HOW CAN WE MAINTAIN AND IMPROVE EDUCATION AND SKILLS AS THE CITY GROWS?

Plymouth Plan topic paper
Education and Learning
How can we maintain and improve educational attainment and skills as the city grows?

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What is this Topic Paper about?

How can we maintain and improve educational attainment and skills as the city grows?

This topic paper has been published as part of Plymouth Plan Connections[^1]. It is one of a series of topic papers that are being published to provide information, and support ongoing discussions with local people and organisations about the future of the city. This topic paper looks at education and learning in Plymouth and considers how attainment and skills can be maintained and improved as the city grows.

[^1]: The name given to this stage of public consultation (See ‘Get Involved With The Plan’ at [http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/environmentandplanning/planning/planningpolicy/pllymouthplanppgetinvolved.htm](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/environmentandplanning/planning/planningpolicy/pllymouthplanppgetinvolved.htm))
What are the key drivers for change?

Plymouth’s vision for the future is to become one of Europe’s most vibrant waterfront cities where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone\(^2\). This vision will only be achieved if the city grows, and key to this is creating a stronger local economy. The Council has aspirations for higher economic growth over the next 20 years, which could lead to the city growing in population to 310,000 by 2031\(^3\). Improving access to jobs in the city over the next 15-20 years and increasing the level of attainment, education and skills so that children and young people will be ‘school ready’ and ‘work ready’ are key drivers for change.

At a local level there are considerable financial pressures. Key agencies in the city are committed to reducing spend and there are likely to be similar budget positions in future years. School budgets have been protected and are generally in a stable, positive position. However, increased responsibilities for schools and rising demand for the placement of children and young people with complex and special needs indicate that school budgets will also be under pressure in the future.

Additionally, physical regeneration has not always been matched by social regeneration or improvements to housing matched with improvements to schools. Huge advances have been made in improving the post war stock of schools; 12 per cent of the education asset stock has been replaced in the past decade, but much remains to be done. Variations in housing stock in the private rental sector for example means that the effects of child poverty, health inequalities and mobility too often impact on a child’s educational potential, and the gap between those in receipt of free school meals (FSM) and non FSM pupils continues to be too high. This is most evidently seen once young people leave school and unemployment figures make them an economic statistic, or ‘looked after children’ leave the care system and feature as the most likely group to become Not in Education Employment or Training (NEET).

Local schools are seeking a new and responsive arrangement in service delivery where they have influence over the design of services. Some schools and academies consider that the present models are not utilising the skills and sector expertise that exists within schools and are not always delivering what they want or need. There is some evidence that the local authority (LA), through its new partnership arrangements could more effectively use the skills of schools in the delivery of statutory duties. The national policy direction has altered the face of the educational landscape. The role of the LA is changing rapidly – especially in its relationships with schools.

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2 From Plymouth City Council’s Corporate Plan 2013/14-2016/17 at www.plymouth.gov.uk/ourplan
3 From the Strategic Housing Market Needs Assessment (SHMNA) July 2013, Main Report, undertaken by GVA Edge Analytics (economic scenarios on page 73 and population projections on page 131) at http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/housingdeliveryhousingneed.htm
**Educational Attainment**

Across Key Stage 1 Plymouth performs well. 70 per cent of children\(^4\) achieve the required level in phonics decoding.\(^5\) The percentage of young people eligible for FSM achieving the required level in phonics decoding (60 per cent)\(^6\) performs well against benchmarks.

Across Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils achieving a good level of development in reading, writing\(^7\) & maths stands at one per cent below the national average of 75 per cent\(^8\). Whilst being below national average is of concern, Plymouth’s increasing rate of attainment is consistent and, if maintained, will see Plymouth move above national average in the next academic year. However, the raising of the floor target will see more schools below target.

It is critical for the growth of the city that the number judged ‘good or better’ by Ofsted continues to be in the upper quartile\(^9\) to reduce the move to Devon schools by parents attracted by higher performance and facilities. The percentage of young people eligible for FSM achieving a good level of development in reading, writing\(^10\) and maths stands at 57 per cent; as with overall attainment levels, this places Plymouth slightly behind the national average (60 per cent)\(^11\).

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4 Source: Department for Education (DfE) statistical release. Phonics screening check, Key Stage 1, 2013.

5 Phonics decoding is the ability to apply your knowledge of letter-sound relationships, including knowledge of letter patterns, to correctly pronounce written words (http://www.readingrockets.org/helping/target/phonics).

