

TO: EXECUTIVE
16 DECEMBER 2014

SCHOOL CAPACITY AND FUNDING STRATEGY
Director of Children Young People & Learning

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of the report is to update the Executive on the forecast demand for school places, and the arrangements for creating new school places, and to endorse the updated School Capacity Strategy and associated Funding Strategy.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Executive:

- 2.1 **Notes the forecast demand for school places, and the arrangements for creating new school places that are required to keep pace with the demand.**
- 2.2 **Endorses the School Capacity Strategy as set out in the confidential APPENDIX B.**
- 2.3 **Agrees the Funding Strategy as set out in the confidential APPENDIX C.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Provision of new school places will continue to constitute a significant element on the Council's Capital Programme with multiple projects across all sectors spanning many years.
- 3.2 The Council has a statutory duty to provide sufficient school places, and the impact of rising rolls and new housing has made this an important issue for Bracknell Forest, carrying significant financial implications.
- 3.3 The Executive last approved the School Capacity Strategy in October 2012, and this has been updated to reflect the current revised requirements for new school places.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 Options for creating additional school places include creation of surge classrooms, expansion of existing schools and construction of new schools, and these are set out in the body of the report.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Executive Summary

- 5.1 In excess of 5,000 school places have been created in Bracknell Forest schools over the last 10 years, including expansions and surge classrooms at existing schools in all three organisational areas, construction of a new primary school at Jennett's Park and the re-provided expanded secondary school at Garth Hill College.

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- 5.2 Rising demand for school places in Bracknell Forest is part of a wider increase nationally, and the number of primary-school-age children nationally is projected to rise from a low point of 3.95 million in 2009, to 4.51 million by 2018. This increase of more than half a million will take the national primary school population to its highest level since the late 1970s. Our worst case (highest) pupil forecasts indicate that Bracknell Forest may be facing up to twice the national increase in primary pupil numbers (24%) but in half the time.
- 5.3 The 2014-19 School Places Plan (SPP) predicts that school rolls will continue to rise across the Borough.
- 5.4 Assuming the worst case (highest) pupil forecasts are realised, it is estimated that over the next 15 years, up to a further 6,400 new school places will need to be created, consisting of up to 2,600 primary and up to 3,800 secondary. This is an overall increase of up to 39%.
- 5.5 The estimated cost of providing these new school places at current prices is around £107m.
- 5.6 Depending on the levels of available funding from DfE and developer contributions the Council could be facing a funding gap of between £9m and £24m between 2015 and 2021.

School Places Plan

- 5.1 The need for additional school places is kept under constant review, and is reported annually through the CYPL School Places Plan (SPP). The initial review of the draft 2014-19 SPP forecasts confirms that the pressure on school places experienced over the last five years is likely to be sustained over the following five year forecast period 2014-19.
- 5.7 One of the key tools for managing the supply of school places is the School Places Plan (SPP), which is published annually based on a review of future housing plans, numbers on roll and demographic data. This School Places Plan supports the School Capacity Strategy by providing:
- pupil data and statistics
 - forecasts of pupil numbers for the next five years
 - commentary on the need to add or remove school capacity
 - estimates of future housing growth
- 5.8 Achieving the correct balance of places in the correct location requires accurate, sustained forecasting and planning over a long period, and the SPP is produced and managed by the Pupil Place Planning Board. The Board is chaired by the Chief Officer Strategy, Resources & Early Intervention and composed of key senior officers, advisers and the Executive Member for Children, Young People & Learning. It meets quarterly to review and monitor issues relating to production of the SPP and school organisation in Bracknell Forest.
- 5.9 The 2014-19 School Places Plan (SPP) predicts that school rolls will continue to rise across the Borough.

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Factors Affecting Pupil Numbers

5.10 The two main factors which impact the supply and demand for school places are:

5.10.1 Demographic trends, and in common with many other Local Authorities, over the last few years Bracknell Forest has seen a steady increase in pupil numbers and rising rolls in primary schools, resulting in pressure on the intake year and the requirement for additional capacity throughout the Borough. Whilst the forecasts do note a slowing in the birth rate, Members will appreciate that this will not reach the primary school population for five years. An increase in inward immigration into the Borough has also been observed, resulting from the arrival in recent years of an increasing number of families from outside the UK. The proportion of pupils in schools from a minority ethnic background has increased steadily from 6.1% in 2001 to 18.7% in 2014.

5.10.2 New Housing is the other significant factor, and Bracknell Forest continues to be an area of significant housing growth. Numbers of actual/proposed new housing completions are shown in Table One below.

