

Staffordshire Learning Infrastructure Framework 2015-2030

Draft for discussion: setting out the purpose, principles and approach to the provision of education and childcare places, infrastructure development and capital investment in Staffordshire.

Please note that this document is in draft as we are currently seeking views and input from our partners.

A final version will be published by October 2015.



Introduction

Every child deserves a good education. The right foundation of learning and skills is vital for our young people to access good jobs and live healthier, happier and independent lives.

Staffordshire's Learning and Skills Strategy challenges every one of the county's 400 schools to be rated as 'good' or 'outstanding' by Ofsted. In its seven key themes, the strategy recognises that there's much more to this than buildings, but getting the right local infrastructure for education is a good place to start¹.

Staffordshire County Council has a statutory responsibility to ensure that every child in the county has access to a childcare place, a place at school or an offer of suitable post-16 education or training when they need one.

As the county continues to prosper and grow with today's combination of increased birth rates and plans for at least 60,000 new homes across the county by 2031, this is an increasingly tough challenge - but it's one that we can meet with the right approach and forward planning.

Staffordshire's Learning Infrastructure Framework sets out how those with a role to play in providing childcare or education places for Staffordshire's children can work together. Through each of us playing our part we will make best use of the time and money we have and ensure that we continue to offer Staffordshire's families choice in first class education and childcare, close to home, when they need it.

¹ (See page 23 of [Achieving Excellence in Learning and Skills](#) for detail on Flexible Learning Infrastructure and how this Framework helps us to meet these aspirations).

Seize opportunities - rise to the challenge

If there's one thing that's constant, it's that nothing ever stays the same. The world of childcare, education and training is no different. As the world around us changes, we are presented with new challenges and opportunities in ensuring we have the right education and childcare provision in place. By highlighting and understanding these challenges and opportunities now, we can proactively plan for them and take action to ensure that we continue to give Staffordshire's children, young people and families access to the quality, local they deserve.

Opportunities and challenges

- 1. Invest around £330m in over 20,000 new school places by 2031:** Because there are more children being born in Staffordshire, and the scale of housing development in the county means that more families can choose to live here, we expect to need to invest around £330million in an additional 13,000 primary and 8,000 secondary mainstream school places by 2031. Most of these places will be needed in the county's towns. (See Appendix 1.)
- 2. Respect school's increasing independence and work together to give Staffordshire's families access to a first-class, local education:** As more and more schools become academies (who are independent of the local authority) and maintained schools enjoy the right to make their own decisions about expansion, working in partnership to ensure there are enough good, local school places for Staffordshire's families is more important than ever.
- 3. Give children with special education needs and disabilities (SEND) access to the same opportunities as their peers:** Staffordshire has 'outstanding' special school provision for children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). However, some of the children attending these schools could be supported to thrive in mainstream schools where they can grow up with, and take advantage of the same opportunities as their peers. If it's the right thing for them, the county council

wants children with SEND to be supported to have a real choice and go to mainstream schools. We will provide special school education for those children and young people who need it most. We know that there are opportunities to support children with SEND differently because more Staffordshire children aged 0-19 are placed in special schools compared to the national average ².

4. **Support early years providers to give working parents 30 hours free childcare by 2017:** In May 2015, Government set out proposals that will see working parents able to claim up to 30 hours of free childcare per week by 2017 (instead of 15 hours). As a result, demand on private, voluntary and independent early years providers is likely to increase as parents look for additional, flexible and accessible childcare places. The county council is unlikely to receive capital funding to support the enlargement of early years buildings, so the introduction of a 30 hour childcare offer may need providers to explore a combination of additional places and business re-modelling to support implementation.
5. **Give young people access to vocational qualifications and training so they can access good local jobs and contribute effectively to the economy:** To ensure that local employers can recruit young people with the skills they value and to ensure that there are enough young people who can take advantage of an increasing number of apprenticeship opportunities (including higher apprenticeships), we need more schools and colleges with a focus on technical and vocational specialisms. The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire City Deal aims to contribute to 3900 additional apprenticeships and 1100 traineeships by March 2024.
6. **Secure the capital funding needed to enlarge or build new schools:** To provide the new mainstream school places needed in Staffordshire's primary and secondary schools over the next 15 years, we estimate the building costs to be around £330m.

