

Executive

19 May 2016

Report of the Director of Children's Services, Education and Skills

Additional Primary School Places for Micklegate

Summary

1. This paper will explain the preferred option to make changes to internal space within Scarcroft Primary School (part of the South Bank Multi Academy Trust) to allow an increase in pupil numbers. The paper will also explain the options available to increase outdoor space in order to accommodate government requirements for sufficient playing areas.

Recommendation

2. In principle, Members are asked to approve the expenditure of Basic Need funding to allow Scarcroft Primary School to increase by 0.5 form of entry (15 pupils per year group) to 2 form of entry (60 pupils per year group). The funding will cover the cost of making internal modifications to Scarcroft Primary School; putting a small MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) on part of the school's car park; provide additional car parking spaces on Millthorpe School site and to create a full sized MUGA. A full sized MUGA is required as Scarcroft Primary School does not have enough outdoor playing space.
3. In exploring the options for a suitable site for a full sized MUGA the Executive is asked to approve a full consultation. The options to be explored include Millthorpe School, Scarcroft Green and the Little Knavesmire.

Reason: To meet its statutory duties to provide sufficient school places the Council supports the proposed changes to Scarcroft Primary school's building and the need to create additional outdoor spaces. As from the 1 April 2016 Scarcroft Primary School became part of the South Bank Multi Academy Trust.

This means that although the Council remains responsible for ensuring there are enough school places in its area it will be the South Bank Multi-Academy Trust Board who will need to seek approval for the increase in the size of the school through the Regional Schools Commissioner.

Background

4. This paper provides a response to the paper that was presented to the Executive on 17 March 2016. In March, the Executive was asked to consider the expansion of Scarcroft Primary School and a recommendation that further time was required to conduct a feasibility study before a preferred recommendation could be put forward to the Executive.
5. Following Primary National Offer Day on 18 April, expectations regarding the demand for the number of places in the Micklegate and South Bank areas have been consistent with the projections.
6. An admission number of 60 at Scarcroft Primary School from September 2017 will enable around 95% of pupils in the local planning zone, which includes Scarcroft and Knavesmire, to access a place at either primary school up to 2020. This percentage is based on a projection of 126 1st preferences for 120 places at either Scarcroft or Knavesmire in September 2017. The percentage of 1st preferences gaining a place at either school is projected to increase in the following years. Projections show that in September 2018 100% of 1st preferences for Scarcroft and Knavesmire will be met.

Consultation

7. As agreed at the Executive on 11 February 2016, a four week informal consultation took on the options for the provision of school places in the area. The consultation began on 12 February 2016 and closed on 11 March 2016.
8. The public were asked to give their views on seven options:
 - (a) do nothing;
 - (b) build an Annexe to Scarcroft on the Millthorpe School site;
 - (c) build a new school on Nun Ings;

- (d) build a new school on land adjacent to The Square;
- (e) expand places in Bishopthorpe;
- (f) expand at the existing Scarcroft Primary School site;
- (g) recommend an application for a free school.

9. The table below summarises the results of the informal consultation.

Informal Consultation Responses			
	For	Mixed	Against
Do nothing	0	3	4
Scarcroft annexe at Millthorpe site	1	1	24
New school at Nun Ings	2	1	0
New school at The Square	2	1	5
Expand at Bishopthorpe	0	0	0
Expand existing Scarcroft site	22	0	0
Free School	3	4	1
Total number of respondents: 37			

Additional views, comments and question were also requested, which are summarised as follows:

- (a) concerns about changes to catchment boundaries
- (b) concerns regarding siblings being able to get into the same primary school
- (c) concerns over the timing of the compliance of statutory duties and the proposal approval
- (d) concerns about traffic and road safety
- (e) concerns that parents' views need to be taken into account;
- (f) concerns that information needs to be shared with all interested parties before decisions are made
- (g) concerns relating to a split site

10. Two architectural companies with experience of working with listed buildings were commissioned in March 2016 with a brief to illustrate how it might be possible to expand Scarcroft Primary School.

11. As part of their proposals, the architects responded to the need to increase the numbers of classrooms from 12 to 14 by re-purposing the use of other existing rooms. This would allow the school to increase to 2 forms of entry (60 pupils per year group). The plans indicated that even when 14 rooms are utilised as classrooms there are still enough rooms remaining for other purposes, including dedicated music, library, preparation, planning and assessment (PPA) and intervention areas.
12. A meeting was held at Scarcroft Primary School on 13 April with the deputy headteacher and the chair of governors to share and discuss the plans the council has received from the architects. The meeting considered the proposals to increase the number of classrooms from 12 to 14, including the implications and any concerns the school may have regarding additional facilities, such as toilets, cloakroom space, hall space, the kitchen and general circulation.
13. Scarcroft Primary School will be asked to consider the preferred option at their Multi Academy Trust Board. Further discussion and consultation is also needed to resolve the issues of outdoor play and car parking space. The results of this consultation together with a recommendation will be included in the paper to be tabled to Executive in July.
14. A meeting was held at Scarcroft Green Nursery with the nursery manager on 20 April to discuss the impact of the preferred option with regards to car parking.

