



Delegated Decisions by Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services

***Wednesday, 10 July 2019 at 10.00 am
County Hall, New Road, Oxford***

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 at the end of the working day on 18 July 2019 unless called in by that date for review by the appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

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

July 2019

Committee Officer: **Deborah Miller**
Tel: 07920 084239; E-Mail: deborah.miller@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Note: Date of next meeting: 18 September 2019

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. **Petitions and Public Address**
3. **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.

4. **Change of Age Range at Valley Road Primary School** (Pages 1 - 10)

Forward Plan Ref: 2019/085

Contact: Joanne Booker, School Organisation Officer Tel: 07393 001258

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 change the age range at Valley Road Primary School from September 2019.

The proposal is to change the age range of the school from 3-11 to 4-11. The Governing Body proposes to consolidate all early years provision under the private childcare provider, Cygnets of Henley Ltd., which already operates on the school site.

The Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services is RECOMMENDED to approve the change of age range of Valley Road Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11 from September 2019 with the following conditions:

- ***That the school and the nursery can reach a mutually agreeable level of rent and other costs to ensure the current free entitlements, including the extended thirty hours offer run by the school for parents, can be maintained or extended.***
- ***That the current timings for the funded entitlements be maintained for at least 12 months from 1 September 2019, so as not to be disruptive to***

parents whose child already attends the nursery or is registered from September 2019.

- *That a suitable lease is drawn up to guarantee the continued provision of free nursery places longer term.*
- *That existing arrangements for integrated provision with Bishopswood (Special) School are maintained.*

5. Statutory Notice to Expand and Extend Age Range at Northfield School (Pages 11 - 74)

Forward Plan Ref: 2019/048

Contact: David Clarke, Deputy Director for Education Tel: 07741 607594

Report by Deputy Director for Education (**CMDECS5**).

This report follows the publication of a Statutory Notice relating to the County Council's proposal to expand Northfield School, subject to an academy sponsor being appointed.

The proposal is to permanently expand Northfield School to a capacity of 108 places. To accommodate this expansion, the county council would rebuild the school with purpose-built accommodation.

The Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed expansion of Northfield School, including rebuilding the school with purpose-built accommodation, with the following condition:

- 1. That a new academy sponsor is appointed to run the school.***
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Division(s): Henley-on-Thames

CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURAL SERVICES - 10 JULY 2019

REPORT ON THE PROPOSED CHANGE OF AGE RANGE FOR VALLEY ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Report by Director for Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services is **RECOMMENDED** to approve the change of age range of Valley Road Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11 from September 2019 with the following conditions:

- That the school and the nursery can reach a mutually agreeable level of rent and other costs to ensure the current free entitlements, including the extended thirty hours offer run by the school for parents, can be maintained or extended.
- That the current timings for the funded entitlements be maintained for at least 12 months from 1 September 2019, so as not to be disruptive to parents whose child already attends the nursery or is registered from September 2019.
- That a suitable lease is drawn up to guarantee the continued provision of free nursery places longer term.
- That existing arrangements for integrated provision with Bishopswood (Special) School are maintained.

Executive Summary

1. The proposal is to change the age range of Valley Road Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11 from September 2019, with all early years provision consolidated under the private childcare provider, Cygnets of Henley Ltd., which already operates on the school site.
2. This change would increase the flexibility of childcare provision and improve the school's budget position.
3. The change requires a statutory consultation and decision-making process.
4. A statutory notice has been published, and the required representation period has ended. There have been no objections to the proposed change of age range.

Introduction

5. 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 change the age range of Valley Road Primary School. The proposal is made with the support of the school's Governing Body. The Cabinet Member is now required to make a decision on the proposals in accordance with the statutory prescribed alteration procedures.
6. 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. In accordance with this expectation, the school ran a 2-week informal consultation from the 26th April to the 10th May. There were 3 responses; 2 of which were in support of the proposal and 1 of which raised concerns relating to continued access to the free nursery offer. The concern centred around a possible change in hours for the funded entitlements from the current 9am until 3pm. This is a free entitlement. If new hours were from 8am until 4pm as an example, then parents would have no choice but to pay for the additional two hours. This is addressed in the recommendations above.
7. Take up of nursery class places at Valley Road has been variable, with the nursery not reaching full capacity at any point in the 2017/18 academic year. Council sufficiency data however indicates a shortfall in funded provision for funded three and four year olds in Henley. A school survey in 2018 highlighted that a key reason for not choosing the school nursery class was the need for childcare covering the full school day. The Council would like to retain the same level of early years provision and the integrated places offered by Bishopswood Special School. The proposal would support this ongoing provision and extend the flexibility of the childcare offer to the community.

The Proposal

8. The statutory proposal (Annex 1) was published in the Henley Standard on 17 May 2019 and was also posted on the county council website. The Representation period ran until the 14 June 2019, 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.
9. The proposal is to change the age range of Valley Road Primary School from 3-11 to 4-11 from September 2019, with all early years provision consolidated under the private childcare provider, Cygnets of Henley Ltd., which already operates on the school site.

10. The current school nursery is not financially viable when not full and has an adverse effect on the school budget. The proposed alteration would:
 - Consolidate all on site early years and childcare provision under the management of Cygnets of Henley – judged ‘Outstanding’ at their last Ofsted inspection.
 - Retain the same overall number of funded early education places.
 - Retain the Integrated Nursery arrangements with Bishopswood Special School.
 - Extend access to ‘wrap-around’ childcare, supporting working families.
 - May improve the school budget position.
11. The Governing Body of Valley Road Primary School supports the proposed change of age range.

Representations

12. 1 response was received during the 4-week statutory Representation period. This response was in support of the proposal but emphasised the importance of maintaining the same level of early years provision at Valley Road for children with SEND. This is in reference to 8 full time nursery places offered by Bishopswood School in the integrated nursery. This is addressed in the recommendations above.

Legal Background

13. The Childcare Act 2006 places a duty on English local authorities to secure early years provision free of charge (Section 7 (as substituted by section 1 of the Education Act 2011)) and also to secure sufficient childcare for working parents (Section 6).
14. The Childcare Act 2016 (Section 1) places a duty on the Secretary of State to secure the equivalent of 30 hours of free childcare over 38 weeks of the year for qualifying children.
15. The proposal seeks to secure the ongoing viability of the childcare offer at the Valley Road site which otherwise could be lost and affect the sufficiency of early years places in the locality.
16. Change of school age ranges 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*.
17. A change of age range at 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.

18. 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.
19. The county council confirms that it has adhered to the above Guidance.

Decision-making

20. 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.
21. 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. Where a decision is not made within this time frame, the LA must refer the proposal to the Schools Adjudicator for a decision.
22. 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)”.

23. The *Guidance* sets out the following factors which should be considered in deciding this proposal.
24. **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.
25. Cygnets is an Ofsted ‘Outstanding’ Early Years provider. Existing strong links with the school will continue. The proposal will increase flexibility of the childcare offer for parents.
26. **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.
27. There will be no loss in the overall number of nursery places offered on the school site. Those parents requiring only the free entitlement will continue to have equal access to this provision. A memorandum of understanding will be developed with the provider to formalise the arrangements for integration of special nursery provision.
28. **Community cohesion:** When considering a proposal, the decision-maker should consider its impact on community cohesion.
29. It is not considered that the proposal would have an impact on community cohesion.
30. **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.
31. The expanded childcare offer as a result of the change of age range may encourage more parents to access childcare provision closer to home, reducing travel distances to other providers.

32. **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.
33. There are no additional capital costs as a result of the proposal. Legal fees for drawing up the lease will either be met from the school budget or by Cygnets.

Financial and Staff Implications

34. There are no financial or staff implications for the County Council. Valley Road Primary School reports that the proposed change will provide greater stability for their budget, and the Council's assessment is that it should not have a negative impact.
35. The school have re-deployed nursery staff within the main school. There will be no TUPE implications.

Equalities Implications

36. There are not considered to be any equalities implications for this proposal.

LUCY BUTLER

Director for Children's Services

Annexes: Annex 1: Public Notice
 Annex 2: Full Proposal Document

Contact Officer: Joanne Booker, School Organisation Officer, 07393 001258

July 2019



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Proposed Change of Age Range at Valley Road Primary 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 Valley Road Primary School, Valley Road, Henley-on-Thames RG9 1RR from 01 September 2019.

The Local Authority, working with the Governing Body of the school, proposes to alter Valley Road Primary School's age range from 3-11 to 4-11. The Governing Body intends to consolidate all early years provision under the private childcare provider, Cygnets of Henley Ltd., which already operates on the school site.

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/consultation>. Copies can also be requested by contacting:

**Joanne Booker (School Organisation Officer), Oxfordshire County Council,
Access to Learning, 4th Floor, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND
Tel: 07393 001258 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: Lucy Butler, Director of Children's Services

Publication Date: 17 May 2019

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OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

FULL STATUTORY PROPOSAL

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

Change of Age Range at Valley Road Primary School, Henley

1. School and LA details

School: Valley Road Community School

Address: Valley Road, Henley-on-Thames, RG9 1RR

Local Authority: Oxfordshire County Council

2. Description of alteration

Oxfordshire County Council, working with the Governing Body of Valley Road Primary School, proposes to alter the school's age range from 3-11 to 4-11.

The Governing Body proposes to consolidate all early years provision under the private childcare provider, Cygnets of Henley Ltd., which already operates on the school site.

3. Evidence of demand

Take up of nursery class places at Valley Road has been variable, with the nursery not reaching full capacity at any point in the 2017/18 academic year. Council sufficiency data however indicates a shortfall in funded provision for funded three and four year olds in Henley. A school survey in 2018 highlighted that a key reason for not choosing the school nursery class was the need for childcare covering the full school day. The Council would like to retain the same level of early years provision and the integrated places offered by Bishopswood Special School. The proposal would support this ongoing provision and extend the flexibility of the childcare offer to the community.

4. Objectives

The current school nursery is not financially viable when not full and has an adverse effect on the school budget.

The proposed alteration would:

- Consolidate all on site early years and childcare provision under the management of Cygnets of Henley – judged ‘Outstanding’ at their last Ofsted inspection.
- Retain the same overall number of funded early education places.
- Retain the Integrated Nursery arrangements with Bishopswood Special School.
- Extend access to ‘wrap-around’ childcare, supporting working families.
- Improve the school budget position.

5. The effect on other educational institutions within the area

The proposal is largely a change of management and is unlikely to affect other educational institutions. Bishopswood Special School - which integrates 8 nursery places within Valley Road nursery class - will continue this arrangement using the same accommodation but with Cygnets managing the mainstream nursery places.

6. Project costs and funding

No capital alterations are required. Lease costs will be met by Cygnets and the annual rent payable will be reviewed to reflect the increased space usage at the school.

7. Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

The proposal would be implemented from the start of the 2019/20 Academic Year. Children on Valley Road nursery school roll at 31 August 2019 would transfer to Cygnets Nursery from 1 September 2019.

8. Objections and comments

Comments or objections must be received by the local authority by **Friday 14 June 2019**.

Respond by:

- using the online questionnaire at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultations
- or emailing school.planning@oxfordshire.gov.uk (*please quote ‘Valley Road School Consultation’ in the header*)
- or in writing to **Joanne Booker, Access to Learning, Oxfordshire County Council, 4th Floor County Hall, Oxford OX1 1ND**

9. Decision-making

The decision-maker for this proposed change 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 10 July 2019.

Division(s): Leys

CABINET MEMBER FOR EDUCATION & CULTURAL SERVICES - 10 JULY 2019

REPORT ON THE PROPOSED EXPANSION OF NORTHFIELD SCHOOL

Report by Director for Children's Services

RECOMMENDATION

1. **The Cabinet Member for Education & Cultural Services is RECOMMENDED to approve the proposed expansion of Northfield School, including rebuilding the school with purpose-built accommodation, with the following condition:**
 1. **That a new academy sponsor is appointed to run the school.**

Executive Summary

2. Expansion of Northfield (Special) School, Oxford, is necessary to ensure sufficient special school places for pupils with additional Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH) in Oxfordshire. This is subject to a new academy sponsor being appointed to run the school, as is required following the school receiving an "Inadequate" Ofsted grade.
3. Such expansion requires a statutory consultation and decision-making process.
4. A statutory notice has been published, and the required representation period has ended. One objection was received, relating to concerns over the choice of the current school site for the expansion. However, an Options Appraisal concluded that re-provision of the school on the existing site was the preferred option.

Introduction

5. 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 Northfield School. The proposal is made with the support of the school's leadership team. The Cabinet Member is now required to make a decision on the proposals in accordance with the statutory prescribed alteration procedures.
6. 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. The proposal to expand Northfield School grew out of consultation during 2018 both into special educational provision in Oxfordshire in general and also specifically into the future of Northfield School:

- i. Oxfordshire County Council held a public consultation between 25th January and 22nd February 2018 to allow all those with an interest in provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities to feed into planning for Oxfordshire's future Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) provision. One theme emerging from this consultation was the need for improved provision for pupils with Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH)/Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) needs.
 - ii. On 4th June 2018 Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet approved a public consultation on the future of Northfield School. In July, parent and staff meetings took place to update them on the school's accommodation issues and options. The Director for Education, Member for Education, School Headteacher and School Improvement Manager led these meetings. The meetings allowed parents, pupils and staff to express their views and concerns. It was agreed at that point to establish temporary accommodation, so that the school could continue to operate whilst refurbishment of the main school building took place, and a review of the long-term solution for the school was completed in the context of the emerging SEND Sufficiency of Places Strategy.
7. Resulting from these consultations, 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 SEND as Oxfordshire's population grows. This strategy sets out how an emerging shortage of special school provision, especially for pupils with additional Social, Emotional & Mental Health needs \(SEMH\), 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.](#)
8. [Having considered the evidence presented in the Strategy, Cabinet gave in-principle approval to the expansion of Northfield School, as one strand of increasing special school provision, subject to the approval of this statutory proposal. The proposal is itself subject to an academy sponsor being appointed to run the school, as is required as a consequence of the school being rated as "Inadequate" by Ofsted.](#)

The Proposal

9. The statutory proposal (Annex 1) was published in the Oxford Mail on 17 May 2019 and was also posted on the county council website. The Representation

period ran until the 14 June 2019, 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.