6 Source: DfE statistical release. Phonics screening check, Key Stage 1, 2013.

7 Performance across the other tests; Grammar, Punctuation & Science (GPS) below national averages.


9 Source: Data View, Ofsted Inspection results, http://dataview.ofsted.gov.uk. A quartile is one of the three points that divide a range of data into four equal parts. The first quartile (also called the lower quartile) is the number below which lies in the 25 per cent of the bottom data. The second quartile (the median) divides the range in the middle and has 50 percent of the data below it. The third quartile (also called the upper quartile) has 75 per cent of the data below it and the top 25 per cent of the data above it (from http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/quartile.html).

10 Performance across the other tests; Grammar, Punctuation & Science (GPS) below national averages.

The percentage of pupils achieving GCSE 5+ A* to C including English and Maths has seen dramatic improvement over the last five years with Plymouth now performing above the national average\(^{(12)}\). Although improvement has also been evident in pupils who are eligible for FSM, this is still below national benchmarks (35.5 per cent compared with 38.1 per cent nationally)\(^{(13)}\). Key Stage 4 attainment is slightly above national average\(^{(14)}\).

2013 saw a 4.3 per cent year on year increase in the percentage of 19 year olds achieving a Level 2 qualification and considered to be ‘work ready’, compared with a 1.7 per cent increase for both statistical neighbour and national benchmarks. This performance increase has seen Plymouth rise back above the national average.

However, when looking at the percentage of 19 year olds achieving a level 3 qualification, the city is not achieving as well as it sits in the bottom quartile nationally. Whilst this is of concern, last year saw a five per cent increase in the percentage of 19 year olds achieving a level 3 qualification (compared with a two per cent increase on average), showing a good rate of improvement\(^{(15)}\). One of the key challenges post 16 is matching economic need to skills development. The Plymouth Employability and Skills Plan (PES)\(^{(16)}\) highlights the range of issues present in the city’s provision. Whilst the Council is not responsible for the market in post 16 learning and training it is critical that it works with partners to secure the employee ‘pipeline’ essential for future prosperity.

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12 Source: DfE statistical release, GCSE and equivalent attainment by pupil characteristics, 2012 to 2013.
13 Source: DfE statistical release, GCSE and equivalent attainment by pupil characteristics, 2012 to 2013.
14 Source: DfE statistical release, GCSE and equivalent attainment by pupil characteristics, 2012 to 2013.
15 Source: DfE statistical release, Level 2 and 3 attainment by young people aged 19 in 2013.
What are some of the specific challenges and successes around Education and Learning?

Early Years

57 per cent of children achieve a good level of development across the early years foundation stage (EYFS)\(^{(17)}\) which firmly positions Plymouth in the top quartile nationally\(^{(18)}\). This can be put down, in part, to the good settings and excellent staff across early years settings: 83 per cent of early years settings achieved an Ofsted inspection outcome of good or better and supporting this\(^{(19)}\), 75 per cent of two year olds and 74 per cent of three year olds are benefiting from funded early education at providers with staff who have qualified teacher status (QTS) or qualified early years practitioner status (EYPS)\(^{(20)}\). This places Plymouth in the top 10 authority areas nationally.

Young people eligible for FSM who achieve a good level of development at Foundation Stage (EYFSP) currently sits at 42 per cent which is high comparatively placing Plymouth in the top quartile nationally\(^{(21)}\). The percentage of young people with SEN who achieve a good level of development at Foundation stage stands at 24 per cent which is in line with national average attainment levels\(^{(22)}\).

The percentage of children achieving a good level of development is considered a key ‘school readiness’ measure and whilst it is excellent that Plymouth performs well it also means that 43 per cent of Plymouth’s young people enter the education system not school ready\(^{(23)}\). Additionally, it should be noted that there is a wide gender gap between boys and girls achieving a good level of development (girls 67 per cent boys 48 per cent)\(^{(24)}\).

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17 Source: DfE statistical release, Early years foundation stage profile results: 2012 to 2013.
18 Early year’s attainment is captured through the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP) with 2012/13 the first year of the revised methodology (meaning that historic data is not comparable).
19 Source: Data View, Ofsted Inspection results, [http://dataview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://dataview.ofsted.gov.uk).
21 Although SEN statement children has been supressed due to data protection. Source: DfE statistical release, Early Year’s foundation stage profile results: 2012 to 2013.
22 Source: DfE statistical release, EYFSP attainment by pupil characteristics: 2013.
23 Source: DfE statistical release, Early Years Foundation Stage profile results: 2012 to 2013.
24 Source: DfE statistical release, Early Years Foundation Stage profile results: 2012 to 2013.
Schools, Children’s Centres and other community based settings respond well as outreach settings for vulnerable families. They act as a hub, developing multi-agency delivery with health services, early year’s nursery settings and closer collaboration with specialist services such as domestic abuse services. The Plymouth Plan conversation and convention events found that citizens of Plymouth wanted more facilities like this.\(^{(25)}\)