² 1.05% of Staffordshire children aged 0-19 are placed in special schools compared to the national average of 0.8% (Source: CSIE 2014 Report).

Based on the way we currently pay for schools to be built or extended, we forecast a shortfall in funding.

To meet this gap, communities will look to us to work creatively and ensure that new school buildings are value for money, maximise capital allocations from Government and secure contributions from housing developers (bearing in mind that the new Community Infrastructure Levy may add uncertainty in securing the long term investment needed towards new school places unless we plan together and prioritise effectively.)

How can I support Staffordshire's children and young people to have access to quality local education and childcare?

In view of the opportunities and challenges we're facing, no single organisation can give Staffordshire's families access to the quality, local education and childcare they deserve. We have to work together and to do that we need to be clear on how we can all make a contribution. Here, we set out principles to guide the way we work together and give an overview of different roles and responsibilities.

Principles

In partnership with local communities

The number of children and young people in a community, now and in the future, differs depending on local birth rate and on planned housing development. The way buildings are used for education and other community services or activities are different for every local community. By having early, open and honest conversations about the provision of future education and childcare places with people in local communities, we can have a co-ordinated and efficient approach which makes good use of what exists and allows us to make intelligent choices that are right for each area.

Diverse

So that Staffordshire's children and families have the choice and opportunity they deserve when it comes to education, we will work to ensure that we have the right mix of education and childcare providers across the county. This includes maintained schools, academies, free schools and University Technology Colleges (UTCs), post-16 providers, specialist and alternative providers, private providers and private, voluntary and independent childcare providers – a rich mix across the local area to meet the needs

identified in a community.

Inclusive and accessible

Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) will have the opportunity to attend a mainstream school if this is right for them. To support this, we will work to develop accessible facilities for [children and young people needing specialist support](#) so that they can learn within, and are cared for as part of their local community. We will also look to ensure that a greater number of children with SEND are able to travel to school independently.

Affordable and sustainable

We will develop affordable and cost-effective solutions that make the very best use of public money and deliver what is needed to support quality, local education and community services, both now and in the future.

A foundation for excellence

We will ensure that the childcare and education places we provide will support our aim of achieving good and outstanding education for all children and young people in Staffordshire and that as a result, they are able to access local jobs and enjoy a prosperous future.

Roles and responsibilities

1. Together:

- To have a common understanding of how the number of children and families is changing in our communities so that we can take part in medium and long term planning for the provision of childcare and education places
- To make the most efficient use of limited resources
- To be informed contributors and/or consultees on future proposals in the provision of childcare and education places so that Staffordshire's families can continue to have choice in first class education and childcare, close to home, when they need it

2. Governors and leaders providing education in Staffordshire:

- To understand the opportunities and challenges around the provision of childcare and education places in our community and how this might affect local education provision and the local area
- To work with others to help design and deliver effective and affordable ways of meeting the need for childcare and education places that are right for our community and that will support quality, local education and community services, now and in the future
- To work with others to ensure that schools are at the heart of our communities by taking opportunities to link school facilities with other community services or activities
- To promote good ways of working together, acting in accordance with legislation and guidance by consulting on any proposals (such as to enlarge a school) and to make local decisions open and transparent

3. Early years providers:

- To understand how demand for early education and childcare places in our communities is likely to change as a result of new policies and changes to the number of children and families in my area
- To respond to these changes positively so that all children who need a place can have one