10. The proposal is to expand Northfield School to a capacity of 108 places, subject to an academy sponsor being appointed to run the school. To accommodate this expansion, the county council would rebuild the school with purpose-built accommodation.
11. In November 2018, Northfield School was inspected by Ofsted and rated "Inadequate". As such, it is required to become an academy to receive additional support from an academy sponsor. If no academy sponsor can be appointed for a school rated "Inadequate", then a proposal to close the school needs to be considered.
12. If an academy sponsor can be appointed for Northfield School, the county council believes that part of the strategic plan to improve the quality of education would be expanding the school, and rebuilding it to provide purpose-built accommodation meeting the needs of its pupils. To make any future academy conversion process as straightforward as possible, the county council would approve the expansion before the school converts. It therefore published this proposal to expand the school, subject to an academy sponsor being appointed. Pupil numbers at the school would only rise in line with the accommodation available, and the school would not reach its full size until the new building is open, expected to be in 2021/2022.
13. Northfield School's existing accommodation has significant suitability and condition issues which limit the operation of the school, and has required significant investment over the last year to maintain. Rebuilding and expanding the school would be a key component of Oxfordshire's SEND Sufficiency Strategy.
14. The proposed alteration would:
 - Support the improvement programme at Northfield School by providing purpose-built accommodation;
 - Provide more special school places for Oxfordshire's growing pupil population;
 - Make it easier and quicker to place pupils with SEMH needs in appropriate education;
 - Reduce the county council's expenditure on high cost places at independent schools.
15. The leadership team and Interim Executive Board of Northfield School support the proposed school expansion.

Representations

16. 5 responses were received during the 4-week statutory Representation period. Of these responses 4 were in support of the proposal, whilst 1 objected.
17. The respondent who objected expressed concerns over expanding the current site, but supported expansion on split sites.
 - An Options Appraisal was carried out by the OCC Property Team, and concluded that the preferred option was to rebuild on the existing site, as this removed the possibility of local resistance, planning constraints and potential time delays that would otherwise result if the school were to be relocated onto a new site. The results of the Options Appraisal were reported to Cabinet in December 2018 as part of the proposal to rebuild and expand the school, which was approved.

Legal background

18. Local authorities have a statutory duty under section 14 of the Education Act 1996 to ensure sufficiency of school places. This duty will be met with the expansion of Northfield School, to provide sufficient special school places for pupils in Oxfordshire with SEMH needs.
19. 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*.
20. 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:
 - how copies of the proposal may be obtained;
 - that anybody can object to, or comment on, the proposal;
 - the date that the representation period ends;
 - 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.

21. 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.
22. The county council confirms that it has adhered to the above Guidance.

Decision-making

23. 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.
24. 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. Where a decision is not made within this time frame, the LA must refer the proposal to the Schools Adjudicator for a decision.
25. 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)”.
26. The *Guidance* sets out the following factors which should be considered in deciding this proposal.
27. **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.
28. Northfield School offers countywide provision for pupils with SEMH needs, for which there is currently a shortage of places within Oxfordshire. Expansion of the school would be achieved through a complete rebuild of the school,

providing purpose-built accommodation which would support the quality of education at the school. Expansion will also improve the county's ability to complete an Education and Health Care Plan for pupils with SEND within the required 20-week period.

29. **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.
30. Expansion of this school would ensure that children with SEMH needs in Oxfordshire can obtain access to a special school place closer to home, without the need to travel out of county. If sufficient places are not available within the heart of the community this can affect access to out of school activities, social contact with peers, and travel distances.
31. **Community cohesion:** When considering a proposal, the decision-maker should consider its impact on community cohesion.
32. Expansion of this school would enable children in Oxford and the surrounding area with SEMH needs to attend a school in their local community, which is a key element in creating community cohesion.
33. **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.
34. Expansion of this school would prevent the need for children with SEMH needs to be transported to special schools further afield, and help to minimise journey times and vehicular transport.
35. **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.
36. Oxfordshire County Council's cabinet (18 December 2018) has committed to fund the rebuild of Northfield School through the allocation of £9.52m capital budget within the council's capital programme.

Financial and Staff Implications

37. The financial implications of this report are linked to the capital works that will be carried out should the proposal be approved and an academy sponsor

appointed to run the school. As outlined above, capital funding has already been committed by the Cabinet.

38. The academy trust appointed to run the school will need to meet the costs of additional staffing, curriculum resources and maintenance costs from its delegated budget share. The funding formula on which the budget share is based will allocate additional resources based on increased place numbers.

Equalities Implications

39. As outlined above, expansion of this school would increase equality of opportunity in terms of access to special school places.

LUCY BUTLER

Director for Children's Services

Background papers:

Annexes: Annex 1: Public Notice
 Annex 2: Full Proposal Document
 Annex 3: Special Educational Needs & Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy
 Annex 4: Proposal to Agree to Re-Build and Expand Northfield School Through the Special Educational Needs and Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy

Contact Officer: Joanne Booker, School Organisation Officer, 07393 001258

July 2019

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**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Proposed Expansion of Northfield 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 Northfield School, Knights Rd, Oxford OX4 6DQ, from 01 September 2019.

The Local Authority, working with the leadership team of the school, proposes to expand Northfield School from 76 places to 108 places. This will be achieved through the rebuilding of the school on its current site. The additional places will become available once the school is rebuilt.

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/consultation>. Copies can also be requested by contacting:

**Joanne Booker (School Organisation Officer), Oxfordshire County Council,
Access to Learning, 4th Floor, County Hall, New Road, Oxford OX1 1ND
Tel: 07393 001258 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: Lucy Butler, Director of Children's Services

Publication Date: 17 May 2019

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OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

FULL STATUTORY PROPOSAL

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

Expansion of Northfield (special) School

1. School and LA details

School: Northfield School

Address: Knights Rd, Oxford OX4 6DQ

Local Authority: Oxfordshire County Council

2. Description of alteration

Northfield School provides up to 76 places for pupils aged 10-18 (although no post-16 pupils are currently enrolled). The school is co-educational (although currently no girls are enrolled).

Oxfordshire County Council, working with the leadership team of the school, proposes to expand Northfield School to a capacity of 108 places, subject to an academy sponsor being appointed to run the school.

To accommodate this expansion, the county council would rebuild the school with purpose-built accommodation.

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 SEND as Oxfordshire's population grows. This strategy sets out how an emerging shortage of special school provision, especially for pupils with additional Social, Emotional & Mental Health needs (SEMH), 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.

Having considered the evidence presented in the Strategy, Cabinet gave in-principle approval to the expansion of Northfield School, as one strand of increasing special school provision, subject to the approval of this statutory proposal.

4. Objectives

In November 2018, Northfield School was inspected by Ofsted and rated "Inadequate". As such, it is required to become an academy to receive additional support from an academy sponsor. If no academy sponsor can be appointed for a school rated "Inadequate", then a proposal to close the school would be made.

If an academy sponsor can be appointed for Northfield School, the county council believes that part of the strategic plan to improve the quality of education would be expanding the school, and rebuilding it to provide purpose-built accommodation meeting the needs of its pupils. To make any future academy conversion process as straightforward as possible, the county council would approve the expansion before the school converts. It is therefore publishing this proposal to expand the school, subject to an academy sponsor being appointed. Pupil numbers at the school would only rise in line with the accommodation available, and the school would not reach its full size until the new building is open, expected to be in 2021/2022.

Northfield School's existing accommodation has significant suitability and condition issues which limit the operation of the school, and has required significant investment over the last year to maintain. Rebuilding and expanding the school would be a key component of Oxfordshire's SEND Sufficiency Strategy.

The proposed alteration would:

- Support the improvement programme at Northfield School by providing purpose-built accommodation;
- Provide more special school places for Oxfordshire's growing pupil population;
- Make it easier and quicker to place pupils with SEMH needs 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 for pupils with additional SEMH needs, the expansion of Northfield 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. It is expected to be supportive for local mainstream schools, who will be able to more easily access the necessary specialist education for pupils with additional SEMH needs currently on their rolls.

6. Project costs and funding

Oxfordshire County Council's cabinet (18 December 2018) has committed to fund the rebuild of Northfield School through the allocation of £9.52m capital budget within the council's capital programme.

(<http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MId=5414>)

7. Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation

This proposal to expand Northfield School will only be implemented if an academy sponsor is appointed by the Secretary of State.

The design of the new school building is underway, and it is currently expected that the school's rebuild will be completed in 2021/2022. Until then, the school would continue operating in its current accommodation. Although pupil numbers can only grow significantly once the new building is complete, the county council wishes to formally expand the school before it converts to an academy. It will then commission places on a year-by-year basis in line with the school's accommodation.

8. Objections and comments

Comments or objections must be received by the local authority by **14/06/2019**.

Respond by:

- using the online questionnaire at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consultations
- or emailing school.planning@oxfordshire.gov.uk (*please quote 'Northfield Expansion' in the header*)
- or in writing to **Joanne Booker, Access to Learning, Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall, Oxford OX1 1ND**

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 10 July 2019.

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CABINET REPORT– 18 DECEMBER 2018

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS & DISABILITY SUFFICIENCY OF PLACES STRATEGY

Report by Director for Children’s Services

Recommendation

1. The Cabinet is **RECOMMENDED** to note and approve the special educational needs sufficiency of places strategy

Executive Summary

2. An analysis of the sufficiency of places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities demonstrated that there is an urgent need to increase the number of places available within Oxfordshire schools.
3. The special educational needs and disability sufficiency of places strategy has been written as a result of this analysis of need and builds on the county council’s vision for special education need and disability. The sufficiency of places strategy is part of a broader special educational needs and disability strategy in preparation.
4. In order to provide sufficient school places the analysis shows that by 2022 further places for approximately 100 more pupils with Education Health and Care Plans in mainstream schools and for an additional 300 special school places will be needed.
5. Paragraph 16 of the report sets out the 4 strands making up the Strategy.

Introduction

6. In 2018 Oxfordshire County Council conducted an analysis of the sufficiency of places for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
7. Since 2013 there has been increase in demand of 77% for Education, Health and Care Plans. This has led to an increase in demand for special school places and that there has been an increase in allocation of places to independent non- maintained special schools
8. The increase in the demand for places has placed a pressure on the high needs block. A review was conducted of the high needs block as part of a process that Local Authorities with funding from Central Government carried

out to review the spend. This was conducted by an external consultant, Linda Calverley and was completed August 2018.

9. The review also coincided with the outcome of the Joint Local Area special educational needs and disability Inspection and production of the subsequent Written Statement of Action.
10. The special educational needs and disability sufficiency of places strategy has been written as a result of the analysis of need that clearly shows that there is an urgent need to increase the number of places available within Oxfordshire schools.
11. This builds on our vision for special educational needs and disability which is:
 - a. Investing in and developing good quality local provision which meets the needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disability within Oxfordshire – the right pupils, in the right provision at the right place
 - b. Oxfordshire County Council has a whole- hearted commitment to investing in and developing schools' special educational needs and disability provision for the children of Oxfordshire. A 'local first' approach will ensure that children and young people's needs are at the core of our service planning.
 - c. In Oxfordshire we are proud of the special educational needs and disability education provision we currently deliver which enables more children and young people with special educational needs and disability to access local provision. Our future programme and creative approaches are enabling this work to expand and deliver even better outcomes.
12. The sufficiency of places strategy is one part of the broader special educational needs and disability strategy and this full strategy will be brought to Cabinet in spring term of 2019.

Key Issues

Ensure there are sufficient school places through the special educational needs and disability sufficiency of places strategy and reduce demand for independent and non-maintained specialist placements:

13. A special educational needs and disabilities sufficiency of places strategy has been produced (Annex 1). This strategy identifies that Oxfordshire's school age population is growing, both because of the rise in births experienced between 2002-2011 and due to the large-scale housing growth planned for the county between now and 2027. However, the growth in demand for special school and resource base provision has increased rapidly.
14. This is due to an increase in Education, Health and Care Plans (77% since 2013) due to changes brought in by Children's and Families Act 2014, which

increased the age range from 2-19 to 0-25 years. There has also been a rise in demand in children being identified as having social and emotional mental health needs, and/or a diagnosis of Autism. In addition, there has been a real term reduction in school funding, impacting on the ability for a mainstream school to effectively educate pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. This has resulted in children and young people requiring places at special schools, resource bases, independent non-maintained special schools, and/or can place them at risk of exclusion or elective home education.

15. Currently, the Council has a lack of special educational needs school places. Analysis has shown that the Council requires by 2022:
 - a. Places for approximately 100 more pupils with Education Health and Care Plans in mainstream schools, to be supported via an enhanced network of resource bases and mainstream programmes
 - b. An additional 300 special school places 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.

16. To meet this increase and demand for places the special educational needs and disability sufficiency of places strategy identifies four key strands. The four strands set out the vision for how Oxfordshire County Council will ensure sufficient education provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.
 - a. Strand 1: Ensure that all early year's providers and mainstream schools support an inclusive approach to education:

All children, where possible, to be educated in their local school, receiving the support they need at the earliest stage and providers following an inclusive approach for all children with special educational needs and disabilities.
 - b. Strand 2: Review of the current resource base provision across the County:

Conduct a review of all base provision needs and undertake a consultation with schools who currently have a resource base provision onsite to identify any opportunities to increase capacity.
 - c. Strand 3: Review of current special school sites
Whilst many of the special schools across Oxfordshire have already increased the numbers of children they admit the review is to focus on whether further expansion is possible and a survey of all special school sites has been undertaken.
 - d. Strand 4: New Schools
Open two new special schools focused on social, emotional and mental health needs and Autism in Bloxham Grove and Didcot and to rebuild Northfield school
For a detailed explanation please see Annex 1 (pages 16-19)

17. The special educational needs and disabilities team is working on aligning the various aspects in relation to special educational needs and disabilities and will be in the spring term bringing to Cabinet the completed overall strategy for special educational needs and disabilities and will also be reporting in February to Education Scrutiny.
18. The proposal is that the special educational needs and disability Programme Board, in the Spring term, will become the special educational needs and disabilities performance board to oversee and hold to account progress made within special educational needs and disability as a whole. This board will be chaired by the Lead Member for Education and reports will be given to Members, Education Scrutiny and other Governance Bodies.
19. Cabinet is asked to note and approve the special educational needs and disability sufficiency of places strategy.