**Primary and Secondary school provision**

The local Children’s Services Authority Plymouth City Council has a statutory duty to ensure that there are sufficient schools, and therefore school places, for its population. This provision is mainly through ‘maintained schools,’ (which are the direct responsibility of the Council) or voluntary aided schools, but in recent times has also included an increasing number of academies and free schools, (which are outside of local authority control). The Academy and Free School initiatives mean that the LA must have a different role; in essence it retains its statutory functions and strategic responsibilities but has less power to influence and intervene. By 2031 it is almost certain that all schools will have left LA control and the number of free schools is likely to rise.

The current educational landscape of Plymouth demonstrates good potential for self-improvement and school-to-school support is emerging as a sustainable part of a changing system. Schools have a variety of governance arrangements with almost all secondary schools already ‘converted’ into academies and many primary schools either converting or joining new Catholic or Church of England Multi Academy Trusts (MATs).

In addition to the faith schools Plymouth has free schools, a University Technical College (UTC) and may shortly also develop a Studio School. The city continues to operate a selective, ‘grammar’ school system meaning that between 18-23 per cent of arguably the most academically able pupils do not attend comprehensive education after the age of eleven years. This has a major effect on the movement of pupils around the city and the choices parents make.

Schools are free to make a wide range of decisions and their ability to trade and purchase services from a variety of sources has increased. Schools are coming together to share their views and make their voices heard in relation to the type and quality of service they wish to access. The LA needs to respond swiftly and positively as schools make budget and expenditure decisions for future years.

Current and future legislation will potentially establish the role of the LA as commissioner for the greatest need and this role will be integrated with other statutory agencies and partners. This thinking has begun in Plymouth and the transformation agenda for education, learning and family support is moving with partners, towards integrated ways of working.


Support for Children’s Centres (Page 27 (Health and Wellbeing section)).
Although as a result of parental choice some children will attend schools outside of their neighbourhood or the city, the provision of a diverse and high quality education offer supports the overall sustainability and quality of life provided in Plymouth.

**Sufficiency of school places**

In Plymouth the demand for school places, which is known as ‘basic need’, is worked out by: taking the live birth figures (provided by the Plymouth NHS Trust) and comparing them with the number of children arriving at school four years later. This data is then used to produce a trend which forecasts future school years’ reception cohorts\(^{(26)}\).

When the Plymouth Local Development Framework Core Strategy was prepared in the early-mid 2000s, birth rates appeared to be averaging out, and the plan was to rationalise the number of schools. Since then there has been a baby boom and primary schools are currently over-subscribed. The birth rate reduced slightly in 2013 which was the first fall since the year 2000 (see Figure 1).

![Births (calendar year)](image)

*Figure 1: Past birth rates in Plymouth*

The fluctuation in the school population is largely due to fluctuations in the adult population of child bearing age that feed the birth rate which in turn feeds the primary population and then the secondary age population. The following Census data (Figure 2) is used to predict these trends showing that the birth rate is likely to continue to fall.

\(^{(26)}\) By using the trends based on admissions and not just live birth rates this allows for migration rates.
The pressure that has been experienced in the primary sector since 2010 will begin to feed into the secondary sector from 2017 onwards. These differing trends in the sectors can be seen in Figure 3 which shows the number on roll (NoR) in each sector.

It remains a priority to deliver the city’s aspiration for good quality local provision with healthy and sustainable schools in the heart of communities.

To ensure there is sufficiency in the future, potential solutions continue to include:
Education Topic Paper

- local authority building new schools, for academies;
- permanent or temporary extensions to existing schools;
- converting and remodelling existing spaces for use as classrooms, usually where schools have previously used classrooms for other purposes when they have had surplus places;
- the creation of free schools or studio schools.

There are a number of reasons why a school might not be able to expand to increase its capacity, with the consequence that some children might not be able to be placed at their local school. One reason is the school may not be able to expand due to the amount of available land. A large proportion of Plymouth’s schools are built on very constrained sites. This is particularly true of the remaining Victorian and Edwardian schools which still make up 17 per cent of education assets in the city. There is a predominance of this type of school in the city centre and west of the city.

