

## **PLANNING FOR GROWTH: REVIEW OF SECONDARY EDUCATION**

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### **Overview**

The attached report, 'Planning for Growth – Review of Secondary Education' has been the subject of consultation with the Head Teachers of Bromley Secondary and Secondary Special Schools, the Principal of Bromley College, the Archdiocese of Southwark, the Anglican Diocese of Rochester and the Harris Federation. Comments from individual institutions are incorporated in the main text.

### **Bromley Head Teachers' Group response**

The Bromley Secondary Head Teachers' Group has indicated that its preferred way forward, in the first instance, is for the expansion of existing schools in partnership with the Local Authority. Options discussed with schools are set out in Appendix 1.

The Headteachers' Group also understands and expects the Archdiocese to develop a Catholic secondary school either on the All Saints site, or elsewhere.

Headteachers would be concerned at the potential impact on surplus places should other providers seek to open free schools in the borough, and consider that this would have a detrimental effect on existing popular and successful Bromley schools.

### **Next steps**

The Working Party is asked to consider the document and the recommendations below to the Education Policy Development and Scrutiny Committee.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 1 The review be accepted as the basis for secondary place planning**
- 2 The higher GLA alternate roll projection methodology be adopted as the basis of forecasting for 2014/15 and beyond**
- 3 A margin of 2% be considered above projection to provide for parental choice in order to improve the rate of first choice allocations**
- 4 A new Catholic secondary school be supported in principle**

- 5 Further reviews of existing capacity be carried out on the basis of the Department for Education's revised space standards to validate options for growth at existing schools as the basis for capital bid applications**

## **Planning for growth: Review of Secondary Education**

### **Executive Summary**

This review considers the impact of the rise in primary school rolls moving into the secondary phase and beyond, and makes recommendations about how this might be met. It aligns with a set of principles agreed with Head Teachers.

The Council has a statutory duty to plan sufficient places to meet demand in its area, and to allocate formula funds received from government to provide new places through Basic Need. It may also make bids to secure specific capital projects in response to targeted programmes as they emerge.

It can also act as an agent of change by promoting alternative solutions, whether by itself or in partnership with others. Where new schools are required, the government's policy is to provide these principally through the free school route.

The review considers the impact of other parallel changes such as the raising of the participation age to 17 and 18. New options are also emerging such as University Technical Colleges and Career Colleges offering places at 14 and 16.

The report describes the diversity of current provision including single sex, faith and selective options in addition to mainstream academies. With all schools offering mixed post 16 education, students are able to make real choices. The review also takes account of patterns of gender balance and migration. Consideration is also given to the issue of school size.

The review also considers the impact of this growth on the special school sector. Medical advances also mean more students presenting with complex needs, while changes in statementing will reduce placements in other areas.

Whilst some schools still have capacity, initial projections indicate a need for up to 30 additional forms of entry in the years to 2025 and beyond. Although there is scope within the existing secondary estate for expansion, the Council would wish to consider where enlargement would best meet emerging needs. It also has to assess whether there is a need for one or more new schools.

No new funds are available to the Council until the next capital allocation round for 2015-7, although the DfE may invite bids in the interim. The application of revised DfE space standards may show additional capacity in the existing estate.

Against this background, a proposal by the Catholic Archdiocese for a new school is considered, as Bromley is the only borough in south London without a Catholic school. Proposals may also emerge for free secondary schools. Taken together these have the potential to provide sufficient places to meet forecast needs until the mid 2020s.

## Introduction

- 1 London's population is forecast to grow by 1.3m over the period between 2006 and 2031. Rapidly rising primary school rolls, first felt in Inner London in 2009 have now affected Bromley and have required a significant and ongoing increase in places. New schools are being set up, existing schools enlarged and bulge classes opened. These higher rolls will start to move into secondary schools later this decade. This review seeks to determine the pattern of need for places in the secondary phase over the period 2013-2030.
- 2 The purpose of this review is to set the strategic context and to consider what alterations might need to be made to the pattern of secondary schools in the light of demographic changes. The review is also being carried out against the background of the raising of the participation age whereby students are required to attend school, college, apprenticeship or training up to the age of 17 in 2013 and 18 in 2015.
- 3 The context of the review was agreed by the Bromley Secondary Heads' Forum in May 2013 in a paper attached as Appendix 2. This laid out a number of guiding principles concerning the review process and the way in which decisions would be made in the spirit of partnership, equality and transparency. The key points are as follows:
  - all schools are party to all available information simultaneously
  - expansion plans are shared between all schools
  - expansion is carried out evenly across the borough
  - existing gender balance is maintained
  - alternative provision is expanded in line
  - social space is included in expansion proposals
  - infrastructure needs are also considered
  - schools, officers and members work in partnership
- 4 In addition to the above, it was also agreed to include students with special educational needs (SEN), whether in special schools, units or currently placed out of borough. As mainstream rolls rise, special needs increase in proportion and at the same time medical advances and diagnosis can mean that children are identified at an earlier stage than before. This is likely to mean that more children with high end special needs are coming forward for a secondary place. Their needs might also be met differently than in the past.
- 5 Rising rolls in the primary phase are projected to be carried through into the secondary starting from 2014/15 onwards. Although projections are available to 2030, from 2022 onwards these are less reliable as children are only just born and the growth due to demographic factors is likely to be influenced by the wider economic and political climate.
- 6 The review considers all students of secondary age including those with special educational needs. The demand for places in special school will also be taken

into account alongside planned changes in the way statements of educational need will be drawn up.