Table One: Net Number of Dwellings Completed/Proposed in Bracknell Forest

Historical 1,703					14/15	Future Forecast 7,561							
09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14		15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23
325	410	264	390	314	417	697	808	1,147	1,239	1,117	1,042	896	615

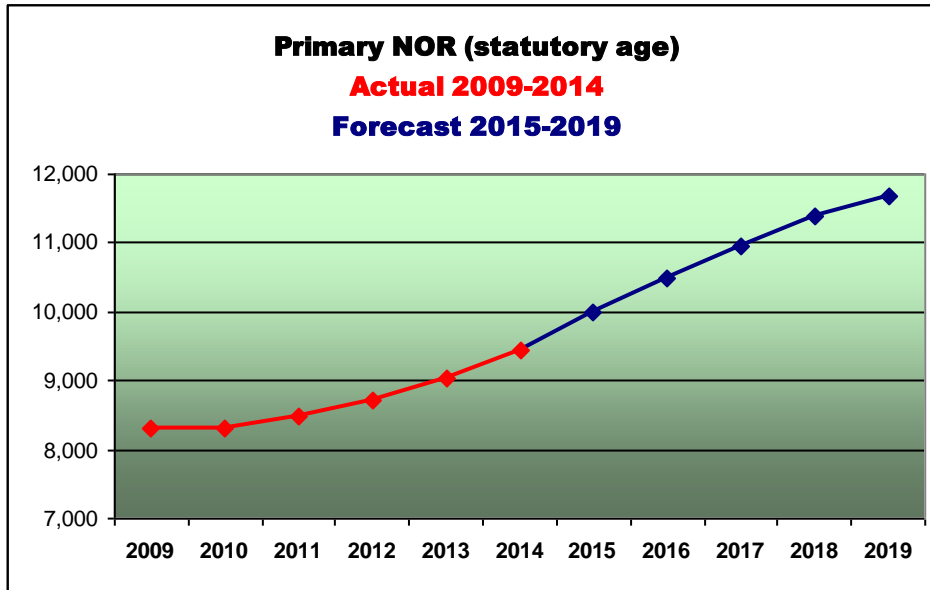
5.11 Other factors influencing demand for pupil places include:

- Pupil Mobility, or the numbers of pupils arriving and leaving, for example the impact on school places when the garrison at the Royal Military Academy rotates, and families move out of and in to the Borough.
- Designated Area (DA) and boundary issues with neighbouring local authorities, and there is movement/displacement where DAs cross over the Borough boundaries in North Bracknell and Crowthorne.
- Raising of the Participation Age following the Government's Spending Review and the White Paper, 'The Importance of Teaching' which raised the participation age to 18.
- Denominational education, and the need for additional Church of England or Roman Catholic school places to meet the needs of Bracknell Forest residents.

5.12 The Executive will also be aware that pressure on mainstream school places creates a proportional pressure on SEN places. As many as one in five pupils may have special or additional educational needs at some point in their school life, and the School Capacity Strategy also addresses this need.

Primary Pupil Numbers

5.13 The graph below shows the historical trends in primary numbers on roll (NOR) for statutory age pupils (i.e. excluding nursery classes) from 2009 - 2014 and forecasts for 2015 - 2019, illustrating the rising trend in the primary population.

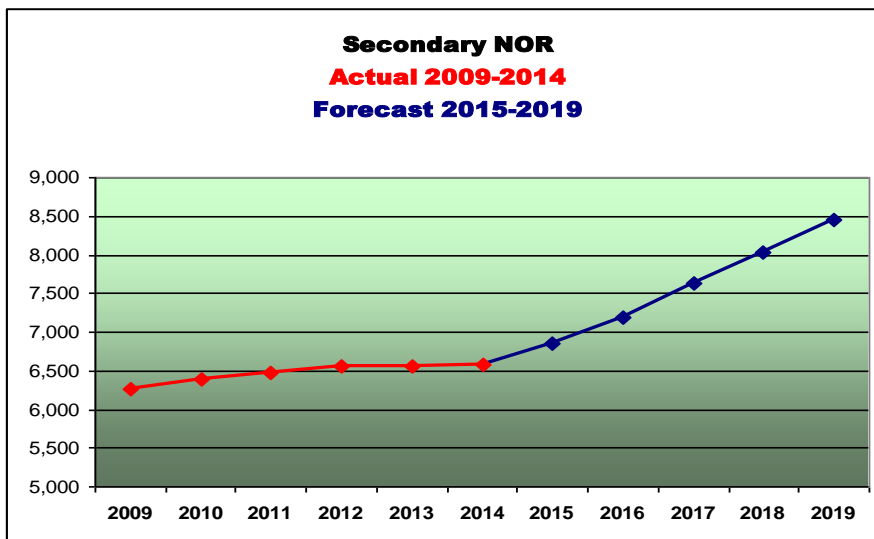


5.14 There are currently 9,460 primary pupils on roll in the Borough and a total of 10,107 primary places, on the face of it, a surplus of 647 places or 7%. It is important to note that in several primary schools where the net capacity has been increased, the places will be available in phases over the coming years and are not necessarily available currently. Of the 647 places, most are in Y6 and will be filled by the larger cohorts coming through the school. Lower year groups are at or close to capacity.

