

Title: Da Vinci Studio School of Creative Enterprise
Author: Department for Education (DfE)

Approved in July 2012, opened in September 2013

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 is 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 (or is proposed to be) situated. The assessment shows that while the Da Vinci Studio School could have a moderate impact on three of the neighbouring schools, any negative impact on individual schools is likely to be balanced by the projected increased demand for secondary school places in the area and the increase of diversity and choice for parents and pupils.

Background

The Da Vinci Studio School of Science and Engineering is a 14 – 19, non-faith co-educational school for 400 Students sponsored by North Hertfordshire College (NHC). The focus of the school will be on developing students to take their place in work at an age appropriate to them, by equipping them with employability skills, confidence in work settings and the qualifications needed to access work, apprenticeships or higher education with a focus on careers in Science and Engineering. The school will have a close connection with local science and engineering employers who will be involved in all aspects of the curriculum. Pupils will receive personal coaching and their learning will be closely matched with the industries they plan to work in. Key employers involved in the project are AMCO FM, Astrium Ltd, MBDA, Monarch Airlines, Stevenage Bioscience Catalyst, Weldability and Wenta. It is planned that the school will open with 40 pupils in Year 10 and 100 in Year 12 with a gradual increase to full capacity of 180 pre-16 students and 220 post 16 students by 2017.

For September 2012, it is proposed that the Studio School will be based within North Hertfordshire College's Stevenage campus, while the new premises is being built in Monkswood Way, Stevenage, it is due to be completed by September 2013. Both locations are close to local rail and bus links and the two sites are about a 10 minute walk apart.

The sponsor, North Hertfordshire College is a large general further education college with just over 4,000 students aged 16 – 18 and around 10,000 adults. In 2010 Ofsted rated the school as 'Good' with an 'Outstanding' capacity to improve. The college has a long history of working collaboratively with secondary schools across Stevenage and North Hertfordshire.

Catchment area, characteristics and admissions

The Da Vinci Studio School expects to draw students mainly from Hertfordshire. The school's admission policy is fully compliant with the School Admissions Code. The Studio School will be non-selective. The School will accept any child who has a statement of special educational needs that names the school.

Year 10

For Year 10, the Trust will consider all applications for places at the Studio School. Where fewer than the published admission numbers for the relevant year groups are received, places will be offered to all those who have applied.

Oversubscription criteria

If more applications are received than there are places available, the following oversubscription criteria will be applied -

- a) Children in public care and children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or a special guardianship order).
- b) Medical or Social: Children for whom it can be demonstrated that they have a particular medical or social need to go to the school. Applicants should supply evidence at the time of application. The evidence must comprise the following:
 - a doctor or social worker report and letter supporting the application on the basis that for medical or social reasons the child needs to go to the Da Vinci Studio School of Science and Engineering above all others because of the child's particular needs and/or family circumstances.
- c) Random allocation¹ : the remaining places will be allocated as follows:
 - 50% of places allocated randomly to those living within a circular area enclosed by a 10 miles circular radius of the school entrance. This will be determined by Hertfordshire County Council's measuring system from the front door of the Da Vinci Studio School of Science and Engineering to the student's registered permanent postal address.
 - After this allocation, the remaining 50% of applicants, irrespective of their home address (including outside the 10 mile radius), will be pooled and the remaining places will be allocated randomly within this group of applicants.
 - Random allocation will be overseen by a body independent of the school, this will be Hertfordshire County Council.

Year 12

All students entering Year 12 must meet the minimum entrance requirements (published in the annual prospectus) for the course they wish to study.

The Da Vinci Studio School of Science and Engineering will offer all its year 11 students a place in the Da Vinci School Year 12 Sixth Form where the student has met the minimum entrance requirements. Any remaining places will be available to external applicants.

Oversubscription Criteria

After admissions of students with statements of Special Educational Needs where Da

¹ Applications from sets of twins or other children from multiple births will be treated as individual applicants, this may result in one child being allocated a place under random allocation and another not.

Vinci Studio School of Science and Engineering is named on the statement, and after the allocation of places to students progressing from KS4 to Post 16 within the school, the oversubscription criterion that will be used for the remaining places will be as follows -

- a) Children in public care and children who were looked after, but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or a special guardianship order).
- b) Distance. In the event that a tie break situation, this will be decided by distance from the front door of the Da Vinci School of Science and Engineering. A 'straight line' distance measurement from the front door of the student's permanent registered postal address to the school entrance will be conducted using the NPLG (National Land and Property Gazetteer). (The same procedure will be applied to all applicants being chosen by criterion c).
- c) In the case of a tie, random allocation will be applied.

