

Title: The Gateway Primary Free School
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Impact Assessment – Section 9 Academies Act Duty

1. Section 9 of the Academies Act places a duty upon the Secretary of State to take into account what the impact of establishing the new school is likely to be on maintained schools, Academies and institutions within the further education sector in the area in which the school is situated.

Background

2. The Gateway Primary Free School will be co-located with the existing Gateway Academy in Tilbury, Essex. At capacity, the school will accommodate 630 pupils from Reception to Year 6. It will open in September 2012 with 90 Year 6 pupils. From September 2013, pupils will be present in all years from Reception to Year 6.

3. The proposal was submitted by the Gateway Academy (an outstanding secondary Academy) with strong backing from the Ormiston Trust, the Academy's sponsor. The success of the Gateway Academy has generated strong parental support for a primary school linked to the Academy and has the backing of the Local Authority. The school will provide a traditional primary curriculum with pupils benefitting from the shared facilities and teaching with the Academy.

4. The school has currently received applications from and offered provisional places to 50 pupils, although we expect that number to increase to around 70 by the time the school opens in September.

5. The Gateway Academy Trust is in the process of becoming a Multi-Academy Trust. It will establish a single Governing Body to oversee four schools that will be part of the Gateway Learning Community. These schools include Gateway Academy itself, the primary Free School, Lansdowne Primary Academy and Herringham Primary School (which is currently in the process of converting to Academy status).

Catchment Area and Admissions

6. Gateway Primary Free School's admissions policy is compliant with the admissions code. If the school is over-subscribed, priority (after first accepting children with statements of SEN on which Gateway Primary is named) will be given in the following order:

- a. Pupils whose siblings attend the Gateway Primary Free School
- b. Pupils whose parents have been employed at the Gateway Primary Free School for more than two years or who have been recruited to address a skills shortage

- c. Pupils who live in the 'designated catchment area'
- d. Pupils admitted on the basis of proximity to the Free School using straight line measurement

7. The school does not have a self-defined catchment area for its pupil intake, although it will use an inner 'designated catchment area' for the purposes of prioritising pupils from a particular part of Tilbury. This inner catchment area was chosen to prioritise streets that are in the most deprived part of Thurrock.

8. We have created a proxy catchment area based on the distance travelled to school by a significant majority (90%¹) of pupils in Thurrock. We will therefore include all primary schools within a one and a half mile radius of the Free School.

Characteristics of the catchment area

9. Gateway Primary Free School is located in Thurrock district. Table 1 below sets out the population growth in primary schools between 2010/11 and 2015/16 in Thurrock and neighbouring districts².

Table 1: Number of pupils and projections in Thurrock District 2010/11 – 2015/16

		Academic year 2010/11		Academic year 2015/16		2010/11 – 2015/16
LA District	Number of places in 2010	No of pupils	Surplus %	No. of pupils	Surplus %	% increase in population
Primary school pupil population						
Thurrock	15,162	13,199	12.9%	15,892	-4.8%	20.4%
Havering	19,464	18,473	5.1%	20,958	-7.7%	13.5%
Brentwood	5,746	5,316	7.5%	5,409	5.9%	1.7%
Basildon	16,165	14,159	12.4%	15,582	3.6%	10.1%
Castle Point	7,077	6,272	11.4%	6,168	12.8%	-1.7%

10. The primary school population is projected to grow by 20.4% over the next five years in Thurrock, and most of the surrounding districts are also projected to grow. Additionally if no new primary school places were added in Thurrock there would be a 4.8% shortfall of places by 2015/16. It is therefore possible that any potential negative impact on local schools could be mitigated by increased demand for primary places in Thurrock and its neighbouring districts in the longer-term.

Summary of likely impact

¹ We initially look at the distance that 80% of pupils travel, but in instances where this includes fewer than five schools, this is increased to 90%.

² Districts south of the Thames (Bexley, Medway, Gravesham and Dartford) have been excluded due to difficult journeys involved via the Dartford Tunnel.

11. Of the nine primary schools within a 1½ mile radius of the proposed site, we expect the Free School to initially have a high impact on three of those schools, a moderate impact on two schools and a minimal impact on the remaining four. However, as the new Free School becomes more established and expands its intake, we expect that the impact will change for two of the schools. We do not expect the opening of the Free School to affect the long term financial viability of any of these schools.

