

Nottingham City Council

Business Case

Project Title:

Proposed expansion of Nottingham City Council Special Schools

Lead Department:

Children and Adults



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DOCUMENT CONTROL

BC Author	Janine Walker / Sarah White
Project Sponsor (contact details)	Pat and Sarah Fielding
Project Manager (contact details)	Sarah White, Major Projects Directorate Telephone: 0115 8763410 Email: sarah.white1@nottinghamcity.gov.uk
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CONTENTS

	Page
1.0 Purpose of Document	4
2.0 Executive Summary	4
3.0 Strategic Fit	5
3.1 Overview of current situation	5
3.2 Predicted growth patterns and need	6
3.3 Strategic objectives and fit	8
3.4 Feasibility, scope and options analysis	8
3.5 Constraints	10
3.6 Dependencies	11
3.7 Key risks	12
3.8 Benefits Realisation Plan	13
4.0 Options appraisal	14
5.0 Finance	14
6.0 Procurement and value for money	16
7.0 Delivery	16
8.0 Project governance and reporting	17
9.0 Programme and approvals	18

Annexes

A	Need for School places across Nottingham City
B	Options Appraisal
C	Programme

1.0 PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This document sets out the Business Case for expanding the capacity in Special Schools within the City. The Schools and Learning team has identified that there are three of the five special schools in the City that are under significant pressure for places (Westbury, Oak Field and Nethergate) while there are two schools (Rosehill and Woodlands) that have sufficient capacity at present. Feasibility studies have been undertaken at those schools seen as under the most pressure to explore how more spaces might be provided and give an indicative cost. This document sets out the case for taking forward the preferred option and provides background information on how this decision was reached.

2.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Context

Local Authorities are under a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient school places, to promote high educational standards, ensure fair access to educational opportunities and promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential. In addition, Local Authorities must ensure that there are school places available in areas of need, promote diversity and increase parental choice. This requirement includes special school places for pupils. Local Authorities may provide these spaces themselves or procure spaces from private providers.

Demand for specialist maintained provision

The demand for specialist maintained provision across a range of special educational needs is increasing. In the last two years there have been four temporary classrooms installed at Westbury Special School and a new classroom created at Oak Field Special School from a meeting room to provide urgent places as the need for places exceeds those available. This need is increasing every year and without further expansion the City Council, as the responsible body, would have to purchase additional places from outside the city boundaries. The situation is so critical that early discussions have already taken place with adjacent Local Authorities to ascertain capacity and the potential capacity in their Special Schools. These discussions have indicated that the City is not alone in experiencing an increase in need and suggests that there is no additional capacity in the adjacent Local Authorities, so any places required would need to come from the private sector at a significantly increased cost.

Current position and rationale for feasibility works

The City Council has considered a number of options to ensure that there is sufficient capacity in alternatives to mainstream school. Due to the limited capacity in other areas and the increased costs associated with places in the private sector, the proposed option was originally a programme of capital investment to increase capacity at three special schools: Westbury Special School, Nethergate Academy and Oak Field Special School. Two schools were excluded; after discussions with the Head Teachers of Rosehill and Woodlands it was concluded that at the present time there is sufficient capacity remaining within these schools to manage the increasing numbers of students in the foreseeable future. As a long term objective, it is viewed that investment in Westbury, Oak Field and Nethergate schools will ensure that sufficient space is

provided to increase capacity and ensure a robust curriculum can be delivered to enable these young people achieve their highest possible academic and social outcomes. There is also an opportunity, at least in the interim, to allow these schools to expand their offer of services, providing more support to schools across the City and potentially other Local Authorities, generating income as a sold service until the schools reach capacity. The priority would always be to meet the needs of the children and young people in the City first.

On this basis, feasibility studies have been undertaken at the three schools to establish potential building solutions; these feasibility studies have been used to inform the preferred option, as set out in this Business Case. This document also clarifies the demand at each school, the benefits and provides an overview of the options available to deliver additional places as well as providing an estimate of the capital and revenue implications of each option.

Portfolio Holder meeting in October to review feasibility works

Following a review of the feasibility studies, a meeting was held with the Portfolio Holder for Schools and the Directors of Education on 6th October 2015.

Currently, the key priority areas are addressing the increase in the number of children with Profound and Multiple Disabilities and those with Social, Emotional and Mental Health Difficulties.

The various options were presented and it was agreed that the priority schemes should be:

- Westbury Special School expansion, as set out in the feasibility study
- Oak Field Special School, expansion of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 areas only.

Due to the limited capital available, it was agreed that the expansion of Nethergate and the expansion of Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4 would be considered in the future depending on the funding available and a review of the pressure on numbers going forward.

Further to this, a review of the implications of managing a major change to Oak Field Special School was broached with the Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) that manages the school as a Private Finance Initiative (PFI). This review identified that more information needs to be shared in order for there to be a full understanding of the timescales and costs associated with expanding Oak Field Special School. On this basis, the preferred option is proceed with an option for expanding Westbury Special School and that a report for Oak Field Special School expansion will be submitted in the near future, once a more detailed investigation of cost and programme has been undertaken.

3.0 STRATEGIC FIT

3.1 Overview of current situation

Currently all the young people who require a place in a special school in Nottingham City have a place available to meet their needs but this situation is likely to change in the

coming years and the need for new places is now at a critical level. This section outlines the pressure on the three schools where feasibility studies have been commissioned to provide potential solutions to the pressures on places across the City and the range of children requiring spaces.

This year alone, providing places for those children who need them has only been achieved by working closely with special schools, finding flexible solutions to provide additional places. For example, at Oak Field Special School, there have been negotiations with the SPV that manages the school building to convert two small meeting rooms to provide an additional classroom and at Westbury Special School four temporary classrooms have been installed on site to create an additional 32 places.

This pressure is not unique to Special Schools; pressure on capacity at the primary level has led to significant investment in the primary estate to increase capacity. Since 2012, approximately 1920 additional places have been provided with a further 1920 either being constructed or designed. There are further works planned to provide 420 places to ensure adequate provision is in place for primary age pupils. Whilst there has been an increase of 4,260 primary school places since 2012, there has been no expansion of the Special School provision.

As the number of young people continues to increase, the situation is becoming critical and there is no further flexibility within the existing school estate to accommodate increasing numbers and it is highly likely that the City Council will be unable to continue to provide places for all the children with Special Needs unless there is an increase in capacity.

