

Subject:	Options for additional reception classes for September 2012: Proposed Temporary Expansion of Goldstone, Westdene, Queens Park and Connaught		
Date of Meeting:	10 November 2011		
Report of:	Strategic Director, People		
Lead Member:	Cabinet Member for Children & Young People		
Contact Officer:	Name:	Gil Sweetenham	Tel: 29-3474
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Key Decision:	Yes	Forward Plan No: CAB25601	
Wards Affected:	All		

FOR GENERAL RELEASE**1. SUMMARY AND POLICY CONTEXT:**

- 1.1 Projected pupil numbers for the city has shown that for September 2012 there is an increase in reception class numbers of 120 children.
- 1.2 These numbers can be accommodated in the city as there are sufficient reception class places in total.
- 1.3 However annual analysis of post code data and demographic changes shows that the majority of the additional places needed are in Hove and on the Brighton/Hove border, areas where there is no spare capacity.
- 1.4 The Council has committed to providing local places for local children wherever possible.
- 1.5 Rather than send children out of their local area the Council proposes to extend, for one year only, the intake number at four schools in the area where numbers have risen.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Cabinet agrees that officers should consult formally with Queens Park Primary School, Goldstone Primary School, Westdene Primary School and West Hove Infant School (Connaught Building) regarding each school taking an additional reception class in September 2012.
- 2.2 That Cabinet agrees that officers should consult other schools in the city regarding the proposal in 2.1.
- 2.3 Following the Consultation officers will report back to Cabinet in January 2012

3. RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFORMATION/CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS:

- 3.1 The need for additional reception class places in the City over the last three years has been addressed by providing permanent additional forms of entry at Davigdor Infant School, Benfield Primary School, The Connaught Building (through West Hove Infants), Goldstone Primary School, Westdene Primary School and Queens Park Primary School, a total of 8.5 forms. A further form of entry has been added to West Blatchington Primary School on a temporary basis
- 3.2 Annex 1 shows the projection of primary numbers highlighting the 'spike' in numbers for September 2012 and the number of reception places in total across the city.
- 3.3 The only vacant reception class places are in the East of the City, a significant distance from the post code areas showing increased numbers.
- 3.4 The expansion of Queens Park Primary School, Goldstone Primary School, Westdene Primary School and West Hove Infant School (Connaught Building) has given each school a number of new classrooms that will be empty in September 2012.
- 3.5 Classrooms at each school will remain empty until the schools have filled up with their natural intake.
- 3.6 This will mean that towards the end of the additional intakes primary education temporary classrooms will need to be provided.
- 3.7 These proposals are consistent with Government policy of expanding popular schools and the use of vacant accommodation.

4. CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Officers have discussed their proposals informally with the Headteacher and Governors at Queens Park and West Hove Infant (Connaught Building) schools who have both agreed in principle to the proposal.
- 4.2 Officers have discussed their proposal informally with the Governors at Westdene Primary school and they have objected to the proposal on grounds of school organisation of classes and a potential increase in parking issues outside of the school premises.
- 4.3 Officers have discussed their proposal informally with the Headteacher of Goldstone Primary school and the Governors have written to object to the proposal based on the disruption caused to the schools following on from years of building expansion. And concerns about community disquiet re parking..
- 4.4 Officers have had an initial discussion with the Office of the Schools Adjudicator who will not consider this in-year variation until the proposal is formally confirmed. His initial view, however, is that the proposal to temporarily increase numbers as a result of increased pressure in certain areas will fit within the criteria for 'in-year' variations. This would ensure that the temporary increase proposed does not become permanent for future years.

5. FINANCIAL & OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

Financial Implications:

- 5.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of the recommendations in this paper. Any implications as a result of the consultations will be included within the paper to Cabinet in January 2012

Finance Officer Consulted: Andy Moore

Date: 20/10/11

Legal Implications:

- 5.2 Under section 88E of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 Local Authorities can make an application to the Schools Adjudicator for an in-year variation to school admissions arrangements, where there has been a major change in circumstances since the time that the arrangements were determined. This report outlines the projected increases in reception class numbers for September 2012, and the potential difficulties in providing local places for local children. As the Authority is under a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places in the city, and also wishes to ensure that they are in the geographical areas which will have no spare capacity, a referral to vary the determined admission arrangements will be necessary in order to make the proposed changes.
- 5.3 Before making the referral to the Adjudicator the Authority is required to consult with all affected schools.

Lawyer Consulted: Serena Kynaston

Date: 19/10/11

Equalities Implications:

- 5.4 Planning and provision of school places is conducted in such a way as to avoid potentially discriminatory admissions priorities or planning processes. The city council and voluntary aided school governing bodies must be mindful of best practice as described in the Admission Code of Practice.

Sustainability Implications:

- 5.5 All new extensions to Brighton and Hove Schools utilise, where ever possible, environmental and sustainable principles such as higher than minimum insulation levels, the use of efficient gas condensing boilers, under floor heating, solar shading and natural ventilation. Materials are sourced from sustainable sources where ever possible.

Crime & Disorder Implications:

- 5.6 By including the community in the development and use of the facilities at the schools crime and disorder in the local area will be reduced. This will be further improved by offering extended use of the facilities to the community outside of the school day

Risk and Opportunity Management Implications:

- 5.7 It is important that this opportunity is taken to ensure the future provision of learning and teaching, and continuing improvement in standards of education in the city.

Corporate / Citywide Implications:

- 5.8 These proposals are an essential element in providing additional places in local areas for local children.

6. EVALUATION OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTION(S):

- 6.1 The other options available to the Council are:

- To send children outside of their local area to vacant places in the east of the City
- To extend other schools in the area of need by adding mobile accommodation funded from the schools capital programme.

7. REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The proposal represents the best option to satisfy the need for local places for local children and best value in that they use empty classrooms already provided from the Councils schools capital programme.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Appendices:

1. Primary Number Projections

Documents In Members' Rooms

None

Background Documents

None