Another reason for a restriction of expansion of an individual school is that the Council has a policy not to expand primary schools beyond three forms of entry (90 pupils per year group). This is to maintain a modest sense of scale for very small children; however other parts of the country have expanded primary schools beyond this scale in response to the current bulge in primary age children.

Sending a child to a ‘good’ school is another key factor in the choice many families make about where to live. Therefore, pressures on school places at an individual school include other factors such as:

- an increase in local population, perhaps driven by new development;
- popularity of a local school, perhaps because of a good Ofsted report or because it is a new school with new or high quality facilities.

Given the number of factors that affect school places it remains important to continue to project forward from live birth rates, and continuously monitor trends, to ensure that increased pressure from known new developments is factored into future projections.

Currently, there remain a number of areas of the city where primary schools are under pressure to expand and provide more places, even after a four year Basic Need Building Programme (see Figure 4). The areas that are in the highest need for additional school places are the Widewell / Southway and Plympton areas. Additionally, should an urban extension take place at Woolwell in the South Hams, there would be a need for expansion of school places in this area. The North East and Central areas continue to have a high number of popular schools which means that they are high importers of children and the rising pressure for places is making parents’ preference for these schools harder to achieve when they are applying from some distance.
Figure 4: A summary of the issues relating to primary school places in each area of Plymouth (Planned Admission Number (PAN) for primary schools).

For more context please see Appendix A.

The role of schools in the community

To achieve the city vision, ‘One of Europe’s most vibrant waterfront cities, where an outstanding quality of life is enjoyed by everyone’, communities need to aspire to achieve not just better education provision in their area but better quality in provision from other services too.

Citizens need to set themselves new ambitions for the future of their community and set about thinking how they may achieve them. Much of the conversations at Plymouth Plan events have surrounded the need to provide more services in community settings.

In addition to their primary education role, schools are a key facility within their local community and can support wider cohesion in the area. They are unique in that often they are the only service provider that will know the whole family and understand the needs of individuals in the context of their whole family. Schools have a strong commitment to their area and an interest in supporting parents, and despite the choices parents make most on the whole come from the locality. Schools might offer an opportunity to provide the joined up infrastructure needed to deliver more services to meet the wide ranging needs of families locally; for example employment, health and housing advice, extended study support and after school activities and/or sports, leisure, social uses.
To achieve this wider remit for schools, an understanding of new responsibilities and the need for more support staff might be required. If citizens were able to confidently self-identify themselves as community leaders and create self-organised community groups, much of the support schools need to achieve their new remit, should be provided by those in the community. This would provide more sustainability. However, there are restrictions to this and issues such as safeguarding can prohibit or discourage schools from making facilities available during the day or while after school activities are taking place. The funding needed to operate the buildings including the facilities management costs can also be a major restriction to the facilities being available as it is often the case that the cost of making a facility available can’t be afforded by the community group wishing to use the facility.

A key facility that schools have that is critical to the city’s growth is playing fields. The city’s current playing field strategy indicates that there is a need to expand community playing field provision, however if the school playing field provision is taken into account as a community use there could be sufficient playing fields for the growth of the city. The problem is that many sporting groups can’t afford to hire school playing facilities because of the staffing costs needed to maintain and care-take the use. By contrast, Council playing fields are subsided so the charges made to the sports groups are lower than the costs of making the fields available. Changes to the way playing fields are managed could incentivise schools and make available more land for community use which could support the growth of the city, and assist schools in meeting their community agenda. Additionally, the potential role of Section 106 Agreements associated with residential developments in the area should be considered in facilitating greater use of school playing pitches.

It remains a priority to deliver the city’s aspiration for good quality local provision with healthy and sustainable schools in the heart of their communities. This direction supports the development of the city in sustainable neighbourhoods, with reduced car journeys to school and other services, thereby reducing congestion and the increase in carbon emissions.
Children in Need

There was a significant increase in the number of children in need subject to a Child Protection Plan in Plymouth in 2013-14, and there is an urgent requirement to develop an enhanced prevention and early intervention plan in order to manage demand resulting from vulnerable children and families. Munro\(^{(27)}\) was asked to conduct a review of children’s safeguarding and her review helped inform Working Together to Safeguard Children 2013\(^{(28)}\). Munro established a number of principles that all who work with children and young people should strive to include. These principles are:

- the system should be child-centred;
- the family is usually the best place for bringing up children and young people, but difficult judgements are sometimes needed in balancing the right of a child to be with their birth family with their right to protection from abuse and neglect;
- helping children and families involves working with them and therefore the quality of the relationship between the children and family and professionals impacts on the effectiveness of help given;
- early help is better for children;
- children’s needs and circumstances are varied so the system needs to offer equal variety in its response;
- good professional practice is informed by knowledge of the latest theory and research;
- uncertainty and risk are features of child protection work;
- the measure of the success of child protection systems, both local and national, is whether children are receiving effective help.