In particular, there is now extremely limited availability for young people with the following special educational needs:

- Social, emotional and mental health difficulties
- Complex learning needs
- Severe learning difficulties and profound and multiple learning difficulties

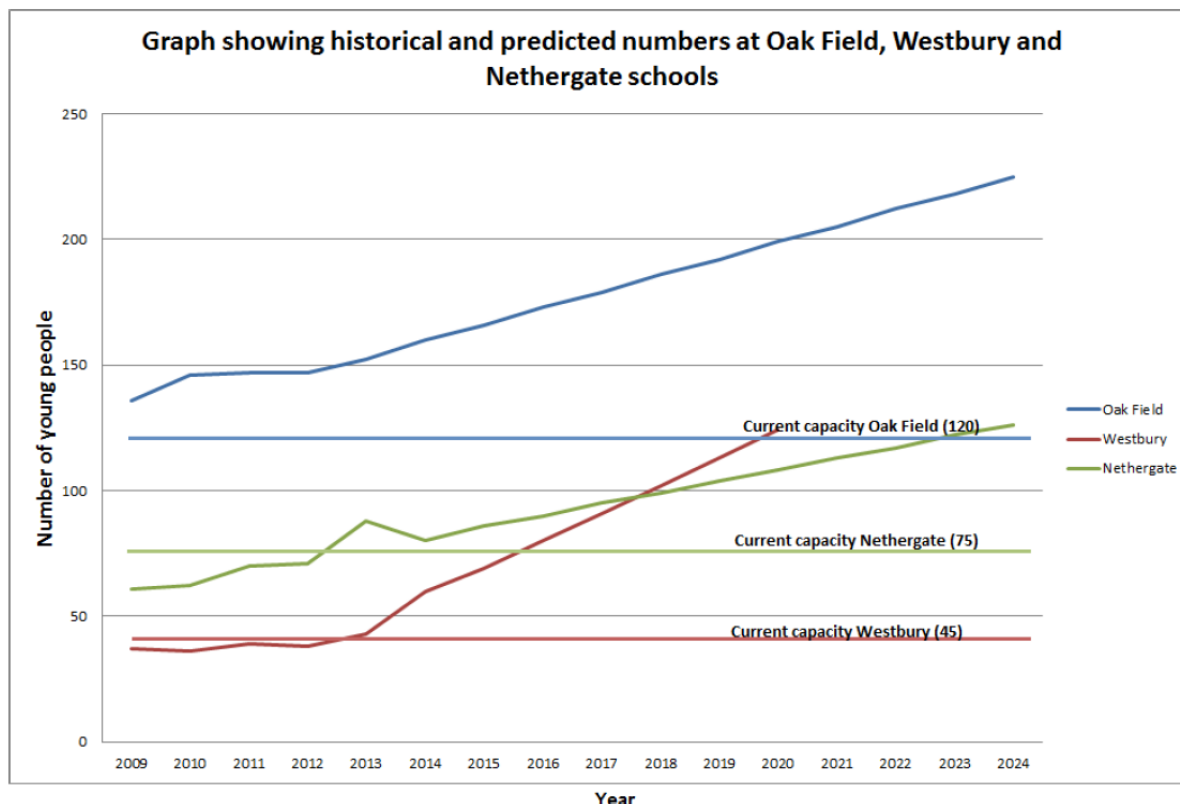
Further information about the need for places is included at Appendix A. This appendix also shows the rationale for expanding each school and how the increased capacity has been calculated.

3.2 Predicted growth patterns and need

It is difficult to accurately predict the increase of children with special needs as often this information is only available once the child requires a place in school. More information on predicted growth is included at Annex A.

Historical data has been used to estimate a growth pattern and predict the number of places required for Oak Field, Westbury and Nethergate schools from 2009 to 2024, excluding post-16 provision.

Graph 3.2.1



This graph demonstrates that all three schools are already struggling to accommodate those children that require a place and are operating above capacity. If this growth pattern continues as evidence suggests, the number of places required will exceed those available.

Issues at other specialist maintained provision across the City has further increased the pressure on places and additional temporary accommodation has had to be installed on site to allow children to attend Westbury Special School. At the same time, there is an increasing demand for places for younger children at the school.

Neighbouring authorities have similar capacity issues within their special school provision and there is currently no option of buying placements at maintained schools outside the City boundary. While there are potential opportunities to procure places within the independent education sector for pupils there are a number of concerns with the quality and cost of this particular route.

Whilst it is clear that there are pressures on places at Nethergate and more space is required, there may be other opportunities to address this that should be explored further, particularly when funding is so difficult to find. Nethergate have the opportunity to bid for funding directly from the Education Funding Agency and may be able to expand using this funding. The City Council remains committed to investing and providing support for those with specialist needs. Additional places are already being invested in; an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) unit at the new Bluecoat Primary School will open in January 2017.

3.3 Strategic Objectives and Fit

Expanding special schools contributes to the Council's priority to ensure that all young people thrive and achieve. It will provide quality learning and teaching environment and meet the Council's objectives to expand good and outstanding schools across the City; Nethergate was rated as 'Good' in March 2014, Westbury was rated as 'Good' in November 2013 and Oak Field was rated as 'Outstanding' in March 2014.

In addition, expanding special schools will support the City Council's commitments to deliver on for schools in Nottingham, as set out in the Council's Plan for 2015-2019:

- Ensuring every child is taught in a school judged good or outstanding by Ofsted
- Creating more special school places for children with additional needs.

Providing more special school places for children across Nottingham fits with the strategic objectives of the City Council.

3.4 Feasibility, scope and options analysis

This Business Case presents the case for expanding Westbury special school against other options considered.

For all three schools, a number of building solutions and other options for providing places are presented and evaluated in Annex B. In this analysis, it is assumed that the highest quality of care and education is provided at the school itself as it may not be possible to provide this high quality elsewhere and the other options for care and education are not available for a comparison. In addition, the travel distance to other schools or provision outside the City is seen as having a negative impact.

Feasibility studies for all three schools have been undertaken to provide a more accurate assessment of potential building solutions, associated costs, programme and risks. The options are then assessed as a desk top analysis review against other options to assess whether there is an alternative to expanding schools.

The principle of the feasibility studies was to look at how it might be possible to increase:

- Oak Field School by 60 places to 220
- Westbury School by 60 places to 120
- Nethergate School by 48 places to 128

Based on the pattern of growth indicated in section 3.2, this will address the anticipated needs for the City at Oakfield and Westbury for at least the next five years. After this point, it is recommended that the trend in numbers be reviewed to see whether any further expansion is required.

The feasibility studies have made an assessment of the existing space in the school and what will be required to deliver the additional places outlined above. Guidance on the size of teaching and learning spaces for special schools is given by the Department for Education (DfE). This information is provided on the Education

Funding Agency (EFA) website known as Building Bulletin 102 (BB102): [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/276698/Building Bulletin 102 designing for disabled children and children with SEN.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/276698/Building_Bulletin_102_designing_for_disabled_children_and_children_with_SEN.pdf)
It should be noted that this guidance tends to be generic and that there is an element of discretion required in interpreting the guidance to meet the curricular and other requirements of individual schools.