4. County council officers:

- To establish a clear understanding of local educational opportunities and challenges making connections between education and other local infrastructure needs – such as roads or public transport – and making sure the right things are in place to support new or enlarged schools
- To undertake our duties and responsibilities for school place planning, school organisation, admissions and transport working with all partners to do our best to meet the aspirations and choices of parents and families
- To ensure that the provision we commission is well designed and built, cost effective, and constructed to meet local need, through projects that are well managed so that disruption can be minimised and so that projects can be delivered in a timely way
- To work closely with private, voluntary and independent (PVI) early years providers to ensure there is the required number of high quality places to meet both statutory duties and the needs of Staffordshire's families
- To ensure that all parts of the council, and those it commissions, work together effectively and efficiently

5. Elected Members/Councillors:

- To champion good communication in a local area, representing the views of constituencies whilst understanding the wider opportunities and challenges in ensuring that we can continue to provide quality, local education and childcare for Staffordshire's families

6. District and Borough Councils:

- To ensure that planning provisions for education are reflected in the development of Local Plans
- To support effective negotiations with housing developers to secure sufficient contributions are made towards necessary education infrastructure
- To consider, within council priorities and spending decisions, the importance of meeting the education needs of local children and young people

7. As housing developers:

- To recognise the requirement to contribute funding, and where necessary make appropriate land available, to mitigate the impact of housing development

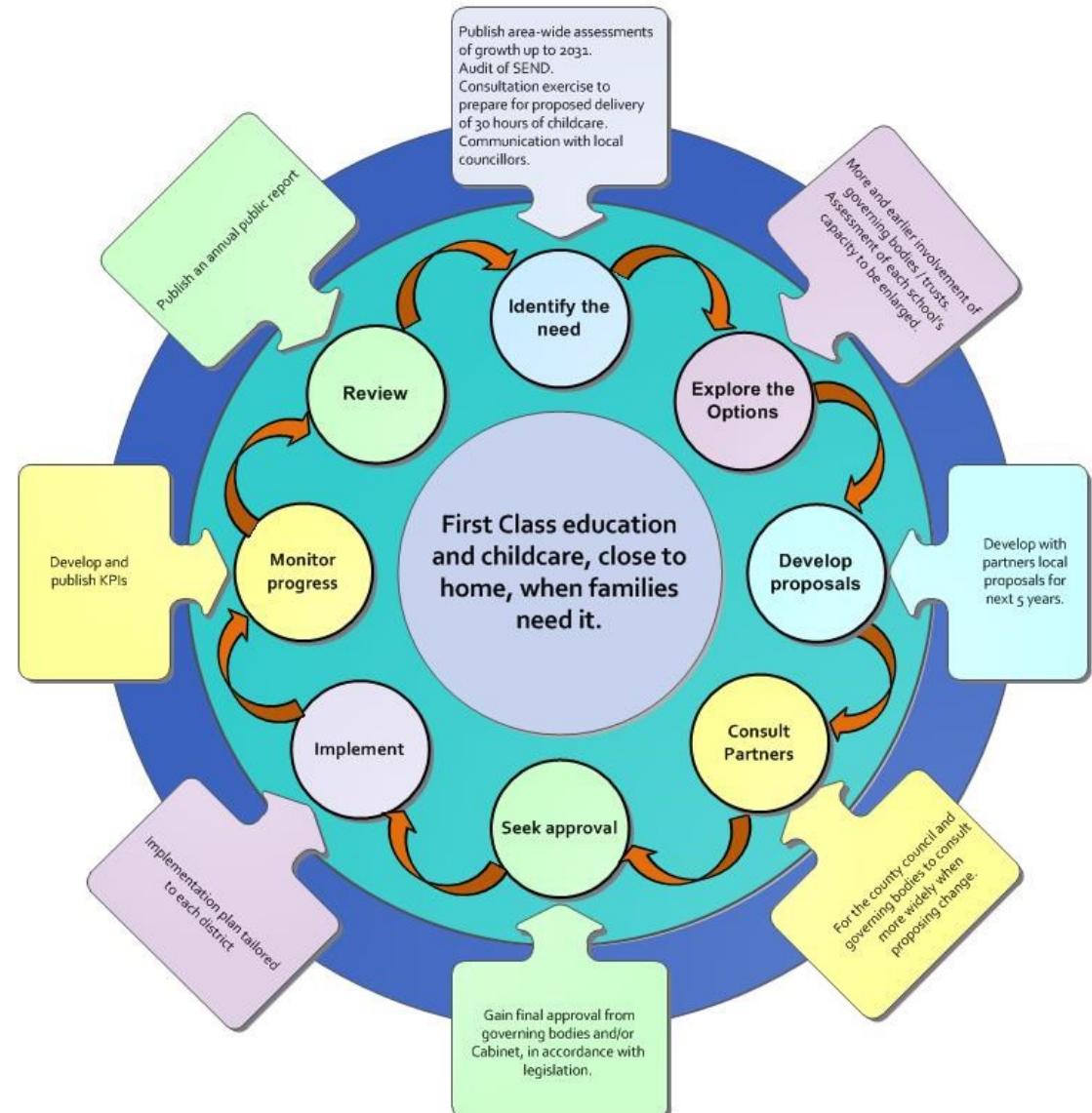
How will we work together in practice?