Impact on other Schools

12. Below is a discussion of the likely impact of the proposed school on the schools flagged as being at risk of losing pupils, as well as those which are performing poorly and operating with significant surplus capacity. Of the nine primary schools that fall within a 1 ½ mile radius of Gateway Primary Free School, it is our view that the opening of the Free School will have a high impact on three schools, a moderate impact on two schools and a minimal impact on four schools.

13. A map showing the location of the Free School in relation to surrounding schools is attached at [Annex A](#).

Table 1. Maintained secondary schools within a 4-mile radius of the site of Becket Keys Free School

School Name	Impact	Distance (miles)	Capacity	Surplus in 2010/11	Ofsted Rating
Lansdowne Primary School	High	1.1	600	13%	Inadequate
Manor Infant and Nursery School	High	0.72	270	15%	Good
Woodside Primary School	High (medium in the longer-term)	0.83	350	0%	Good
Herringham Primary School	Moderate	0.67	420	12%	Good
Chadwell St Mary Primary School	Moderate (high in the longer-term)	0.35	254	37%	Good
Thameside Junior School	Minimal	1.2	360	44%	Satisfactory
Thameside Infant School	Minimal	1.21	265	16%	Good
St Mary's Catholic Primary School	Minimal	1.14	240	0%	Good
Little Thurrock Primary School	Minimal	1.21	517	0%	Satisfactory

Lansdowne Primary School

Impact: High

14. Lansdowne Primary School is a community primary school situated 1.1 miles south of the proposed Free School site. The school has capacity for 600 pupils (around 90 pupils per year group) but had a surplus of around 13% of

places in 2010/11. The school was unable to fill all of its new places in 2010/11.

15. Lansdowne Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted in May 2011, and received an overall effectiveness rating of inadequate. The school is under special measures and has been given a notice to improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to governance, attendance, pupil's attainment, and the quality of teaching and teachers' use of assessment information. The school is however demonstrating the capacity to improve. The school has well below average attainment at Key Stage 2, with 53% of pupils achieving the expected level in English and Maths in 2011 compared with 74% nationally.

16. The school is located just over one mile away from the proposed site, which is above the average distance travelled to primary school in Thurrock (0.70 miles). The school has an inadequate Ofsted rating and relatively poor attainment, so parents is likely to be attracted to an alternative. The school currently has a number of surplus places and was undersubscribed for entry in 2010/11, so the opening of the free school could further exacerbate the number of surplus places. However, given the longer-term projected increase in the primary pupil population, we do not expect the Free School to impact on the long-term viability of the school. Current pupil application data suggests that 9 Year 5 pupils from Manor School will be attending Gateway in Year 6.

17. Lansdowne Primary School has converted to Academy status from 1 April and will become part of the Gateway Learning Community Trust, which brings it under the same Governing Body as the Gateway Academy and Gateway Primary Free School. This may also make the school more attractive to parents in the longer-term, but in the short-term the potential loss of some of the more able pupils could have a negative impact on its improvement journey.

Manor Infant and Nursery School

Impact: High

18. Manor Infant and Nursery School is a community primary school located 0.72 miles south east of the proposed Free School site. The school has capacity for 270 pupils (around 90 pupils per year group) but had a surplus of around 15% of places in 2010/11. The school did not fill all of its new places in 2010/11.

19. The school was rated as good by Ofsted in its last inspection in 2009. Key Stage 1 attainment in 2010/11 was below the national level in reading and writing, and above the national level in speaking and listening, maths and science.

20. The school is rated as good by Ofsted and has attainment above the national level in speaking & listening, maths and science. However, results in reading and writing are below the national level so parents may be attracted to an alternative. It is the third closest school to the proposed site at 0.72

miles which is around the average distance travelled to primary school in Thurrock (0.7 miles), so in principle could lose more potential pupils to the Free School than schools further away.

21. The school has a large number of surplus places and was undersubscribed for entry in 2011/12 so the opening of the Free School could further exacerbate the existing surplus issue in this school. The opening of the Free School could therefore have a negative impact on the long-term viability of the school. However the primary population in the area is set to grow over the next few years so any negative impact of the Free School opening may be mitigated by the increased demand in the area in the longer-term. Current pupil application data suggest that 17 Year 5 pupils from Manor School will be attending Gateway in Year 6.

22. The Gateway Academy Trust has been in discussion with Thurrock Council about the Manor School becoming part of the Trust. The school have been reluctant to join the Trust but the Council see this as a positive opportunity for the school to improve its performance. The Council accept that numbers will fall at Manor as a result of the new Free School and are planning to reduce the pupil numbers for the next 2 years as the school rebuilds. Capacity at the school will then be increased in the future as the pupil population in the area increases. Therefore, although the impact is high, officials believe that this is acceptable given the reduction would be managed at Local Authority level and is forecast to grow again later.