In order to provide value for money and manage the scope of any expansion, a scoping technique (known as MoSCoW) has been used to assess the proposals against the BB102 guidance document, setting out what Must, Should and Could be delivered to meet the needs of each school as they have varying needs. The full feasibility studies are available on request if required. These have not been included with the Business Case due to the file sizes.

The feasibility studies were presented to the Portfolio Holder and Directors of Education on 6th October 2015 for review. At this meeting it was agreed that the first phase of projects should be the expansion of Westbury Special School and the expansion of Key Stages 1 and 2 for Oak Field Special School as these are the areas where the pressure on places is most significant. Since this decision was made, it has been agreed that further work needs to be done to clarify the potential impact of expanding Oak Field special school as this is run as a Private Finance Initiative (PFI). This work is at an early stage and work will continue to establish the financial and time implications of taking this project forward.

The proposed scope of works for Westbury special school is outlined below.

Westbury scope of works

Expansion of the school as a separate block including:

- 8 new classrooms
- 2 new specialist bases
- SEN resource base
- Main entrance/ administration area
- Hygiene room
- Group room
- Storage space, circulation space and toilets
- New basketball court and playground areas
- Minor adaptations within the existing school to improve curriculum delivery
- Extensions to the main school building administration area, a classroom, kitchen/ food technology areas and the art room.
- Extension to the sports hall to replace temporary accommodation.
- Works to improve the circulation of vehicles and increase parking on the site.

Please refer to the drawing below, extracted from the feasibility study.

Drawing 4.1.1 – proposed layout for Westbury School



The school is currently surrounded by a large field that is currently owned by NCC but is outside of the school's perimeter. Following a discussion with the Policy and Research Team, it has been confirmed that the location of the expansion would need to move and the architects have confirmed that the expansion would fit in the location preferred by colleagues. It has been confirmed that there is no Right of Way across the site.

3.5 Constraints

It is not possible to deliver all the accommodation required as outlined in the guidance BB102 document as this document covers all types of special schools and their needs. The differing needs of children at each school and the varying curriculum requirements demand different solutions and this is reflected in the feasibility studies.

It is likely that additional temporary accommodation will be required at Westbury school within this period. A further report for revenue funding will be submitted.

Feasibility studies have not included any survey work and there may be a risk that further costs might be incurred once the necessary site investigations are undertaken.

3.6 Dependencies

If taken forward, this project will form part of a broader strategy to increase pupil places in areas of need across Nottingham.

It will contribute towards the strategic priorities identified in the Council Plan 2015 - 2019:

- Access to a good school close to home for every young person in Nottingham
- Enable children in the City to achieve their potential at school and in later life

It will also support the City Council's commitment to:

- Ensure every child in Nottingham is taught in a school judged good or outstanding by Ofsted
- Create more special school places for our children's additional needs

A report on Special Education Needs (SEN) strategy across the City is being written by David Stewart. Phase 1 of works should take into consideration any recommendations in the report that impact on the projects. An initial draft of the report has been reviewed and reviews how SEN is strategically delivered across the City. It does not specifically mention expanding special school provision.

In order to progress, these projects require approval from Executive Board for the funding and to enter into any contracts related to the procurement of works.

3.7 Key Risks

The key risks are:

Risk Number	Risk Description	LIKELIHOOD Rating	IMPACT Rating	Risk Rating	Risk Responses
1	No proposal is agreed for providing the additional places required for children with special needs.	Possible	Catastrophic	15	Present a robust Business Case with clear options for delivering the required places and demonstrate the impact of not providing places.
2	The proposals are too costly to deliver.	Possible	Major	12	Ensure that the scope of the feasibility studies is focused on providing only the essential spaces required for each school. Undertake financial assessments to ensure that the rates used reflect the market and offer value for money. Compare the financial impact of options to ensure that the implications of each option can be assessed.
3	Increase in required spaces is no longer required or does not reflect the growth pattern.	Unlikely	Moderate	6	Ensure that the most accurate data available is used to identify trends in growth. Ensure that where schools are expanding, there are other commercial options available if spaces are not required. Continue to monitor trends in growth. Plan how any fluctuations will be accommodated within any options proposed.
4	Proposals do not meet school needs	Unlikely	Moderate	6	Engage school to ensure that feasibility studies will address the needs of the young people and allow effective teaching and learning to take place.

3.8 Benefits Realisation Plan

Benefits	Observable	Measurable	Quantifiable	Financial	Expected
Financial benefit	Commercial opportunity to sell any empty spaces to neighbouring Local Authorities.	Revenue increase		£35,000 per place estimated	On completion
Financial Benefit	No requirement to procure places through external providers or out of the City compared to providing places in the City	Difference in cost between in-house provision and independent providers		£30,000 per place estimated	Two years post-completion
Quality gain	Provision of required space in order to deliver effective and appropriate curriculum to children and young people.	Maintain high quality of education and educational outcomes	Ofsted ratings, test and exam performance, improvement in quality of life for children and young people.		Two years post-completion
Quality Gain	Provide a high quality building and improve existing resources	Satisfaction of children, young people, parents, carers and staff	Reduction in condition liability at schools and capital investment required to address maintenance issues	Starting at £20,000 per annum depending on existing issues (est)	Five years post-completion
Health gain	Improvement in quality of care provided in school environment	Satisfaction of children, young people, parents, carers and staff	Survey information to measure		Two years post-completion
Equality gain	Children and young people given suitable educational opportunities to achieve	Maintain high quality of education and educational outcomes	Ofsted ratings, test and exam performance, improvement in quality of life for children and young people.		Two years post-completion
Political gain	Provision of a wide range of suitable places ensuring parental choice	Additional places made available	Increase in capacity		Two years post-completion
Political gain	Expansion of special school places	Additional special school places made available	Increase in capacity		Two years post-completion
Quality gain	Expansion of popular and successful schools	Additional school places made available in schools that are good are outstanding	Increase in capacity		Two years post-completion

4.0 OPTIONS APPRAISAL

The full options appraisal is available as Annex B. This sets out the background to the preferred option.

The preferred option is to invest in the expansions of Westbury Special School at an estimated cost of £4.750m in capital investment. A summary of the overall budget estimate is outlined below. A more detailed breakdown is included in the feasibility studies, available on request. This file is not included due to the file size.

5.0 FINANCE

Estimated project costs

An estimate of cost has been undertaken, using the information in the Feasibility Studies as a starting point.

The costs for Westbury are estimated to be £4.750m as shown in the breakdown below.

