The Future Role of the Local Authority in School Place Planning

A Public Policy Exchange Symposium

Wednesday 21st October 2015
10:15am – 4:30pm
Grange Wellington, London

Public Policy Exchange holds regular interactive seminars which provide an invaluable interface for policy discussion, debate and networking. These special events offer local practitioners, civil servants and other stakeholders not only an insight into current policy thinking, but also the opportunity to feed into future development across all areas of public policy.
Overview

Recent data from the Local Government Association (LGA) shows that two in five council areas in England with responsibility for schools will have more primary-age pupils than places for them in 2016/17. This is then expected to increase to more than half in 2017/18, and to three in five in 2018/19.

Moreover, the Department for Education (DfE) estimates that there could be up to 900,000 extra pupils in English schools over the next decade, with the LGA suggesting the cost of creating these new school places to be £12 billion. Councils therefore have a huge ongoing challenge to meet the increasing demand for extra places.

In addition, councils working alongside schools and other partners have to deliver these places with the added pressures of capital funding requirements, planning for the physical space and equipment, required to meet the surge in demand for school places. The unique challenges different areas serve up include dealing with the transitional educational requirements of pupils changing schools and accommodating those pupils for whom English is a second language.

In March 2014, the Local Government Association (LGA) published ‘The council role in school place planning’, a report setting out a five-point plan to enable councils to equip themselves with the funding and power required to meet demand for school places, and also to create the new places needed.

This year, in February the Department for Education announced £1.6 billion of ‘Basic Need Funding’ to support the creation of the new school places needed by September 2018, including an additional £300 million to be allocated in 2015-17 to help provide school places in areas experiencing significant and unexpected increases in their pupil numbers. Additionally, the Education Funding Agency also announced £2 billion of funding for Phase 2 of the Priority School Building Programme (PSBP) for the rebuilding and refurbishment of 277 schools across the UK.

As the demand for school places continues to rise, this timely symposium provides an invaluable opportunity for local authorities, schools, academy sponsors, teachers, head teachers, researchers, education providers and other key stakeholders to discuss the future role of local authorities in school place planning and examine policy priorities for the new parliament for to ensure every child has an education.

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A debate has been raging for many years about the role that councils should play in education. They retain a very wide range of legal duties to promote high educational standards locally, ensure fair access to schools, and protect the interest of the most vulnerable pupils.

“What is not in dispute is the unique responsibility that councils have in making sure there are enough school places available to local children and young people. No other local or national body shares with them the duty to secure sufficient primary and secondary schools, although they increasingly have to work with schools and other partners to deliver the places needed…”

- ‘The council role in school place planning’, Local Government Association, March 2014

Why Attend?

✓ Review best practice examples of how local councils and schools are presently addressing the shortage of primary and secondary school places, building new schools, and reducing overcrowding
✓ Assess the future role of local authorities in school place planning and the LGA’s five-point plan from 2014
✓ Examine the planning difficulties and other issues around free schools for councils and discuss whether councils should be given a greater role in judging and approving free school proposals
✓ Assess whether councils have the flexibility to deliver the different types of schools required to fulfil their statutory duty to offer places
✓ Share ideas and experience on whether there needs to be a restoration of decision-making powers for councils on the provision of new schools as it was before the Academies Act 2010

Who Should Attend?

• Local Authorities
• Local Education Authorities
• Local Authority Officers
• Schools
• Teachers
• Headteachers
• Academy Chains, Sponsors and Federations
• School and Academy Leaders and Governors
• School Business Managers and Bursars
• Private Sector Providers
• Education and Training Professionals
• Ofsted
• School Place Planning Teams
• Heads of Education Services
• School Organisation Teams
• School Funding Teams
• School Improvement Teams
• School Admissions Teams
• School Commissioners
• Behaviour and Attendance Officers
• Pastoral Officer/Coordinators
• Inclusion Managers
• SENCOs
• Education Welfare Officers
• Social Workers
• Social Care Services
• Directors of Children’s Services
• Children’s Services Teams
• Families Services Officers
• Early Years Practitioners
• Child and Educational Psychologists
• Family Planning Specialists
• Looked After/Children in Care Teams
• Child Protection Officers
• Youth Workers and Youth Offending Teams
• Community Safety Teams
• Central Government Departments and Agencies
• Academics and Researchers

Accommodation

Through our partnership with HotelMap, we are able to offer our delegates heavily discounted hotel rates at a wide range of London hotels. To view hotel availability and rates and to book online, visit www.HotelMap.com/MSNUZ/

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Programme

09:30 Registration and Morning Refreshments
10:15 Chair’s Welcome and Introduction
10:30 Panel Session One: Ensuring Every Child Has a School Place – How are Local Authorities Meeting the Challenge?
   • Explore Best Practice Examples of How Local Councils and Schools Are Presently Dealing with the Increasing Demand for Primary and Secondary School Places
   • Realise the Benefits and Importance of Developing Close Working Relationships between Schools and Councils to Successfully Deliver Places, Achieve Expansions and Address Other Challenges
   • Developing School Buildings to Meet the Demand – Examining How to Increase School Places through Building and Refurbishing Schools
   • Understand the Planning Difficulties and Other Issues Around Free Schools for Councils
   • Share Best Practice on How Councils are Dealing with Investment Challenges to Fill Funding Gaps
11:15 Morning Refreshments
11:30 Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel One
12:30 Networking Lunch
13:30 Panel Session Two: The Next Steps – the Role of Local Authorities and the LGA’s Five-Point Plan
   • The Schools Capital System – How Does the Current System Divide Money? Should There Be Local Capital Pots for Councils and Schools to Decide Locally the Best Use of Funding for Repairing, Rebuilding and Building New Schools?
   • Spending Review – What Is the Best Way to Spend the £21billion Schools Capital Allocation? Discuss the LGA’s Recommendation of Five-Year Allocations to Allow Councils to Plan Ahead and Deliver Primary and Secondary Places up to 2020
   • Should There Be a Restoration of Decision-Making Powers on the Provision of New Schools to Councils at a Local Level?
   • Do Councils Have the Flexibility to Deliver the Different Types of Schools Required to Fulfil Their Statutory Duty to Offer Places?
   • Should Councils Be Given a Greater Role in Judging and Approving Free School Proposals and How Can This Be Achieved?
14:15 Afternoon Refreshments
14:30 Open Floor Discussion and Debate with Panel Two
15:30 Chair’s Summary and Closing Comments
15:40 Networking Reception
16:30 Close

* Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice *

Event Details

Date: Wednesday 21st October 2015
Time: 10:15am – 4:30pm
Venue: Grange Wellington, London

Forthcoming Events

Better Skills, Better Careers: The Future of Apprenticeships and Traineeships
13th October 2015
Working in Partnership to Transform Child Protection: Delivering a Child-Centred System
14th October 2015

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