

**Title: Kings School Woolston**  
**Author: Department for Education (DfE)**

**Impact Assessment – Section 9 Academies Act Duty**

1. Section 9 of the Academies Act 2010 places a duty upon the Secretary of State to take into account what the impact of establishing the additional school would be likely to be on maintained schools, Academies, institutions within the further education sector and alternative provision in the area in which the additional school is to be situated.

**Background**

2. Kings Free School is a secondary school approved to open in Warrington LA in September 2012. It will initially take up to 120 pupils into year 7. Once it reaches full capacity the school will hold 840 pupils, of which 600 will be in years 7 to 11, and 240 will be in the sixth form.

3. Warrington Council has now approved a temporary site, part of Bruche County Primary School, and thereafter Hillock Lane playing fields as the permanent site (subject to planning permission). The school will open in the temporary site for up to the first 2 years of operation. In the meantime the EFA is preparing a planning application for a new build on Hillock Lane playing fields, with the outcome expected to be known towards the end of the year.

4. The project is led by the well-known educationalist, Sir Iain Hall, supported by a very strong parent group. Sir Iain's decision to apply to open a Free School came after five years of research in to the educational practices of the most successful Charter Schools in the U.S.A. underpinned by a close scrutiny of successful Independent Schools in England. The School intends to encourage, in their students, a sense of pride in their heritage and an understanding of our successes as a multicultural nation in terms of leadership and business.

5. The decision to close of Woolston Community High School in 2007, generated strong and prolonged protests from the local community, and reduced the number of local secondary school places by 1000. Woolston pupils were forced to move to other schools, requiring additional transport arrangements, and extra costs, for local parents/pupils. The area is mixed economically, with some areas of deprivation, but there is a strong local identity, and there is a substantial groundswell of local activism and purpose in bidding to open this Free School in the area.

**Admissions, Catchment Area, and Characteristics**

Admissions

6. The school's admissions policy has been agreed by officials and is compliant with the School Admissions Code. The school will have a non-selective intake in line with The Law: Equity and Fair Access in School

Admission Arrangements and actively encourages applications from all backgrounds, cultures, abilities and faiths. No deviations from the Admissions Code have been requested. When the school is oversubscribed, after the admission of pupils with Special Educational Needs where the school is named in the Statement, priority will be given to those children who meet the following criteria:

1. The admission of looked after children, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the School Admissions Procedures.
2. Children who, on the date of admission, have siblings on the school roll. The term sibling includes legally adopted children as well as step brothers and sisters living at the same address.
3. The remaining places will be allocated to children within local areas, measured as 'the crow flies' being the deciding factor.

#### Catchment Area & Characteristics

7. The Free School does not have a defined catchment area so for the purposes of this impact assessment we have considered that the catchment area for pupils travelling to the school is the area within a 2.5-mile radius from the Free School's location. 2.5 miles is the maximum distance travelled by at least 80% of pupils in Warrington.

8. The secondary schools identified within the catchment area are as follows:

- Lysander Community High School
- Cardinal Newman Catholic High School
- Birchwood Community High School
- Sir Thomas Boteler CofE High School
- William Beamont Community High School

#### **Secondary pupil population**

9. The school does not have a clear self-defined catchment area. For the purposes of the impact assessment, we have created a proxy catchment area based on the distance travelled to school by a significant majority (80%) of pupils in Warrington (2.5 miles). Kings Leadership Academy is located in Warrington Unitary Authority. Table 1 below sets out the population growth in secondary schools between 2011/12 and 2015/16 in Warrington.

**Table 1: Number of pupils and projections in Warrington, 2010/11 – 2015/16**

		Academic year 2011 /12		Academic year 2015/16		2011/12 – 2015/16
District	Number of places in 2011	No of pupils	Surplus %	No. of pupils	Surplus %	% increase in population
<b>Secondary school pupil population</b>						
Warrington	15,261	12,046	21.1%	11,816	22.6%	-1.9%

*Note and source: The figures in this table are based on the 2011 SCAP data and covers 11 – 16 year olds in maintained secondary schools.*

10. The secondary school population is projected to fall by 1.9% over the next five years in Warrington. It is therefore unlikely that any potential negative impact on local secondary schools will be mitigated by increased demand for secondary places in Warrington. However, the Free School will increase parental choice and increase competition to drive up educational standards.