<u>WESTBURY SPECIAL SCHOOL EXPANSION</u>			
	Feasibility cost		4,692,000.00
<u>Provisional Items (Excluded from Feasibility Costs)</u>			
Works to facilitate installation of car park/ circulation route		£8,000.00	
Abnormal foundation costs (risk item)		£10,000.00	
Subtotal			£18,000.00
<u>NCC Contingency</u>			
Client Contingency		£10,000.00	10,000.00
<u>NCC Direct Costs</u>			
Fire Insurance		£10,000.00	
Planning fees		£10,000.00	
Building Control		£10,000.00	£30,000.00
	TOTAL COSTS		£4,750,000.00

There is a very small contingency for a project of this size, but there may be opportunities to make efficiencies in the building as the design development progresses. To date, no surveys have been undertaken so there is a risk of abnormal ground conditions and potentially a need to increase services. Unless a major issue is identified, the budget shown above should be sufficient.

It is worth noting that there is already temporary accommodation on the Westbury site and this will need to be sustained if the number of pupils remains consistent. A separate report looking for additional revenue funding will be issued for this funding in the future.

Funding

There is likely to be a saving made in comparison to providing temporary accommodation, procuring places externally or spending revenue on travel costs out of the City.

In October 2014 Full Council approved (pending business cases) the Investment Strategy which included a number of school expansion projects. This included two special school expansions; Westbury and Nethergate with a total indicative cost of £4.33m. The funding for these schemes was expected to be £2.000m from Prudential Borrowing and £2.330m from Basic Needs Grant. Since the above approval additional work has been carried out to ascertain area specific need and to work up more accurate costs. It is now proposed that Nethergate scheme does not go ahead and the funds are diverted to the Westbury scheme which is now expected to cost £4.750m. In addition the proposal is now to fund the expansion wholly from Basic Needs Grant.

Basic Needs is grant funding from the Department for Education (DfE) which is allocated to local authorities each year to help ensure they can fulfil their statutory duty to provide sufficient schools places in their area. It is allocated three years ahead to allow authorities time to plan to create the new places required. Current practice for the capital programme is to include both confirmed and indicative Basic Needs Grant in order to compile a five year programme. The grant allocation for 2017/18 has recently been confirmed at £11.686m which is significantly more than originally anticipated. It is proposed that the additional grant is used to fund the Westbury scheme which will mean the Council will not have to borrow the £2.000m originally allocated to this scheme

The capital programme and the funding allocations will be amended accordingly.

Whole Life Costings

When Westbury is completed, the responsibility for operation and maintenance will rest with the school.

Schools are provided with funding on a per pupil basis and the additional capacity will generate additional funding for the school. There will be a saving made when the temporary buildings on site are removed. The cost of keeping these buildings on site is currently shared between NCC and the school. It is not proposed that a life cycle fund be set up to maintain the school. Currently schools are delegated funding to maintain their own buildings and are able to access other sources of funding and support, including from the Local Authority, where larger maintenance or condition issues arise. It is unlikely that any substantial works will be required to maintain the new building for the first five years, other than decoration. A maintenance schedule will be included in the documentation handed over to the school upon completion. The school will be provided with estimates of increased utilities costs once the design is complete based on the mechanical and electrical models. Nottingham City Council's Authority's Requirements (ARs) are used to establish the quality criteria for school buildings; these are available to review on request. The ARs specify the minimum service life of key elements of the building including the roof, boiler etc. These documents draw on the experience of previous projects including the Building Schools for the Future schemes and incorporates lessons learned to ensure a robust set of requirements are

in place, establishing the City Council's expectations in relation to the quality and performance of school buildings.

Furniture, Fittings and Equipment (including ICT)

The school will require further funding to provide Furniture, Fittings and Equipment (FF&E) needed to run a school including desks, chairs and ICT equipment. These items are not covered by the project budget above and separate reports will be prepared to secure funding for these essential items.

6.0 PROCUREMENT AND VALUE FOR MONEY

Procurement of building works

If the preferred option is progressed, the proposed procurement method is to use the East Midlands Property Alliance (EMPA) framework (managed by Scape) to procure a contractor for the Nethergate and Westbury projects.

Scape's regional frameworks are procured following a 2 stage Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) process, with all documentation and contracts provided for clients to use. Each framework partner has been appointed following competitive tendering to ensure they provide exceptional value for money; 100% of tender packages for each project cost are market tested.

The project design will be managed by an NCC Design team. The detail of this is to be confirmed.

The costs in the feasibility study have been drawn up by a Quantity Surveyor and there is a full breakdown of this that sets out the rates that have been used. These have been assessed to ensure they take into consideration market changes and inflation.

A meeting is being held with the County in December to discuss block purchasing of any empty places on the Westbury site but already there is some indication that this is a favourable option.

7.0 DELIVERY

The project will be delivered by Major Programmes on behalf of Children and Adults; the team have considerable experience in delivering school projects and already have a strong working relationship with the schools.

Delivery team

Internal resources:

The project will be managed by a Project Manager reporting to Programme Manager within Major Programmes. A Quantity Surveyor from the City Council will act as the contract administrator; this responsibility includes the validation of any change requests, verifying the costs for the project and managing the project budget.

Design Services, under the Commercial & Operations Department will provide a Design Challenge Service, assisting clients and providing a support service to review and quality assure the design process.

Design Services will also assist the client team in their duties under the Construction and Design Management Regulations (CDM) 2015, including the assembly of pre-construction information.

External resources:

