

Statutory proposals for a prescribed alteration

School and Local Authority details:

School: Micklefield Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School, Great North Road, Micklefield, LS25 4AQ.

Local Authority: Leeds City Council, The Director of Children and Families, PO Box 837, Sufficiency and Participation Team, Children and Families, Leeds, LS1 9PZ

Description of alteration:

The proposal is to permanently increase the capacity of Micklefield Church of England (C of E) Voluntary Controlled Primary School (PS) from 140 to 210 pupils with effect from 1 September 2021. The current admission number for the school is 20 into Reception each year (aged from four) and the proposed admission number for Reception each year is 30 (aged from four). This permanent increase would apply to Reception classes from September 2021 and it would therefore take several years for the school to reach its full capacity.

To facilitate the proposed expansion a combination of new build and remodelling of existing space is anticipated, this would ensure the full building and site meets the challenges of becoming a 1 form entry school. Extensive consultation with the school would take place on all aspects of the proposed project, including the need to shape the proposals and ensure the construction work phasing does not impact teaching and learning. Additionally, once the designs have been developed to the required stage they would be subject to the formal planning permission process.

Evidence of demand:

Micklefield village sits within an area of the city where the birth rate has remained fairly static however new housing developments in Micklefield village are expected to increase the need for additional primary school places in the coming years. There are currently two housing developments with full planning permission for around 340 homes and plans for further housing which may be built in the future. It is likely to take several years for the housing to be built and based on the anticipated build rates and pupil yields, along with the historical take up of places at Micklefield C of E PS compared with the numbers of children accessing Garforth primary schools, we believe that up to 10 additional places will be needed in each year group.

Effect on other schools:

Based on the expected demand for school places within the Micklefield area Leeds City Council would anticipate that an increase in places at Micklefield C of E PS school will not have any negative impact on other local schools.

New housing developments in Micklefield are expected to result in an increased demand for additional primary school places. Although Micklefield has good transport links including a railway station, it has only one primary school accessible by foot. The expansion of Micklefield C of E PS would ensure that families could access a local school place within a reasonable walking distance.

We know that historically families in the village have sent their children to Micklefield C of E PS and primaries in Garforth. Although this may continue in future years, we want to increase places at Micklefield C of E PS so that we can offer families more local places. As there are no other schools

within a reasonable distance, the risk of not expanding the school would be that in future years there may be insufficient places available for those families requiring a local school place.

Objectives:

(including how the proposal would increase educational standards and parental choice);
The council has a duty under the Education and Inspections Act 2006 to secure diversity in the provision of schools and increase opportunities for parental choice. It also has a duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places. Providing places close to where children live allows improved accessibility to local and desirable school places, is an efficient use of resources and reduces the risk of non-attendance. Creating 10 additional permanent places each year at Micklegate C of E PS will provide more choice for local families and meet the demand for additional places as housing comes forward.

Discussions about an increase to places have been held with the Governing Body and although there have been delays bringing forward the new housing due to planning and other issues, we believe that it is now the right time to seek permission to permanently expand the school to ensure that the Local Authority (LA) continues to meet its statutory duty to provide sufficient places.

Micklegate C of E PS is currently rated 'Requires Improvement' by Ofsted. The school is working closely with the LA which is supporting the new Headteacher and Governing Body with its improvement plans. If this proposal were to progress, the school would be able to admit additional children gradually, growing year on year from September 2021 which would enable the school to continue to focus on its improvement journey in a managed way. The school currently has split age classes but the expansion would allow the school to introduce classes in single age groups which is expected to have a positive impact on teaching and learning.

This proposal contributes to the city's aspiration to be the best council, the best city in which to grow up and a child friendly city. The delivery of pupil places through the Learning Places Programme is one of the baseline entitlements of a child friendly city. By creating good quality local school places we can support the priority aim of improving educational achievement and closing achievement gaps. In turn, by providing young people with the skills they need for life, this proposal provides underlying support for the council's ambition to produce a strong economy by compassionate means. A good quality school place also contributes towards delivery of targets within the Children and Young People's Plan such as our obsession to improve behaviour, attendance and achievement.

It is important when bringing any proposals forward that there is a degree of certainty that any change would not have a negative impact on teaching and learning. The Headteacher and Governing Body are confident that they can manage the expansion of the school which would happen gradually from September 2021 whilst continuing to focus on improving outcomes for both existing and future children attending the school. Colleagues in Leeds City Council's Learning Improvement team are supportive of the expansion, especially since the move towards single age classes is likely to have a positive impact on teaching and learning.

Implementation and any proposed stages for implementation:

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from four). This permanent increase would apply to Reception classes from September 2021 and it would therefore take several years for the school to reach its full capacity.

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Project costs: (and indication of how these will be met, including how long-term value for money will be achieved)

This proposal offers good value for money through its capacity to support achievement of the Best Council outcome to give everyone the chance to do well at every level of learning, gaining the skills they need for life.

This proposal is being brought forward to meet the LA's statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places for all the children in Leeds. Providing places close to where children live allows improved accessibility to local and desirable school places, is an efficient use of resources and reduces the risk of non-attendance.

Based on current basic need funding rates for cost per pupil places, the target cost of the proposed scheme is in the region of £1.75m. This may not represent the final total cost of the scheme as once the feasibility stage was complete and schemes proceeded to the detailed design phase, budgets would be realigned to reflect that all parties have agreed the final design and cost estimates. This would take account of site investigations and survey information, any 'abnormal' costs, off-site works and fees in accordance with standard project and risk management principles. The proposed scheme would be subject to planning permission which would need to be granted prior to the commencement of construction works and would be subject to relevant stakeholder consultation.

The proposed scheme would be funded from the Learning Places Programme. Funding streams would be primarily through Basic Need Grant, council borrowing, and Community Infrastructure Levy. The precise funding packages would be confirmed at the design freeze stage, and detailed in the relevant Design and Cost reports.

These proposals have been brought forward in time to allow primary places to be delivered for September 2021. A decision not to proceed at this stage may result in places not being available in time for when the new housing begins to be built. It may also result in bulge cohorts being delivered which would be more costly in the longer term. The LA's ability to meet its statutory duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places in the short term may be at risk.

Support, objections and comments:

Within four weeks of the date of publication of this proposal, i.e. by 4pm on 3 June 2019 any person may submit comments, support or objections on the proposal to PO Box 837, Sufficiency and Participation Team, Children and Families, Leeds, LS1 9PZ or email educ.school.organisation@leeds.gov.uk