



Bewdley High School

# Good education places for all Worcestershire children

Worcestershire County Council's  
School Organisation Plan

2019 - 2024

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# 1. Introduction

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Worcestershire's Corporate Plan: Shaping Worcestershire's Future 2017-22 states that "We will continue to play an essential role in managing and coordinating the school system across the county and ensuring education provision remains fit for purpose."

This plan sets out the way that Worcestershire County Council (WCC), as the responsible body for education intends to address its statutory responsibility to ensure a sufficiency of places across all areas of education provision in the period 2019-24 including:

- Early Years (0 – 5 years).
- Mainstream (5 – 16 years).
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) (0 – 25 years).
- Post-16 (16 – 19 years).

It also addresses the changing role of the Council as a strategic commissioner. This five-year strategic plan provides links to the annual updates, which will include the latest forecast information. The plan will be updated during the five-year period to take into account any changes to education policy at a national and local level.

Children entering reception classes in Worcestershire first and primary schools rose by 5% in the period 2013-17, peaking in 2016 (+8%). At this point there were an additional 487 reception pupils or 16.2 FE (forms of entry based on 30 pupils per form of entry) compared with October 2013. In the period of this plan, numbers entering reception are forecast to decline by -7.4% (2017-2021 excluding the impact of new housing). This equals 473 fewer reception pupils or 15.7 FE across the County compared with October 2017.

Numbers entering Year 7, the standard transition point for secondary education, also rose in the last five years, this time by 11.6% but from a low base. As a result there were an additional 616 children in year 7 or 20.5 FE in October 2017 compared with 2013. In the lifetime of this plan numbers are forecast to continue to increase and will peak in 2023 with an additional 11.9%. This equals an additional 702 pupils at Year 7 or 23.4 FE across the County.

Alongside this demographic growth, large scale housing developments are expected up to 2030 and beyond. This will put increased pressure on places across all phases and will be carefully monitored throughout the life of this plan. Forecasts for reception children in Worcestershire, including current housing trajectories, see numbers decline by only -2.8% by 2021. Year 7 numbers including housing rise by 19.5% in the period from 2017-23. This equals 1,154 additional pupils at Year 7 or 38.5 FE across the County, resulting in a total forecast increase in pupils at Year 7 of 1,770 or 59 FE in the period 2013-23.

This will result in the need for the creation of additional capacity in existing schools and the creation of new schools in Worcestershire which will be monitored by the team and reported annually to the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills.

In a constantly changing education landscape this report will also identify how the Council will meet education provision need, commission new places, fund those new places and monitor the success of the plan.

## 2. Vision and principles

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### Strategic vision for education in Worcestershire

Worcestershire County Council believes that all children should have the opportunity for the best possible education to allow them to fulfil their full potential. To achieve this, we feel that local solutions offer the best way to meet the needs of all children and therefore, will encourage schools and settings to work together to build partnerships and support each other for the best interests of all our children. The County Council, for its part, will work with all types of providers to ensure there is a sufficiency of good quality education places in Worcestershire.

### Core principles

Where the Council identifies the need for additional places, the decision on which provider to commission to deliver those places will be based on the aim to meet the following clear core principles:

- Improve educational outcomes for all children and young people;
- Improve the learning experience of children and young people;
- Support good or outstanding provision;
- Be sustainable in the long term; and
- Be cost effective / value for money.

### Links to other council strategic documents

**Worcestershire's Corporate Plan "Shaping Worcestershire's Future"** has four key priorities to help guide the work of the Council over the next five years.

We are focused on improving outcomes for all children, young people and families in Worcestershire. Our ambition is to see more children and young people achieving their full potential in education and being fully prepared to live happy, healthy, independent and prosperous adult lives. This School Organisation Plan supports our priorities to:

- Provide adequate capacity by creating the right number of good or better school places to enable parental preference; and
- Support successful schools to expand in an appropriate form, to meet housing and demographic growth.

Worcestershire's Children and Young People's 2017-21 provides a framework for all agencies and organisations working with children, young people and families to make the necessary impact to improve lives ([www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cypp](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cypp)).

The School Organisation Plan supports the following CYPP priorities:

- Support children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning;
- Provide access to a quality and appropriate education/learning experience for all;
- Prepare young people for adult life; and
- Improve outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people.