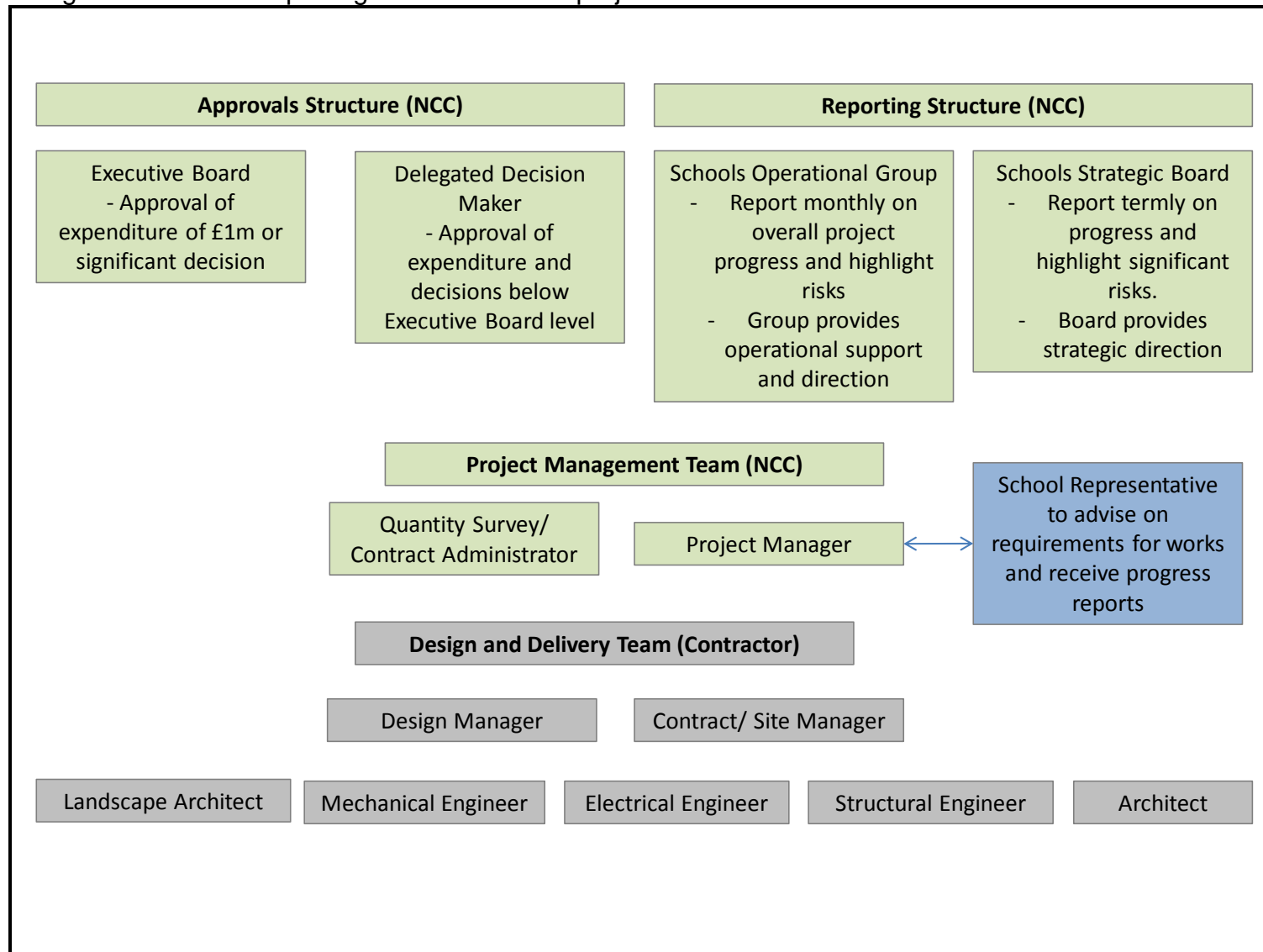
For the capital projects, Wates Construction will act as the contractor and will lead the design team.

It is proposed that this project will be delivered as a Design and Build contract; the contractor will procure the preferred design team on behalf of the City Council.

Wates will act as the Principal Designer to ensure the Council fulfils Construction and Design Management (CDM) requirements.

8.0 PROJECT GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING

The governance and reporting structure for this project is as follows:



9.0 PROGRAMME AND APPROVALS

A detailed programme is included as Annex C to the Executive Board report.

For the purposes of demonstrating how the projects could be delivered, it has been assumed that:

- Approval is given and a formal report will be submitted to Executive Board in December 2015.
- A construction period is yet to be determined by a contractor and this estimate is based on projects of equivalent size and complexity
- A planning period of 13 weeks will be required

Using these assumptions, the key milestones are:

Milestone	Date
Approval process	
Briefing with Portfolio Holder and Corporate Director	6 th October 2015
Executive Board meeting date	22 nd December 2015
Approval to proceed	5 th January 2016
Phase 1 – Westbury and Oak Field KS1 & 2	
Design team appointed, design progressed and surveys undertaken	January – April 2016
Detailed design	April – September 2016
Planning application submitted	by 20 th September 2016
Technical design, tender and contracts	September – January 2017
Planning application approved and pre-commencement conditions discharged	January 2017
Mobilisation and construction period	February 2017 – March 2018
Handover	March 2018

Need for School places across Nottingham City

Summary

Although many primary places have been added across the city, a shortfall of places still remains in areas of the City. This has an impact on the number of Special School places required, reflecting an increase in the number of children and young people requiring school places. Whilst significant investment has been targeted at providing primary school places available, no investment has taken place to expand the Special School estate to date.

The table below shows the data identifying the ongoing pressure to provide primary school places.

Pupil Age	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Projected places	Increase each year	% increase each year
Year	R	1	2	3	4	5	6			
2014/15	3734	3764	3539	3420	3313	3112	3073	23955		
2015/16	4117	3748	3778	3553	3434	3327	3126	25083	1128	5%
2016/17	4023	4111	3742	3772	3547	3428	3321	25944	861	3%
2017/18	3972	4022	4110	3741	3771	3546	3427	26589	645	2%
2018/19	3972	3972	4022	4110	3741	3771	3546	27134	545	2%
Total increase in primary aged pupils expected between 2014/15 and 2018/19									2634	11%

As the number of primary school children increases, it makes sense that the proportion of children with special needs will also increase.

The table below shows the capacity for three Special Schools and the number of places required historically.

School	Capacity of school	Year						Overall increase
		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Oak Field School	120	136	146	147	147	152	160	
Increase in numbers above capacity each year		16	10	1	0	5	8	40
% increase per year		13%	7%	1%	0%	3%	5%	33%
Westbury School	45	37	36	39	38	43	60	
Increase in numbers above capacity each year		-8	-1	3	0	5	17	15
% increase per year		-18%	-3%	8%	0%	13%	40%	33%
Nethergate School	75	61	62	70	71	88	96	
Increase in numbers above capacity each year		-14	1	8	0	17	8	21
% increase per year		-19%	2%	13%	0%	24%	9%	28%

The trend is more difficult to predict for Special Schools as this can fluctuate depending on the needs of individual children and young people. It is also worth noting that in some cases children may not have been allocated a space at the school if space was not available and may have been accommodated either within a mainstream school or other specialist provision. There is a significant jump in the number of places available at Westbury as temporary accommodation was made available to the school in 2014. This table demonstrates an ongoing need for additional places in the future but the fluctuating numbers indicate that it is not easy to predict the requirement based on historical data alone and there is no clear correlation between the numbers of primary school places required against the requirement for special school places.

In order to predict future numbers required, a mathematical estimation has been made to assess the number of places required. This is outlined in the table below:

	Actual places each year			Predicted places required									
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Oak Field School	147	152	160	166	173	179	186	192	199	205	212	218	225
Westbury School	38	43	60	69	80	91	102	113	124	124	124	124	124
Nethergate School	71	79	80	86	90	95	99	104	108	113	117	122	126

For Nethergate, the post 16 provision has been excluded from the calculation as this will be capped at 24 places and would skew the mathematical calculation.