- 7 The review also considers the impact of the raising of the participation rate (RPA) for post 16 students. From 2013, all students are required to stay on until the age of 17 either in education, training or work based learning. This rises to 18 from 2015.
- 8 Bromley College is the main local provider of post 16 education and training in the further education sector. It is also developing specialist provision for students with SEN. Vocational provision is being made for the 14+ age group from 2014. The College has just been awarded 'Careers College' status which will enable them to provide additional places in vocational and academic based learning for the 14 plus age group.
- 9 There are 17 mainstream secondary and four special schools dealing with the secondary phase. All mainstream schools offer the age range 11-19, two are selective. Four are for girls, three for boys and two are faith (CE). All are academies except St. Olave's CE Grammar, which has advised that it is unlikely to convert to academy status within the current terms of the Church conversion model. A map is shown at Appendix 3 showing all schools including the primary planning areas 1-9.
- 10 A description of each school is shown at Appendix 1. An initial round of consultation was also held with schools to consider the scope for expansion in the context of this review, and this is also set out here.
- 11 The Council retains a statutory duty to provide sufficient places to meet the needs of the area across all phases. It is resourced with capital expenditure by the Department for Education (DfE) to meet these needs whether by expansion of existing schools or provision of new schools. However, the expectation is that new schools would emerge through the free school route whereby a sponsor identifies a need and makes a case to the DfE. If and when approved, the DfE through the Funding Agency for Schools would work with the sponsor and the Local Authority (LA) to secure a site, provide the buildings and ensure revenue funding to allow the school to open.
- 12 The pattern of secondary schools has itself been evolving. Bishop Justus CE was the last wholly new school to open in 2005, and Langley Park Boys has just been completely rebuilt. Many schools have seen development and expansion as their status has changed from foundation and most recently to academies. Recent changes in legislation have also allowed selective schools to expand. Admission numbers since 2003 are shown at Appendix 6.

### **Demographic projections of need for the secondary and post 16 sector**

- 13 Projections of need are provided by the Greater London Authority (GLA) using a model based on ONS population forecasts for the area, taking into account secondary school rolls and dwelling stock changes. The underlying forecast is

influenced by fertility and net migration (both internal and external). The school rolls are based on the actual numbers of pupils from year to year. The difference is accounted for by net migration to other LAs, the independent sector, home education and pupils in special schools.

- 14 The GLA school population projections are provided on the basis of a standard and alternate forecast. The alternate forecast takes into account the impact of development data and is constrained to the overall population of the borough. It tends to be higher than the standard forecast. For primary this has been adopted as it has more accurately forecast the rise in rolls especially in the north of the borough. It is proposed that the alternate forecast is applied for secondary and post 16. The GLA forecast showing year 7 rolls year by year to 2030 for year 7 is shown at Appendix 4, with existing capacity.
- 15 The alternate forecast is based in the medium term on actual planning approvals for new housing using indices of size and tenure. This is updated each year as new planning approvals are included. Into the future it assumes approximately 500 new dwellings a year, although the Mayor is consulting on higher numbers to reflect the London wide housing shortage. Any increase in family housing would lead to a growth in demand.
- 16 For post 16, the projections follow a similar pattern although there is a degree of movement between schools as students make preferences about institutions and courses. All sixth forms are mixed including those which are single sex to year 11. Although some 88% of students stay on from year 11 to year 12, this includes those changing schools within the borough as well some who may have attended a school outside the borough or elsewhere.
- 17 School rolls have traditionally followed long cycles of growth, consolidation and recession. The last period of falling school rolls is currently working through the secondary sector in Bromley. Across London as a whole, new secondary provision has been made in response to a number of factors such as increased local provision as a result of London Challenge, as well as to growth in demand. Although the September 2013 year 7 roll show a small upturn, this may still show a fall when the official spring term count is taken. However, the cohort of 10 years olds in Bromley schools coming forward for secondary transfer in 2014 is some 200 larger than the same group in 2013. (Appendix 15)
- 18 In September 2013 the demand for year 7 was 116FE (based on a form entry of 30 pupils) against a capacity of 118 FE. The projection shows the crossover point between surplus and deficit between 2014/15 and 2015/16, with the trend clearly upwards. Extra capacity is likely to be needed from 2015/16, mainly in the north and west of the borough following the pattern of primary growth. Appendix 5 illustrates the overall picture of needs against capacity to 2030 based on the planned admission numbers in 2014/5.
- 19 The forecast shows a particularly rapid rise in 2018/19 where the difference appears to suggest that there would be a 9FE difference between on year and the next. This would be subject to further refinement with the GLA as an input into next year's forecast. Nevertheless, the trend is well established in both the

alternate and standard forecast, and both of these are based on the borough population forecast as a whole.

- 20 The forecast show rolls continuing to rise until the mid 2020s when they flatten off. At this stage, these forecasts are indicative and would be subject to a number of factors such as the state of the national economy and prevailing policies on housing construction as well as other factors such as the birth rate and pace of household formation.
- 21 Given the established rise in primary rolls, the passage of these children into secondary schools can be more securely forecast based on established local patterns. 2009 saw the start of the current increase in primary rolls across London, and these children will present for secondary transfer in 2016/7, and those coming into school in the current year in 2020/1.
- 22 The rise in rolls has been felt most markedly in the north and west of the borough, moving out from inner London. The primary review illustrated how other parts of the borough will also grow over the next few years. As has been seen, the majority of schools recruit locally. The selective schools and faith schools tend to draw from a wider area - for instance, St Olave's takes 50% of its intake each year from outside Bromley.
- 23 Secondary and post 16 education is planned on the basis of the borough as a whole and the GLA forecasts are prepared accordingly. However, it is possible to determine patterns of growth across the borough by using the primary year 6 projections, which give a broad indication of the growth by planning area in the year before secondary transfer. However, they would not take account of cross boundary movement so should be viewed as a guide only.
- 24 The chart at Appendix 7 shows the percentage change across the borough. It is noticeable that in planning area 3 the numbers are forecast to reduce, in contrast to all others. The largest rises are in the areas in the north west and centre, planning area 1,2, 4 and 7 with others showing variable amounts of increase from the present to 2020 and 2030. This would suggest new provision should broadly follow the pattern of growth.
- 25 In year admissions in the primary sector have shown rapid growth in parallel with the overall growth in numbers. It may be expected that a similar pattern emerges in secondary as the pressure on places grows. This is already a characteristic of popular schools in growth areas and is likely to become more widespread as the increase in rolls is felt throughout the school system.