The Education and Skills Strategy is currently in development and due for publication in spring 2019.





## Worcestershire County Council

Worcestershire County Council has a duty (under the Education Act 1996) to ensure there are sufficient school places to accommodate the children and young people who reside in the county and to ensure these places are of good quality with sufficient capacity to promote parental preference and diversity.

The 2011 Education Act requires that, where the need for a new school is identified, the Council should invite proposals to establish a free school, with the final approval given by the Secretary of State for Education.

Worcestershire County Council has a statutory duty to:

- Secure sufficient childcare, as far as is reasonably practical, to support parents to take up or remain in work or training.
- Secure free early years education for all eligible young children in their area.
- Undertake an assessment of the sufficiency of childcare places in its area at least every 3 years, with an annual update, and publish the assessments in the prescribed manner (Childcare Act 2006).
- Secure sufficient schools to provide primary and secondary education in their area through the inputting and analysis of pupil forecasts, and to complete the Annual Surplus Places Survey.
- Ensure sufficient education places are available to meet the needs of the population in the area.
- Undertake an assessment of the sufficiency of school places in its area with annual updates.
- Consider parental representations regarding the provision of schools and respond accordingly, including outlining any proposed action, or where it is considered action is not needed, to explain the reasons for this.
- Ensure the prescribed statutory process is followed when proposing to establish new schools. (As of 1st February 2012 Section 37, Schedule 11 of the Education Act 2011 applies i.e. where a new school needs to be established the Council must seek proposals for the establishment of a new academy).
- Follow the prescribed statutory process when proposing the closure of existing maintained schools.
- Follow the prescribed statutory process when proposing alterations to existing schools.
- Secure educational provision for pupils age 16 – 18 and those 19 to 25 years with special educational needs as in Section 14 of the Education Act 1996.
- Keep their arrangements for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) provision under review as in Section 315 of the Education Act 1996.

The co-ordination and management of all education place planning is located in the Children, Families and Communities (CFC) directorate of the County Council.

Under the County Council's Scheme of Delegation, decisions relating to PAN changes and the consultation process, at maintained schools, have been delegated to the Director for Children's Services or the Cabinet Member with responsibility for Education and Skills. The Cabinet Member may also decide to escalate the decision to the County Council's Cabinet.

Approval to the allocation of relevant capital resources is given by Council as part of its budget setting.

## Provision planning and accommodation

Provision Planning and Accommodation is the team within the Council that leads on school organisation matters. Its principle outputs include:

- Annual sufficiency forecasts and forward planning for:
  - » Childcare;
  - » Mainstream;
  - » SEND; and
  - » Post-16.
- Submission of the annual School Capacity Collection (SCAP), which is a statutory return to the DfE that is used as the basis for calculating Basic Need Grant.
- Maintaining capacity information.
- Managing S106/CIL contribution requirements including negotiating contributions with developers and district councils and the collection and allocation of funding for education capital works.
- Project Management of:
  - » School reviews and school organisation changes;
  - » Development of schemes to be funded through the Education Capital Programme;
  - » Managing Education Capital Programme; and
  - » Academy Conversions.

## Babcock Prime

Babcock Prime provides a number of services that support the delivery of services to early years settings, schools, academies, multi-academy trusts and post-16 providers assisting Worcestershire County Council to fulfil the duty to secure sufficient places.

Babcock Prime is a commissioned service that administers the statutory [Admissions Process](#) on behalf of and in partnership with the Council. Further information on the work of admissions can be found by clicking on the link above.

Information on the Council's [policy on Delayed and Accelerated Transfer](#) – Placement of pupils out of their chronological age group including summer born children starting school, can be found by clicking the link.

## Settings

All types of providers are key to a successful school organisation system. They provide the places that allow children and young people of all ages to attend an education setting in their local area. Without this continued support from all providers and settings across Worcestershire the Council could not continue to meet its statutory duty.

