proposed expansion would:

- Be supportive of high educational standards for SEN education provision. John Watson School is rated Good by Ofsted (last inspected May 2016);
- Provide more special school places for Oxfordshire's growing pupil population;
- Make it easier and quicker to place pupils with SEND in appropriate education;
- Reduce the county council's expenditure on high cost places at independent schools.

5. The effect on other schools, academies and educational institutions within the area

Due to the existing and growing shortage of special school places in the county, the expansion of John Watson School is not expected to have a detrimental effect on existing maintained schools. It is expected that this expansion would reduce the number of places the county council needs to purchase at independent & non-maintained special schools.

6. Project costs and funding

The estimated cost of the project is around £3m. As noted in the Council's SEND Sufficiency of Places Strategy, the project is expected to be funded from the Special Provision Fund and S106 developer contributions.

7. Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

It is expected that building work will be completed by September 2022, enabling the school to increase its secondary intake from this date.

8. Objections and comments

Comments or objections must be received by the local authority by **17 July 2020**.

Respond by:

- using the online questionnaire at <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/johnwatsonexpansion>
- emailing school.planning@oxfordshire.gov.uk (please quote 'John Watson Expansion' in the subject line)

9. Decision-making

The decision-maker for this proposed expansion is Oxfordshire County Council. The decision will be made by the Cabinet Member for Education and Cultural Services at a meeting which is open to the public, and publicised on the county council's website. The decision must be made within a period of two months of the end of this representation period, and is currently expected on 9 September 2020.

Service and Community Impact Assessment (SCIA)

Front Sheet:

Directorate and Service Area:

**People
Sufficiency & Access**

What is being assessed (e.g. name of policy, procedure, project, service or proposed service change):

Expansion of John Watson School

Responsible owner / senior officer:

Barbara Chillman

Date of assessment:

July 2020

Summary of judgement:

Oxfordshire County Council, working with the leadership team of the school, proposes to expand John Watson School by 16 places from September 2022 onward. This would increase the overall capacity of the school from 91 to 107 places.

The proposed expansion would improve access to special education for the local community, and would therefore have a positive impact for the local community.

Detail of Assessment:

Purpose of assessment:

Due to population growth and an increase in demand for special school places across Oxfordshire, expansion of John Watson School is proposed as part of Oxfordshire County Council's Special Educational Needs & Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy. This SCIA is intended to provide an assessment to guide the process of expanding the school.

You should also include the following statement to clearly set out the reasons and context for undertaking the assessment:

Section 149 of the Equalities Act 2010 ("the 2010 Act") imposes a duty on the Council to give due regard to three needs in exercising its functions. This proposal is such a function. The three needs are:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act.
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, and those who do not.

Complying with section 149 may involve treating some people more favourably than others, but only to the extent that that does not amount to conduct which is otherwise unlawful under the new Act.

The need to advance equality of opportunity involves having due regard to the need to:

- remove or minimise disadvantages which are connected to a relevant protected characteristic and which are suffered by persons who share that characteristic,
- take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and which are different from the needs other people, and
- encourage those who share a relevant characteristic to take part in public life or in any other activity in which participation by such people is disproportionately low.
- take steps to meet the needs of disabled people which are different from the needs of people who are not disabled and include steps to take account of a person's disabilities.

The need to foster good relations between different groups involves having due regard to the need to tackle prejudice and promote understanding.

These protected characteristics are:

- age
- disability

- gender reassignment
- pregnancy and maternity
- race – this includes ethnic or national origins, colour or nationality
- religion or belief – this includes lack of belief
- sex
- sexual orientation
- marriage and civil partnership

Social Value

Under the Public Services (Social Value Act) 2012 the Council also has an obligation to consider how the procurement of services contracts with a life value of more than £173,934¹¹ might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the area affected by the proposed contract, and how it might act to secure this improvement. However, it is best practice to consider social value for all types of contracts, service delivery decisions and new/updated policies. In this context, 'policy' is a general term that could include a strategy, project or contract.

Context / Background:

Special school capacity is being planned strategically across Oxfordshire, guided by the Special Educational Needs & Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy approved by Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet on 18 December 2018. This strategy sets out how an emerging shortage of special school provision is resulting in an increased use of high-cost independent & non-maintained special school placements, resulting in a growing High Needs block revenue pressure and overspend. The shortage of special school places is also affecting the county's ability to complete an Education and Health Care Plan for pupils with SEND within the required 20-week period. The proposed expansion of John Watson School by 2022 is one of the actions noted in the Strategy.