### **LA statutory duty for school place planning and provision**

- 26 The Local Authority retains the responsibility in law to plan for the delivery of sufficient schools places to meet the projected need in its area, and to keep these under review. In that context, it would prepare from time to time development plans setting out the projected demand with proposals as to how this might be met from the starting point of existing provision. This includes

primary, secondary and special schools. With the move towards academy status across the country this role has become more consultative although the LA retains a leadership role in this regard.

- 27 As soon as the need for a new school has been agreed, LAs must notify the Secretary of State (SoS) of their plans to seek proposals for a new school. The presumption is that most new schools are provided by the free school route.
- 28 Free schools may also independently make proposals to provide places where gaps have been identified in local provision, or an innovative form of teaching or school organisation is considered beneficial in the area. This would require a demonstration of support by parents. In these circumstances, and if approved the SoS would provide the full costs of the site and buildings if necessary.
- 29 Where the LA identifies the need for a new school it would seek proposals of the basis of the type and number of places required. This would include consideration of the area to be served, the gender balance where relevant, the denominational need or to meet a gap in special needs provision by inclusion or in a new special school.
- 30 Once proposals have been received, the LA would provide details of all the proposals to the SoS. The SoS would then indicate if he had any concerns about a proposer's ability to open the school. DfE guidance indicates that in these circumstances the LA would be responsible for providing the site for the new school and meeting all associated capital and pre-/post-opening costs. The SoS will enter into a funding agreement with the approved proposer.
- 31 Where the SoS is not minded to approve a free school application he will notify the LA who will then assess all other proposals received. The outcome of the LA's assessment should be sent to the SoS. The preference indicated by the LA will be a key factor in that consideration. However, he will reserve the right to put in place a proposer of his own choice, particularly where there is further evidence available to him about the suitability of a proposer – or the availability of a better proposer. The intention is to ensure that the school is always established by the best proposer possible.

### **Statutory competitions**

- 32 Other routes remain although these involve a more lengthy consultation route and statutory process. If a need for a new school is identified and no academy/free school proposal is available, a statutory competition can be held with the consent of the SoS. A statutory competition would add about a year.
- 33 The LA may no longer submit its own community or foundation school proposals in a competition. At any time the LA may be directed to withdraw a competition notice; or a competition may be ended where circumstances have changed e.g. where the new school is no longer needed or an alternative option is found, such as the enlargement of existing schools.



- 34 Academy/Free School proposals and proposals for foundation (by proposers other than a local authority), voluntary controlled and VA schools, can be submitted into the competition by the deadline specified in the first notice. The SoS would consider a free school/academy option before allowing the competition to proceed. Otherwise the LA would decide the outcome of the competition.
- 35 Where a competition does not identify a suitable academy/Free School or maintained school, the local authority may publish its own community or foundation school proposal and the Schools Adjudicator will be the decision maker in such cases.
- 36 In special cases the consent of the SoS is not required to publish notices to establish a new VA school.

### **Capital funding routes and options**

- 37 In order to secure the required number of places, the LA receives an allocation of capital funding from government derived from its projections of need. Basic Need allocations are given – at present on a two year cycle - to deliver capital projects to secure the additional places required. Although funding in the current cycle (2013/5) is allocated substantially to primary schools to meet the demand for new places, it would be expected that as the demand moves into the secondary phase there would be scope to consider the allocation of funds for expansion of existing schools.
- 38 The two year approach was taken to allow LAs to have more certainty of funding although by the end of the cycle it is based on forecasts four years out of date. The DfE is keen to improve LA forecasting and has not clawed back funding for changes which may not have materialised although this has been proposed in the past.
- 39 The LA may only use Basic Need funding to enlarge existing schools. The expectation is that all new schools are funded through the Free School route, and would then become Academies. LAs may not open new community schools. All revenue funding for academies (whether converting or free schools) is through the EFA. New voluntary schools would also be established via the free school route, now that issues surrounding the ownership of land and property have largely been resolved with the voluntary authorities. However, no more than 50% of admissions can be subject to a faith criterion. Where the LA declares a need for a new school it is expected to provide the site and meet the capital costs. This may be as a result of a successful capital bid. It may assist the establishment of free schools, for instance by the provision or assistance with a site or buildings.
- 40 As part of the review of building standards, the DfE announced reduced space standards for the funding of new buildings procured centrally. For secondary schools this represents some 15% reduction on the previous standard set out in Building Bulletin 98. At the same time it introduced a new national cost per m<sup>2</sup>

rate against which all these centrally procured new schools would be funded, substantially lower than recent practice including BSF. In general this would provide for basic refurbishment or modular new buildings. Funding bids and allocations will be considered using this standard.