Waiting lists, in-year admissions and appeals

When all available places at the Da Vinci School of Science and Engineering have been filled according to the agreed oversubscription criteria then applications will be added to a waiting list. This list will be maintained until the end of the first term of the school year. The waiting list will be maintained by Hertfordshire County Council.

For the 2013 intake Hertfordshire County Council will co-ordinate admissions for in-year applications and for applications for year groups other than the normal point(s) of entry. Subject to any provisions in the Hertfordshire County Council LA's co-ordinated admission arrangements relating to applications submitted for years other than the normal year of entry, the Da Vinci School of Science and Engineering's Trust will consider all such applications if the year group applied for has a place available. If more applications are received than there are places available, the oversubscription criteria shall apply.

There will be a right of appeal to an Independent Appeals Panel for unsuccessful applicants. The Independent Appeal Panel will act in accordance with all relevant provisions of the School Admissions Code and the School Admission Appeals Code published by the Department for Education as they apply at any given time to maintained schools and with equalities law and the law on admissions as they apply to maintained schools. The appeals will be co-ordinated and managed by Hertfordshire County Council.

The need for secondary places in the local area

The following table demonstrates that there is evidence of basic need in the area. The secondary population in Stevenage (the location of the Studio School) and neighbouring districts of Hertfordshire is projected to increase slightly over the next couple of years. The total school capacity in Stevenage is 8,613 and the percentage of surplus places is 18%. The number of secondary places needed by 2013/14 is set to increase by 1.8% with more significant increases of 17.9% when looking up to 2017/18. Overall, therefore, the secondary population in the sub-region is projected to increase over the next few years. The total school capacity of 7,781 in the local area around the proposed site of the studio school is lower than the capacity in Stevenage. As is the proportion of surplus places in the local area, (12.6%)

compared to the rate of surplus in Stevenage (18%) as a whole.

Need for school places at district level and in the local area					
Basic need statistics	Stevenage	North Hertfordshire	East Hertfordshire	Welwyn Hatfield	Local area
Total school capacity	8,613	7,431	12,235	6,358	7,781
% of surplus places	18.0%	7.5%	3.2%	16.2%	12.6%
% increase in number of secondary places needed by 2013/14 (basic need)	1.8%	1.6%	4%	2.8%	
Secondary pupil population increase between 2011/12 and 2017/18	17.9%	13.4%	10.8%	9.8%	

Source: LA Level data from the School Census SCAP 2011, School Level Census Jan 2011, DSD

Local Authority views

Hertfordshire County Council was invited to provide their views regarding the Studio School proposal. The Director of Education and Early Intervention Children's Services responded on behalf of the Local Authority confirming their unreserved support for the Studio School and intention to work with the sponsor, North Hertfordshire College, to help make it a success. In summary, the LA provided the following key reasons for their support:

- The sponsor's history of successfully working collaboratively with secondary schools across Stevenage and North Hertfordshire and the highly effective leadership of the College, which is ambitious for the young people in the area. The LA believes that this proposal will help the college to further broaden its offer of high quality provision across the area;
- Stevenage and the surrounding areas face a significant rise in the demand for secondary school places over the coming years. This Studio School will help the LA meet that demand and reduce the impact on KS4 and sixth form numbers in nearby schools. The LA does not think that this new school will undermine the validity of existing surrounding provision;
- Hertfordshire County Council pursues a policy of choice and diversity and this provision will add to the breadth of current provision and thus the choice for parents and young people.

Representations

No direct representations have been received by the Department. However, the Academy Trust carried out its own formal public consultation which commenced on 27th February 2012 and concluded on 6th April 2012. The trust made a conscious decision to use the Local Authority to run and manage the consultation process thus giving an independent organisation through which people could seek information and records could be kept independently of formal responses.

A consultation brochure was developed and sent to individuals and organisations in the local area – all primary and secondary schools, education support centres, MPs,

county councillors, district councillors, parish and town councils, LA Chief Executives, relevant officials within Hertfordshire County Council, trade union representatives, diocese representatives, Citizens Advice Bureaux, libraries, NHS representatives, parent and governor representatives, arts organisations, museums and various others. The consultation was also made available to members of the public via the HertsDirect website.

In addition, three events were held in connection with the consultation on 2nd February 2012 (open evening), 14th March 2012 (open evening) and 22nd March 2012 (this was the formal consultation evening).