Financial and Staff Implications

20. This strategy is aimed at increasing and improving special educational needs and disabilities places and provision within the maintained sector (including academies) to ensure the educational needs of all children with special educational needs and disabilities can be met without undue reliance on the independent non-maintained special school sector. In doing so it will also enable more effective and efficient use to be made of the high needs block funding.
21. There was an overspend of £1.2m by the end of 2016/17 in the high needs block which rose to £2.8m in 2017 /18 and is estimated to be more than £6m in 2018/19.
22. Work is underway to determine, utilising a recent survey of special schools, additional county council capital investment to implement this strategy and reduce the need to use the independent non-maintained special school sector.
23. The costs for a placement in an independent non-maintained special school would, as typical examples, be:
 - A day placement at a school for a child with social emotional & mental health needs, costs £53,649 per year (based on a child just going in to the school). The cost of this placement for 5 years (until the end of year 11) would be £268,245. This does not include transport costs on a daily basis, which equates to around £20,000 per year.
 - A day placement for a child attending a school for children diagnosed with Autism will cost around £77,000. The cost of a placement for 5 years would cost £385,000. This does not include transport costs.
24. A local first approach to meet the needs of children and young people will reduce the impact on the transport costs for students who are currently travelling considerable distances to access a school place.

Equalities Implications

25. The Local Authority needs to ensure that it has sufficient school places for all children, including those with special educational needs. It would not be fulfilling its statutory duty to ensure that sufficient school placements are available for all children if this strategy was not in place.

Risk Management

26. By providing the additional places the Council will be able to fulfil the choice and expectations of parents for the best possible education reducing the spend from the High needs block and special education needs transport budgets.
27. The Council will be able to meet its statutory duties of effectively and within the 20-week timescale complete an Education and Health Care Plan for a child.

LUCY BUTLER
Director for Children's Services

Background papers:

Contact Officer: David Clarke, Deputy Director for Education

December 2018

Annex 1:



Special Educational Needs Sufficiency of Places Strategy

2018-2027

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Executive Summary

This strategy:

- i. Ensures Oxfordshire has sufficient school places to meet the needs of all children with special educational needs and disabilities; ensuring that the provision is developed in the right place, at the right time, with the additional places to address population growth and the identified increase in demand.
- ii. Provides support across Oxfordshire's mainstream schools to ensure they provide inclusive education, and adopts a 'local first' approach wherever appropriate.
- iii. Ensures the high needs block funding is spent effectively to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and disabilities across Oxfordshire.

Oxfordshire's school age population is growing, both because of the rise in births experienced between 2002-2011 and due to the large-scale housing growth planned for the county between now and 2027. However, the growth in demand for special school and resource base provision has increased rapidly. This is due to:

- An increase in Education Health and Care Plans (77% since 2014) due to changes brought in by Children's and Families Act 2014, which increased the age range from 2-19 to 0-25 years (resulting in an additional 450 plans).
- A rise in demand in children being identified as having social and emotional mental health needs, and/or a diagnosis of Autism.
- A real term reduction in school funding, impacting on the ability for a mainstream school to effectively educate pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. Resulting in children and young people requiring places at special schools, resource bases, independent non-maintained special schools, and/or can place them at risk of exclusion or elective home education.

Previous growth planning for special schools in Oxfordshire was based predominantly on population growth. However, the rapid increase in the provision of Education Health and Care Plans has over the last few years has meant that even though many of the special schools have increased their capacity (Appendix 4) the need for additional places is continuing to grow and the current number of places is not sufficient to meet the demand. The consequence of this has led to: -

- Special school and resource base provision under strain, with most schools and bases currently at or over capacity because of the increase in special educational needs and disabilities demand.
- Increased use of independent non-maintained special school placements and as of January 2018, 227 pupils were placed at independent non-maintained special schools. This growth has doubled the cost of independent non-maintained special school placements since 2013 and for 2017/18 the total cost of independent non-maintained special school placements to the council was over £14m and this is predicted to rise for 2018/2019 because of insufficient places in the maintained sector.
- High needs block revenue pressures and overspend.

Currently, as a result there are insufficient school places to meet this demand which impacts on the ability for the Council to: -

- Effectively and in the 20-week timescale complete an Education and Health Care Plan for a child and fulfil the statutory requirements.
- Fulfil the choice and expectations of parents for the best possible education provision for their child
- Require increasing number of places into independent non-maintained special schools resulting in the overspend of the high needs block
- Utilise the high needs block resource to support early intervention in mainstream schools



The strategy was conducted to detail how the Council plans to address the current lack of special educational needs school places. Analysis has shown that the Council requires by 2022: -

- Support for approximately 100 more pupils with Education Health and Care Plans in mainstream schools, to be supported via an enhanced network of resource bases and mainstream programmes
- An additional 200 special school places to reverse the recent dependence on the independent non-maintained special schools sector and ensure needs can be met through the local authority's provision.

The paper identifies options to meet the increase in demand on places for children particularly, though not exclusively, with social and emotional mental health needs/Autism to: -

- expand and develop current education provision across mainstream schools
- review resource base and special school sector
- the building of new special school provision

The special educational needs and disabilities sufficiency of places strategy comprises four strands. These four Strands (see page 16) sets out the vision for how Oxfordshire County Council will ensure sufficient education provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities where the demand for places is increasing and the level of funding is decreasing both for the Council and Schools. The impact will be:

- A local first approach to educating children and young people with special educational needs
- Inclusive attitude to engage learners and schools reducing exclusions and in some cases elective home education
- Providing best value in the allocation of the high needs block and revenue spend, for example, for every 10 pupils taught in mainstream school this would lead to a saving of £226k/year

- Provide effective transport arrangements as pupils would be able to, where appropriate, access local provision
- Ensuring that Education Health and Care Plans are issued within 20 weeks and the content of each plan is of high quality with input throughout the process from parents/carers and young people. This will help to minimise the number of complaints and cost of appeals and tribunals.

The Need for this Strategy

Population growth

In Oxfordshire, as well as nationally, total pupil numbers have risen, and will continue to rise over the period covered by this report. The county has seen an increase in the birth population between 2002-2011. This growth has already progressed through the primary age range and is now filtering into the secondary sector.

Children & Families Act 2014

Following the Introduction of the Children's & Families Act in 2014, the age range of children eligible to have an Education, Health and Care plan increased from 2-19 (16 years if in a mainstream school) years to 0-25 years. The number of Education, Health and Care plans maintained by Oxfordshire since 2014 has increased significantly (77%). With the predicted population growth, it is expected that the total number of Education, Health and Care plans will continue to increase over the next five to ten years as shown on page 6, (Figure 1), around 13% per year. The number of children with an Education, Health & Care plan will have nearly doubled in five years.

The figures for the first ten months of 2018 show an increase from **13%** to **37%**. If the total growth of Education, Health and Care plans continue to accelerate rather than grow at the projected rate, the number of children with Education, Health and care plans will be higher than those predicted in Figure 1 in 2023 and the number of specialist placements required will exceed the current number planned.

The growth rate will need to be monitored carefully and this strategy will need to be refreshed annually to ensure that the demand for places is monitored closely.

Increased incidence of specific needs

The numbers of Education, Health and Care plans appear to be growing with a higher number of children being diagnosed with social, emotional and mental health needs and Autism (Figure 2 & 3). This rising demand and particularly the increasing complexity of needs is creating a lack of placements across the Local Authority.

Over the last five years, the number of Education, Health and Care plans with Autism Spectrum Disorders identified as the primary need has nearly doubled. Those children identified as having social and emotional mental health needs and specific learning difficulty as their primary need have also grown significantly faster than others, although specific learning difficulty remains a small percentage of the total of Education, Health and Care plans maintained by the Local Authority.

Children with social and emotional mental health needs and Autism now account for nearly half of Education, Health and Care plans maintained by Oxfordshire.

Figure 1: Projected number of Education, Health and Care plans for Oxfordshire by 2023

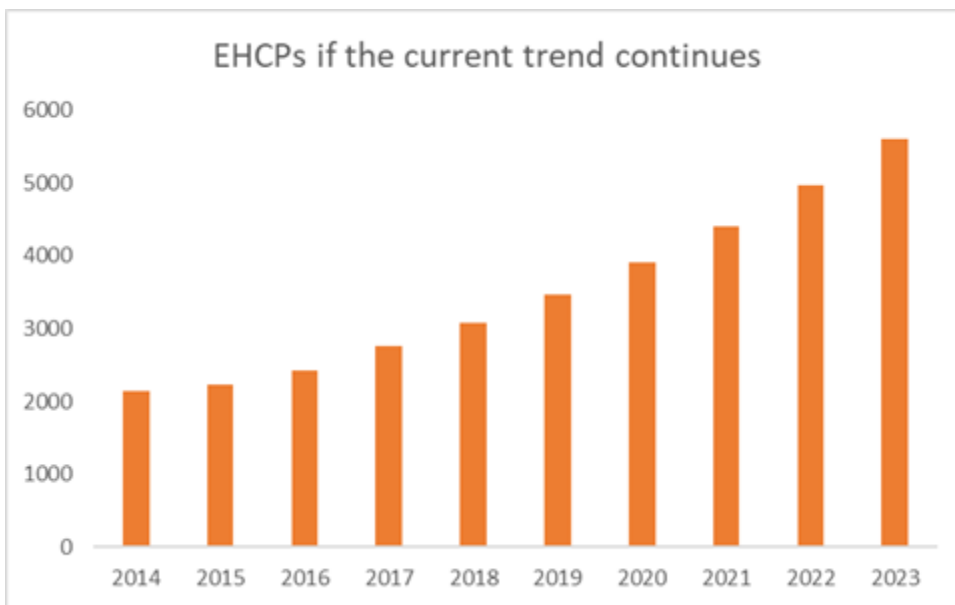


Figure 2: Increase in Education, Health and Care plans (all ages) listing each primary need in Oxfordshire 2014-2018

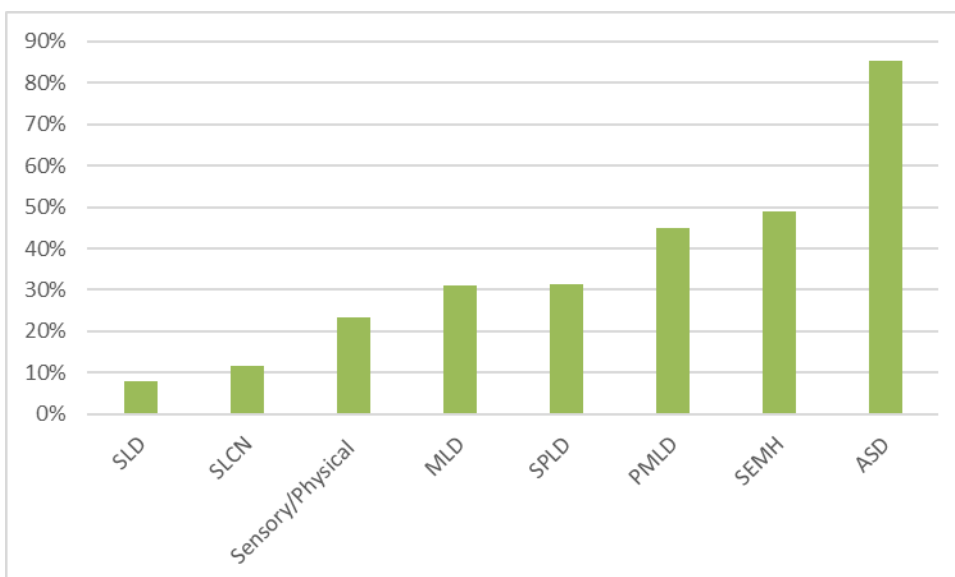
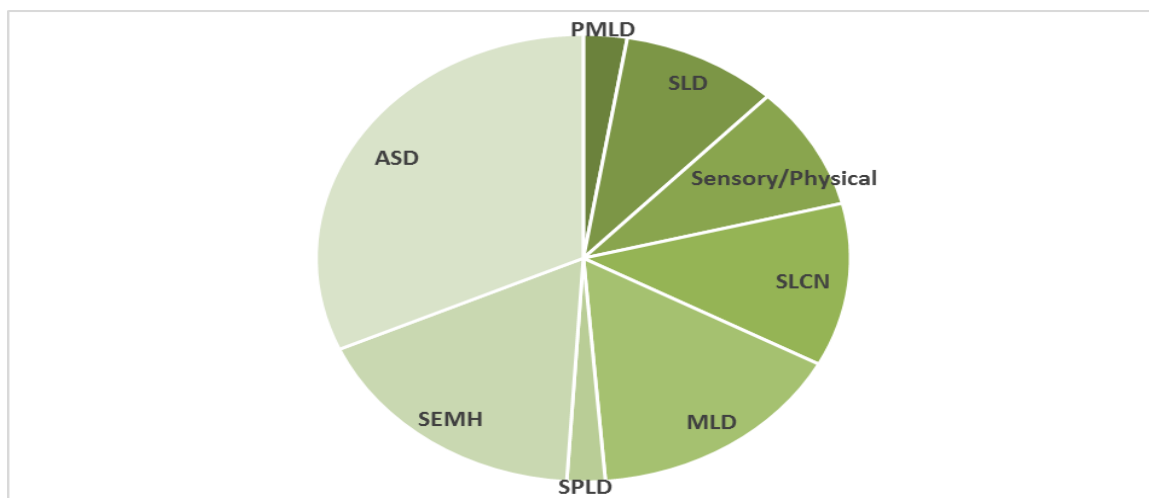


Figure 3: Oxfordshire Education, Health and Care plans (all ages) by Primary Need 2018