- 41 In considering expansion proposals it is necessary to have regard to the new space standards to determine the area requirement. This would include a reassessment of the existing accommodation. As a starting point, this would mean more students could be accommodated in a given space. Whilst it is rarely economic to remodel schools to reduce room sizes, this standard would have to be applied across all schools to ensure equity of provision.
- 42 In 2013 the DfE invited bids for the Targeted Basic Need programme and some £820m was allocated later that year to a mixture of projects providing new places. This included primary, secondary and special schools including VA. Some 45 new schools were created as well as enlargements to 333 more across England. Bromley did not bid as three free schools had been just approved, representing an investment of more than £12m.
- 43 Whilst there is no guarantee that a similar programme would be run in a subsequent year, it would be a suitable source of funding for both the expansion of existing secondary schools as well as a new Catholic secondary. For the last round, bids were encouraged for developed schemes with planning permission. In these circumstances it would be prudent to have a batch of schemes ready should another bid cycle emerge.
- 44 The LA also receives a capital allocation for planned maintenance of the school building stock. Whilst this is expected to be used for major renewal of plant and fabric, there is scope to apply funds to expansion projects where these have been identified as the highest priority, without risking disruption or closure.
- 45 Similarly capital funds are provided by the DfE under the Locally Controlled Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP) for maintenance and renewal. These are allocated to the voluntary bodies in consultation with the LA, and while mostly for renewal schemes at VA schools it may be used to secure new places. Generally diocesan boards expect LAs to provide additional places through Basic Need where it is agreed they are most appropriate at a VA school.
- 46 Existing funds are fully allocated to named schemes although these are kept under review as estimates change or additional needs emerge. New schemes are only brought into the programme with identified funding.
- 47 Academies may apply directly for funding to meet fabric and condition work that cannot be met from routine maintenance allowances. It can also be used to fund expansion of popular and successful schools.
- 48 The next capital cycle is expected to be announced towards the end of 2014 setting out allocations for 2015/6 and 2016/7. Although these would be determined in this Parliament, they would be delivered in the next. Supplementary allocations such as the Targeted Basic Need programme for

the provision of urgently required new places are announced from time to time. Specific initiatives such as free school meals or sports facilities may also attract a dedicated fund stream. An incoming government in 2015 may wish to review these funding arrangements in the light of needs and resources at the time.

- 49 The LA may supplement its capital resources by the application of S106 or the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Council is yet to make a decision whether to implement CIL. Where planning applications are being considered which contain a family housing element the LA would expect a contribution from developers according to an approved tariff. These contributions would be available to allocate to capital schemes in the relevant area. Whilst S106 resources would usually be applied in the vicinity of the development, for secondary places it would be argued that these should be used more widely across the borough because of the strategic need. However, S106 would supplement rather than replace Basic Need funding.
- 50 Schools may also bring their own funds to expansion proposals. Academies have scope to raise money of their own from foundations, trusts or the private or voluntary sector in order to supplement capital proposals. Schools also have allocations of devolved capital which may be accumulated, or make savings on their delegated budget to generate balances to apply to capital schemes.
- 51 It is for the LA to decide how to allocate its capital resources according to need as demonstrated in the regular planning cycle. This report is the basis of planning for secondary schools from 2015 onwards, to be followed up with more detailed reports proposing individual schemes when capital resources become available. Funding may be accumulated from more than one source.
- 52 Formula Funding (Basic Need) is allocated on a per place methodology using indices determined by the DfE. These are based on national unit costs of delivery to the latest revised standards used for the Priority Schools Programme. Essentially these are based on an assumption of modular construction on unencumbered sites. No allowance is made for the additional costs of building in London, nor for abnormal site costs, special planning requirements such as proximity to listed buildings or environmental considerations. Making best use of existing buildings by refurbishment can avoid the need to extend onto playgrounds but this may not always be the least cost option. For Bromley as with other London authorities the real cost of new places can be significantly higher than the allocated funds would allow.
- 53 Targeted Capital Fund in the last round was allocated on a bid basis, but as above the basis of funding was the national unit cost, although the funding was expected to cover additional costs such as fees, abnormals, ICT and furniture and equipment. Any difference was to be made up by the LA or the promoter. VA proposals had to be made by the LA.
- 54 Given there is no certainty of another Targeted Capital bid round in this parliament, the earliest that new capital funding might be expected would be for the financial years 2015-17. The Council would not therefore be in a position to

give any commitment to allocate funds to any existing school until the allocation was known, subject to other pressures on its resources at the time.

- 55 In the meantime, a twin track approach is proposed. Consideration should be given to working with potential sponsors of free schools to shape their proposals to meet Bromley's identified needs, and to give attention to the major issue of site identification and delivery. At the same time, schools where expansion is possible may be encouraged to develop fully costed proposals towards the planning stage, with the potential to be put forward in a future Targeted Capital bid. In doing so, some match funding may be required from the sources outlined above to meet any gap between a successful bid amount and the real outturn cost. The Council would consider which bids to support at the time in the light of the demand for places.

### **Parental choice**

- 56 The expansion of popular schools has been a continuing policy government from successive governments, and reflected in the policies of LBB. For 2013/4, 6 out of the 14 schools using a distance based admission criteria were able to make an offer to all first preference applicants. The remainder applied the admissions criteria, and the distances reached by successful applicants are published in the admissions booklet each year. In 2013 76% of parents received their first preference of school, and this has been rising in recent years. Some admissions numbers have been adjusted in recent years to reflect the real capacity of schools, for instance where poor quality accommodation has been taken out of use.
- 57 However, as rolls increase it becomes more difficult for parents to secure a place in the school of their choice. In recognition of that, for primary schools it was recently agreed that a margin of 2% be applied to the projections to provide for a margin of additional capacity to increase parental choice. It is proposed that the same margin is applied in the case of secondary 11-16 rolls. The addition is shown from 2015/6 onwards, when the impact of the increased demand is likely to make itself felt in terms of increasing pressure for places.