Woodside Primary School

Impact: High (medium in the longer-term)

23. Woodside Primary School is a community primary school situated 0.83 miles north of the proposed Free School site. The school has capacity for 350 pupils. It was oversubscribed in 2010/11 and is not currently carrying any surplus.

24. Woodside Primary School was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2010 and received an overall effectiveness rating of Good. The school has below average attainment at Key Stage 2. In 2011, 78% of pupils were making expected progress in English (compared to a national average of 84%) and 74% were making expected progress in Maths (compared to a national average of 83)

25. Current pupil application data suggests that 10 Year 5 pupils will be transferring to Gateway in Year 6. Although Woodside has a 'Good' Ofsted rating and is currently oversubscribed, local contextual information suggests that there is parental dissatisfaction with the leadership of the school, which might result in parents considering other local options. Therefore, a move to the Gateway Free School and greater security of a place at the secondary school could be very attractive.

26. Given that one of the key reasons for pupils switching to the new Free School is dissatisfaction with the current school leadership, we do expect the

impact to reduce over time as this issue is addressed. In addition, the Free School will gradually increase its intake with pupils that live closer to the school, which in turn is likely to reduce the number of pupils currently attending Woodside accessing places at the Free School. The projected growth in primary school pupil numbers will mitigate against this risk and it is in this context that officials feel the impact is acceptable.

Herringham Primary School

Impact: Moderate

27. Herringham Primary School is a community school located 0.67 miles from the proposed Free School site. The school has capacity for 420 pupils, around 60 pupils per year group, but had a surplus of around 12% of places in 2010/11. The school did not fill all of its new places in 2010/11.

28. The school was rated as Good by Ofsted in its last inspection in February 2012. The school has attainment at Key Stage 2 around the national average, with 75% of pupils achieving the expected level in English and Maths in 2011 compared with 74% nationally.

29. It is the second closest school to the proposed site, located under the average distance travelled to primary school in Thurrock (0.7 miles) so in principle could lose more potential pupils to the Free School than schools further away. Although the school has attainment levels just above the national average, the school has an Ofsted rating of satisfactory so parents may be attracted to an alternative. The school currently has surplus places and did not fill all of its new places for entry in September 2011. The opening of the Free School could further exacerbate the existing surplus places issue in this school, and could therefore have a negative impact on the long term viability of the school. Current pupil application data suggest that only 3 Year 5 pupils from Herringham will be attending Gateway in Year 6.

30. Herringham School has been approved to convert to Academy status, although this process has been delayed as a result of negotiations between the Council and the school about the ownership of the children's centre located on the site of the school. When this process is complete Herringham will also become part of the Gateway Learning Community Trust, which brings it under the same Board of Directors as the Gateway Academy and Gateway Primary Free School. This along with the projected increase in primary pupil population makes the likely impact on this school acceptable.

Chadwell St Mary Primary School

Impact: Moderate (High in the longer-term)

31. Chadwell St Mary Primary School is a community school located 0.35 miles from the proposed site of the new Free School. The school has capacity for 254 pupils, (around 30 per year group). There was a relatively large surplus of around 37% of places in 2010/11, and the school was unable to fill all its new places in 2011/12.

32. The school was rated as good by Ofsted in its last inspection in 2011. The school has attainment at Key Stage 2 in the top 25% of schools, with 87% of pupils achieving the expected level in English and Maths in 2011 compared with 74% nationally.

33. It is the closest school to the proposed free school, so in the longer-term is likely to lose more pupils to the Free School than schools further away. However, the school has a good Ofsted rating and KS2 attainment in the top 25% so the relative attraction of the Free School should be limited and potential loss of pupils to the Free School should be minimal. Current pupil application data suggest that only 2 Year 5 pupils from Chadwell St Mary will be attending Gateway in Year 6. However, we do expect that as the new Free School becomes more established in the longer-term it will draw more pupils from Chadwell St Mary's. The designated inner catchment area chosen by the Free School covers an area that is currently within the Chadwell St Mary's catchment and we therefore expect an increasing proportion of pupils from that area to attend the Free School over time.

34. However, the primary school population in Thurrock is projected to rise over the next few years which will increase the demand for places. The opening of the Free School should therefore not have a negative impact on the long term viability of the school.