Proposals:

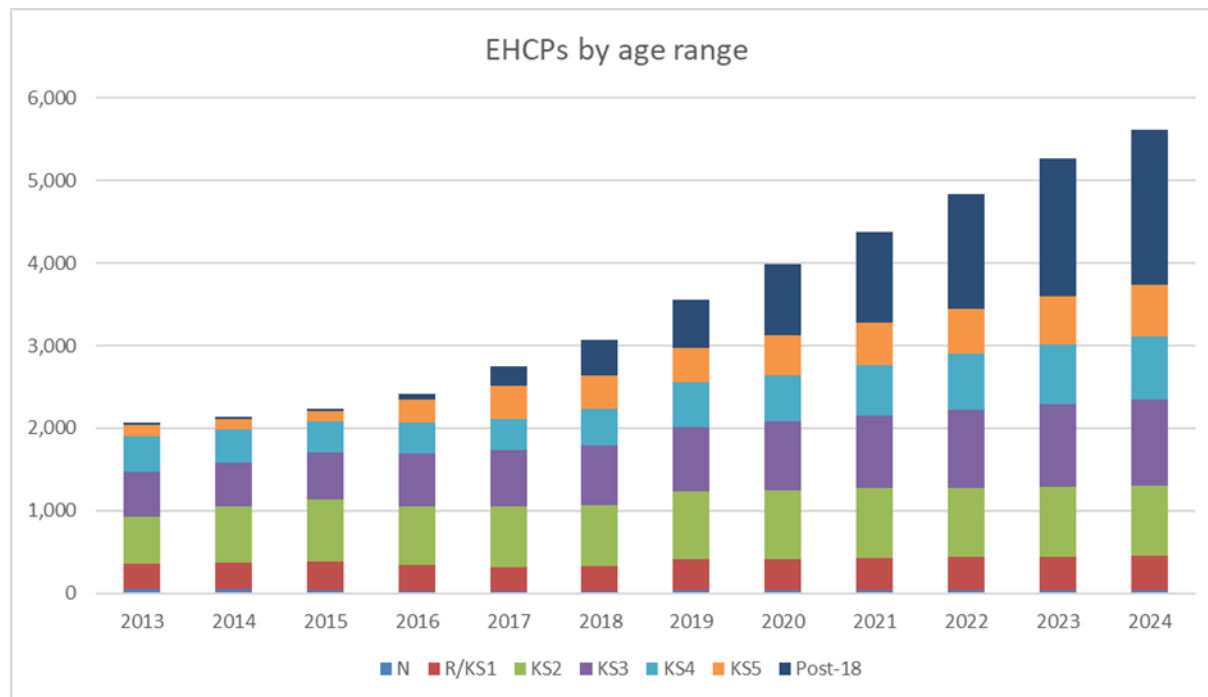
John Watson School in Wheatley is a community special school for pupils aged 2-19 with severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties. It is proposed to expand the secondary age range at John Watson School by 16 places from September 2022 onward. This would increase the overall capacity of the school from 91 to 107 places. This follows on from a recent project to also expand the primary age range by the same amount.

Evidence / Intelligence:

¹¹ [EC Procurement Threshold for Services](#)

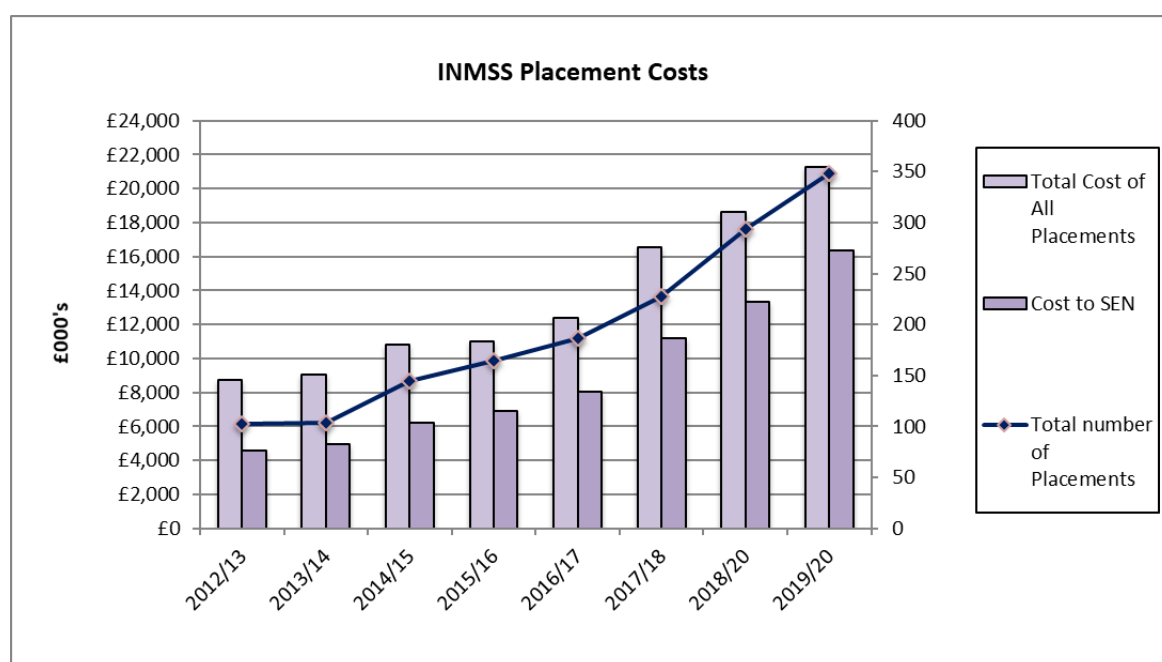
Demand for special education provision has risen rapidly in recent years, and is projected to continue to do so.