### **Special Educational Needs**

- 58 This report will also considers the impact of changes in the statementing process, likely to mean that the needs of some students with moderate learning difficulties and mild to moderate Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may no longer receive a statement and their needs might be met in a mainstream rather than special school.
- 59 At the same time there is a continuing high cost of out of borough placements for students whose specialised needs cannot be met locally. There is scope to consider whether additional investment in local facilities might create new places to enable appropriate placements at lower cost nearer to students' homes. This would reduce the burden of travelling, maintain a greater connection between parents and the school, and improve accountability.

- 60 For students with high end special needs the DfE is placing more emphasis on 16-25 as a single phase where the experience gained in the sixth form is carried through into young adult provision. The opportunity to consider new free school structures may offer scope to reconfigure the existing pattern of provision to enable a more cost effective service to emerge.
- 61 Four special schools deal with the secondary phase. Burwood provides for students with BESD whereas Marjorie McClure, Glebe and Riverside offer places for those with complex needs, each offering a specialist support for students presenting variously in combination with ASD, severe, profound or multiple learning difficulties. Both Marjorie McClure and Riverside include primary departments whereas Glebe and Burwood and secondary only. Burwood only offers places for students in the 10-16 age range whilst the others offer sixth form provision to 19. Bromley College has also developed new provision for young adults to the age of 25.
- 62 Specialist units have been established in mainstream secondary school promoting inclusion of students with SEN. These include a centre for the deaf at Darrick Wood, speech and language provision at Hayes and provision for specific learning difficulties at The Priory and The Ravensbourne. Langley Park Boys has a unit for social and communication difficulties including ASD in addition to full disabled access.
- 63 Proposals are also in train to enlarge both Riverside and Glebe special schools to provide more places for students with ASD in response to growing numbers being identified, and to continue to minimise out of borough placements.

### **Gender balance**

- 64 Bromley offers a broad range of mixed and single sex schools, and all single sex schools are mixed in their sixth forms. In overall terms, the number of students at 11-16 is in broad balance with 51% girls and 49% boys. By PAN for 2014, 55% of places are in mixed schools, 24% in girls and 21% boys.
- 65 The numbers of girls places has increased slightly with the growth of Newstead Wood from 130 to 160, and there has been a small increase in St. Olave's from 112 to 116. However, Harris Beckenham is in the course of change from a boys school, and is only in the second year of mixed admissions. With the exception of Coopers, where the boy/girl balance is 37%/63%, the ratios in mixed schools are broadly in the range 45-55%. The data is set out at Appendix 8 by percentage for the 11-16 cohort.
- 66 Additional places to meet growth might be expected to broadly follow the same pattern so that the existing balance remains. In the present circumstances, with the greater number of single sex places being available in girls schools there would be no case for more. There is no current evidence that more boys places are required. It is most likely that any new school would also be mixed.

## **Cross boundary movement**

- 67 Bromley is a net importer of pupils in the secondary phase. Overall, in 2012 the difference between exports and imports was some 1,200. In schools Bromley residents occupy 78.4% of the places, with some 20.1% from other London LAs and 1.5% from outside. This is shown in Appendix 9.
- 68 Some 84% of Bromley residents send their children to borough school, another 12% choose a school in another London LA with some 4% outside London as illustrated in Appendix 10.
- 69 Comparing total imports and exports, there is an overall net difference of some 6% between the numbers of students leaving the borough (22%) and arriving (16%). Appendix 11 shows the actual numbers in each direction. The largest inflow is from Lewisham followed by Croydon and Greenwich whilst the largest exports are to Croydon, Kent, Bexley and Greenwich.
- 70 Appendix 12 shows the borough of residence data for year 7 admissions for 2013. This illustrates the distribution of students by schools and home LA. The Greenwich judgement means that any parent can apply for any school regardless of their residence, and will be successful if they can meet the admission criteria. Where schools recruit the majority of their intake on proximity, the distance from the borough boundary strongly influences the extent to which they recruit from outside Bromley

## **Size of school**

- 71 Provision of new places can be by the expansion of existing schools or the provision of new schools, and may also be found in the short term by migration. Current numbers by school in the spring term 2013 are shown at Appendix 13.
- 72 Expansion of popular schools in response to parental demand has been a characteristic of government policy in recent years. Although firstly as grant maintained, then foundation and most recently as academies, secondary schools in Bromley have had the opportunity to expand. For the most part, development has been to refurbish or renew existing building stock to enable more effective delivery of the curriculum. Planned admission numbers (PAN) have remained largely stable and indeed in some cases been reduced in the light of demand and buildings issues. The only significant addition to capacity was the establishment of Bishop Justus in 2005 but that largely replaced the loss of places represented by the closure of All Saints.
- 73 Newstead Wood has been expanded from a PAN of 130 to 135 and in 2013 to 160. St. Olave's has seen a small expansion from 112 to 116 (plus 4 choral scholarships) with further growth planned to 128 inclusive. These increases to selective schools were made possible by legislative changes under the present government.