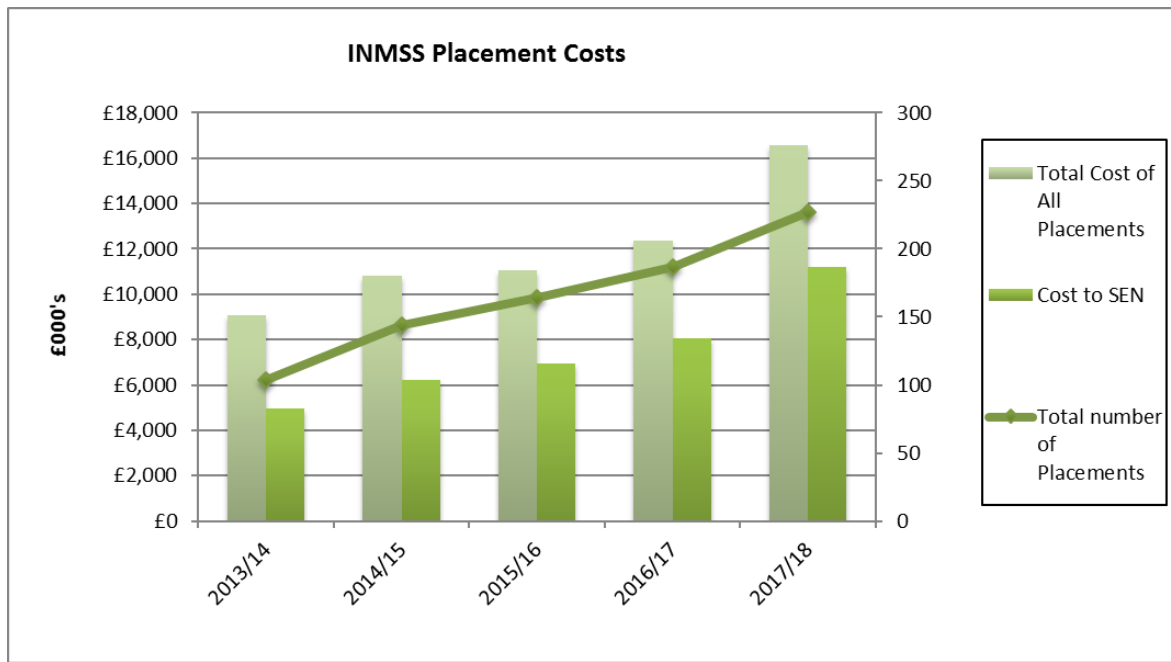
Due to the increase of children with a primary need of Autism/social and emotional mental health needs, additional provision will need to be developed across the mainstream & special school sector to ensure the Local Authority is able to provide support across the mainstream and special school sector.

Increased use of high-cost independent non-maintained provision resulting in an overspend on the high needs block.

Despite a significant increase in Oxfordshire's maintained special school places in recent years, the numbers of requests for specialist provision have risen more quickly and supply is not meeting demand. This has resulted in a year-on-year increase in the numbers of children funded from the high needs block in the Independent sector.

By January 2018, 227 pupils were placed in the independent sector. This growth has doubled the cost of independent non-maintained special school placements since 2013: in 2017/18 the total cost of independent non-maintained special school placements to the council was over £14m, this is continuing to grow as demand increases.

Figure 4: Independent non-maintained special school placements and costs (all ages) 2013/14 – 2017/18

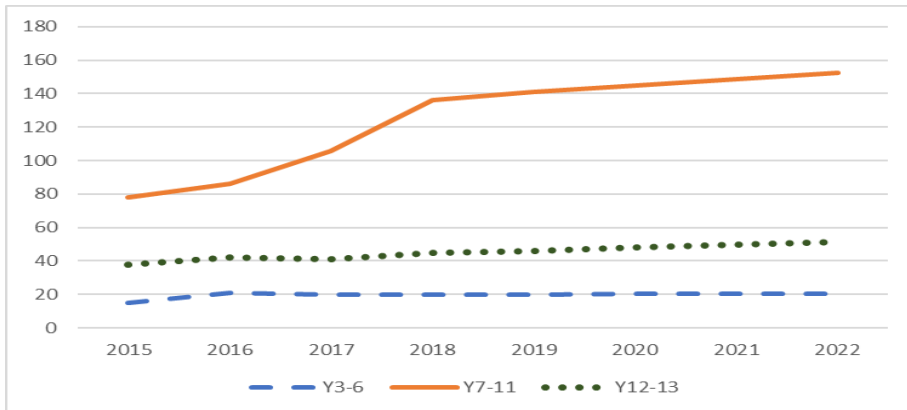


Most of this growth has been for children with Autism and social and emotional mental health needs, by 2018 placements with this area of need accounted for 73% of all independent non-maintained special schools school placements. This demand is exacerbated by the shortage of maintained special school places.

If independent non-maintained special school placements (all needs) grow only in line with the forecast population growth for each age group, there would be a minimal increase in the primary age group, but the secondary age group would grow by 17 places and the sixth form age range by another 6 places by 2022.

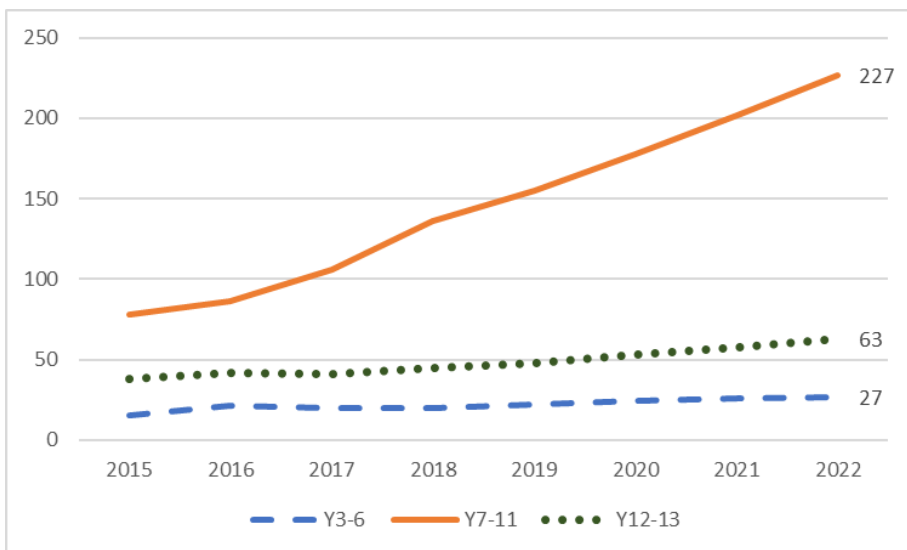
At an average cost of approximately £50,000 per place, if Independent Non-Maintained Special School placements only grow in line with population an extra 24 places at least would be required for the Year 3-13 age range and would represent an additional burden to the high needs block of approximately £1.2m.

Figure 5: Projected Oxfordshire Independent Non-Maintained Special School placements in line with population



However, if the trend since 2015 is projected forward, the additional number of places for the secondary age range would increase to 116. The additional pressure on the high needs block funding would be at least £5.8m.

Figure 6: Projected Oxfordshire independent non-maintained special school placements in line with recent trends



How well does Oxfordshire's current provision meet the current and future needs of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities?

Maps 1 and 2 (Appendix 1) illustrate significant weaknesses in the current distribution of special schools and resource bases across the Local Authority:

- There is a lack of primary resource bases in most areas outside Oxford city.
- There is a shortage of resource bases focused on social and emotional mental health needs.
- There is a lack of special school provision for social and emotional mental health needs and Autism outside of Oxford city.

As a result, many pupils face long journeys to school, especially for Autism and social and emotional mental health needs placements. While the profound and multiple learning disabilities/severe learning disability focused community special schools draw many of their pupils from the surrounding locality, only a third of pupils attending the county's social and emotional mental health needs special schools in Oxford live in Oxford.

The shortage of social and emotional mental health needs and Autism places mean that many pupils with these needs attend community special schools. In many cases their needs would be better met by more specialist schools, and if such schools were available, it would free up space at community special schools.

Many families do not consider the county's provision for social and emotional mental health needs and Autism adequately meets their children's needs, which leads to increased demand for higher cost places at independent non-maintained schools.

In 2017, Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission jointly inspected the effectiveness of Oxfordshire's approach to implementing the special educational needs and disabilities reforms set out in the Children and Families Act 2014. This inspection identified several key shortcomings that need to be addressed by a Written Statement of Action monitored by the Department for Education and Care Quality Commission on a quarterly basis.

Predicted number of additional special school and resource base places required.

It is predicted that the number of additional places required by 2022 will be:

- Support for approximately 100 more pupils with Education, Health and Care plans in mainstream schools, to be supported via an enhanced network of resource bases;

- An additional 200 special school places to reverse the dependence on the independent non- maintained special schools sector and ensure children's needs can be met in county through the local authority's provision.

The additional capacity will need to have a particular focus on social, emotional and mental health needs and Autism, which are the fastest growing needs in Oxfordshire and together now account for nearly half of all children in Oxfordshire with Education, Health and Care plans.

- The strategy primarily focuses on the five-year period 2018-2022, but also looks beyond to the following five-year period to 2027. Whilst also recognising that housing and population growth, and trends in special educational needs and disabilities provision, are less certain over the longer timeframe. The strategy will be reviewed and refreshed annually and where the trend differs from that which has been previously identified, the strategy will be revised accordingly.

This strategy sits alongside Oxfordshire County Council's special educational needs and disabilities high needs block funding Review 2018 which includes recommendations on funding models across the maintained and special school sector.

The Special Educational Needs & Disabilities education sufficiency strategy comprises four strands, which sets out the vision for how Oxfordshire County Council will ensure sufficient education provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities.

Strand 1: Ensure that all early year's providers and mainstream schools support an inclusive approach to education.

All children should be educated in their local school, receiving the support they need at the earliest stage. All providers should follow an Inclusive Approach to all children with special educational needs and disabilities. To ensure that support is available for all children the following will be addressed:

- Early Intervention strategies will be put into place to support schools to ensure that they are able to request support from professionals at the earliest opportunity.
- Following the review of the high needs block funding, measures will be put into place to ensure that any funding allocated to a child will follow the child, ensuring that the funding will always be available at the school or setting that the child attends to meet their needs.
- Review of the special educational needs support service to ensure that specialist teachers can support schools and settings to meet all children's needs at the earliest opportunity before the school/setting feels the need to apply for an Education, Health and Care plan. It is hoped that this approach will prevent the escalation of needs for some children which in turn can then lead to more expensive provision/school setting being required.
- There is a wealth of specialist expertise in schools/settings across Oxfordshire. Much of this support is used in its own sector and not spread

across to support other schools to meet children's needs. The Local Authority needs to be able to utilise this support to upskill staff in all schools to ensure that the inclusive environment that many schools offer is available to all, with staff having the expertise to deal with children with more complex needs.

- Offer outreach/inreach support across the early years/mainstream sector. Using the expertise that is available in our alternative provision and special school sectors.
- School to school peer support to upskill staff who do not feel confident that they are able to meet all children's needs.

It is hoped that this approach could help to reduce the number of fixed term and permanent exclusions across the County. However, this will not prevent all children being excluded so we need to ensure that any alternative provision provided supports children's educational needs, therefore we will need to undertake a:

- Ensure the alternative provision available across Oxfordshire will meet the needs of children in the primary and secondary sector have their needs met if they are permanently excluded without any delays (by the 6th day).
- Ensure that a robust commissioning approach is in place across Children's Services to ensure that any provision required to be commissioned is appropriate, cost effective and contracted appropriately.

Strand 2: Review of the current resource base provision across the County (Appendix 1 – List of current resource bases)

Currently many of the resource bases are run by staff employed by Oxfordshire County Council. The school does not have any of the employment costs or hold the responsibility to replace staff when they leave. This seems to be a situation that is unique to Oxfordshire as in many other Local Authorities, provision attached to a school site is often run by the school. The focus is to: -

- Conduct a review of all base provision needs.
- Undertake a consultation with schools who currently have a resource base provision onsite to identify any opportunities to increase capacity.
- Establish a clear funding mechanism (part of the high needs block funding review) to ensure that schools have the funds to cover the costs for staff and to support the pupils attending the resource base provision.
- Open at least 7 resource bases within new mainstream schools by 2022. It is hoped, where possible, that we can utilise empty space on an existing school site. Where possible expansion of resource bases will be tied in with expansion plans for current schools.
- New resource bases currently confirmed to open over the next 3 years are:
 - Aureus Primary School, Didcot, January 2019 – 8 places, Social and Emotional Mental Health needs (in addition to Didcot DEN which opened 2017)
 - Aureus Secondary School, Didcot, January 2019 – growing to 20 places, Social and Emotional Mental Health needs

- Banbury (starting at Longford Park, moving to new Southam Road Primary School), October 2018 – 10 places, Communication and Interaction/ Social and Emotional Mental Health needs
- Gagle Brook Primary School, Bicester, September 2019 – 6 places, Communication and Interaction
- SW Bicester secondary school, 2020 – 8 places, Social and Emotional Mental Health needs
- Barton Primary School, Oxford, 2020 – 8 places, Social and Emotional Mental Health needs
- New west Witney primary school, 2020 – 8 places, Communication and Interaction

This is a total of 68 additional places, which will significantly improve the geographic and primary need coverage of bases, as can be seen in **Appendix 3**.

In addition, Oxfordshire have completed many capital projects since 2011. Further projects across the County have been planned, some of which are already underway. Each proposal is explained in more detail in **Appendix 4**.

Strand 3: Current special schools (Appendix 2 – List of all current special schools)

Many of the special schools across Oxfordshire have already increased the numbers of children they admit to the school due to the increases in demand for places over the last few years. To determine whether further expansion is possible, a review of all special school sites has been undertaken to see:

- If further expansion is possible, either to reconfigure the current building to accommodate more students or whether there is room on the site to build additional accommodation.
- To review the internal accommodation, and provide investment to schools where refurbishment is required. Many of our special schools have not had any capital investment for several years and therefore may need some investment to upgrade them in some areas.
- Northfield school in particular is a school that requires significant investment, with the recommendation to re-build and expand the current school. Without this school, more children will need to be educated out of county which will further increase the pressure on the high needs block funding.
- Continue the current programme of special school expansions, with planned expansions by 2022 at:
 - Fitzwaryn School (Wantage)
 - Bardwell School (Bicester)
 - John Watson School (Wheatley).
- Confirm the potential to relocate and expand accommodation used by the secondary phase of Bishopswood School (Sonning Common).
- Provide new, expanded, accommodation to replace that currently used by Northfield School.
- Review additional capacity needs resulting from planned housing growth in each district, once the respective Local Plans are adopted and agreed.