In total there were four responses to the consultation, the majority of respondents supported the proposal to establish the Studio School and enter into a funding agreement. One respondent raised concerns around whether the proposal could cause potential damage to other local schools.

Impact on other schools

We have considered the impact the Studio School may have on other provision within the local area. To do this we have selected schools within a radius of the Studio School site, based on the distance that 80% of secondary school pupils travel to school in Hertfordshire County Council, which is 3.5 miles.

To estimate the extent of the impact of the proposed Studio School on local provision, the following specific types of schools have been assessed separately and it is assumed that they will remain relatively unaffected. This is based on the following assumptions:

- Primary Schools are considered to be minimally impacted because there is no overlap in age group between a primary school (5-11 years old) and Studio School (14-19 years old);
- Further Education colleges are considered to be minimally impacted. There is only a two year overlap in age group between a Studio School and FE college, so the potential loss of students to FE sector in an area is 150 students. FE colleges tend to be quite large (usually over 1,000) so assuming the loss of pupils will be spread across FE colleges in the area, it is unlikely that the loss of potential pupils to any one college will be significant enough to impact on the viability of the college;
- Sixth form colleges are considered to be minimally impacted because of the substantial difference of offer between what they provide – a strong academic focus, and a Studio School – a more vocational offer;
- Alternative providers and special schools are considered to be minimally impacted because of the substantial difference of offer between what they provide and a Studio School.

The following table summarises the likely impact on the six closest schools to the proposed site of the Studio School. Of the six nearest schools, it is expected that the impact will be minimal for three schools, and moderate for three.

The schools with a moderate impact rating, Marriotts School, Barnwell School and The Thomas Alleyne School, are located closest to the proposed site and so in principle we would expect these schools to lose more pupils to the potential Studio

School than schools further away. One was rated inadequate and the other two as satisfactory by Ofsted so parents/pupils may be attracted to an alternative.

Additionally, all had below average attainment at KS4, above average unauthorised absence rates and/or above average rates of persistent absentees, indicating that there may be higher than average levels of disengagement from the mainstream school offer in these schools, potentially putting these schools at an increased risk of losing pupils to the new Studio School with its more vocational offer.

Due to the high number of surplus places in some of these schools, the loss of even a few pupils to the new Studio School has the potential to impact negatively on the school's overall attainment, viability and ability to improve. However, given the projected increase in the secondary population in the local area over the next few years, it is likely that the loss of any pupils to the Studio School will be mitigated by an increased demand for secondary school places in the area. We therefore do not expect the long term viability of any of these schools to be significantly affected by the opening of this Studio School.

Schools within the local area

School	Distance from Studio School (miles)	Ofsted Judgement	Impact Rating	% 5A* - C incl Eng and Maths 2009	% 5A* - C incl Eng and Maths 2010	% 5A* - C incl Eng and Maths 2011	School Capacity	Pupils on Roll	Proportion of Surplus Places (%)	Proportion of persistently Absent (%)
Marriotts School	1.19	Inadequate	Moderate	34	40	45	1013	902	11	18
Barnwell School	1.24	Satisfactory	Moderate	32	43	47	1985	1511	26	11
The Thomas Alleyne School	1.32	Satisfactory	Moderate	32	49	34	1008	601	39	7
Barclay School	1.32	Satisfactory	Minimal	39	53	59	1181	1141	1	10
The Nobel School	1.68	Satisfactory	Minimal	48	57	49	1247	1206	2	9
The John Henry Newman Catholic School	1.70	Outstanding	Minimal	69	70	76	1405	1481	-5	5
LA average for Hertfordshire				59	64	67				
National Average				51	55	58				

Schools where the impact is moderate

Marriotts School – Stevenage, Hertfordshire (1.19 miles from the proposed site)

This is a smaller than average, mixed secondary school with specialist sports college status and a sixth form. The school is due to move into a new building in autumn 2012. There are 902 pupils on roll although the school has capacity for 1013 pupils. In February 2012, Ofsted rated the school as 'Inadequate'. This is following a 'Satisfactory' judgement in the previous inspection. In 2011, 45% of pupils achieved 5+ A*-C (or equivalent) including English and maths, this is up from 40% in 2010 and 34% in 2009. The school's attainment is below both LA and national averages.