For Westbury, any requirements for placements for young people with social, emotional and behavioural needs over and above the numbers identified above should be provided through the service redesign work currently being undertaken in relation to the KS2-4 learning centres.

Options appraisal

Project Title:

**Proposed expansion of Nottingham City
Council Special Schools**

**Lead Department:
Schools and Learning**

DOCUMENT CONTROL

BC Author	Janine Walker / Sarah White
Project Sponsor (contact details)	Pat and Sarah Fielding
Project Manager (contact details)	Rob Caswell – Programme Manager, Major Programmes (87 63408)
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CONTENTS

	Page
1.0 Purpose of Document	24
2.0 Method	24
3.0 Oak Field Special School	24
3.1 Brief introduction to the school	24
3.2 Predicted growth patterns and need	24
3.3 Options available	25
3.4 Options appraisal	27
3.5 Options analysis	28
4.0 Westbury Special School	
4.1 Brief introduction to the school	29
4.2 Predicted growth patterns and need	29
4.3 Options available	30
4.4 Options appraisal	31
4.5 Options analysis	32
5.0 Nethergate Special School	
5.1 Brief introduction to the school	33
5.2 Predicted growth patterns and need	33
5.3 Options available	34
5.4 Options appraisal	35
5.5 Options analysis	36

1.0 PURPOSE OF DOCUMENT

This documents sets out the options in relation to the need for more spaces at Oak Field, Nethergate and Westbury Special Schools.

2.0 METHOD

A number of options have been explored for each school, including:

1. Do nothing
2. Procure places from neighbouring Authorities
3. Procure places from private providers
4. Accommodate the additional places within in existing specialist provision
5. Expand the existing school accommodation to increase the number of places available. A number of different options to provide this accommodation have been explored.

A brief description of the financial, time and cost implications is explored and an assessment of risk is undertaken. The options for each school are then appraised in a matrix before a preferred option is identified.

3.0 OAK FIELD

3.1 Brief introduction to the school

The Oak Field School is a City co-educational day school for children aged 3- 19 years with special educational needs, in particular severe and profound learning difficulties and/or physical difficulties. Admission to the Oak Field School is through a Statement, which is issued by the Education Authority after a child has been assessed under Section Five on the 1981 Education Act. The age at which pupils are admitted varies and is dependent on the individual needs of each child. The catchment area is defined by the Authority as the City of Nottingham and the District of Broxtowe.

Oak Field School is divided into 3 phases:

- Early Years & Key Stage 1 - 3 classes including 2 units for early years
- Ages 7-13 -8 classes
- Ages 14-19 7 classes

The school is supporting the Local Authority by providing more places than the official capacity of the school. Most recently, two small meeting rooms have been converted to provide a teaching space.

A recent Ofsted inspection report in March 2014 indicated that Oak Field is an outstanding school in all aspects.

3.2 Predicted growth patterns and need

As a popular and successful school, Oak Field is already oversubscribed. It is predicted that the number of children and young people requiring a place will increase in the

coming years, although it is difficult to accurately predict the numbers that might attend the school. The table below suggests how the current growth pattern at the school might continue:

	Actual places each year			Predicted places required									
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Oak Field School	147	152	160	166	173	179	186	192	199	205	212	218	225

It is proposed that an additional 60 places be provided at Oak Field Special School, taking the capacity from 160 to 220 places; the feasibility study is based on these figures.

3.3 Options available

A number of options have been explored for each school, including:

1. Do nothing – this is not seen as a viable option as the number of children with special needs continues to increase. The City Council has a statutory obligation to provide suitable places for all children within the City.

This is not a viable option.

2. Procure places from neighbouring Authorities – this could be undertaken but depends on the availability of places. Early indications are that other Local Authorities are under the same pressure to provide places with limited resources. It is also preferable to provide facilities that are local for children and their families and there may be an increase in costs for procuring places outside of City provision. It is assumed that the highest quality of care and education is at the school itself as there is a risk that other places may not be of the same quality.

This is a viable option, but not a preferred option.

3. Procure places from private providers – this could be undertaken, but again depends on the availability of places. As demand increases across the City and neighbouring areas, demand for places in private providers is likely to increase. Again, it is also preferable to provide facilities that are local for children and their families and there may be an increase in costs for procuring places outside of City provision. It is assumed that the highest quality of care and education is at the school itself as there is a risk that other places may not be of the same quality.

This is a viable option, but not a preferred option.

4. Accommodate the additional places within in existing specialist provision – some children with less complex needs could be accommodated within specialist provision elsewhere in the City, however, this is only a short term option and will not resolve the issue in the long term as the requirement for places increases. In addition, it is difficult to predict the severity of needs of children and this may not be a feasible option.

This option is not feasible in the long term.

5. Expand the existing school accommodation to increase the number of places available - if funding were available, additional places could be provided by expanding Oak Field Special School. This option would mean that children and families would

have access to a high quality facility near to them. A number of different options for delivering this accommodation have been explored.
This is a viable option and the preferred option.

3.4 Options appraisal

An options appraisal has been undertaken to assess the five options presented above.

Oak Field Special School - Options Appraisal Matrix

Option	Quality of care		Quality of education		Long term financial impact		Short term financial impact		Impact on time		Viability		Risk		Needs of children		Meeting NCC strategic objectives		Meets needs of school		Meetings needs of parents/carers		Totals
	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	
		10		10		8		6		6		10		8		10		8		8		8	
1. Do nothing	1	10	1	10	1	8	3	18	1	6	1	10	1	8	1	10	1	8	1	8	1	8	104
2. Neighbouring places	3	30	3	30	2	16	2	12	4	24	2	20	2	16	3	30	3	24	3	24	2	16	242
3. Private providers	3	30	3	30	1	8	2	12	4	24	2	20	2	16	3	30	3	24	3	24	2	16	234
4. Existing provision	3	30	4	40	3	24	3	18	4	24	1	10	1	8	2	20	3	24	2	16	3	24	238
5a. Expand - option 1	5	50	5	50	4	32	4	24	3	18	4	40	4	32	5	50	5	40	4	32	5	40	408
5b. Expand - option 2/ 2a	5	50	5	50	4	32	3	18	3	18	5	50	4	32	5	50	5	40	5	40	5	40	420
5c. Expand - option 3	5	50	5	50	4	32	4	24	3	18	4	40	4	32	4	40	5	40	3	24	5	40	390

3.5 Evaluation of options

For Oak Field, it is not possible to do nothing so this option is dismissed.

The next three options (2, 3 & 4) explore options for using alternative provision either within the City at other schools, other providers or out of the City. These options score lower as these may offer a different quality of care and education in comparison to Oak Field that offers Outstanding care and education. There is also an assumption that a local facility that limits travel is preferable for assessing care and education.