- 74 There is a balance to be struck between large and small schools. The average size of secondary school in England has grown since 1950 from around 300 to 900. In terms of overall size including sixth forms Bromley schools are at the top end, with the smallest taking 974 pupils and the largest 1697, with five schools over 1500 in size. Parents in general tend to favour small schools because they are considered to be less impersonal, and in terms of teaching and learning they are often considered successful not least because management issues are easier to address. Large schools have greater resources to provide for a wider variety of curriculum offer.
- 75 The Gulbenkian Foundation published a study in 2009 'Schools within schools – Human scale education in practice', reporting on a project whereby some 39 schools were given funding to examine ways in which schools might adjust to ensure that the perceived beneficial characteristics of small schools might be translated into larger ones. This was easier in schools being rebuilt. It recommended that in large schools, reorganisation into smaller collegiate or house units would be beneficial to generate a greater sense of identity and security, particularly in the younger age groups.
- 76 The average size of school in Bromley at admission is 7FE. The largest was The Priory hitherto at 9FE, but reducing to 7.5FE from 2014 although in the past Coopers has also admitted higher numbers. St. Olave's at under 4FE is relatively low by comparison with other schools in London, and has noted the difficulties inherent in generating sufficient funding to provide fully for the curriculum within the current model. However, with a total roll of 974 including the sixth form the school would not be considered small by national standards.
- 77 Some academic work has been done on the effectiveness of large versus small schools although the results are inconclusive, and tend to suggest that the quality of leadership and management is a more telling factor. In the London context the average size of school tends to be smaller and there is a view that the ideal size is between 6 and 8 FE, where there is felt to be a balance between the benefits of the small and large school.
- 78 It may be appropriate to consider whether a principle should be applied limiting the size of an expanded school to 8FE, with 9FE or larger only in exception circumstances where appropriate provision can be made.

## **Options for additional school places**

### **Growth of existing schools**

- 79 The first option to consider in looking for additional capacity is the existing family of schools. Discussions have been held on an individual basis and these are reported at Appendix 1. Based on these initial assessments, and bearing in mind considerations of school size, the first option would be to consider the impact of growth to 8FE where practicable. This could yield some 5.5FE at year 7 subject to capital funding.

- 80 A second level of options has been discussed where schools may consider expansion beyond 240 or to a higher number beyond their existing capacity but within their overall site constraints, which would require more major investment. This has the potential to unlock some further 6 forms of entry.
- 81 Some schools have indicated that in the longer term and subject to need they could envisage further major expansion. In some cases that was the subject of feasibility work either through Building Schools for the Future or on the initiative of governors. This has the potential to yield 6 more forms of entry.
- 82 On the basis of this initial assessment it may be possible to consider expansion of the existing estate incrementally by up to some 18 forms of entry taken together. This would be subject to further discussion, strategic planning, funding and planning consents being forthcoming in the medium to long term.

### **Faith schools -a proposed new Catholic school for Bromley**

- 83 At present there are two faith schools, both Church of England. St. Olave's, and Bishop Justus which opened in 2005. St. Olave's is a boys' selective school whereas Bishop Justus is mixed and offers equal numbers of places to faith and non faith applicants. There is no Catholic school nor is any other faith represented.
- 84 All Saints Catholic school closed in 2007, with cessation of recruitment in 2005. Although renamed and improved after the closure of St. John Rigby RC school on the same site, it did not secure sufficient support from parents to be viable. The site remains in the ownership of the Catholic archdiocese although has deteriorated in the intervening period through lack of use.
- 85 The Archdiocese has indicated its intention to open a Catholic school in Bromley. There are Catholic secondary schools in all surrounding boroughs. At present, students leaving Catholic primaries in Bromley disperse to over 40 secondary schools across London, the largest of which is around 20 to Coloma Convent RC Girls in Croydon. All other numbers are smaller and these include a wide range of faith and non faith schools.
- 86 The proposal would be for a 5 or 6 FE mixed secondary school with a sixth form, and would not only meet the aspirations of parents but address the need for additional places later this decade. The process of bidding, design, construction and commissioning is likely to take two to three years, once a suitable site has been identified and a funding package put together.
- 87 Although the demand for places at a Catholic school is assumed in line with similar schools elsewhere in south London, the site issues are not straightforward. As noted above, the site of All Saints remains potentially available. Whilst it is the intention of the archdiocese to seek to dispose of the site in order to reinvest in primary schools elsewhere in the borough, there are significant planning obstacles to the site redevelopment for purposes other than



education There is also a charge on the site by the borough, reflecting the financial support provided to the archdiocese in closing the school.

- 88 The All Saints site has limited open space and the buildings are in need of refurbishment. They would also need substantial remodelling in order to meet current standards including accessibility. The location near the boundary with Croydon is not ideal as the travelling distances and routes from other parts of the borough are difficult and would require special services to be put in place. It would also represent a potential draw for parents in Croydon which may have the effect of denying places to applicants from Bromley.
- 89 An initial search for another site has taken place and several options in the ownership of the archdiocese have been considered in consultation with planners. The planning issues surrounding the establishment of new schools in Bromley are complex. Many sites are constrained either by Green Belt, Metropolitan Open Land or designation in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) as Urban Open Space. As such, any site which has been a school starts with an advantage in planning terms as it does not require any change of use.
- 90 Additionally, the disposal of any school site would require ministerial consent. In planning terms, there is an expectation that sites would not be released until it can be shown that the need for additional places can be met elsewhere. There is a need for specific consent for the disposal of school sites by the Secretary of State under the S77 of the 1998 School Standards and Framework Act. Although nominally a process to determine the release of school playing fields in effect it encompasses the disposal or change of use of all school land save for small utility and servicing areas.
- 91 Whilst other sites have not been ruled out at this stage, the process of reaching a planning consent is likely to be complex. The establishment of Bishop Justus between 2000 and 2005 illustrates the difficulty of finding a suitable site in Bromley. In this case, the preferred site although available was in the Green Belt and planning was only secured after refusal and appeal to the Secretary of State. This was a lengthy process through public enquiry and was only successful as it was shown that there were 'very special circumstances in terms of need for a new school' and given the 'lack of a more suitable alternative site', there were 'material considerations' in setting aside the planning refusal. In the present circumstances the process for any new site would be no less easy, particularly in light of the alternative All Saints site.
- 92 A review of the Local Plan is under way and there is scope within that for the reconsideration of planning designation of land. This may mean that there is potential for other sites to be identified for school use taking into account the balance of need in the area. However, the process of review is lengthy and procedures involve consultation, proposals, examination and consent. Given the emerging concerns elsewhere about the expansion of school sites this process is not straightforward and the outcomes far from certain. Given this level of risk, the redevelopment of existing sites has greater likelihood of success in the short to medium term.