Thameside Junior and Infant Schools

Impact: Minimal

35. Thameside Junior and Infant Schools are community schools located 1.2 miles north of the proposed site of the new Free School. Thameside Junior and Thameside Infant Schools are amalgamating in September 2012. The junior school currently has capacity of 360 pupils and the infant school has capacity for 265 pupils. The schools have surpluses of 44% and 16% of places respectively.

36. Thameside Junior was rated as satisfactory in its latest inspection in 2011; Thameside Infant was rated as good in its latest inspection in 2008. Thameside Junior has below average Key Stage 2 attainment, with 59% of pupils achieving the expected level in English and maths in 2011 compared with 74% nationally. Key Stage 1 attainment for Thameside Infant was below average for writing, reading, maths, science and speaking and listening.

37. The schools are located over one mile away from the proposed site, above the average distance travelled to primary school in Thurrock (0.70 miles). However, both the infant and junior schools have attainment below the national level, so parents may be attracted to an alternative.

38. Both schools currently have a number of surplus places and were undersubscribed for entry in September 2011, so the opening of the free school could further exacerbate the number of surplus places. However, at this point there are no applications from pupils at Thameside wishing to move to Gateway in Year 6.

Other Schools

39. Of the other two schools considered, both have been assessed as being minimally affected by the opening of the Free School. Both are currently oversubscribed.

40. We do not expect the viability of St Mary's Roman Catholic School to be affected by the new Free School. A positive Ofsted judgement, oversubscription and its faith designation suggest it is likely to lose only a small number of pupils. Current pupil application data suggests that there are no Year 5 pupils planning to transfer to Gateway in Year 6.

41. Although Little Thurrock has only a satisfactory Ofsted judgment, it is currently oversubscribed and we do not expect them to lose a significant number of pupils to the Free School. Current pupil application data suggests that there is just one Year 5 pupil planning to transfer to Gateway in Year 6.

Impact on Secondary Schools

42. The Gateway Primary Free School will be a school admitting pupils of primary school age. It will open in September 2012 with an intake of 3 Year 6 classes and expand to full capacity (630 Reception to Year 6 pupils) in its second year. It will have no specialist SEN provision but will work to accommodate the needs of pupils where the school is named in their statement of SEN. As such it is unlikely to have any direct impact on local secondary schools, special schools, alternative provision and even less likely to impact on post-16 and FE institutions.

43. Thurrock Council has considered the increasing demand for secondary school places which the rising population will create and are working closely with the Gateway Learning Community Trust to manage the implications of the increased demand and the potential impact on admission arrangements. After a time-lag, rising rolls in primary schools translate to rising rolls in secondary school. Thurrock Council's projections show that over the next five years the primary population will increase by more than 20%. However, because of the greater degree of predictability of secondary age pupil numbers, the planning of expansions to meet demand is a more certain process. The Gateway Academy has submitted a bid to the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund to expand existing pupils and deal with the existing and predicted future demand for secondary places in the area.

Representation

44. No direct representations have been received by the Department but a public consultation has been carried out by the Academy Trust. The responses received to the consultation were unanimously positive with no negative or critical comments received. Formal responses were received from a number of local schools and partners, all supporting the proposed Funding Agreement. An open public meeting generated a limited response. A relatively small number of people participated in an open debate, but again the outcome was unanimous support for the proposal to enter into a Funding

Agreement. It was not possible to ascertain the numbers of people accessing the consultation via the GLC website because of technical limitations to the current technologies. However, the responses that were received were again wholly positive.

45. No response was received from Thurrock Council to the Academy Trust's consultation or in response to the Department's requests for their views on the new Free School. However, Thurrock Council has fully supported the proposal for the Free School and supported its development.

Conclusion

46. The Gateway Primary Free School will create additional surplus places in the short-term. However, this will be mitigated in the medium-term by a projected increase in the primary school population of 20.4% in Thurrock over the next five years. This will reduce the longer-term impact on all of the surrounding schools considered in this analysis.

47. Based on current pupil applications, it appears that pupils applying for places at Gateway Primary are currently spread across a number of existing schools. This helps to minimise the impact on any one school. However, the analysis above suggests that Manor School, Lansdowne School and Woodside School will bear the greatest impact of the new Free School opening. However, for the reasons set out above, officials believe that the impact on these schools is acceptable.

A	Gateway Primary Free School
B	Lansdowne Primary School
C	Herringham Primary School
D	Manor Infant and Nursery School
E	Thameside Junior School
F	Thameside Infant School
G	Chadwell St Mary Primary School
H	Woodside Primary School
I	St Mary's Catholic Primary School
J	Little Thurrock Primary School