So we want to work together to ensure that Staffordshire's families can continue to access quality, local education and childcare and we've got a set of shared principles and clear roles and responsibilities, but in practice, how do we work together?

The diagram opposite summarises the general process for identifying and then meeting the need for future childcare and education places. This will vary slightly from project to project.

You can see this process in a table format in Appendix 2.

Staffordshire Learning Infrastructure Cycle



What will success look like?

We all want what's best for Staffordshire's children and families. We want Staffordshire's children to enjoy their own personal successes and to be able to contribute to the county's economy in the future. Being able to choose an education that matches your strengths and ambition is crucial to this. This is what success will look like for Staffordshire's families.

1. Every child and young person will have a place in a primary or secondary mainstream school when they need one up to the year 2031 and focussed on a five-year rolling programme of projects
2. Children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) will have access to local educational opportunities that are right for them because we will have the right number and type of specialist school places to meet the needs of learners in both mainstream and specialist settings
3. Staffordshire parents will be able to choose from a range of strong early education and childcare providers (including those run by schools and by the private, voluntary and independent sector) now and in the future
4. Young people will be able to choose from a range of technical, practical and academic learning linked to good job opportunities and careers that will support a thriving economy
5. Communities can use school facilities to access services or as a base for running activities that are of interest and benefit to them
6. Affordable growth plans with sufficient government funding and housing developer contributions of money and land to create or enlarge schools so that we can provide first class education and childcare, close to home, when families need it

Supporting information

Planning for childcare and education places is complex and there is a wealth of information to support the process. You can access further information online at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/slif

Get in touch

We are currently seeking feedback on this Framework and would value your views.

Please go to www.staffordshire.gov.uk/slif by 3 August 2015 and complete a short survey.

If you have any questions, please contact us at slif@staffordshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1

Where do we expect to invest in additional school places?

To ensure that Staffordshire's families continue to have choice in first class education, close to home, when they need it, we expect to invest around £350million in expanding or building new mainstream primary and secondary schools.

Based on the number of places available in our current schools, plans for new homes and what we know about the birth rate and number of families generated by new housing, we have a good idea of where we will need to invest this money. As there is space in our secondary schools at the moment, we forecast the need for more primary than secondary places.