The highest rated options are those for expansion. Whilst there is significant financial investment required to construct a new building, the cost of this is expected to be less than the cost of providing alternative provision with other providers in the long term.

A number of options for expansion have been considered as detailed in the feasibility study. The options are broadly similar and therefore there is little difference between the scores for each of these. However, the school have raised concerns about the impact on curriculum delivery if all the expansion was concentrated in one area as proposed in option 5c (option 3). The school expressed a preference for option 5b (option 2) at feasibility stage and this was developed further into option 5b (option 2a).

The feasibility study is available on request.

4.0 WESTBURY

4.1 Brief introduction to the school

Westbury Special School is designated as a mixed school but currently only has boys on roll. Pupils are aged between 7 and 16 with a total of 59 boys at present. In line with Local Authority expansion plans for the school, this number will continue to rise throughout the year as pupils are gradually admitted, to a capacity of 63.

Pupils experience the full range of the National Curriculum at key stage 2, 3 and 4. The school has developed a strong ethos around the achievement agenda, and over the last three years, has demonstrated year on year improvements at the end of Key Stage 2 and 3 assessments and considerable success at GCSE.

The school is a National Support School and the Executive Headteacher is a National Leader of Education designated by the National College for Teaching and Leadership. The school is a partner in the Westbury Woodlands Federation and a partner in the Transform Teaching School Alliance.

Pupils at Westbury are admitted to the school following completion of an Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) which is replacing the Statementing Process, and with agreement that placement at the school is appropriate for their needs. Pupils currently with a statement of special educational needs will be transferred to an EHCP following the local authority's transition timetable. Places at Westbury are at a premium within this and other authorities and there is often a waiting list for pupils requiring full-time education.

4.2 Predicted growth patterns and need

As a popular and successful school, Westbury is already oversubscribed and currently has four temporary classrooms on site. It is predicted that the number of children and young people requiring a place will increase in the coming years, although it is difficult to accurately predict the numbers that might attend the school. The table below suggests how the current growth pattern at the school might continue:

	Actual places each year			Predicted places required						
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Westbury School	60	38	43	60	69	80	91	102	113	124

It is proposed that an additional 60 places be provided at Westbury Special School, increasing the capacity to 120 places.

4.3 Options available

A number of options have been explored for each school, including:

1. Do nothing – this is not seen as a viable option as the number of children with special needs continues to increase. The City Council has a statutory obligation to provide suitable places for all children within the City.

This is not a viable option.

2. Procure places from neighbouring Authorities – this could be undertaken but depends on the availability of places. Early indications are that other Local Authorities are under the same pressure to provide places with limited resources. It is also preferable to provide facilities that are local for children and their families and there may be an increase in costs for procuring places outside of City provision. It is assumed that the highest quality of care and education is at the school itself as there is a risk that other places may not be of the same quality.

This is a viable option, but not a preferred option.

3. Procure places from private providers – this could be undertaken, but again depends on the availability of places. As demand increases across the City and neighbouring areas, demand for places in private providers is likely to increase. Again, it is also preferable to provide facilities that are local for children and their families and there may be an increase in costs for procuring places outside of City provision. It is assumed that the highest quality of care and education is at the school itself as there is a risk that other places may not be of the same quality.

This is a viable option, but not a preferred option.

4. Accommodate the additional places within in existing specialist provision – it is anticipated that in the long term future, children and young people with less complex needs could be accommodated within specialist provision, Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) and mainstream schools elsewhere in the City, however, this is dependent on the successful implementation of improvement and support strategies and does not offer an interim solution. In addition, it is difficult to predict both the severity of needs of children or the number of children requiring support and therefore this may not be a feasible option.

This option is may not feasible in the long term.

5. Expand the existing school accommodation to increase the number of places available - if funding were available, additional places could be provided by expanding Westbury Special School. This option would mean that children and families would have access to a high quality facility near to them. A number of different options for delivering this accommodation have been explored.

This is a viable option and the preferred option.

4.4 Options appraisal

An options appraisal has been undertaken to assess the five options presented above.

Westbury Special School - Options Appraisal Matrix

Option	Quality of care		Quality of education		Long term financial impact		Short term financial impact		Impact on time		Viability		Risk		Needs of children		Meeting NCC strategic objectives		Meets needs of school		Meetings needs of parents/ carers		Totals
	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	
Score = 1 - 5 (where 1 is poor and 5 is good) x weighting		10		10		8		6		6		10		8		10		8	(8		8	
1. Do nothing	1	10	1	10	1	8	3	18	1	6	1	10	1	8	1	10	1	8	1	8	1	8	104
2. Neighbouring places	3	30	3	30	2	16	2	12	4	24	2	20	2	16	3	30	3	24	3	24	2	16	242
3. Private providers	3	30	3	30	1	8	2	12	4	24	2	20	2	16	3	30	3	24	3	24	2	16	234
4. Existing provision	2	20	3	30	1	8	3	18	4	24	1	10	1	8	2	20	3	24	2	16	3	24	202
5a. Expand - option 1	5	50	5	50	4	32	4	24	3	18	3	30	4	32	5	50	5	40	4	32	5	40	398
5b. Expand - option 2	5	50	5	50	4	32	4	24	3	18	4	40	3	24	4	40	5	40	3	24	5	40	382
5c. Expand - option 3	5	50	5	50	4	32	4	24	3	18	4	40	4	32	5	50	5	40	5	40	5	40	416
5d. Expand - option 4	5	50	4	40	4	32	4	24	3	18	3	30	4	32	4	40	5	40	3	24	5	40	370

4.5 Evaluation of options

For Westbury, it is not possible to do nothing so this option is dismissed.

The next three options (2, 3 & 4) explore options for using alternative provision either within the City at other schools, other providers or out of the City. These options score lower as these may offer a different quality of care and education in comparison to Westbury that offers Good care and education. There is also an assumption that a local facility that limits travel is preferable for assessing care and education. It is noted that this might ease some of the requirement for places in the long term, subject to the successful implementation of support strategies across the educational estate.

The highest rated options are those for expansion. Although there is significant financial investment required to construct a new building, the cost of this is expected to be less than the cost of providing alternative provision with other providers in the long term. The school already has a significant amount of temporary accommodation on site to provide four additional classrooms and other key learning spaces to support education delivery. This is not sustainable in the long term and the saving made by replacing temporary accommodation will offset some of the investment in expanding the building.

A number of options for expansion have been considered as detailed in the feasibility study. The options are broadly similar and therefore there is little difference between the scores for each of these. The school are concerned about the impact of managing a two storey building as shown in option 5b (option 2) as there might be operational issues with managing children and young people in this environment. The expected cost savings from having a two storey building are also not realised. The school expressed a preference for option 5c (option 3) at feasibility stage and this was developed further into option 5c (option 2 developed). This is the preferred option as the location offers a better relationship with existing accommodation and there is a natural split of key stage areas that will benefit school organisation and curriculum delivery. Further development of the design has shown that this is the most cost efficient option.