### **Local Authority View**

11. Warrington Council was formally invited to provide their views on the Free School proposal. They responded on 16 December 2011. They reiterated their belief that the current surplus of places across the borough mitigates against the need for a Free School and that the Free School should not go ahead, based on the following objections:

- The belief that the local community is not large enough to support another secondary school, especially as pupil numbers are falling. The LA's view is that there would therefore be insufficient demand or need for a new High School, meaning that the school would be unviable.
- As a result of there being insufficient pupil numbers the Free School would have a detrimental effect on existing maintained schools and Academies in the area such that if all of the places per year group were filled, this could significantly affect other schools nearby, and their long-term viability.
- The LA's view that it is a waste of money to heavily subsidise a new school to the detriment of other schools nearby.
- The LA claims that local people already have access to good-quality local schools, Academies and sixth form provision.

### **Representations and consultations**

12. A formal public consultation was carried out by the Trust from 16 April to 30 May. As part of the consultation, the Trust consulted with schools,

colleges, businesses, parents, residents in the local community, emergency services, Warrington Borough Council, and the local MP. On 18 June, Warrington Borough Council granted permission for the Free School to be temporarily located at the Bruche Primary School site. It was deemed appropriate for the Trust to further consult with pupils, parents/carers and the local community on the confirmed location of their temporary site. The extended consultation period commenced on Wednesday 27 June and closed on Sunday 15 July. This consisted of updates to the website and an advertisement placed in the Warrington Guardian newspaper between Thursday 5 July and Thursday 19 July. The Trust received one response across all forms of communication. This response was a letter that was very strongly in favour of King's School, its vision and ethos, its future plans and its necessity to the local community. It was also inferred that the lack of responses from the local community indicated that the location of King's School at the Bruche Primary School site was not contentious.

13. The Trust also held a number of further well-attended public meetings including one with around 200 attendees. The findings of the consultation showed there was strong support for the project across the range of stakeholders questioned; during the open days and liaison with interested parties the proposers encountered no significant or sustained criticism or opposition. Some opposition was voiced by some Warrington Council Labour councillors, in line with the Local Authority consultation response above.

14. Of the 122 responses to the consultation:

- 96.8% were in favour
- 3.2% were against, including the Local Authority

Of those against, the main objections concerned whether there was a need for a local school, and the appropriateness of the proposed permanent site for the school.

### **Impact on other schools**

15. The school does not have a defined catchment area. Instead we have created a proxy catchment area based on the distance travelled to school (2.5 miles) by a significant majority (80%) of pupils in Warrington. We will therefore include all secondary schools within a two and a half mile radius of the Free School.

### **Impact ratings for secondary schools**

16. Table 2 below sets out the individual impact on each secondary school located within two and a half miles of the proposed site<sup>1</sup>. It shows that the Free School may have a moderate or high impact on all the schools within this proxy catchment area; a high impact on two schools (including one rated as

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<sup>1</sup> The two and a half mile is based on the distance that the majority (over 80%) of pupils travel to school in the local authority – See Annex A for more details

moderate/high) and a moderate impact on three schools.

**Table 2: Summary of the potential impact on secondary schools located within 2.5 miles of King's Leadership Academy**

School name	Distance from Free School	Impact rating
Lysander Community High School	0.92 miles	High
Cardinal Newman Catholic High School	1.09 miles	Minimal
Birchwood Community High School	1.26 miles	Minimal
Sir Thomas Boteler CofE High School	1.72 miles	Minimal
William Beamont Community High School	1.81 miles	Moderate/High

### **School with a high impact rating**

The following section summarises what the potential impact maybe for the schools in Table 2 which have a high impact.