- A review of all special school provision has been undertaken (Appendix 6) to identify any opportunities for expansion. Each school site will now be looked at closely and any development opportunities investigated further with schools.

Strand 4: New Schools

The following projects have already been highlighted:

- Open two new special schools focused on social, emotional and mental health needs and Autism:
 - Bloxham Grove in north Oxfordshire (due to open 2020);
 - A new school in Valley Park, Didcot in south Oxfordshire (target date 2023). Application has been submitted to the Department of Education to gain funding towards this project as part of the special free school application process.
- All projects will include resource base provision within the specification for new mainstream schools, except where the local need is already met.



Financial Summary

This strategy is aimed at increasing and improving Special Educational Needs & Disabilities provision within the maintained sector (including academies) to ensure the educational needs of all children with Special Educational Needs & Disabilities can be met without undue reliance on the Independent Non-Maintained Special School sector. In doing so it will also enable more effective and efficient use to be made of the high needs block funding.

There was an overspend of £1.2m by the end of 2016/17 in the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) High needs block which rose to £2.8m in 2017 /18 and is estimated to be more than £6m in 2018/19.

The DSG funding blocks were ring fenced from April 2018 and the Council becomes liable for any overspend. In comparison to other Local Authorities Oxfordshire is poorly funded and an example of this is that Buckinghamshire, a very similar Council in terms of size and number of pupils, has a High needs block allocation that is £17 million more than Oxfordshire.

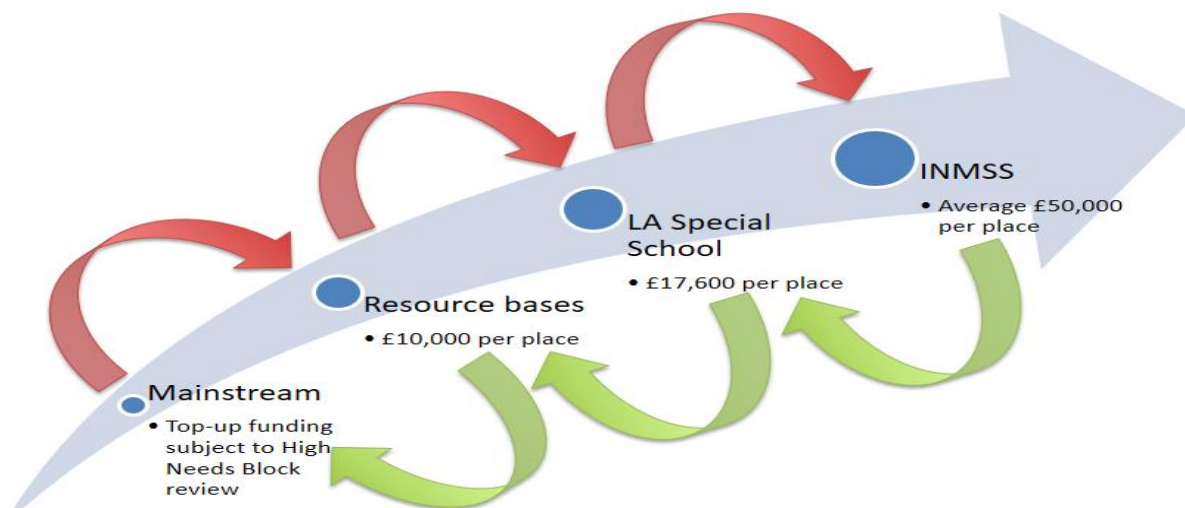
Without the investment proposed in this strategy, there will continue to be a growing overspend on the High Needs budget due to the reliance on high-cost Independent providers. It is only through the additional capacity proposed in this strategy that the decisive change necessary can be made in High Needs spending.

Additional county council capital investment proposed by this strategy (in addition to existing capital programme, and subject to confirmation over Section 106 funding) £15m

Expected annual revenue savings because of this strategy (after 6 years, once proposed new schools are at full capacity) £7m

Most importantly, these savings will be made while at the same time improving the education provision for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in Oxfordshire, reducing the reliance on out of county provision and reducing travel distances to access suitable provision.

Figure 7: Cost implications of special educational needs and disabilities market segments



Example

If the Local Authority decided not to increase the special school provision provided across the county, more children would need to be placed in the independent non-maintained sector:

Examples of costs are:

- A day placement at a school for a child with social emotional and mental Health needs, costs £53,649 per year (based on a child just going in to the school). The cost of this placement for 5 years (until the end of year 11) would be £268,245. This does not include transport costs on a daily basis, which equates to around £20,000 per year.
- A day placement for a child attending a school for children with Autism will cost around £77,000. The cost of a placement for 5 years would cost £385,000. This does not include transport costs.

The high needs block funding is already under extreme pressure and is currently showing an overspend. If the trend continues as is with the increased demand on the Independent sector, with costs for placements demonstrated above, this would further impact on the high needs block budget and put further pressure on the transport budget.

Revenue savings resulting from this strategy

Although this strategy recommends a very significant capital investment by the council, such investment will unlock a greater scale of future revenue savings.

Recent years have seen a trend towards greater use of higher cost special educational needs and disabilities education providers; this strategy facilitates the reversal of that trend by ensuring there are sufficient resource base and Local Authority special school places to meet Oxfordshire's needs.

As well as improving access to learning for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities, this will deliver better value for money and in time end the current overspend on the high needs block.

Although the expanding resource bases and special schools are an important part of enabling revenue savings to be made, the largest element relates to the additional provision proposed for social and emotional mental health needs and Autism.

The two new special schools and the replacement and expansion of accommodation currently used by Northfield School will provide 224 additional places specifically for children and young people with social and emotional mental health needs and Autism. The current shortage of suitable maintained special school places for these needs has led to a rapid growth in the use of independent schools, where places are on average around £30,000 per pupil per year more expensive than Local Authority special schools, and in many cases much higher than that. The 224 places created by this strategy therefore offer the potential to reduce spending by around £7m per year.

The full scale of this saving will, of course, only be realised if there are sufficient pupils who would otherwise have required Independent placements who are instead able to access Local Authority provision as a result of the additional capacity.

It must be recognised that these savings will not happen overnight. As well as the delay before the new schools can be built and opened, once they are, it is unlikely that significant numbers of pupils already at the Independent providers will transfer. A more conservative assumption is that the savings will grow annually as new placements can be made to the new schools rather than to expensive out of county providers.

In the last four years, an average of 35 new independent non-maintained special school placements have been made for Autism and social and emotional mental health needs per year, but this has been accelerating; by June 2018 there had been 44 new independent non-maintained special school placements for Autism or social and emotional mental health needs in the 2017/18 academic year, reflecting the upward trend. It is considered that the majority, if not all, of these would not have been required if sufficient suitable maintained special school capacity had been available. It is the future transfer pupils, rather than those already in independent non-maintained special schools, who would be the main targets for placements at the new schools. If 40 places per year could be diverted from the independent non-maintained special school sector to maintained schools as a result of this strategy, assuming a saving per place of approximately £30,000 this would reduce expenditure by around £1.2m in the first year, growing to the maximum saving within six years as the new school's fill.

Concluding Statement

This strategy focuses on delivering sufficient special educational needs and disabilities provision to ensure that capacity not only keeps up with population growth and increase in demand, but also reverses the trend towards the high number of placements in the independent non-maintained special school sector. This will require by 2022:

- Support for approximately 100 more pupils with Education Health and Care Plans in mainstream schools, to be supported via an enhanced network of resource bases;
- An additional 200 special school places 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 additional capacity will need to have a particular focus on social, emotional and mental health needs and Autism.

As already indicated there will be a need to refresh this strategy annually to ensure that the population growth and the increase in requests for Education, Health and Care plans are monitored to ensure that the current projected growth has not been under estimated.

Appendix 1 – List of Current Resource Bases

The table below shows the resource bases and Special Educational Needs Units in Oxfordshire, as of 2017/18, including the primary need and the number of planned places. In total there are currently 165 places across these bases.

Table 2: Resource bases and Special Educational Needs Units in Oxfordshire schools

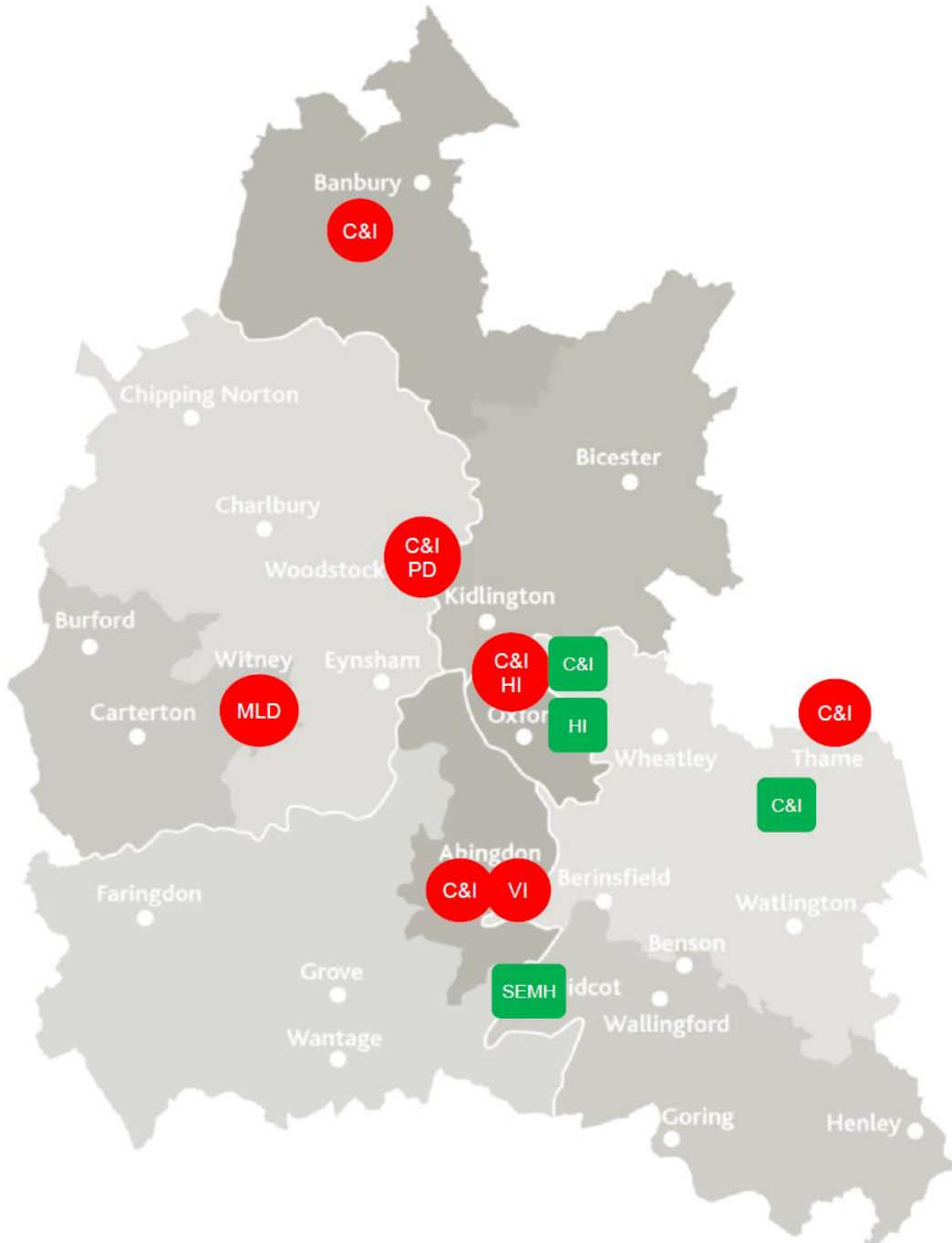
School	Location	Age range	Need	Planned Places
Cherwell	Oxford	Secondary	C&I	20
Cherwell	Oxford	Secondary	HI	10
Willowcroft – Didcot DEN	Didcot	Primary	SEMH	8
Fitzharrys	Abingdon	Secondary	C&I	12
Larkmead	Abingdon	Secondary	VI	8
Lord Williams	Thame	Secondary	C&I	20
Marlborough	Woodstock	Secondary	PD, C&I	25
New Marston	Oxford	Primary	HI	8
St Andrews	Chinnor	Primary	C&I	7
St Nicholas	Oxford	Primary	C&I	15
Warriner	Bloxham	Secondary	C&I	12
Woodgreen	Witney	Secondary	MLD	20

As shown in Map 1, secondary resource bases are currently reasonably well distributed across the county, although there is a relative shortage in the south of the county. Primary resource bases are concentrated in Oxford, Chinnor and Didcot, leaving significant geographic gaps.

Most resource bases are currently focused on the broad areas of Communication & Interaction (C&I) needs, which includes Speech, Language & Communication Needs and Autism Spectrum Disorders. There is only one resource base specially focused on Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH) needs, and this only opened in 2017.