These principles need to be considered in the provision of all future education and learning.

Special Educational Needs

The Children’s Act takes forward the Coalition Government’s commitments to improve services for vulnerable children and support families. It underpins wider reforms to ensure that all children and young people can succeed, no matter what their background. As part of this Act the Government is transforming the system for children and young people with special educational needs (SEN), including those who are disabled, so that services consistently support the best outcomes for them. The Act extends the SEN system from birth to 25, giving children, young people and their parents greater control and choice in decisions and ensuring needs are properly met, by replacing old statements with a new birth-to-25 education, health and care plan; offering families personal budgets; and improving co-operation between all the services that support children and their families, particularly requiring local authorities and health authorities to work together.

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Currently, pupils with special educational needs are achieving a good level of development across key stages 1, 2, and 4 which places Plymouth in the top and second quartile nationally\(^{(29)}\). Provision for learners with special educational needs or disability across the city is enhanced with seven special schools offering a range of specialist provision and many mainstream schools offering satellite specialist facilities and expertise.

**Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET)**

The Alternative Complementary Education service (ACE) provides the statutory offer for excluded pupils and a range of other early intervention work including medical need. They have been judged ‘good’ by Ofsted\(^{(30)}\).

The number of people in academic years 12-14 who are NEET remains a persistent challenge for the city and whilst the current methodology does not allow for historic comparisons, figures for the end of March 2014 (7.7 per cent NEET, 634 young people) compared poorly against statistical neighbours (5.4 per cent) and England (5.3 per cent)\(^{(31)}\).

Data shows that there has been a sustained increase in the number of young people completing apprenticeships in Plymouth compared with other areas.

However, from 2013, all young people will be under a duty to participate in education or training until the end of the academic year in which they turn the age of 17. From 2015, this will rise to their 18\(^{th}\) birthday\(^{(32)}\). For those that are not participating there is a requirement to use re-engagement programmes to support young people who are NEET back into learning.

The primary and secondary placement panels co-ordinate transfers for primary and secondary aged mainstream children who are at risk of exclusion. The aim of the primary and secondary placement panels is to reduce the number of exclusions across schools in the city and work towards a zero tolerance of permanent exclusion. The primary and secondary placement panels only deal with referrals for children without Statements of Special Educational Need and so special schools do not fall within their remit.

The Flagship initiative, ‘Learning and Talent Development’, *Deal for Young People* in Plymouth City Council’s Local Economic Strategy (LES) Review 2013/14\(^{(33)}\), go towards capitalising on the existing strengths in higher education and research and development sectors and

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33 From http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/business/economicdevelopment/strategicgrowthlocaleconomicstrategy.htm
industries linked to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). In particular, marine science by supporting opportunities for careers advice through engagement with local businesses and role models, career talks, work experience or open days. More initiatives are needed to enable greater opportunities sector wide if young people in Plymouth are to have a confident route into employment.

**Further and Higher Education**

Plymouth has a major strength in terms of its further and higher education offer.

Post 16 learners can transition to school 6th forms (uniquely ALL secondary schools have a 6th form), training providers, a large General Further Education College (GFE)\(^{(34)}\) or Plymouth College of Art (PCA)\(^{(35)}\). PCA has recently been awarded Higher Education Institution (HEI) status\(^{(36)}\) bringing the number of universities in the city to three.

The quality of Plymouth’s further education sector is high which makes a substantial contribution to teaching, learning and research that is recognised regionally, nationally and internationally.

![Figure 5: Net inflows of people 2001-2010 Plymouth (source: SHMNA, July 2013, Main Report, undertaken by GVA Edge Analytics)](image)

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34 Plymouth City College [www.cityplym.ac.uk/](http://www.cityplym.ac.uk/)

35 Plymouth College of Art [http://www.plymouthart.ac.uk/](http://www.plymouthart.ac.uk/)

36 Higher Education Institutions [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/invest/unicoll/heis/](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/whatwedo/invest/unicoll/heis/)
Providers of further and higher education in Plymouth include Plymouth University, Plymouth College of Art, City College Plymouth, University of St Mark and St John and the Peninsula Medical and Dental Schools. Places are funded nationally by the Education Funding Agency (EFA) direct to the individual provider, and the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) is the body responsible for policy developments in Universities. The City Council has a responsibility to ‘secure sufficient and suitable provision for young people,’ to support young people in its area into education or training and establish those that are failing to fulfil the duty to participate in education or training.