This table illustrates potential investment in additional places in Staffordshire's mainstream schools. You can see the table in map form at www.staffordshire.gov.uk/slif

Forecast as at 19 June 2015

Mainstream school places	TOTAL GROWTH FORECAST IN NEXT 5 YEARS TO 2019/20	District or Borough	TOTAL GROWTH FORECAST OVER 10 YEARS 202/21 TO 2030/31	TOTAL GROWTH FORECAST OVER 15 YEARS TO 2030/31
Primary Education	525 additional places	Cannock Chase	630 additional places	1155 additional places
Secondary Education	0 additional places		0 additional places	0 additional places
Potential capital cost	£6.9m		£10m	£16.9m
Primary Education	2807 additional places	East Staffordshire	630 additional places	3437 additional places
Secondary Education	1560 additional places		2010 additional places	3570 additional places
Potential capital cost	£76.6m		£36.4m	£113m
Primary Education	945 additional places	Lichfield	1652 additional places	3437 additional places
Secondary Education	360 additional places		1050 additional places	3570 additional places
Potential capital cost	£32.6m		£35.4M	£113M
Primary Education	830 additional places	Newcastle (see Note 2)	245 additional places	1075 additional places
Secondary Education	150 additional places		0 additional places	150 additional places
Potential capital cost	£10.9m		£2.3M	£13.2m

Mainstream school places	TOTAL GROWTH FORECAST IN NEXT 5 YEARS TO 2019/20	District or Borough	TOTAL GROWTH FORECAST OVER 10 YEARS 202/21 TO 2030/31	TOTAL GROWTH FORECAST OVER 15 YEARS TO 2030/31
Primary Education	0 additional places	South Staffordshire	315 additional places	315 additional places
Secondary Education	0 additional places		120 additional places	120 additional places
Potential capital cost	£0m		£6.5M	£6.5m
Primary Education	1535 additional places	Stafford Borough	1100 additional places	2635 additional places
Secondary Education	900 additional places		210 additional places	1110 additional places
Potential capital cost	£40.4m		£15.9M	£56.3m
Primary Education	90 additional places	Staffordshire Moorlands	585 additional places	675 additional places
Secondary Education	0 additional places		480 additional places	480 additional places
Potential capital cost	£1.3m		£23.1M	£24.4m
Primary Education	420 additional places	Tamworth	945 additional places	1365 additional places
Secondary Education	0 additional places		900 additional places	900 additional places
Potential capital cost	£5.3m		£33.4M	£38.7m
Primary Education	7152 additional places	TOTAL (Note 3)	6102 additional places	13254 additional places
Secondary Education	2970 additional places		4770 additional places	7740 additional places
Potential capital cost	£169.3m		£163.5m	£332.8m

Note 1: This forecast compares the existing school capacity with a pupil forecast based on birth data and estimates of the additional pupils generated from new housing. As there is more spare capacity in secondary schools we forecast the need for more primary places than secondary school places).

Note 2: Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council are currently preparing a new joint local plan with Stoke-on-Trent City Council and have not yet identified their housing need or likely spatial distribution. Therefore the growth forecast above considers only housing sites where planning permission has been granted or applied for in the Borough. The housing forecast and any new strategic allocations identified in the emerging Local Plan will be included in future updates to the Learning Infrastructure Framework.

Note 3: Any refresh of existing Local Plans to take account of the Birmingham housing market area in the period up to 2031 will also be included in future updates to the Learning Infrastructure Framework.

Appendix 2

Table: How we will work together in practice?

	Activity
Identify the need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish area-wide assessments of growth up to 2031, with a focus on a five year rolling programme • An audit of SEND need to determine the appropriate number and type of specialist school places • A consultation exercise to prepare for proposed delivery of 30 hours of childcare • Scheduled regular communication with local councillors
Explore the options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More and earlier involvement of governing bodies/trusts • Produce a formal assessment of each school's capacity to be enlarged
Develop proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop with partners local proposals for next five years
Consult partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the county council and governing bodies to consult when proposing change
Seek approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gain final approval from governing bodies and/or Cabinet in accordance with legislation
Implement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation plan tailored to each district
Monitor progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and publish key performance indicators
Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publish an annual public report