Preferred Option

15. To internally refurbish Scarcroft Primary School to allow the building to accommodate two forms of entry from September 2017.

Analysis

16. Scarcroft Primary School has 19 classroom sized rooms throughout its building. At present 12 of these rooms are used as classrooms, and seven others are used for other purposes.
17. To accommodate an increase to 2 form entry, 14 classrooms are required.

In discussions with Scarcroft Primary School on 13 April, it was agreed that the ICT suite and the intervention/group room could be re utilised as classrooms. Many schools are re purposing their ICT provision through the use of tablets and chrome books. Intervention and group room activities would share flexible and multi use within the music room and library.

18. Internal refurbishment may involve:
- (a) re-allocating two rooms for classroom use
 - (b) re-evaluating and updating the kitchen, its ventilation system, cooking equipment where necessary and ensuring there is stainless steel surfaces throughout
 - (c) improving cloakroom and storage areas
 - (d) updating toilet facilities where required
 - (e) improving dining management
 - (f) encouraging staff to streamline existing resources
 - (g) looking in detail at ICT provision

Council Plan

19. This proposal links to the following key council corporate priorities:
- (a) a prosperous city for all - the LA wants to ensure that there is a good quality of education available for all around the city
 - (b) a focus on a frontline service - this proposal links directly to the CSES objective that all children should be able to go to local schools that are good or outstanding
 - (c) a council that listens to its residents - the LA has listened to the needs of the school cluster by focussing on the needs of the local school and the local residents to provide enough pupil places in a popular area of the city

Implications

Financial

20. Initial estimates indicate that a budget of £2.5m would be needed for one or more MUGAs, some additional car parking spaces and internal changes to Scarcroft Primary.

21. The main capital funding for pupil place expansion is the Department for Education Basic Need Capital Grant. At present, allocations have been confirmed up to, and including, 2018/19, totalling £39.49m, of which £15.1m has been spent, or is committed to ongoing schemes.
22. Initial high level planning had allocated a further £19.8m for schemes to alleviate place pressures across the city, including provision for this scheme.
23. As of April 2016, around £1.26m of Section 106 has been earmarked for the scheme. Of this, £0.2m has been received by the council. The remainder relates to outstanding payments for the Terry's and York College sites, and an amount requested for the proposed Hudson House scheme, which is still under planning consideration.

Equalities

24. A CIA/EIA is included with this report as Annex B.

Property

25. As the whole of the Scarcroft Primary site is now leased to the South Bank Multi Academy Trust with effect from 1 April 2016, the Council will need to obtain permission from the academy trust prior to any alteration work commencing on site.
26. One of the buildings on the school site is sub-let to Scarcroft Green Nursery including car parking rights and allocated parking spaces. Agreement would need to be reached (between the academy trust, as landlord, and the nursery) for any alteration to these car parking rights/re-location of the nursery parking spaces.
27. Prior to the school converting to an academy, a small area of fenced land on Scarcroft Green (which forms part of Micklegate Stray) was used by the school on an informal basis. It is now proposed to seek approval in due course for either this arrangement to be more formalised or for an alternative option for playing field space, as referred to in this report. Any such permanent options would be subject to the provisions of the Micklegate Stray Act 1907 as well as s123 of the Local Government Act 1972 relating to Public Open Spaces.

Legal

28. Section 13 of the Education Act 1996 imposes a duty on the council as local education authority to “contribute towards the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community by securing that efficient primary, secondary and further education are available to meet the needs of the population in their area.”
29. The option of using part of Micklegate Stray to increase the school’s access to outdoor space is complicated by the fact that the Stray is subject to the provisions of the Micklegate Stray Act 1907 which places restrictions on how it could be used. Any proposal would need to be carefully evaluated against the provisions of that Act.
30. In accordance with the new DfE guidance (March 2016) it is the South Bank Multi Academy Trust Board who need to seek approval from the Regional Schools Commissioner to increase the size of Scarcroft Primary School. That guidance ‘Making Significant Changes to an Existing Academy,’ states that:

‘Academy trusts will need to ensure that a fair and open local consultation has been undertaken; the change is aligned with local pupil place plans; that all required funding is in place and appropriate planning permissions and other consents have been secured to support all proposals.’
31. In accordance with this document it is assumed that the South Bank Multi-Academy Trust will be able to make a fast track application to increase the size of Scarcroft Primary School and therefore seek approval from the Regional Schools Commissioner to a change to their funding agreement with the Education Funding Agency.

Other Implications

32. There is no specific Human Resources (HR), Crime and Disorder or Information Technology implications arising from this report.

Risk Management

33. The need for school places in this area of the city is already significant and will continue to grow. To not add any places would result in pupils not being able to access their local school, additional transport costs will be incurred, reputational risk to the Council and failing in a key statutory duty not to provide sufficient school places.

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**Report
Approved**



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Specialist Implications Officer(s)

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Wards Affected: Micklegate Ward

All

For further information please contact the author of the report.

Background Papers

None

Annexes

Annex A – Additional Primary School Places for Micklegate (17 March 2016)

Annex B - CIA/EIA Form