There is a considerable in-migration of those aged 15-19 years old for further education from other authorities (see Figure 5), in particular from Cornwall\(^{(37)}\). However, the cohort of Plymouth pupils from 2010/11 who went to university in 2011/12 is lower than Plymouth’s statistical neighbours\(^{(38)}\) and the England average. None went to Oxford or Cambridge and only 10 per cent of the cohort went to Russell Group universities compared to 21 per cent in Torbay and 15 per cent in England\(^{(39)}\).

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38 This data is experimental statistics which means that this is not yet official.

39 DfE statistical release, Destinations of key stage 4 and key stage 5 pupils 2011/12.
Some key challenges and questions for the Plymouth Plan

There are a number of key challenges around education in Plymouth that the Plymouth Plan may need to address:

Question 1

The education system is changing to one where schools are more independent and where the local authority has less influence. Over the next twenty years if the school provision is increasingly privatised and marketed, what role should schools play in the community and as a provider of integrated services in the community?

Question 2

How can parents be supported to ensure their child is ‘School Ready’?

Question 3

What can be done to encourage parents to choose the nearest ‘most sustainably located’ school, given the positive impacts on health and strengthening community cohesion?

Question 4

There continues to be a need to increase primary school places to cater for the city’s growth. However, delivering school expansions is often not straightforward and there could be a need for new primary schools during the plan-period (two are already planned at Derriford and Morley Park; others will be dependent on the level of growth within the city and in the adjoining parts of the South Hams). Similar issues are likely to arise for secondary schools in the next few years as children from the baby boom years reach 11. Given demographic changes and Plymouth’s agenda for growth, where should new schools be located to meet the need? And/or is there a need to be more flexible and innovative about where and how education in delivered?
Question 5

Everyone living in the city should be able to access quality schools, with good facilities. But how is this maintained with increasing financial and social challenges?

Question 6

Schools play a crucial role at the heart of local communities through supporting community cohesion. How can this role be given more emphasis and support?

Question 7

Have we identified all of the key challenges?

Question 8

Are there any other challenges the Plymouth Plan needs to consider?
Opportunities and options to consider in the Plymouth Plan

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<th>Why?</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Early Years</strong></td>
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<td>Early Years</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage key agencies in the city to support families to ensure their child is ready for school.</td>
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<td>So that children can make the best start to their education and ensure a good level of development from thereon in.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acknowledge that community based settings such as Children’s Centres and schools help promote healthier lifestyles and support agencies to invest in these and other community based settings.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Schools, Children’s Centres and other community based settings play a big part in working with families and network with the police, health and social workers. They are likely to be able to notice problems in families early and be able to suggest appropriate community based solutions.</td>
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<td><strong>Primary and secondary school provisions</strong></td>
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<td>Primary and secondary school provisions</td>
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<td>Support and enable the transformation programme for Education, Learning and Family Support to move towards a more integrated way of working.</td>
<td></td>
<td>So that the local authority can move confidently into its commissioning role and responsibility for education and learning becomes part of the DNA of all agencies within the city.</td>
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<td><strong>Sufficiency of school places</strong></td>
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<td>It will be important to continue to project forward from live birth rates, continuously monitor trends, and ensure that increased pressure from known new developments is factored into future projections. The Plymouth Plan must support the local authority and other key education providers to ensure that there is sufficient provision of schools to cater for the new population which meet the needs of pupils and their families. It must also set out key policies to support</td>
<td></td>
<td>It remains a priority to deliver the city’s aspiration for good quality local provision with healthy and sustainable schools in the heart of their communities. To provide school places for children living in the city and plan in advance so as to minimise future capacity problems. Some of the children will migrate into the city or migrate out. Working with neighbouring authorities is required in order to manage demand.</td>
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### Plymouth Plan Solutions

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| the expansion of existing schools and the provision of new ones where appropriate and needed. | The role of schools at the heart of their communities | The role of schools at the heart of their communities
Community hubs have been recognised as a need by local citizens through the Plymouth Plan conversations and as a potential solution to delivering services with a greater impact on the health and wellbeing of citizens within communities (40).
Ensuring that future school provision takes into consideration the needs of not only its pupils but also future pupils, families and the needs of the whole community. |
| Have arrangements in place for working with neighbouring authorities. |  | |
| **The role of schools at the heart of their communities** |  |  |
| Promote the role of the school as an option for community hubs development where this is a sustainable option. |
| Where there is an identified need for a school to become a community hub this should be considered when determining which schools to expand and where new schools may need to be located. |  |  |
| The Plymouth Plan needs to embrace Munro’s principles when supporting and enabling any future education and learning provision. |  |  |
| The following principles are currently included in city wide strategies and should be embodied in the Plymouth Plan: | Targeted and intensive support |  |