- 93 There is also a perceived legacy issue from the previous schools on the site which suggests that it may be more difficult to establish a successful new institution from the outset.
- 94 The process of establishing a new Catholic school would require a resolution of these planning issues to enable a decision to be made on the site issue. Once that had been determined, an application for funding would be constructed based on an assessment of the chosen site and build form. At present, two options exist for funding – Targeted Basic Need or the free school route.
- 95 The Archdiocese has indicated that the free school option is not one which the Church would wish to pursue at this stage. Free schools require 50% of the places to be open. Although there are some examples of successful free schools with a Catholic ethos, these have been made by bodies outwith the Church itself. In these circumstances, it is likely that the archdiocese would have to go down the competition route as set out above.
- 96 The preferred funding route is through the Targeted Basic Need fund (TBN). This would require a submission by the Council to a future bid round. Although there has been a recent TBN bid process there is no indication that this will be repeated. However, given the level of demand and need, it may be assumed that a further bid opportunities are likely to exist which would enable the proposal to be put forward. It is likely that a funding package would be required including major DfE capital but would need to encompass other sources of funds from the diocese and elsewhere.
- 97 At this stage, the free school route offers more certainty as there is an announced bid timetable with the next practical deadline of May 2014. However, as a free school with a faith designation 50% of the places have to be available to non faith applicants before over subscription criteria are applied.
- 98 In the present circumstances, the disposal of the All Saints site is unlikely to be determined until the need for places identified in this report has been met.

### **A new free secondary school**

- 99 There would be an option for a new secondary school by the free school route. A provider may put forward an application to the Secretary of State although this would require evidence of parental support and capacity of the sponsor to establish and sustain the school to ensure high standards of provision. However, in practical terms any successful provider would be faced with the need to address the site issues.
- 100 The review of the delivery of the major functions in the borough may identify suitable locations for an additional secondary school where land may be released with the potential to secure planning permission.
- 101 Existing secondary schools in Bromley all enjoy generous sites with good facilities and on site playing fields. There is scope for expansion in a number of

cases subject to the planning issues highlighted previously, i.e. Green Belt, MOL and Urban Open Space. Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) may be another consideration.

- 102 In the context of new secondary schools, and given the planning, land use and land cost constraints it is unlikely that a new site with playing fields can be identified within the borough. The DfE standards provide for an ideal site size in for a secondary school at 5FE with a sixth form of 250 in a range 6-7.5ha. The 'restricted' criteria also recognise that in urban areas where sites of this size cannot be found then the site size could fall dramatically, as low as 0.68ha in this example. Comparative figures for a 6FE with a 300 student sixth form would see a range from 0.76 ha to 8.6 ha. Recent secondary schools in London have opened on the basis of the restricted site criteria, with the playing fields found off site, staggered playtimes and limited parking on site.
- 103 The Government has also eased the restrictions on change of use of existing buildings to allow schools to be located in former shop, office and industrial premises. Assuming other suitability issues can be met, these would also require careful consideration to be given to the management of break times and almost certainly off site playing fields. Traffic and other access issues would need to be addressed in any proposal.
- 104 Free school applicants may put forward a bid based on a proposal for a school without the need for a site to be identified. If approved, it is then for the promoter to work with the LA to secure a site, or with a government appointed property company to undertake a land search. The EFA will purchase sites and provide funding for buildings for approved free schools. New buildings where required would be constructed according to the current standards, that is using procurement through the national framework with an expectation of modular construction within the current cost constraints, and to a size determined by the formula at the time but currently some 15% smaller than the standard used for the last generation of schools as set out in the DfE Building Bulletin 98.
- 105 The combined impact of the potential growth in the existing secondary sector described above, and two new schools at 6FE would provide sufficient capacity to meet growth forecasts as shown to the early 2020s. Each addition to capacity would need to be carefully considered in the context of forecast demand from year to year, and the strategic plan updated accordingly. This is set out at Appendix 14.

## **Special Schools**

- 106 The population of young people with special needs, currently in special schools will be subject to change. Although some of the drivers affecting changes in special education are similar to mainstream, others are unique. These are identified as follows:
- growth in the general school population will be matched by equivalent rise in those with special needs as a proportion