#### **1. Lysander Community High School (0.92 miles from the proposed site)**

School type: Community High School

Capacity: The school has capacity for 1,114 pupils but had a surplus capacity of around 36% of places in 2010/11. The school was undersubscribed for entry in 2011/12, filling only two thirds of the 180 Year 7 places available. However, the LA and the sponsor (University of Chester Academies Trust) have recently agreed a reduction to the PAN of the Academy to 150 in Y7-11 and 40 in the sixth form

Ofsted: The school was rated as satisfactory by Ofsted in its last inspection in 2008. Subsequently, the School originally planned to convert to Academy Status as a converter and an Academy Order was issued in September 2011. Since then, the school was put into an Ofsted category so had to go down the sponsored route. It will be sponsored by University of Chester Academies Trust and is likely to open in January 2013.

Attainment: The school has Key Stage 4 attainment well below the national average – 38% of pupils achieved 5+ A\*-C grades including English and maths GCSE in 2011, compared with 58% nationally.

Impact: **High** – Lysander is the closest school to the proposed site<sup>2</sup>, less than the average distance travelled to secondary school in Warrington, so in

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<sup>2</sup> There was one school closer (Woolston Community High School) but this school closed in July 2012

principle is more likely to lose pupils to the Free School than schools further away. In addition, as the school has been given a Notice to Improve by Ofsted and Key Stage 4 attainment is well below the national average, parents may be attracted to an alternative.

The school currently has a relatively small number of pupils for a secondary school, has a relatively large number of surplus places and was undersubscribed for entry in 2011, so the opening of the Free School could further exacerbate the existing surplus places issue, especially as overall secondary pupil numbers in the area are expected to fall over the next few years. The Free School could therefore have a negative impact on Lysander's capacity to improve and its long term viability; although against that we would expect that becoming a sponsored Academy from January 2013 will have a positive impact on the school's standards and future viability.

### **School with a moderate/high impact rating**

#### **2. William Beamont Community High School (1.81 miles from the proposed site)**

School type: Community High School

Capacity: The school has capacity for 1,050 pupils but had a surplus of around 12% of places in 2010/11. The school was undersubscribed for entry in 2011/12, only filling 177 of the 210 places on offer.

Ofsted: The school was rated as satisfactory in their last inspection in 2011.

Attainment: The school has attainment well below the national average in 2010/11 – 36% of pupils achieved 5+ A\*-C grades including English and maths GCSE, compared with 58% nationally.

Impact: **Moderate/high** – William Beamont is located 1.81 miles from the Free School which is slightly further than the average distance travelled to secondary school in Warrington (1.5 miles) so in principle it should lose fewer pupils to the Free School than schools which are closer. However, the school has attainment well below the national average and only a satisfactory Ofsted rating, so parents may be attracted to an alternative even if it means a longer journey to school.

The school currently has an overall surplus of 12% of places and failed to fill around 16% of year 7 places in 2011/12, so the opening of the Free School could further exacerbate the surplus issue and the school's capacity to improve, especially as overall secondary pupil numbers in the area are expected to decrease over the next few years. However, we would not expect the school's long term viability to be impacted by the Free School, given that it still has a relatively high intake, so, overall, we have assessed the impact on it to be moderate/high, rather than high.

### **Schools with a minimal impact rating**

The following section summarises what the potential impact may be for the schools in Table 2 which we expect to experience a minimal impact.

#### **3. Cardinal Newman Catholic High School (1.09 miles from the proposed site)**

School type: Voluntary Aided Catholic School

Capacity: The school has capacity for 831 pupils but had a small surplus of around 6% of places in 2010/11. However, all places were filled for 2011/12.

Ofsted: The school was rated as satisfactory by Ofsted in its last inspection in 2011.

Attainment: The school has Key Stage 4 attainment above the national average – 63% of pupils achieved 5+ A\*-C grades including English and maths GCSE in 2011, compared with 58% nationally.