Appendix 1 - Map 1: Oxfordshire resource bases

- Resource bases – primary
- Resource bases – secondary



Appendix 2 – Current List of Oxfordshire’s Special Schools

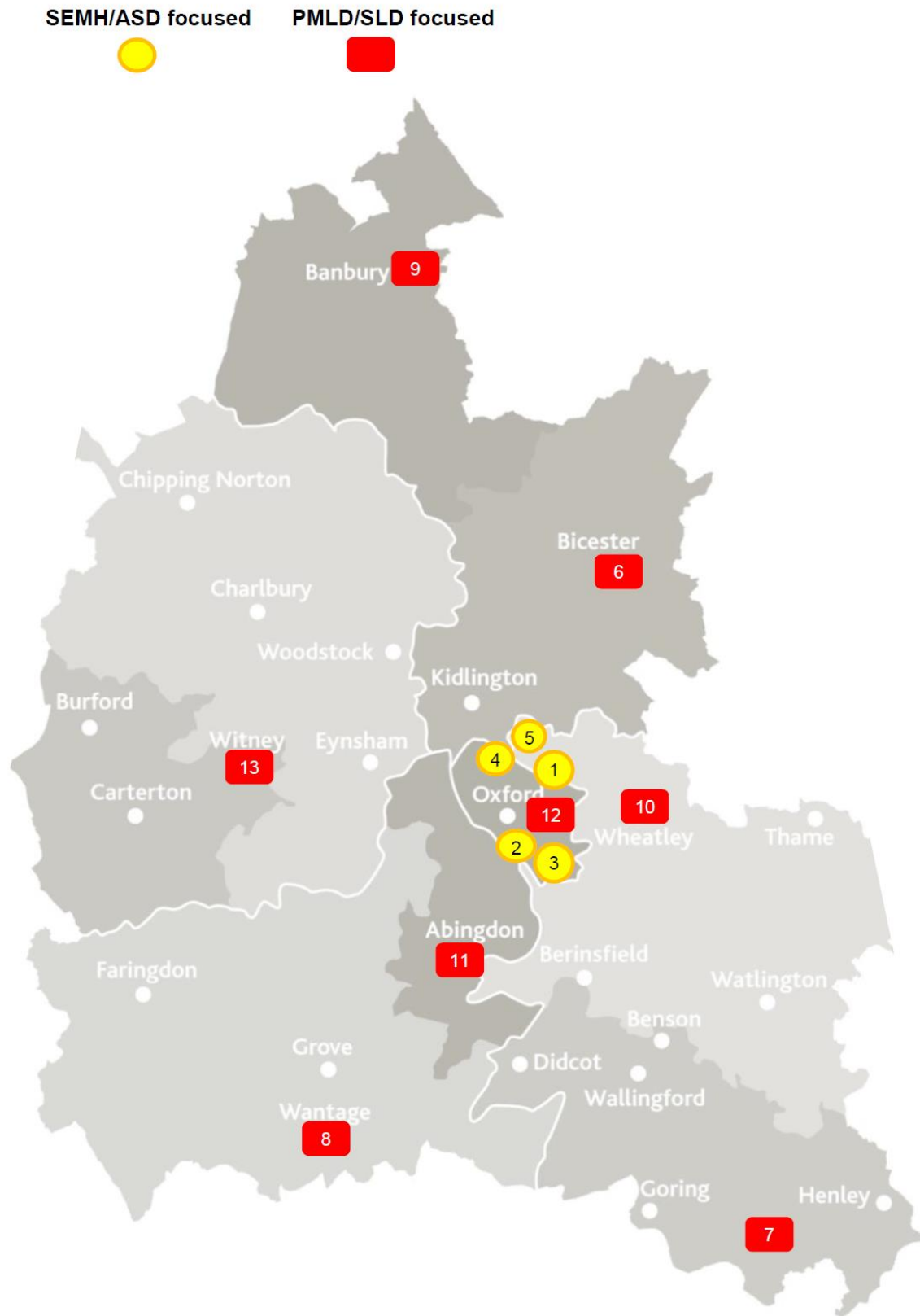
Oxfordshire’s special schools can be divided into two broad categories:

- Five county-wide schools focused chiefly on Social, Emotional & Mental Health needs and/or Autism Spectrum Disorders. These are in and around Oxford city:
 1. Endeavour Academy [Ofsted rating - Good]
 2. Iffley Academy (also has a high percentage of Moderate Learning Difficulties) [Ofsted rating - Outstanding]
 3. Northfield School [Ofsted rating - Good]
 4. Northern House School [Ofsted rating - Outstanding]
 5. Woodeaton Manor School [Ofsted rating - Good]
- Eight community special schools with a greater focus on Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties and Severe Learning Difficulties, as well as other complex needs, although in many cases also with a high percentage of pupils with Autism Spectrum Disorders:
 6. Bardwell School – Bicester [Ofsted rating - Good]
 7. Bishopswood School – Henley & Sonning Common [Ofsted rating - Good]
 8. Fitzwaryn School – Wantage [Ofsted rating - Outstanding]
 9. Frank Wise School – Banbury [Ofsted rating - Outstanding]
 10. John Watson School – Wheatley [Ofsted rating - Good]
 11. Kingfisher School – Abingdon [Ofsted rating - Good]
 12. Mabel Prichard School – Oxford [Ofsted rating - Good]
 13. Springfield School – Witney [Ofsted rating - Good]

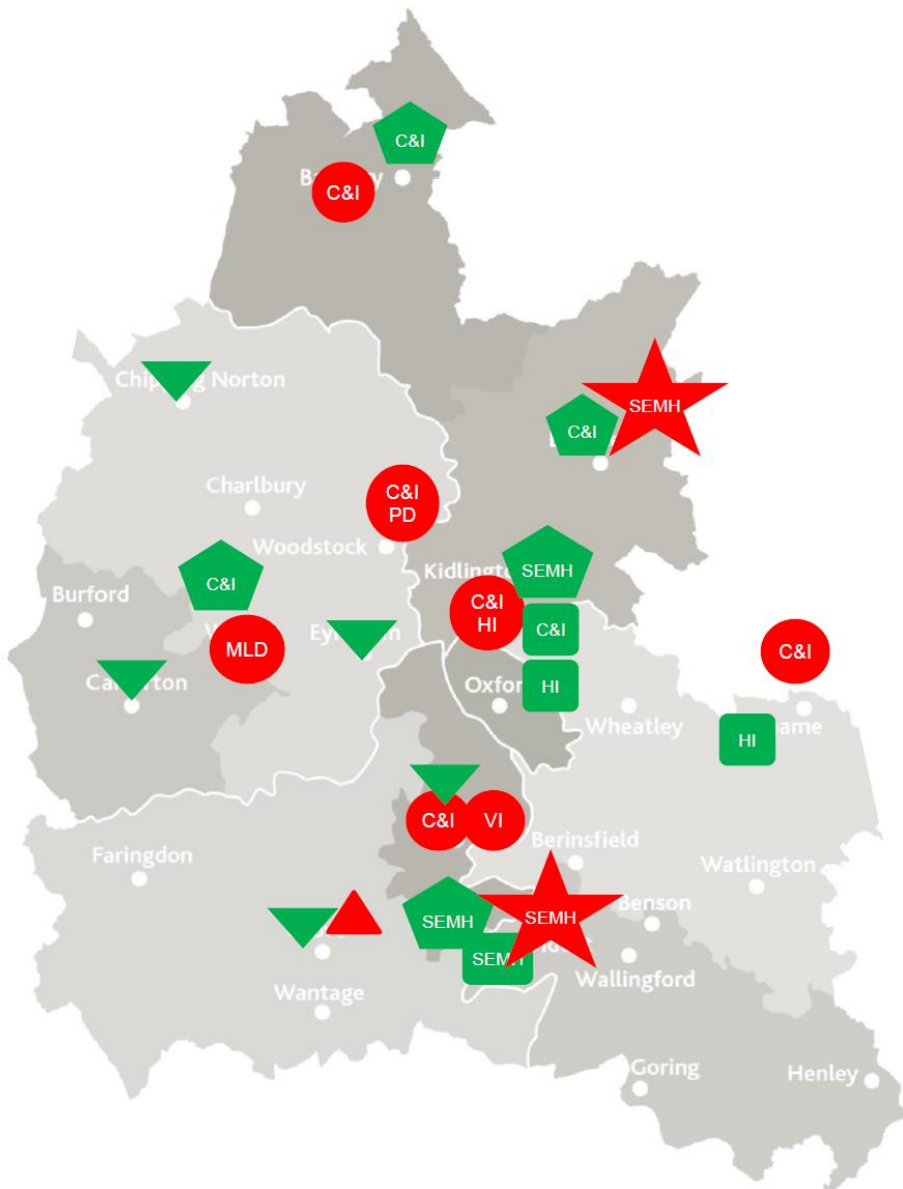
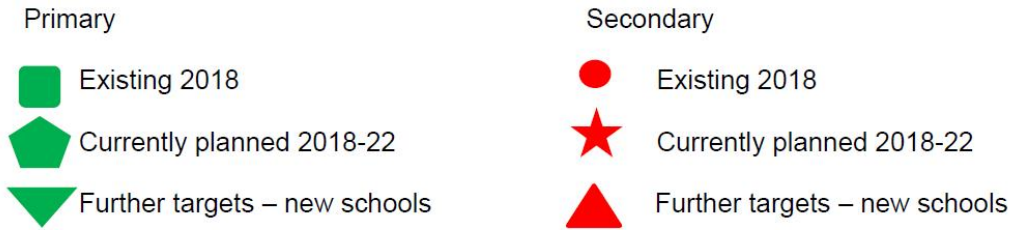
In addition, and not covered by this strategy, Meadowbrook College is an Alternative Provision academy located across three sites in Banbury, Oxford and Abingdon. The Oxfordshire Hospital School provides education for children medically unfit to attend school.

As shown in Appendix 2, Map 2 below, children with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties and, Severe Learning Difficulties who attend community special schools are well distributed across the county, Oxfordshire’s current special school provision for social and emotional mental health needs, and Autism is concentrated in and around Oxford. Children and young people living outside Oxford have long journeys to access these schools.

Appendix 2 - Map 2: Oxfordshire special schools



Appendix 3: Map of Planned resource base provision due to open over the next 3 years.



Appendix 4: Oxfordshire Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Capital Investment Since 2011

1. Completed Projects (Additional Places and Suitability etc)

2011

- **Northern House School, Oxford - £1.308m – 8 additional places**
Construction of a new two-storey six classroom block to replace a two-classroom timber building, a Horsa classroom building and a double temporary classroom all of which were in poor condition with limited life expectancy and significant suitability issues. The project included an additional classroom and a food technology and life skills provision following a successful application by Oxfordshire County Council for grant funding from the Department for Education.

2012

- **Woodeaton Manor School - £227k – 6 additional places**
Construction of a new classroom building to provide additional accommodation to support the lowering of the age range of the school.

2014

- **New Endeavour Academy - £4.292m – 25 additional places**
Construction of accommodation for the new Endeavour Academy residential school for young people with autism. The project includes the remodel of a former school building to create a secondary school facility incorporating class bases for KS3, KS4 & KS5 pupils and ancillary accommodation. A new 12-bedroom residential unit was constructed with the grounds comprising 2 kitchens and dining areas and a central social area.

2015

- **Bardwell School Bicester - £1.388m – 9 additional places**
Replacement of prefabricated 'temporary' buildings with purpose built sixth form accommodation, part funded from successful bid by Oxfordshire County Council to the Department for Education's Demographic Growth Capital Fund.

2016

- **Frank Wise School, Banbury - £1.920m – 8 additional places**
Replacement of prefabricated 'temporary' buildings with purpose built sixth form accommodation, part funded from successful bid by Oxfordshire County Council to the Department for Education's Demographic Growth Capital Fund.
- **The Iffley Academy, Oxford - £30k – 8 additional places**
Internal alterations and remodelling to create an additional classroom. The project was undertaken by the Academy with grant funding from Oxfordshire County Council.
- **Northfield Special School, Oxford - £250k – 16 additional places**
Provision of 2 classroom building to provide additional accommodation to support increase in capacity

2017

- **Mabel Prichard Special School, Oxford - £356k – 8 additional places**
Internal alterations to convert former classroom space, being used for Design & Technology/Art, into a KS2 classroom. Construction of a new Design & Technology/Art facility.
- **Woodeaton Manor Special School - £44k – 16 additional places**
Internal reorganisation to relocate the boys residential facility elsewhere on site and convert former residential accommodation to create 2 new classrooms. Project undertaken by Foundation School with grant funding from Oxfordshire County Council.
- **Kingfisher Special School, Abingdon - £480k – 8 additional places**
Replacement of prefabricated 'temporary' building with new 3-classroom block. Project managed by Academy Trust with funding provided by Oxfordshire County Council. Construction work commenced on site summer 2017.

2018

- **Fitzwaryn Special School, Wantage - £560k – 16 additional places**
Internal reorganisation and remodelling alongside new build post 16 accommodation to create 2 additional classrooms. If approved the project will be managed by the Trust with grant funding from Oxfordshire County Council.
- **Bardwell Special School, Bicester - £63k – 16 additional places**
Conversion of former Children's Centre building to provide Foundation Stage facility for Bardwell School. Relocation of Foundation Stage children will release 2 classrooms within the main school building to provide 16 additional pupil places. Scope of works being investigated by the school, work forecast to be complete within 2017/18 financial year. Work to be undertaken by the school with grant funding from Oxfordshire County Council.

2019

- **John Watson Special School, Wheatley - £1.739m – 16 additional places**
Primary - Proposals for expansion of the primary site subject to significant delay (Carillion), project reviewed and alternative scheme now being progressed which reorganises existing accommodation and relocates Oxfordshire County Council staff from 'Wheatley Centre'. Initial funding has been identified within the council's capital programme. Additional classrooms for John Watson Special School required 2018 (temporary use of former Primary School ICT room) and 2019.

Total Investment = £14.590m**Total Additional Places = 169****2020**

- **New Iffley North Special School - £n/a – 100 additional places**
Successful Free School application for new school catering for pupils aged 7 – 18. Project delivered by Education & Skills Funding Agency. To be co-located with Warriner School, Bloxham.

Appendix 5: Project Development

1. Specialist Resourced Provision in New Schools - confirmed

- 2018 Aureus Primary School, Didcot – 8 places, Social and Emotional Mental Health needs
- 2018 Aureus Secondary School, Didcot – growing to 20 places, Social and Emotional Mental Health needs
- 2018 Gagle Brook Primary School, Bicester – 6 places, Communication and Interaction
- 2020 SW Bicester secondary school – 8 places, Social and Emotional Mental Health needs
- 2020 Southam Road Primary School – 10 places, Communication and Interaction (initially in Longford Park School 2018)
- 2020 Barton Primary School, Oxford – 8 places, Social and Emotional Mental Health needs
- 2020 New west Witney primary school – 8 places, Communication and Interaction

2. Projects In Development – Funding Approved – Delivery Timescale To Be Confirmed

• **Bardwell Special School, Bicester – 16 additional places**

Initial Option Appraisal work has been undertaken to explore the potential to address the problems created by the small school hall and provide additional capacity. Preferred solution is to convert the hall to a classroom and construct a new school hall and further classroom. Funded from Special Provision Fund and Section 106 'developer funding'.

• **John Watson Special School, Wheatley – 16 additional places**

Secondary -Feasibility work is underway to explore how best to replace an aged prefabricated 'temporary' building on the secondary school site and provide additional capacity. Funded from Special Provision Fund and Section 106 'developer funding'.

