**Unanswered Questions from EBDOG Conference.**

**Net Capacity Assessments**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Question** | **Asked by** | **Contact info** | **Answer** |
| Would be helpful if this gave us an objective methodology for assessing places in resource provision contained within mainstream. | Richard Morse | [richard.morse@calderdale.gov.uk](mailto:richard.morse@calderdale.gov.uk)  Senior Commissioning Officer  Calderdale | The NCA tool does collect room level detail for SEND resourced provision within mainstream schools, but when it is for SEND places funded by the LA it is not included within the mainstream capacity. While we hope in the future to be able to generate a separate SEND place capacity for resourced provision using a similar methodology to that being developed for SEND schools, this work is not underway yet. |
| If the NCA finds additional places will the DfE be directing academies to operate at a higher capacity where there is a need for additional places? | Kevin Griffin | [KEVIN.GRIFFIN@OXFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK](mailto:KEVIN.GRIFFIN@OXFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK)  Service Manager - School Organisation & Planning  Oxfordshire | At present, the plan is for the programme to provide the updated NCAs to both the responsible body for the school and the relevant Local Authority, regardless of school type to support discussions about the need for additional places. We are also working with school organisation policy colleagues with regard to the White Paper proposals, specifically the Academy collaboration standards, and the proposal for LAs to be able to object to the schools’ adjudicator where an Academy was unwilling to increase PAN in an area of need. We would envisage the NCA data being supporting evidence in these cases. |
| From some of the pilot work we've seen, there is some concern that in a small number of cases sending out an independent surveyor to do the NCA at academies could allow some degree of 'influencing' by the school on site, resulting in the categorising of what the LA would see as teaching space/classrooms, but are changed to something else in the survey and then not calculated in the NCA. If non-teaching space was shown overall as m2 against BB guidance then that may truly show 'hidden capacity'. This could be picked up through some sort of sufficiency assessment of the overall building (we have an excel tool based on BB that we use alongside NCA data for a more accurate reflection of what the capacity of the buildings could be). Has this been taken into account? | Matt Clayton | [matthew.clayton@lincolnshire.gov.uk](mailto:matthew.clayton@lincolnshire.gov.uk)  Admissions and Education Provision Manager  Lincolnshire County Council | The revised NCA tool captures both an objective ‘room type’ based on the physical nature of the room, and an ‘activity type’ based on the schools advice about how the room is actually used. This will enable responsible bodies to see how the capacity could change if the rooms were used entirely in line with the objective room type.  However, we will need to be assured that the room type is being correctly recorded. We will provide training, guidance and support to the independent data collectors. Also, on top of the standard quality assurance checks there will be an audit function where a proportion of NCAs are fully checked, including shadowing on site by an auditor and revisits. Final NCAs will be shared with both responsible bodies and the relevant LA, regardless of school type. |
| Can you clarify that plans matching the NCA will also be made available to LAs…. The NCA is of limited use without accompanying plans. | Steve Allwood | [Steve.allwood@derby.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.allwood@derby.gov.uk)  Principal Commissioning Officer - School Capital  Derby County Council | The intention is to share the plans that were used to generate the NCA at the same time as sharing the NCA with the responsible body and LA. During the pilot, we haven’t always had access to the plans immediately, but are following that up now. |
| Will the NCA for academies be used to amend their funding agreements? | Gary Maddison | [gary\_maddison@middlesbrough.gov.uk](mailto:gary_maddison@middlesbrough.gov.uk)  Strategic School Planning Manager  Middlesbrough Council | See answer to Oxfordshire above. |
| Will some of the data collection be joined up with condition data collection - this may assist with access to school sites | Angela Ferdinand-Sergeant | [angela.ferdinand-sergeant@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:angela.ferdinand-sergeant@walthamforest.gov.uk)  schools asset management team leader  London borough of Waltham Forest | This was considered in the early stages of the programme development and also as part of the pilot, but in the end proved not to be practical due to differences in the type of data collector needed on site, the nature of the different data collections and also the different scheduling needs of the two programmes.  During the pilot we did find that access to the school sites was reasonably straightforward, with only a small number of schools not opting to take part and then almost entirely just because they had building works on site at the time. |