Impact: **Minimal** – Cardinal Newman is located just over a mile from the proposed site, less than the average distance travelled to secondary school in Warrington (1.5 miles) so in principle could lose more potential pupils to the Free School than schools further away, especially as it only has a satisfactory Ofsted rating so parents may be attracted to an alternative.

However, the school has above average attainment levels, filled all of its places for 2011/12, and is a Catholic school, so parents wanting to send their children to this school may not be interested in sending their children to a Free School without a faith ethos. We therefore expect the impact of the Free School on it to be minimal.

#### **4. Birchwood Community High School (1.26 miles from the proposed site)**

School type: Community High School

Capacity: The school has capacity for 1,283 pupils but had surplus of around 17% of places in 2010/11. The school was oversubscribed for entry in 2011/12 with 35 applicants refused a place at the school.

Ofsted: The school was rated as outstanding by Ofsted in its last inspection in 2008.

Attainment: The school has Key Stage 4 attainment around the national average – 59% of pupils achieved 5+ A\*-C grades including English and maths GCSE in 2011 compared with 58% nationally.

Impact: **Minimal** – Birchwood is located under a mile and a half from the proposed site (the average distance travelled to secondary school in

Warrington) so in principle could lose more potential pupils to the Free School than schools further away.

However, it has been rated as outstanding by Ofsted and has attainment levels in line with the national average. Additionally the school was oversubscribed for entry in 2011/12 so even if it did lose some pupils to the Free School it should still be able to fill most or all of its places. The opening of the Free School should therefore have a minimal impact on it.

#### **5. Sir Thomas Boteler Church of England High School (1.72 miles from the proposed site)**

School type: Voluntary Aided Church of England school

Capacity: The school has capacity for 825 pupils, and had a small surplus of around 7% of places in 2010/11. The school was slightly undersubscribed in 2011/12, filling 162 of the 165 places on offer.

Ofsted: The school was rated as satisfactory in its last inspection in 2010.

Attainment: The school had attainment below the national average in 2011 – 47% of pupils achieved 5+ A\*-C grades including English and maths GCSE, compared with 58% nationally.

Impact: **Minimal** – Sir Thomas Boteler has below average attainment and a satisfactory Ofsted rating, so parents may be attracted to an alternative.

However, the school is located 1.72 miles from the Free School which is slightly further than the average distance travelled to secondary school in Warrington (1.5 miles) so in principle should lose fewer pupils to the Free School than those which are closer. It is also a Church of England school, so parents wanting to send their children to this school may not be attracted to a non-faith Free School. So, although the school may lose a few pupils it should still be able to fill most of its places. Therefore the opening of the Free School should have a minimal impact on it.

#### **Further Education Colleges**

17. There are three further education colleges and one sixth form college (Priestley College) within 10 miles of the King's Leadership Academy, Warrington. The impact on these institutions is expected to be minimal, given the relatively small size of the school's sixth form and because it is intended that the school's post-16 offer will be different from theirs. In addition, the school's sixth form will not open until 2017/18 and the plan is that it will largely cater for pupils at the Free School.

School name	Ofsted	Number of learners aged 16-18	Proportion of learner aged 16-18	Impact Rating
Warrington Collegiate	Good	1,453	48.7%	Minimal
Riverside College Halton	Good	2,115	69.7%	Minimal
St Helens College	Satisfactory	2,476	50.6%	Minimal
Priestley College (Sixth Form College)	Outstanding	2,248	Over 50%	Minimal

### **Primary schools, and Alternative and Special provision**

18. There is no known or likely impact on these types of school, and none raised by any parties to the consultation. However, the Free School will potentially have a positive impact in terms of providing additional choice for parents with children at local primary schools.

### **Conclusion**

19. The Free School is likely to have a high impact on one local secondary school (Lysander) which is in the process of becoming a Sponsored Academy and a moderate/high impact on another local secondary school (William Beamont). The impact on other local education institutions is expected to be minimal. Any negative impact is likely to be offset by the positive impact the Free School will have in increasing parental choice, addressing the demand for high quality secondary school places in the area and increasing competition to drive up standards.