Past and projected EHCPs maintained by age range, 2013-2024 (assuming recent trends in EHCP incidence continue):



A shortage of special school provision has led to a sharp increase in the reliance on high-cost Independent & Non-Maintained Special Schools.

Independent & Non-Maintained Special School placements and costs 2012/13 – 2019/20:



Alternatives considered / rejected:

The county council has a statutory duty to ensure sufficient school places for children with special educational needs and disabilities. Given the current and expected growth in the numbers of pupils requiring such provision, doing nothing would have led to failure to meet this statutory duty, and/or continued unsustainable overspends on the High Needs Budget.

The expansion of John Watson School is only one strand of the Special Educational Needs & Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy; other special schools either have been, or are being expanded. In addition new schools are planned for the north and south of the county, and Orion Academy in Oxford is being rebuilt and expanded.

Impact Assessment:

Impact on Individuals and Communities:

Age

The proposed expansion will help to enable pupils with SEND to attend a school close to where they live, and will therefore have a positive impact.

Disability

The expansion of this special school will have a positive impact on provision for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities, as more special school places will be available, facilitating the timely completion of EHCPs.

Rural communities

Rural communities, as a result of the more dispersed population, typically face longer travel distance to special schools than for urban areas. John Watson's location will facilitate access to special education for a large rural area.

No specific impact has been identified on the following groups:

- Religion/belief
- Sex
- Gender reassignment
- Race/nationality
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Sexual orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership
- Areas of deprivation

| Risks | Mitigations |
|---|--|
| Insufficient special school places are created at the expanded school | Annual pupil forecasting and close cooperation with district councils to |

| | |
|--|--|
| | <p>forecast as accurately as possible future demand.</p> <p>The Special Educational Needs & Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy also includes other actions to ensure sufficient special education places.</p> |
|--|--|

Impact on Staff:

Staff

Where special schools have to turn away children due to a shortage of capacity, staff may experience stress, and negative behaviour from angry and upset parents.

| Risks | Mitigations |
|--|---|
| <p>Insufficient school places are created at the expanded school, resulting in staff experiencing negative responses from parents.</p> | <p>Annual pupil forecasting and close cooperation with district councils to forecast as accurately as possible future demand.</p> <p>The Special Educational Needs & Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy also includes other actions to ensure sufficient special education places.</p> |

Impact on other Council services:

Other council services

Transport – if special school places are not available close to where children live, pupils with SEND face longer journeys to school.

| Risks | Mitigations |
|--|---|
| <p>There is a mismatch between where school places are available and where parents live, resulting in increased traffic and transport costs.</p> | <p>Annual pupil forecasting and close cooperation with district councils to forecast as accurately as possible future demand.</p> <p>The Special Educational Needs & Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy also includes other actions to ensure sufficient special education places.</p> |

Impact on providers:

Providers: schools

If there are insufficient special school places, children with SEND may not be able to access suitable provision, increasing pressure on mainstream schools.

| Risks | Mitigations |
|--|--|
| Insufficient school places are created at the expanded school, resulting in mainstream schools needing to keep pupils on roll whose needs require more specialist education. | Annual pupil forecasting and close cooperation with district councils to forecast as accurately as possible future demand. The Special Educational Needs & Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy also includes other actions to ensure sufficient special education places. Outreach support and advice to mainstream schools. |

Social Value

If the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 applies to this proposal, please summarise here how you have considered how the contract might improve the economic, social, and environmental well-being of the relevant area.

How might the proposal improve the economic well-being of the relevant area?

The proposed expansion may require additional staff at the school, thus creating jobs in the area.

How might the proposal improve the environmental well-being of the relevant area?

Provision of additional school places will minimise the travel to school distance for pupils attending special school.

Action plan:

Summarise the actions that will be taken as a result of the assessment, including when they will be completed and who will be responsible. It is important that the officer leading on the assessment follows up to make sure the actions are completed, and updates the assessment as appropriate. Any significant risks identified should also be added to the appropriate service or directorate risk register, to ensure they are appropriately managed and reviewed.

| Action | By When | Person responsible |
|---|------------------------|--|
| Statutory notice on expansion consultation | 19 June – 17 July 2020 | Barbara Chillman |
| Decision on expansion consultation | 9 September 2020 | Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services |
| Increase in the school's admission (if approved by Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Service) | 1 September 2022 | Jayne Howarth |

Monitoring and review:

Try to be as specific as possible about when the assessment will be reviewed and updated, linking to key dates (for example when consultation outcomes will be available, before a Cabinet decision, at a key milestone in implementation)

Person responsible for assessment:

| Version | Date | Notes (e.g. Initial draft, amended following consultation) |
|---------|----------------|---|
| 2020.1 | July 2020 | Initial draft |
| 2020.2 | September 2020 | Review following statutory decision |