| Will LAs be required to get the DfE to sign-off any future changes/updates to a school’s NCA? | Steve Allwood | [Steve.allwood@derby.gov.uk](mailto:Steve.allwood@derby.gov.uk)  Principal Commissioning Officer - School Capital  Derby County Council | The NCA programme is currently planned as a one-off update across all secondary schools and special schools, with the intention being to publish the updated NCA tool at the same time. Before and during the programme our intention is to continue communicating with all responsible bodies regarding the importance of having updated capacity assessments and we also could provide training sessions on use of the NCA tool. The intention is that after the programme, LAs and hopefully responsible bodies as well, will continue to use the new NCA tool to keep NCA data up to date. |
| Where a 2FE primary hasn't had an NCA since 2002 but NOR and sum of PANs matches the NCA, that implies the NCA isn't really out of date. "out of date" really means things have changed since the last NCA - how will the programme prioritise which schools get on the programme? | Justin Kirby | [jkirby1@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk](mailto:jkirby1@worcschildrenfirst.org.uk)  [white1sugar4t@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:white1sugar4t@yahoo.co.uk)  Pupil Planning Analyst  Worcestershire Children First | The proposed programme will cover all secondary schools, middle schools, all through schools and special schools. At present, it is not planned to include primary schools, for a number of reasons. A higher proportion of them are still LA maintained schools, and the NCA methodology is relatively straight forward for primary schools.  For our programme, we will prioritise SEND schools to support the introduction of the new element of SCAP covering SEND school capacity and forecasting. We will then also prioritise secondary schools where we anticipate the funding agreement capacity being out of date. There may be the possibility of LAs and RBs nominating schools for inclusion in the early tranche. |
| Will the NCA programme include primaries? | Caroline Butrymowicz | [caroline.butrymowicz@nottinghamcity.gov.uk](mailto:caroline.butrymowicz@nottinghamcity.gov.uk)  Project Manager  Nottingham City Council | The proposed programme will cover all secondary schools, middle schools, all through schools and special schools. At present, it is not planned to include primary schools, for a number of reasons. A higher proportion of them are still LA maintained schools, and the NCA methodology is relatively straight forward for primary schools. |
| Will all secondary schools be covered under this programme | Anju Sharma | [anju.sharma@wokingham.gov.uk](mailto:anju.sharma@wokingham.gov.uk)  School Places Delivery Officer  Wokingham Borough Council | Yes, the intention is to cover all secondary schools, middle schools and all through schools, to ensure that all secondary provision is brought up to date and |
| This could have significant implications for LA strategic planning/s106 negotiations if suddenly developers are aware of a higher capacity for a secondary academy ( but we have no access to the places) | Kevin Griffin | [KEVIN.GRIFFIN@OXFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK](mailto:KEVIN.GRIFFIN@OXFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK)  Service Manager - School Organisation & Planning  Oxfordshire | See answer to Oxfordshire above |
| Will this be linked to the White paper - will academies be held to their capacity figure and required to take bulge classes etc if requested by LA? | Jack Cutler | [jack.cutler@sutton.gov.uk](mailto:jack.cutler@sutton.gov.uk)  Schools Commissioning and Capital Lead  London Borough of Sutton | See answer to Oxfordshire above |
| What if a school/academy don't agree a revised net capacity? | Vanessa Cummins | [vanessa.cummins@westsussex.gov.uk](mailto:vanessa.cummins@westsussex.gov.uk)  Schools Planning Officer  West Sussex County Council | See answer to Oxfordshire above |
| Apologies, missed the timeline slide, can you confirm date when LAs will receive the pilot NCAs | Rob Thomas | [rob.thomas@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:rob.thomas@walsall.gov.uk)  Head of Access  Walsall Council | The quality assurance process for the pilot data has taken longer than anticipated. The pilot NCAs are now gradually being sent out to LAs and RBs, and we ~~would~~ anticipate this being completed during July 2022. |
| My major concern is that only one of our 250 schools has been selected as pilot...I'm worried that your pilot will not pick up all the varying admission arrangements/complexities of schools...and not tapping into LA colleagues who may have a lot of experience in this area...any reassurances? | Stephen Chainani | [stephen.chainani@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:stephen.chainani@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)  School Commissioning Officer  Buckinghamshire Council | Our pilot schools covered a wide range of size, type, phase and geographical location of schools. We have also been working with a number of local authorities seeking feedback on their experience of NCA.  We have recently been working with LAs specifically with experience of attempting to assess SEND school capacity and welcome further input on this. |
| Sorry, I missed your answer to the question of whether the NCA Programme will be a rolling programme or a one-off assessment? | Gary Langford | [gary.langford@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:gary.langford@eastsussex.gov.uk)  Place Planning Manager  East Sussex County Council | See response to Derby above |