This is the closest school to the proposed site of the Studio School and therefore has the potential to lose more pupils than schools located further away. Additional factors other than its close proximity to the Studio School such as the most recent Ofsted judgement, which saw the school go down from satisfactory to inadequate, could impact negatively on parents' confidence in the school resulting in them seeking out alternative provision. Also, below average results and a high proportion of persistent absence could be an indication of disengagement from the school and/or its educational offer. The proportion of surplus places at the school is 11% and the Year 7 admission number for the September 2012 intake was increased from 210 to up to 240. As at 03/05/12 only 144 places had been allocated. In 2010, there were 178 places available and 177 were offered and in 2011 there 210 places available with 177 places offered. Notwithstanding, an increase in the need for places in the area over the coming years, could mitigate against any significant impact this might have on the viability of the school due to falling numbers on roll. However, there could be some impact on the school's overall attainment and ability to improve, particularly if more able pupils opt for this new provision. As a result, the impact of opening the Studio School on this school has been assessed as moderate.

Barnwell School – Stevenage, Hertfordshire (1.24 miles from the proposed site)

Barnwell is a larger than average, mixed secondary school with a sixth form, and holds specialist business and enterprise status. The school grew rapidly after the closure of a neighbouring secondary school by the LA after it was placed in special measures in 2006. The school currently operates on two sites less than a mile apart with years 7 to 9 on one site and years 10 – 13 on the other. There are 1511 pupils on roll although the school has capacity for 1985. In 2009, Ofsted rated the school 'Satisfactory' with many good and outstanding features. In 2011, 47% of pupils achieved 5+ A*-C (or equivalent) including English and maths, this is up from 43% in 2010 and 32% in 2009. The school's attainment is below both LA and national averages.

Although overall, the proportion of surplus places at the school appears high at 26%, recent figures from the LA show that it remains a popular choice for parents/ pupils seeking places in Year 7. In 2010, there were 270 places available, 271 places were offered. In 2011, there were 240 places available and 258 places were offered. The Year 7 admission number for the September 2012 intake was increased to 300 and as at 03/05/12 249 places had been allocated. However, with persistent absence rates of 11% it is possible that some pupils are disaffected, disengaged and might consider the Studio School offer as a plausible alternative. So while the loss of pupils to the Studio School is possible, it is unlikely to have a substantial negative impact on the school's long term viability. Increased demand for places in the area in future years should also mitigate against this risk, therefore the impact has been assessed as moderate.

The Thomas Alleyne School – Stevenage, Hertfordshire (1.32 miles from the proposed site)

This is a smaller than average mixed secondary school with specialist science college status, the school also has a sixth form. There are 601 pupils on roll although the school has capacity for 1008 pupils. In September 2011, Ofsted rated the school as 'Satisfactory', with a satisfactory capacity for sustained improvement. In 2011 34% of pupils achieved 5+ A*-C (or equivalent) including English and maths, this is down from 49% in 2010 but up from 32% in 2009. The school's attainment is below both LA and national averages.

The school currently has a high proportion of surplus places (39%) and admission numbers, published by the LA, show that the school has not filled its Year 7 places for the past few years. In 2010 and 2011, the number of places available was 181, and the total number of places offered was 80 and 138 respectively. The admission number for the September 2012 intake is also 181 and as at 03/05/2012 only 107 places had been allocated. The school has recently undergone a management restructure and staff redundancies due to budgetary constraints. The loss of even more pupils could further impact on the financial viability of the school. Also, with below average attainment and a 'Satisfactory' Ofsted rating, parents could be attracted to an alternative. However, the proportion of pupils who are persistently absent is 7%, which is lower than other schools that are closer to the Studio School. There is a projected increase in the secondary population in Stevenage of around 17.9% between 2011 and 2018 and this could mitigate against the impact of loss of pupils in the long term. In the short to medium term, any further loss of pupils could impact the school's overall attainment, viability and ability to improve. The impact has therefore been assessed as moderate.

Conclusion

In conclusion, our assessment is that of the six surrounding secondary schools the potential impact is minimal on the furthest three and could be moderate on the three schools closest to the Studio School site. However, we do not believe that the opening of the Studio School will significantly impact the long-term future viability of any of these schools. This is mainly due to the projected increase in the need for state-funded secondary places in the area over the coming years. In addition, the Studio School will potentially increase choice and diversity in provision. This in turn could help to drive up standards through adding quality competition in the area.

We are therefore of the view that it is reasonable for the Secretary of State to enter into the Funding Agreement with The Da Vinci Studio School for Science and Engineering, despite the potentially negative impact this might have on the three schools mentioned in the previous section.