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40 See Local Community Topic paper: ‘How do we create neighbourhoods where people want to live?’
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<td>Provide value for communities by supporting the delivery of targeted and intensive support to address the behaviours that have a negative impact upon communities and to prevent the need for high cost crisis interventions. Engage the voluntary and community sector providers in designing innovative solutions with families.</td>
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<td><strong>Prevention and Early Intervention</strong></td>
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<td>Quality early intervention gives every child the best start in life and ensures they develop resilience and reach their full potential, and enables young people to lead successful and independent adult lives. The Plymouth Plan should therefore, support the shift in focus of services towards prevention and enable improved access to and standards of services provided.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and those not in education, employment or training</td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Focus on Early Years Education</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Continue to raise awareness of the need to focus on early years support, parental engagement in a child’s development and learning, increasing parental employment and improving quality of learning, so that parents can make a contribution to the city’s economy and be positive role models for their children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Educational Needs, Disabilities and those not in education, employment or training</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Children’s Act takes forward the Coalition Government’s commitments to improve services for vulnerable children</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

41 Early Years Intervention and Prevention Strategy 2012-15
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plymouth Plan Solutions</th>
<th>Related Theme</th>
<th>Why?</th>
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<tr>
<td>expertise, for children and young people with special educational needs, disabilities and those not in education, employment or training.</td>
<td></td>
<td>and support families. It underpins wider reforms to ensure that all children and young people can succeed, no matter what their background.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Support young adults</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Support key agencies in the city to equip young people with skills, knowledge and opportunities to make a successful transition to adulthood and reduce risk taking behaviour. Provide opportunities for them to learn everyday skills, such as homework and budgeting.</td>
<td></td>
<td>To raise confidence and self-esteem and provide young people with skills, which could reduce harmful behaviours and pressure on social services, and enable young people to have the confidence to be ‘work ready’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support the continued capitalisation of the existing strengths in higher education and research and development sectors and industries linked to science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), and encourage sector wide engagement in developing initiatives which provide a greater opportunity for young people to enter into employment.</td>
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<td>Encourage the maximisation of impact from the range of funding sources supporting this area – including funding for education and training places and re-engagement provision.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Support Parents</strong></td>
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<td>There is a significant body of evidence that shows a positive relationship between increased parental engagement, particularly in the case of ‘hard to reach’ parents, and positive learning outcomes.</td>
<td></td>
<td>So that young people and adults can have a better chance at gaining skills, contribute and have an active role in the economy, and be ‘work ready’.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Furthermore where parents and teachers work together to improve learning, the gains in achievement for children and young people are significant. In addition comments that came from the initial engagement on the Plymouth Plan related to the importance of improving education in poorer families, and the impact that education can have on children and the cycle it produces. Many stated that access and finance for education was difficult for parents with childcare. The Plymouth Plan should seek to ensure that parental support is a key consideration of services provided to children and young people.

### Raise confidence and aspirations

Throughout the Plymouth Plan consultation events there was a high level of interest in Citizenship and young people’s involvement in decision making. The Plymouth Plan should champion the engagement of young people in shaping and contributing to their communities.

Parents have told us about the increased confidence and self-esteem, better communication and raised aspirations of those who take part in extracurricular activity particularly for those disadvantaged children and young people who access activities they would not otherwise be able to afford (such as Allsortz). The value of this in children’s development is an essential part of their capacity to learn, to socialise, to seek out opportunities and to take risks\(^ {42}\). It allows them to try out a range of emotions in a ‘safe’ way; to learn and develop emotionally by promoting resilience and self-esteem\(^ {43}\).

<table>
<thead>
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42 See page 3 of Play in Plymouth, 2007-2010  
## Plymouth Plan Solutions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Higher Education</td>
<td>The quality of Plymouth’s further and higher education sector is high which makes a substantial contribution to teaching, learning and research that is recognised regionally, nationally and internationally. There is a considerable in-migration of those aged 15-19 years old for further and higher education from other authorities. However, the cohort of Plymouth pupils from 2010/11 who went to university in 2011/12 is lower than Plymouth’s statistical neighbours[^44] and the England average.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^44]: This data is experimental statistics which means that this is not yet official.
What happens next?