5.0 NETHERGATE

5.1 Brief introduction to the school

Nethergate school caters for pupils with moderate and complex learning difficulties including autistic spectrum disorders, behavioural emotional and social difficulties, and speech, language and communication disorders. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs. The school caters part time for its older pupils and sixth form students with various alternative providers including Oak Field Special School. The school Ofsted report indicates the school is good.

The school place great emphasis upon the development of personal and social skills. The school follows the National Curriculum at Key Stages 1- 4 and shape the curriculum to support each and every student to be as independent and emotionally literate as they are able. Nethergate celebrates individuality and diversity in the school and the wider community and values our links with other schools, having partnerships across the world as far ranging as Rwanda and Lebanon.

As well as a strong emphasis on developing Literacy and Numeracy, pupils learn valuable life skills and engage in activities such as gardening, swimming, pottery and even horse-riding. Technology also plays a significant part in widening the pupils' experiences and typical activities provided in school include music technology, film-making, computer animation (CGI), robotics and programming. The school provides pupils with a calm, safe and supportive learning environment in which they can thrive. This is especially important for many of the pupils who have previously found school very difficult. They arrive at Nethergate and very quickly grow in confidence and self-esteem. This leads to them becoming more effective learners and making better progress.

5.2 Predicted growth patterns and need

Nethergate is under increasing pressure to accommodate additional children. It is predicted that the number of children and young people requiring a place will increase in the coming years, although it is difficult to accurately predict the numbers that might attend the school. The table below suggests how the current growth pattern at the school might continue:

	Actual places each year			Predicted places required									
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Nethergate School	71	79	80	86	90	95	99	104	108	113	117	122	126

It is proposed that an additional 48 places be provided at Nethergate Special School, increasing the capacity from 96 to 144 places.

5.3 Options available

A number of options have been explored for each school, including:

1. Do nothing – this is not seen as a viable option as the number of children with special needs continues to increase. The City Council has a statutory obligation to provide suitable places for all children within the City.

This is not a viable option.

2. Procure places from neighbouring Authorities – this could be undertaken but depends on the availability of places. Early indications are that other Local Authorities are under the same pressure to provide places with limited resources. It is also preferable to provide facilities that are local for children and their families.

This is a viable option, but not a preferred option.

3. Procure places from private providers – this could be undertaken, but again depends on the availability of places. As demand increases across the City and neighbouring areas, demand for places in private providers is likely to increase. Again, it is also preferable to provide facilities that are local for children and their families.

This is a viable option, but not a preferred option.

4. Accommodate the additional places within in existing specialist provision – there is some flexibility to provide alternative places elsewhere across the City in the short term but this is not sustainable in the long term as numbers increase. In order to ensure the best outcome for children and young people, it is preferable not to keep moving children from one school to another and this might happen if pressure on places continues.

This option is may not feasible in the long term.

5. Expand the existing school accommodation to increase the number of places available - if funding were available, additional places could be provided by expanding Nethergate Special School. This option would mean that children and families would have access to a high quality facility near to them. A number of different options for delivering this accommodation have been explored.

This is a viable option and the preferred option.

5.4 Options appraisal

An options appraisal has been undertaken to assess the five options presented above.

Nethergate Special School - Options Appraisal Matrix

Option	Quality of care		Quality of education		Long term financial impact		Short term financial impact		Impact on time		Viability		Risk		Needs of children		Meeting NCC strategic objectives		Meets needs of school		Meetings needs of parents/carers		Totals
	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	Score	Weighting	
		10		10		8		6		6		10		8		10		8		8		8	
1. Do nothing	1	10	1	10	1	8	3	18	1	6	1	10	1	8	1	10	1	8	1	8	1	8	104
2. Neighbouring places	3	30	3	30	2	16	2	12	4	24	2	20	2	16	3	30	3	24	3	24	2	16	242
3. Private providers	3	30	3	30	1	8	2	12	4	24	2	20	2	16	3	30	3	24	3	24	2	16	234
4. Existing provision	2	20	3	30	1	8	3	18	4	24	1	10	1	8	2	20	3	24	2	16	3	24	202
5a. Expand - option 1	5	50	5	50	4	32	4	24	3	18	3	30	4	32	4	40	5	40	4	32	5	40	388
5b. Expand - option 2	5	50	5	50	4	32	3	18	3	18	3	30	4	32	4	40	5	40	4	32	5	40	382
5c. Expand - option 3	5	50	5	50	4	32	4	24	3	18	4	40	4	32	4	40	5	40	3	24	5	40	390
5d. Expand - option 4	5	50	4	40	4	32	4	24	3	18	3	30	4	32	5	50	5	40	5	40	5	40	396
5e. Expand - option 5	5	150	4	120	4	64	4	72	3	72	3	60	4	64	3	90	5	120	3	72	5	80	964

5.5 Evaluation of options

For Nethergate, it is not possible to do nothing in the long term if the numbers continue to increase so this option is dismissed for the purposes of the options analysis.

The next three options (2, 3 & 4) explore options for using alternative provision either within the City at other schools, other providers or out of the City. These options score lower as these may offer a different quality of care and education in comparison to Nethergate that offers a good standard of care and education. There is also an assumption that a local facility that limits travel is preferable for assessing care and education. Furthermore it is noted there are potential issues if children are required to move around the City to receive the appropriate care and education depending on availability of spaces.

In the interim, the situation at Nethergate is less critical than that of Oak Field and Westbury and increasing capacity at those schools may offer an opportunity to provide additional places for those who might otherwise attend Nethergate. If this were feasible, these options would score much higher but is dependent on investment in other projects.

The highest rated options are those for expansion. Although there is significant financial investment required to construct a new building, the cost of this is expected to be less than the cost of providing alternative provision with other providers in the long term, unless additional capacity can be found elsewhere. It is worth noting that Nethergate is not dependent on the Local Authority for funding and may approach the Education Funding Agency directly to secure additional funding.

A number of options for expansion have been considered as detailed in the feasibility study. The options are broadly similar and therefore there is little difference between the scores for each of these. The school are concerned about the impact of managing a two storey building as shown in option 5e (option 5) as there might be operational issues with managing children and young people in this environment. The expected cost savings from having a two storey building are also not realised. The school expressed a preference for option 5d (option 4) at feasibility stage and this was developed further into option 5d (option 4 developed). This is the preferred option as the location offers a better relationship with existing accommodation and creates a separate building and courtyard that will allow better separation of key stages across the school, including external areas.

Outline programme