- medical advances mean that more children with high end physical or complex needs now come forward for school places
  - more complex equipment is required for these students taking up more space in classrooms and circulation routes
  - need to avoid out borough placements where possible, due to the high cost, separation from local peer groups, and difficulties in monitoring
  - more students are being identified with ASD across the board
  - changes in statutory procedures which mean fewer students with moderate learning difficulties (MLD) would be placed in a special schools
- 107 Riverside and Glebe are being expanded to provide more places for students with ASD as part of their diagnosis. Taken together these will provide 24 more places each year and reduce the need for specialist out of borough placements.
- 108 Marjorie McClure is under pressure as numbers of students with complex physical needs has grown. The site is constrained being in adjacency to the mainstream Coopers school, itself with its own growth ambitions. Enlargement of Marjorie McClure would require a creative and innovative solution, likely to involve significant cost with the potential for disruption.
- 109 The reduction in students with MLD means that, over time, their needs will be met in the mainstream with additional resourcing through the 'local offer'. This will allow each school to develop flexible additional supported provision to meet their needs. It will also have the knock on effect of creating more places in mainstream special schools.
- 110 At this stage, these changes in special needs provision may be self balancing, with the fall off in places for MLD students broadly compensating the increases in ASD and high end physical and learning needs identified above.
- 111 There is a continuing need to make suitable provision for these additional places for students with MLD and ASD, as well as those with physical needs in the mainstream. Although existing schools will be expected to support an equal proportion of students, any application for a new school is likely to be enhanced at the DfE by an offer which includes specialist supported provision.
- 112 There is a continuing need to explore ways of enhancing local provision including BESD to ensure that panels feel able to name a Bromley school on statements.
- 113 The main route for capital investment in special schools is likely to be the mainstream capital programme through Basic Need funding. There may be scope to develop a bid under the Targeted category if that is repeated. In the recent past, funding packages were approved to meet the expansion of special schools by accumulation of savings from out borough placements. This may be considered as an appropriate route and should be investigated. Savings in DSG may also offer the potential to supplement funding from year to year.

## **Post 16 growth**

- 114 The rate of growth for post 16 in the GLA forecasts is constrained by the population figures and the historic rolls. Post 16 is more difficult to forecast because student change schools at the end of year 11, and all sixth forms are mixed. In addition to moves between schools there is also migration from outside the borough and elsewhere. The staying on rate between year 11 and year 12 is 88% and on that basis a further 617 places is given as the number of additional places needed. Across 17 schools this would average at some 36 per institution, which could probably be managed within existing accommodation although the size of 6<sup>th</sup> forms does vary substantially.
- 115 However, the changes being brought about by the raising of the participation age (RPA) may have a further impact on post 16 rolls. The post 16 population as a whole is still falling but starts to increase after 2018/9. At this stage it is difficult to estimate the additional numbers who may wish to stay on at school rather than participate in one of the other post 16 options, i.e further education, training or work based learning. The focus of this policy is to increase the level of education and skills in the 16-19 population and to reduce the numbers of students who currently do not participate (NEETs). It would be reasonable therefore to assume larger growth in post 16 numbers at this stage.

## **Further Education and University Technical Colleges (UTC)**

- 116 In addition to further education as a post 16 option, the Government is supporting the growth of new institutions in the sector including UTCs and Studio schools. These admit students at 14 and 16 with an emphasis on combining practical skills with education, and are geared towards students with a clear vocation in areas such as engineering or manufacturing. Woolwich UTC has already opened and another is due to open in Dartford in 2014. Others are being considered in neighbouring authorities. Bromley College is considering whether to submit a bid. Admissions arrangements are in place through the pan London system.
- 117 Bromley College is also itself recruiting a 14+ cohort for 2014/15 offering places for students who may wish to transfer from mainstream schools to a study a more vocationally based course. It is also opening a Careers College, a new free standing institution offering courses for 14+ students on a combination of vocational and academic studies, has just been approved.
- 118 The impact of a new local institutions such as the UTC or Careers College is difficult to gauge at this stage although there will be some impact as year 9 students move out of schools. For the post 16 age group, it is another choice within the RPA offer and may act to offset growth in the school sixth forms.

## Summary and conclusions

- 119 The review identifies a significant rise in secondary schools rolls in the period following 2015/6. The rate of change is dependent on the other factors such as net migration. Growth in the housing stock is a function of the national economy as well as government, Mayor of London and local policy. The report also considers factors such as gender balance, cross boundary movement and the optimum size of school along with to changes in special education.
- 120 The identified need over the period up to 2025 and beyond of between 25 and 30 forms of entry over existing capacity means that, if fulfilled, it would require major expansion at all the existing secondary schools as well as up to two new schools. This raises major questions of funding, timing and site availability.
- 121 There is scope identified in local schools to grow in response to these larger numbers. Changes in the measurement of capacity may mean that schools need to review the way in which accommodation is used and the rate of utilisation. The area of any additional buildings will be driven by these revised rates, and successful bid by the corresponding DfE funding formula.
- 122 At present the next Basic Need capital funding round is expected in late 2014 to cover the years 2015-7, although it is likely that primary commitments will take up a proportion. This may be supplemented by a Targeted Basic Need capital bid exercise in the meantime for named schemes, although there is no guarantee. Schools may wish to identify other sources of funding.
- 123 The effect of this report if agreed by the Council is to identify the need for additional growth beyond the existing capacity of schools. In these circumstances the Government's preferred option for new provision is the free school route. Potential providers who can show demand and relevant expertise may bring forward bids to the Secretary of State. The next bid deadlines are 10 January and 9 May 2014. The Council would be expected to work with successful bidders to secure a site.
- 124 The Catholic Archdiocese of Southwark has expressed a wish to open a Catholic school in Bromley although not by the free school route. In these circumstances consideration would have to be given to the competition rules set by the Secretary of State for the opening of other new schools. It would also have to be successful in a Targeted Basic Need bid supported by the Council.
- 125 Planning considerations mean that it is difficult to identify suitable school sites that are not classified as Green Belt or Metropolitan Open Land. In the circumstances of growth it is difficult for the Council to justify departing from its adopted planning guidelines to allow change of use.