3. Projects in Development – Funding to be Identified

• **Bishopswood (Secondary), Sonning Common**

Proposal to relocate existing provision (except hydrotherapy pool) from shared accommodation into vacant standalone building previously used by Chiltern Edge School. Project would address existing deficiencies and create additional accommodation.

• **New Didcot Special Educational Needs School – Funding To Be Confirmed**

Site to be provided as part of Valley Park housing development. Financial implications for Oxfordshire County Council for site purchase and construction cost over and above developer contribution. Potential free school project subject to Wave Free School Programme bid.

• **Rebuild of Northfield School**

Proposal to rebuild and relocate the current school in a different position on the current school site. To increase the pupil numbers at the school to around

100 places. To be funded from Special Provision Fund and Section 106 developer funding.

In the remainder of the 2018-22 period this is likely to be where already permitted housing development includes new schools:

- Grove Airfield: potential for both primary and secondary resource bases within new school(s) – Social and Emotional Mental Health needs, target date 2022.
- North Abingdon – new primary school
- East Carterton – new primary school

While planned new mainstream schools provide the greatest opportunity for adding resource bases, there would remain some gaps in coverage, and further exploration will be needed into opportunities for incorporating resource bases within existing schools, especially in the south-eastern and south-western corners of the county. Given the concentration of population within Oxford City, a further resource base here would also be of value.

In the 2023-28 period, further new schools are expected due to housing development proposed but not yet confirmed through the Local Plan process, including:

- Chipping Norton – new primary school
- Eynsham – new primary schools
- Cherwell's Oxford Unmet Needs sites
- Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plan proposed sites.

Resource requirements

- The capital costs of resource bases through new schools are sought from developers through Section 106 agreements as part of the total school cost.
- The operating costs of bases will be provided through high needs block allocations.

Risks

- The timing of new schools is subject to the progress of delivery of the associated housing developments, and therefore some resource bases may be delayed by factors beyond the council's control.
- Some new schools – and hence resource bases – may not be fully funded from developer contributions.
- Where no new school is planned, resource bases would need to be agreed within existing schools, and it may not be possible to reach agreement in all areas.

Division(s):

CABINET REPORT – 18 DECEMBER 2018

PROPOSAL TO AGREE TO RE-BUILD AND EXPAND NORTHFIELD SCHOOL THROUGH THE SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY SUFFICIENCY OF PLACES STRATEGY

Report by Director for Children's Services

Recommendations

1. **The Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**
 - (a) note the outcome of the informal consultation and capacity reviews and agree not to issue a statutory notice for closure.
 - (b) approve the proposed re-build of Northfield School in-line with the Special Educational Needs and Disability Education Sufficiency Strategy 2018-2027 for circa 100 students.
 - (c) support allocation of £9.52m capital budget within the capital programme for the delivery of re-provision of Northfield Special School, the funding for which will be agreed through the annual service and resource planning process and the Capital Programme to be approved by Council in February 2019.
 - (d) approve admission of Year 7 pupils for the academic year 2019/20 in to Northfield Special school and for in year transfers from January 2019.

Executive Summary

2. In April 2018, following the exposure of asbestos during priority works the school site was closed and the school operated out of temporary accommodation over two sites.
3. Cabinet had agreed to a public consultation being carried out on the closure of the school but officers continued to explore alternatives. During the Summer meetings were held to get the views of parents, pupils and staff. Following these informal consultations and in light of the Special Educational Needs and Disability review on the capacity of places the report recommends the rebuilding of Northfields school on the existing site.
4. A capital budget of £9.52m has been set aside to provide a replacement new build for Northfield School providing circa 100 places for children. Paragraphs 19-21 set out the placement costs at Northfield School compared to the typical cost at an independent non-maintained special school.

Introduction

5. A building conditions survey was commissioned by Oxfordshire County Council in December 2017, this highlighted serious problems in relation to the fabric of Northfields school. Priority works were highlighted and a spend of around £1.89m was predicted.
6. In April 2018, asbestos was exposed in one of the main circulation areas of the school and it was necessary to close the school on health and safety grounds. Children Education and Families no longer considered it practicable to try to keep the building open. As a result, the school operated out of temporary accommodation over two sites. Year 10 and 11 utilising several portacabins on the existing school site, whilst years 7 to 9 were relocated to Hill End Centre, Eynsham Road, Farmoor, a multi-purpose Education centre.
7. On 4th June 2018, a request was made to, and approved by Cabinet, to carry out a public consultation on the closure of Northfield School. This request was made due to the ongoing issues with the school building, as well as education attainment issues. Subsequent to this approval, officers carried out further work to determine if there was an alternative.
8. In July, parent and staff meetings took place to update them on the medium-term solution, plans for the September-term and the ongoing review of long-term property options. The Director for Education, Member for Education, School Headteacher and School Improvement Manager led these meetings.
9. The meetings allowed parents, pupils and staff to express their views and concerns. It was agreed at that point to establish temporary accommodation, so that the school could continue to operate whilst refurbishment of the main school building took place. A review of the long-term solution for the school was recommenced.
10. At the end-of-term a letter was sent to parents, staff and unions confirming the imminent refurbishment works to the school building and explaining the likelihood of Hill End arrangements (plus other external providers) remaining in place for some pupils until the first half of the autumn term.
11. Following the informal consultation and the outcome of the Special Educational Needs and Disability review on the capacity of places, it is not recommended that Cabinet issue a statutory notice for closure of the school.
12. This paper and the attached business case recommends the rebuilding of Northfields school on the existing site.

Key Issues

13. Northfield school, Blackbird Leys, is a local authority maintained school that provides education for children with social, emotional and mental health needs and autism for children aged 0-18. The school have 74 commissioned places, however, currently there are only 52 children on roll.

14. The works undertaken over the summer, will only provide a temporary solution for the school and therefore it is essential that a longer-term solution is found, either by re-providing the accommodation on the existing site or by finding an alternative site.
15. Rebuilding the school on the current site will reduce the risk of planning constraints and potential time delays that would otherwise result if the school were relocated onto a new site. The attached business case outlines rebuilding the school whilst still retaining the existing buildings, external areas and car park so that disruption is minimised for the pupils and staff at the school.
16. The Special Educational Needs and Disability Sufficiency of Places Strategy identifies that Oxfordshire County Council will need an additional 300 places for children with Social Emotional Mental Health/Autistic Spectrum Disorder. This will be addressed by
 - (a) a new free school in the north of the county at Bloxham which will provide 100 places
 - (b) a proposed free school in the south of the county at Valley Park, Didcot which will also provide 100 places
 - (c) the rebuilding of Northfield school which would provide 100 places in the Centre
17. By extending the age range to accommodate children from Year 5, the local authority will be able to transition children with social emotional mental health/autistic spectrum disorder earlier into a specialist school and avoid another move into secondary provision, relieving additional stress for the child and family.
18. By expanding the school and adding an additional year into 6th form, will aid young people who require additional time to transition to college to do this, to ensure that the next placement is successful.
19. The aims of this project fits with the Council's strategic objectives to give every child a good start in life and support children with special educational needs within Oxfordshire.
20. With the Northfield site redevelopment there is an opportunity to create a modern special educational needs school with a specialism in social emotional and mental health needs and autistic spectrum disorder.

Financial and Staff Implications

21. A capital budget of £9.52m has been set aside to provide a replacement new build for Northfield School. This will provide circa 100 places for children on the existing school site. Full details on the initial business case is in Annex 1
22. The cost of a placement at Northfield school is currently **£17,600 per year**. (£10,000 place funding + £7,600 top-up funding). Total cost for 52 children at Northfield is **£915,000**.

23. The costs for a placement in an independent non-maintained special school would, as typical examples, cost the following:
- (a) A day placement at a school for a child with the social, emotional and mental health, costs £53,649 per year (based on a child just going in to the school). The cost of this placement for 5 years (until the end of year 11) would be **£268,245. This does not include transport costs on a daily basis, which equates to around £20,000 per year.**
 - (b) A day placement for a child attending a school with autistic spectrum disorder will cost around £77,000. The cost of a placement for 5 years would cost **£385,000. This does not include transport costs.**
24. 52 places at £53,649 would cost over **£2.5m per year**, plus transport costs. This means the local authority would need to fund at least an additional **£1.5m** per year.
25. Places in the independent non-maintained special school sector are becoming more difficult to source due to the demand from all local authorities who are also experiencing a high demand for specialist placements, therefore this cost is likely to be more expensive the further away the placement is sourced.
26. The high needs block funding is already under extreme pressure and is currently overspent. If Northfield school closes the costs for placements demonstrated above, would further impact on the budget and also put further pressure on the transport budget.

Equalities Implications

27. The provision of a school for children with special educational needs aligns with the councils emerging special educational needs and disability strategy and seeks to improve the accessibility of pupils with special educational needs to educations. A full service and community impact assessment will be carried out as the project develops.

Risk Management

28. Northfield School has recently had an Ofsted Inspection, but the outcome has not yet been published. It is important for the school that a clear plan is in place for the long-term future of the school. We have been in regular communication with Ofsted to ensure that they are aware of the work we are doing.
29. The staff team have been working hard to ensure that the children on roll have been receiving education provision during the refurbishment work. The situation has been difficult especially with the uncertainty around the future of the school.

30. Retention of the specialist staff is a priority due to the challenges in finding experienced replacement staff.
31. If the school closed, the local authority would have a shortage of 74 places for children with social emotional and mental health needs and autistic spectrum disorder (based on the current planned place numbers for the school). This would leave 52 children without a school placement, based on current numbers on roll.

Communications

32. At present the proposals have been shared with:
 - (a) Corporate Leadership Team
 - (b) Headteachers of Special Schools
 - (c) Interim Executive Board at Northfield school
 - (d) Parents at Northfield school
 - (e) Capital Investment Programme Board
33. If the proposal is agreed and moves to the next stage, the proposal will be shared wider with key partners and stakeholders.

LUCY BUTLER
Director of Children's Services

Annex : Initial Business Case

Contact Officer: David Clarke, Deputy Director for Education

December 2018

Annex 1:

Initial Business Case (Stage 0B Commit to Investigate)

Project/Programme Name:	Northfield School – Replacement New Build School for 108 Social Emotional Mental Health and Autistic Spectrum Disorder Pupils on existing site with sufficient land to deliver 160 school as future proofing.
Total Capital Budget:	£9.52m (2Q18 forecast)
Sponsoring Director:	Children Services
Divisions Affected:	Leys
External Stakeholders Affected:	Other Special Educational Needs and Disability placement providers, residents of Knights Road, Blackbird Leys and the wider Blackbird Leys estate. Possible future housing as part of the overall site development.
Approval No:	

Sign-off & Approval

Responsible Owner	Name	Date
Lead Officer <i>Service Manager / Client / Project Sponsor</i> Education Sufficiency & Access, People Directorate	Kevin Griffin	
Strategy Team – Brief/option appraisal	Andrew Clarke	
Delivery Team - Project Manager, building delivery/ S106 requirements	Liz Clutterbrook	
Finance (Revenue) <i>Finance Business Partner/Senior Financial Adviser</i>	Sarah Fogden	
Capital Finance Team	Graham Clare	
Other Contributors as applicable <i>e.g. developer funding, asset strategy, legal, procurement</i> Developer Funding Team	Howard Cox	

Decision Required

1. Approve the release of £200k project development budget forward funded from the capital programme until the capital programme is approved by Council in February 2019.
2. Approve the re-build of Northfield Special School to include additional places for circa 100 students
3. Support allocation of £9.52m (2Q18 forecast) capital budget within the capital programme for the delivery of re-provision of Northfield Special School through the annual service and resource planning process funded through reprioritisation or utilisation of current budget blocks within the 10 year programme, utilisation of the £120m prudential borrowing programme, or another funding preference
4. Approve admission of Year 7 pupils for the academic year 2019/20 in to Northfield Special school and for in year transfers from January 2018.
5. Please note this paper will be presented for consideration to Cabinet on 18th December.

Description & Objectives of the Proposal / Desired Outcomes & Business Benefits

Educational Attainment

6. The aims of this project fits with the Councils strategic objectives to give every child a good start in life, and protect everyone from abuse and neglect and help people live safe, healthy lives and play an active part in their community.
7. The County Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient special educational needs school places across the county inclusive of social emotional mental health and autistic spectrum disorder , promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunities and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential. The council must ensure that there are sufficient special schools in their area to help promote diversity and increase parental choice.
8. This initial business case outlines the educational infrastructure required to ensure the provision of sufficient and suitable special educational needs school places to meet the demand within Oxfordshire for children with social emotional and mental health needs and autistic spectrum disorder provision.

The Existing School

9. Northfield School, Blackbird Leys, is a local authority maintained special school providing education for Social Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) and Autism (ASD) children aged 11-18. There are currently 74 pupil places at the school.
10. The County Council has, for many years, recognised the need for investment at the school due to suitability and condition issues and has looked to find viable solutions to enable re-provision, including seeking central government grants, sale of land / reconstruction, but this had not proved possible / viable.
11. Such aspirations have contributed toward lack of investment in the buildings both through the County Council's allocation of the Schools Structural Maintenance Grant (SSMG) and the schools use of its delegated funding in light of their repairs and maintenance obligations
12. Over the past 2 years condition issues have led to short term closure of the school, mainly due to roof leaks, but in the Autumn of 2017 it was closed for 2 weeks due to damage to ceilings, which exposed asbestos.
13. Emergency works instigated by the county council following damage to ceilings led to the identification of other internal issues such as past alteration works carried out by the school which compromised fire protection. As a consequence, the County Council procured a Condition Survey from professional consultants which noted that the school buildings and services installation are extremely aged, worn and some areas have suffered impact damage caused by the occupants of at the school. The fabric of the building and the building services were deemed to require a considerable volume of remedial and repair works; the services installations were also considered to not be fit for purpose.
14. This identified need for circa £750k of urgent works and a further £1.2m of necessary works excluding costs of any asbestos removal, decant and temporary accommodation
15. A structural survey also took place which identified the existing building were structurally satisfactory but further analysis showed material suitability issues. It is recognised that the building was not originally designed to meet the needs of pupils with SEMH and ASD difficulties.
16. The building has four different floor levels which creates issues in corridors, with steps and low ceilings which are accessible to pupils. The circulation routes are narrow and winding and some spaces need to be accessed through other spaces, which is disruptive to classes.