Any comments received on this topic paper will be considered in the preparation of the Plymouth Plan. You can make comments at [www.plymouth.gov.uk/PlymouthPlan](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/PlymouthPlan) or by email plymouthplan@plymouth.gov.uk. Alternatively, please post your comments to:

Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Department
Plymouth City Council
Ballard House
West Hoe Road
Plymouth
PL1 3BJ

The closing date for consultation responses is 25 October 2014.

List of key Plymouth Plan evidence base documents


APPENDIX A

North West

This is an area that had a sharp decline of secondary numbers in the latter part of the last century and a similar sharp decline in primary numbers in the early 2000’s. It was also an area of post war estates that had a significant number of 1950’s schools that were in a very poor state of repair. A rationalisation of schools in the area took out a significant amount of capacity in both primary and secondary sectors. There has been a long seated trend for parents to exercise choice to send their children out of the locality.

The recent basic need programme has added new primary capacity and new facilities. The area is therefore stable, however, developments in Widewell and Southway and potential housing sites to the north of the city will add pressure to this area. Initially the new planned school in Derriford may assist with this pressure, but significant housing outside the city will need consideration of additional education provision as it could not be assumed that the primary schools in this area could absorb growth. In the secondary provision significant capacity has been taken out with the planned rebuilding of all three secondary schools in the area. These are stable as secondary numbers decline but there will need to be growth in these schools as secondary numbers increase, the existing sites are just big enough to support this, although building extensions will be necessary.

North East and Central

The central part of this area has always had popular schools and has supported inward migration as parents choose the schools of the more affluent central areas. The area also has the girls’ grammar schools which import students from a city wide and wider catchment. The increase in primary numbers means that it is harder for parents to exercise this choice. The planned development growth of Derriford demanded a new primary school provision which the Council has achieved by obtaining early funding in advance of the housing. The building of this school will be a major draw to the investment opportunity meaning that developer contributions can be targeted towards the provision of transport infrastructure. The secondary capacity of this area has also been rationalised and is stable, however the growth in secondary numbers combined with housing growth in Derriford will need extensions to the secondary schools to allow them to meet the demand.

Plympton

This area was the only area that didn’t embrace the decline in primary and secondary numbers and fought hard to maintain their provision, which was often temporary classrooms added to the schools in the 1960’s and 70’s. Without the radical reorganisation seen elsewhere in the city it proved hard to seek government funding to resolve building issues. The area has a long standing trend for good and popular schools for both primary and secondary sectors and with the spare capacity that schools retained they supported a high level of inward migration. However as primary numbers have increased in the lower years this is no longer the case and Plympton does not have capacity to support all local families that wish to have a Plympton primary school place. The decline in secondary places has been most acute in Plympton with one school suffering in particular, however both the secondary schools in the
area have acute building issues and the reduction in numbers offers an opportunity for them to rationalise their building stock. The building of a significant number of houses in the outer fringe of the city would create pressure on the education provision and, depending on numbers would mean the provision of a new primary school or the expansion of a number of the existing schools. In the secondary provision expansion of numbers would appear to be absorbed as there is capacity but the buildings that support this capacity are of such poor quality that they should be discounted.

**Plymstock**

Plymstock, like Plympton has been a net importer of both primary and secondary children. The area has been expecting considerable turbulence from Morley Park and Sherford developments. Both these developments have significant additional education infrastructure associated with them so there is no significant concern with the overall capacity of the developments. However the timing of the development may lead to transitional issues as the schools planned don’t come on stream for some time and there is concern as to how parents may exercise their choice as temporary provision is provided.

**South East**

The south east and city centre have been subject to expansion through the recent basic need expansion programme and has also benefited from the opening of a free school in Millbay. The area has traditionally been an exporter of children as there are few city centre schools to offer provision. The basic need expansions have made the area stable although it will continue to rely of schools outside the area. The expansions have also absorbed a considerable amount of housing growth some of which is still in construction. Proposals for a significant amount of housing in the city centre would add pressure on the schools in the area which are hard to expand as they have constricted sites.

**South West**

The regeneration of Devonport posed a considerable pressure for the education provision. Reorganisation, which would have driven school improvement and increased parental preference to live in the area proved unachievable and so extensions have been added to the existing local primary schools through the basic need building programme. The secondary provision is very different as the building of the free school in Millbay and the UTC, which offers a 14-19 provision, along with Stoke Damerel Community college and the boys’ grammar school means the area has the most diverse secondary offer in the city. Schools in this part of the city are very constrained in site areas and building suitability and further expansion will be very hard to achieve.