5.15 This year's forecasts indicate primary pupil numbers could rise to 11,669 by 2019 (2,209 additional pupils, representing a 23% increase over 5 years). This could result in a shortfall of 1,202 (10%) in primary places by 2019. The pressure on places is particularly acute in the North and South planning areas.

Secondary Pupil Numbers

5.16 The graph below shows the historical trends in secondary numbers on roll (NOR) and illustrates a steady increase in recent years. The forecasts from 2015 - 2019 indicate a rising trend throughout the plan period.



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- 5.17 Secondary pupil numbers in Bracknell Forest are also forecast to rise. There are currently 6,576 secondary pupils in 5 maintained schools and one academy with a total of 7,606 places. There are currently 1,030 (15.7%) surplus secondary places across the Borough, however this masks more acute shortages, particularly in the North.
- 5.18 This year's forecasts indicate the number of secondary pupils could rise to 8,458 by 2019. Borough-wide this will represent an overall deficit of 852 places (10%).
- 5.19 The statutory increase in the participation age is also a factor, and in September 2012 563 pupils, or 51.4% of the previous year 11 cohort stayed on into year 12 in Bracknell Forest schools. This rose to 587 or 55% who stayed on into Post 16 in September 2013. Members will be aware however that pupils need not stay on at school for post 16, and that many pupils choose to stay on at other colleges or other education establishments instead.

Long Term Forecasts

- 5.20 Longer term forecasts (beyond September 2019) for primary school places are derived largely from trend analysis and estimates of ongoing house building programmes. Longer term secondary forecasts are easier to forecast being based on the already forecast expansion of primary school places on the assumption that the current demand for places at Bracknell Forest schools will be sustained.

The Position as at September 2014

- 5.21 For September 2014 across the Borough 68% of schools are fully subscribed in their intake years, and there were only 63 surplus primary, infant and junior places (4%), and 112 surplus secondary places (9%) available. A breakdown of this by school is attached as APPENDIX A.

The Education Capital Programme

- 5.22 The remainder of this report sets out the proposed response to the forecasts to ensure that the Council meets its statutory duty to provide sufficient pupil places.
- 5.23 The Education Capital Programme has been the instrument through which the Council has managed its risk and met its statutory duty to provide sufficient school places. This constitutes both a major challenge and a major achievement for the Council, and the largest element of the programme is focussed on meeting the Council's statutory duty of providing sufficient school places.
- 5.24 In excess of 5,000 school places have been created over the last 10 years costing in excess of £90m, which is the largest sustained capital investment in the history of the Council. The value of the school places projects currently funded on the programme is £17.7m.
- 5.25 The Education Capital Programme is overseen by the Education Capital Programme Board which is chaired by the Director of Children Young People & Learning and includes the Executive Members for Children Young People & Learning and Finance Transformation and Assets. The Board also includes senior Council officers, advisers and Headteacher representatives.

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- 5.26 The Education Capital Programme has always succeeded in creating sufficient physical capacity in our schools to meet local demand, and the key factors in this have been:
- the ability to plan well in advance,
 - planning for the worst case (highest) pupil numbers, but only building what is actually needed;
 - working with schools to minimise the disruption and optimise the enhancement of the physical environment through the construction works.
- 5.27 During the last four years where pressure on pupil places has been most evident, the Council has developed a number of different solutions to meet this need in the most cost efficient manner. New school places can be created in a number of different ways as follows, in ascending order of cost and complexity:
- a) Individual “Surge” classrooms of 30 pupils can be provided in primary schools to take an additional form of entry for one year only. The surge class moves up through the school year by year until the pupils leave, after which the classroom becomes available again for re-use as a new surge classroom, or for alternative use in seven years time.
 - b) Expansion by 1FE in all year groups in primary schools, involves creation of 7 new classrooms plus associated infrastructure (toilets etc). by refurbishment and/or extensions of existing buildings to create 210 additional school places. Secondary school expansions are similar but the requirements for classrooms are based on curriculum analysis and will vary from school to school depending on subjects being taken and class sizes. Expansion projects are usually implemented in phases to keep pace with pupil numbers as they progress up through the school. Selection of schools to be expanded is based on a number of factors including, DA pressure, available site area, Ofsted rating, planning risk and cost
 - c) Building new schools/school buildings where demand is sufficient, or in response to new housing development, such as the new Jennett’s Park CE Primary School which opened in September 2011. This includes the following:

• Binfield Learning Village	Up to 7FE secondary and 2FE primary
• Warfield West	Up to 2FE primary
• TRL	Up to 2FE primary
• Amen Corner North	Up to 1FE primary
• Amen Corner South	Up to 2FE primary
• Warfield East	Up to 3FE primary
• Ascot Heath	Up to 3FE primary (rebuilding existing schools)
- 5.28 Individual projects are brought onto the Education Capital Programme for Executive approval at the appropriate time in order to continue to meet the demand for sufficient pupil places. The above list of projects represents those currently anticipated, but will be subject to change in response to actual pupil number changes and new housing developments.
- 5.29 The specific projects proposed to meet the Council’s short medium and long term needs for pupil places are set out in the School Capacity Strategy in the attached confidential APPENDIX B.

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6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The contents of this report are noted. Further legal advice may be required as the various projects described are developed.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The anticipated financial implications are set out in the supporting information.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 All new construction will be designed in accordance with Building regulation Part M (Access to and Use of Buildings).

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 The most significant risk facing the Council is the impact of the capital programme on the revenue budget. All new spending on services will need to be funded from new capital receipts or borrowing from internal resources.

- 6.5 There are also a range of risks that are common to all capital projects which include:

- Tender prices exceeding the budget
- Planning issues and potential delays
- Uncertainty of external funding
- Building delays due to unavailability of materials or inclement weather
- Availability of staff with appropriate skills to implement schemes
- House building programmes which are managed by developers

These can be managed through the use of appropriate professional officers and following best practice in project management techniques.

7 CONSULTATION

Principal Groups Consulted

- 7.1 Pupil Places Planning Project Board
- 7.2 Education Capital Programme Board
- 7.3 Asset Management Group
- 7.4 Individual schools are also consulted on masterplans for expansion including Headteachers and Governing Bodies.
- 7.5 All new schemes will be subject to formal approval by the Council

Method of Consultation

- 7.6 Presentations of the Capacity Strategy and at meetings.

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Representations Received

- 7.7 Capacity Strategy has been amended to incorporate changes arising out of consultation.

Background Papers

APPENDIX A: Schools Admission Numbers for September 2014

APPENDIX B: School Capacity Strategy

APPENDIX C: Funding Strategy

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APPENDIX A

Breakdown of Schools Admission Numbers for September 2014 Intake

School	Intake Year Places Available @ Sep-14	Intake Year Places Allocated @ Sep-14	Intake Year Surplus Places @ Sep-14	
North Bracknell				
Ascot Heath Infant	70	65	5	7%
Ascot Heath Junior	60	60	0	0%
Binfield CE Primary	60	59	1	2%
Cranbourne Primary	30	29	1	3%
Holly Spring Infant	90	90	0	0%
Holly Spring Junior	90	90	0	0%
Meadow Vale Primary	90	90	0	0%
Sandy Lane Primary	90	90	0	0%
Warfield CE Primary	30	30	0	0%
Whitegrove Primary	60	60	0	0%
Winkfield St Marys CE Primary	30	30	0	0%
Garth Hill College	270	270	0	0%
South Bracknell				
Crown Wood Primary	90	77	13	14%
Fox Hill Primary	30	30	0	0%
Harmans Water Primary	120	119	1	1%
Wildridings Primary	60	60	0	0%
The Brakenhale Secondary	210	170	40	19%
Birch Hill Primary	60	60	0	0%
Great Hollands Primary	60	52	8	13%
Jennetts Park CE Primary	60	60	0	0%
The Pines Primary	60	44	16	27%
Wooden Hill Primary	50	50	0	0%
Easthampstead Park Secondary	240	176	64	27%
Crowthorne & Sandhurst				
Crowthorne CE Primary	30	30	0	0%
New Scotland Hill Primary	30	30	0	0%
Wildmoor Heath Primary	30	30	0	0%
Edgbarrow Secondary	210	210	0	0%
College Town Infant	90	90	0	0%
College Town Junior	90	76	14	16%
Owlsmoor Primary	90	86	4	4%
St Michaels Sandhurst CE Primary	30	30	0	0%
Uplands Primary	30	30	0	0%
Sandhurst Secondary	200	192	8	4%
Voluntary Aided Schools				
St Josephs RC Primary	30	30	0	0%
St Margaret Clitherow RC Primary	30	30	0	0%
St Michaels Easthampstead CE Primary	35	35	0	0%
Ranelagh CE Secondary	155	158	-3	-2%
Total Primary:	1,775	1,712	63	4%
Total Secondary:	1,285	1,176	112	9%