17. Externally, this manifests itself in low roof eaves which are accessible to pupils, and low windows which are vulnerable to damage. Windows which are accessible are Perspex, which provides poor visibility and are fixed shut providing poor natural ventilation.
18. The pupils have a designated breakfast room and eat lunch in their classrooms as there is no kitchen or dining facility.
19. Since early 2018 access to the main school buildings was heavily restricted due to health and safety concerns which resulted in the buildings being deemed not fit for purpose and the school being classified as a 'serious concern'.
20. Consequently, much of the teaching has been carried out offsite at Hill End. Works to deal with critical building condition issues is currently being carried out to enable the teaching activity to return to the site following the October 2018 half term.
21. This will allow for the pupils to remain in their school for the medium-term and thus provides stability, which is particularly important for pupils with SEMH. It also provides stability in the medium-term for parents and staff whilst allowing time for a long-term option to be determined for re-provision of the school.

Objectives

22. The project sits under the Children's Transformation programme. It impacts on the pupils, their parents, and staff at Northfield School. Other SEND placement providers will also be impacted by decisions made about Northfield School. Proposed changes to the school will be assessed within the context of the Special Educational Needs and Disability school sufficiency strategy.
23. The emerging Special Educational Needs and Disability Sufficiency strategy indicates that Oxfordshire County Council requires an additional 300 pupil places for children with SEMH. This is in part being answered with the building of a new 'Free School' in the north of the county at Bloxham which will provide for 100 pupils, and a second school in the south at Valley Park, Didcot which will likewise provide for 100 pupils. Both schools will specialise in SEMH and ASD. Additionally, new accommodation and SEN Resource bases are being added into new and existing mainstream schools which will further help provide much needed places.
24. The decision to consult on a statutory closure has been stopped because of the Sufficiency of Places Strategy and the essential need for Northfields to remain

open and be rebuilt as per the reasons set out in this paper. Therefore, the consultation brought to Cabinet in June has been stopped due to the outcomes of the SEND review identifying the need for this school to remain open through a rebuild on the current site.

25. Education colleagues and Academy providers advise that educational outcomes are materially affected by the size of the school whereby the optimum provision for an SEMH environment is considered to be circa 100 pupils.

26. An option appraisal concluded that re-provision of the school on the existing site was the preferred option

27. The objective is therefore to deliver a replacement new build School for 108 pupils located on the existing site but with sufficient land to deliver 160 school places to allow for future proofing if critically required by growth in demand.

28. By locating the school at Northfield, part of the site area could be sold for residential use benefitting the local community. The capital receipt from the sale would contribute towards the cost of the new school.

29. Subject to an agreed delivery programme It is currently expected that the new school will be required to be complete and operational for use from the beginning of the autumn term in September 2021 (accepting this date will need to be kept under review).

Non-Financial Benefits & Owners (Include intangibles)	Financial Benefits & Owners Include any savings & realisation times	Targets / KPIs Improvement in or contribution to
A new build facility will reduce the likelihood of challenging behavior and help improve educational outcomes.		Achieving design quality indicators set upon briefing the project in consultation with staff, pupils and parents
	Speed of delivery of 34 additional places will reduce the likelihood of a need for procuring out-of-county placements which cost between £20k and £70k per pupil per year, compared to a place at a state maintained school of £17.5k.	
Helps pupils live safe, healthy lives and play an active part in their community.		The outcomes for the students will reduce exclusions and improve life

		chances including positive transition destinations into college or employment
	Release of land can help meet the City Councils housing shortfall, support the Growth Deal and achieve a capital receipt	
Staff retention may be improved through retaining the schools location and provision of new facilities		Northfield staff are highly experienced and the retention of this staff group will enable consistency and when established promotion of excellence through supporting mainstream schools across the County to retain and educate SEMH children in their local school

Results of Options Appraisal and Programme/Project Scope

30. Northfield School will not accept any future pupil intake from September 2018 whilst the school remains in the existing buildings. That will have the obvious effect of gradually diminishing the pupils on roll for every subsequent year as the oldest pupils leave. Rebuilding Northfield could then contribute to addressing the 300no shortfall of SEN places in the county by increasing its current population.
31. A detailed Option Appraisal was undertaken which concludes that re-provision through increasing capacity from 74 to 108 (34 additional places) would offer the optimum size of school and that utilisation of the existing site presents the best solution having accounted for the appraisal criteria.
32. The growth in places would help address the remaining county shortfall when added to Bloxham, Valley Park, and the expansion of SEN Resource bases in mainstream schools as identified by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Sufficiency strategy.
33. With the Northfield site redevelopment there is an opportunity to:
 - a. create a modern special school with a specialisation in SEMH and ASD benefitting from the appropriate teaching spaces and direct links externally. A modern, purpose-built special school catering for the needs of the pupils to the best possible standards.
 - b. school would become a centre of excellence whereby expertise can be utilised to provide outreach (where staff visit other schools offering advice, guidance and support) and in reach (where schools visit Northfields to observe first hand quality teaching and learning

- strategies) support for mainstream schools to be able to more effectively educate children with SEMH needs in their local mainstream school further reducing the impact on the High Needs Block.
- c. For the children to have their needs met and be educated locally and therefore have a sense of belonging to their community developing peer relationships essential to the overall success of their development.
34. Rebuilding the school on the current site removes the possibility of local resistance, planning constraints and potential time delays that would otherwise result if the school were to be relocated onto a new site.
35. Evidence suggests that a 108 pupil place school, with a cohort of SEMH and ASD boys and girls, would provide the ideal number for this type of school to best function with the most conducive environment. A larger school population, whilst physically possible to achieve on the site, would be more difficult to manage and be considered detrimental to the education of the pupils. The additional land necessary to enable expansion to these levels is relatively small due to the constraints of maintaining the existing school while rebuilding takes place – It is therefore considered appropriate to include sufficient land to enable future expansion to 160. pupils
36. The Options Appraisal indicated a school of this size could be built on the Northfield site whilst still retaining the existing buildings, external areas and car park in place for the duration of the build. This in turn reduces any disruption, time and cost with no requirement to provide decant accommodation during construction.
37. The Options Appraisal also includes for the provision of a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA). This additional facility brings benefit to the county council by enabling residential development of surplus land currently identified as playing fields nearby and increasing capital receipts that would be generated (Northfield Hostel site)

Estimated Costs & Proposed Funding Plan

38. The Indicative capital costs provided by Gleeds in 2018 to support section 106 negotiations for new schools together with verification / adjustments from the Councils in-house construction team has been used to calculate the estimated cost, based on the areas within each Option. The estimated cost for a 2,616m², 2 form entry provision for 108 pupils, to be used as a guide budget figure is approximately £9.52m.
39. The following financial considerations could also be taken into account:

- a. Re-construction of the school would remove the demand for investments that would otherwise be funded through the school's structural maintenance grant; a provision of £0.5m had been allocated for roof repairs in the provisional 18/19 programme.
- b. If the provision of additional places was used to reduce out-of-county placements rather than additional pressures from growth (which could potentially be met through the planned new schools) revenue savings would occur. If the school was to close and the current 52 students were placed in Independent Non Maintained Special School (INMSS) taking out the Maintained Special School rate of £17,600 at the lowest rate of £54,000 (this is based on a day placement at a school for a child with SEMH needs at £54,000 per year and would equate to £268,245 for 5 years, but this would increase to £77,000 per year or £385,000 for the 5 years if the child was placed at an Independent school) it would cost over £1.8m per year plus transport costs. From September 2019 when the full circa 100 places would be required this would therefore cost over £3.6m plus transport per year.
- c. The High Needs Block funding is already under extreme pressure due to an increase in demand. If Northfield School closes the cost for placements demonstrated above, would further impact on the budget and put further pressure on the transport budget.

High Needs Budget

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
	£'m	£'m	£'m
High Needs Grant	50.8	59.0	60.8
Expenditure	51.5	61.4	66.8
Overspend	0.7	2.4	6.0

Notes:

- 1) 2018/19 Forecast expenditure as at Sept 18
- 2) Change of responsibility to include Post 16 from 17/18

Summary of Capital Budget Requirement:

	£000k
A: Estimated cost of feasibility and preliminary design requested to be released (development budget*) supporting the delivery of the new school.	£200
B: Estimated cost of supporting the delivery of the new school during the detailed design, procurement & enabling works (to be requested to be released at Stage 1)	£500
C: Estimated cost of supporting the delivery of the new school during the delivery/ construction (to be requested to be committed at Stage 2)	£7,580
D: Contingency	£1,240
Total Project Cost	£9,520 (3Q19)

The estimated annual expenditure profile for the project is as follows:

Year	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Contingency
Capital (New build) £000	£50k	£300k	£3,350k	£4,580k	£1,240k
Revenue £000	0	0	0	0	0

Project Delivery Timetable & Procurement Plan

It is recognised that the vision is to deliver the replacement school as quickly as possible but also to deliver a high quality design that takes account of innovation and best practice.

Whilst traditional procurement techniques of advertising for exemplar designers to come forward together with the wide range of supporting professional service providers necessary to develop proposals is possible, this would significantly increase procurement timescales by at least 6 months plus 3 months to procure the design team. The table below which compares standard traditional timescales to standard delivery via the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) construction framework.

BASE DELIVERY PROGRAMME (SCHOOLS AND NON-SCHOOLS)						
		OB draft	OB approval	feasibility	start on site	ready for use
75000- 15000k		18/10/2018	15/11/2018	09/05/2019	23/07/2020	09/12/2021

Plus 3 months for procurement of the design team

ESFA DELIVERY PROGRAMME (SCHOOLS)						
		OB draft	OB approval	feasibility	start on site	ready for use
75000- 15000k		18/10/2018	15/11/2018	18/04/2019	23/01/2020	10/06/2021

It is therefore proposed that the project is procured through the ESFA Construction Framework where we have already entered into access agreements to enable us to procure such projects. The intelligent client team will assign its specialist special educational needs Architect to the project who has already been involved and who has significant recent experience in the design of exemplar projects within the private sector to support the project management team as necessary.

Irrespective of procurement route it is however recognised that delivery for an opening in September 2021 will be a significant challenge due to the need for wide ranging research and engagement to determine a robust brief and develop the clients requirements for such a specialist project.

The exact programme for delivery will be established in detail once the stage 1 Business Case has received approval and selection / engagement of the ESFA design and construction team occurs. The anticipated timescale for the provision of accommodation remains September 2021 at this stage. It is however noted that transfer from the existing to new accommodation does not have to occur at the start of the academic year.

Service and Community Impact Assessment

The provision of a school for children with Special Needs aligns with the councils emerging Special Educational Needs and Disability strategy which seeks to improve the accessibility of pupils with special needs to education. A full service and community impact assessment will be carried out by the service as the project develops.

Risks, Constraints, Dependencies & Exclusions

The key areas of risk are as follows:

Description of area or sources of risk and impact on project	Mitigation	Owner
Resolving access and boundaries in light of City Council ownership / access / adoption	Early engagement	PM

CA10b

issues		
Delay to programme due to change of use of land	Using existing school site minimises local resistance and possible planning constraints	PM
Maintaining existing school in operation whilst new school is constructed in terms of disruption, cost and phasing	design to enable single phase construction	PM
increased costs due to having to place pupils in Independent schools	gaining parental confidence that new school provision will be delivered to an appropriate timescale and quality	PM
Failure to secure additional receipts from sale of land at hostel site	Sport England's approval to be gained to proposals as part of planning process	PM
Failure to secure additional receipts from sale of land at school site	Submission of section 77 application asap	PM
Pupil proximity to site during construction poses H&S / safeguarding issues.	Early engagement of contractor / teaching staff within design process	PM
Engagement with Stakeholders regarding new build challenged or considered insufficient.	Work with the Engagement and Communications Team to ensure documentation and engagement activity provides best opportunity for stakeholders to express their views	PM
Staff retention concern given minimum of 3 year wait until new build is complete. Parent / pupil dissatisfaction over time it will take to provide a new build solution.	maintain engagement of staff pupils and parents during design process	PM
Restricted access along Knights Road constrains the ability for the school to expand.	liaise with highways asap in conjunction with redevelopment proposals on adjoining land by Oxford City Council	PM
Lease constraints compromise sale of land / result in a ransom that reduce capital receipts	Early engagement with Oxford City Council.	PM
Failure to deliver within the given time to meet the statutory duty of the authority to provide pupil places.	PM to monitor programmed and ensure contingency funds are always in place.	PM
Design doesn't meet the requirements of the BB104 and the defined Brief and Specification.	Rigorous review and interrogation of design proposals by competent professionals.	PM

Communication & Consultation

The new school specification will need to meet the requirements as set out in BB104 'SEND and Alternative Provision'. As with all Special Schools, the consultation process with the school, parents and end users will help to define the overall

provision offered and ensure they are able to contribute to the design and development of the school.

The agreed accommodation schedules will now be developed with the headteacher, staff, parents, governors and other stakeholders of the school and the opportunity taken to share proposals with the local community, prior to a planning application being made.

The building works required to accommodate the new school will involve a planning application and this submission will form part of the consultation process. Once a planning application is submitted the Council will undertake the required consultation process and interested parties will have the opportunity to make their comments or objections to the proposals.

Work has already moved forward to understand opportunities for engaging with teams within Brookes University, visits to exemplar schemes and development of proposals for engagement of pupils, staff, parents etc within briefing and design development.

Programme / Project Governance

The programme for delivery will be established in detail once this Business Case has received approval. The current anticipated timescale for the provision of accommodation is to have the new school building ready for occupation and setting up ideally by September 2021.

This project is overseen by the Programme Management Office (PMO). Day to day responsibility for the management of this project will rest with the Project Manager to deliver the project within agreed project tolerances.

The Project Manager will work within a framework to report any out of tolerance working and key risk to a working group chaired by the PMO with representation from the contract management team through the project life of design and delivery.

The project sponsor is David Clarke from Children Services who will agree the proposed accommodation schedule.

The project will be reviewed at technical gateways at the end of Stage 1 and Stage 2a, with approval to proceed being issued by the PMO before proceeding to the next stage.

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