The operational lead for place planning in providers and settings across Worcestershire should:

- Monitor forecasts produced by the place planning team to allow them to successfully plan for future demand;
- Undertake appropriate curriculum analysis and school development plans to allow them to identify any potential surplus accommodation that could be used to support needs of children in their area;
- Engage in collaborative working with the Council and other settings in their area to meet future demands on settings from demographic or housing growth, which makes best use of resources and supports all children and young people and settings in their local area;
- Maintain the fabric of their setting; and
- Follow any appropriate statutory guidance when instigating any organisational changes to their setting.

## Place Partnership

**Place Partnership** is a commissioned service that provides a number of services to the Council in managing its capital assets. These services include asset and estate management, project management, building surveying services and facilities management. Place Partnership organises the asset management suitability surveys on behalf of the Council that allows us to prioritise our Condition Programme for maintained schools and to develop our capital programme and provides information on up to date costings from Building Cost Information Service (BCIS).

Place Partnership is also the data holder on behalf of the Council in respect of surveys and plans at the point of transfer.

## Jacobs architects

Jacobs is the County Council's supplier of Construction Related Professional Design Services. They have offices throughout the UK and a Worcester office set up specifically to deliver services for Worcestershire County Council. This team has extensive experience in school design and offers a full multi-disciplinary design service incorporating architecture, engineering, cost control, project management and a full range of specialist survey and design services. The team undertakes condition surveys for the Council and has extensive knowledge of the Worcestershire school estate. It also offers strategic design advice in relation to national School Premises Regulations, ESFA recommended accommodation provision, and standards.

Where funding for a project comes from the Council's capital programme and a school is maintained, then Jacobs will be the Council's design team.

Contact: Andrew Stamper or Dermot Galvin - by telephone on 01905 368100

First Floor, Malvern Court, Whittington Hall, Whittington, Worcester WR5 2RA



Leigh & Bransford Primary School - Extension



## Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC)

The **Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) for the West Midlands** has a strategic role in school organisation as it relates to academies. This is particularly true where an academy seeks to make a prescribed alteration. These can include:

- Significant expansion for more than 30 pupils (10% or 20 pupils, for special academies);
- Age range changes;
- Sixth form provision; and
- Changes affecting provision reserved for pupils with SEND.

For a full list and more information please read the DfE guidance on **Making Significant Changes to an Existing Academy**.

The RSC also recommends the approval of proposals for new free schools to the Secretary of State for Education and can instruct academies to expand due to basic need pressure.

The Council and the RSC work closely together to ensure that any approvals to changes at academies are in the best interest of all children and will not result in over or under supply of school places.

Where a change of age range is proposed by academies, the council will use its data to inform the RSC of the implications of any proposal, and the likely impact on other schools within the pyramid.



Blackwell First School

## 4. Context of Worcestershire education provision

The education provision planning landscape in 2018 is a complex one. The Council still retains direct responsibility and decision making for a majority of its schools however, the majority of our pupils are educated in academies, from which we commission places. In the childcare and post-16 sectors, the vast majority of our places are provided by institutions independent of Worcestershire County Council.

The Council retains its strategic responsibility to ensure sufficient high quality places, across all phases appropriate to the age, aptitude and ability of all learners. We will continue to build on existing partnerships, such as Diocesan Bodies, private and voluntary providers, academies, multi-academy trusts and free schools, whilst developing new relationships, with a core aim of producing the best outcomes for all children and young people in Worcestershire.

### Numbers and Types of education provision

The tables below show the pattern of provision in Worcestershire:

**Table 1 - Numbers and types of early years provision registered for nursery education funding September 2018**

Type of Childcare Provider	Apr-14	Apr-15	Apr-16	Oct-18
Maintained Nursery Class	52	49	52	59
Governor Led Nursery				38
Independent Nursery Class	9	9	4	3
Childminder	98	147	161	211
Day Nursery	134	135	130	130
Pre-School Playgroups	151	152	148	102
<b>County Total</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>492</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>543</b>

**Table 2 - Number and types of mainstream schools, academies and free schools by phase September 2018**

School Phase and Age Ranges	LA Maintained Schools	Academies	Free Schools	Totals by Phase
Nursery Schools	1	0	0	
<b>Nursery total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>
First Schools	53	18	0	
Primary Schools	63	42	1	
<b>First/Primary total</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>177</b>
Middle Schools – Deemed primary	3	1	0	
Middle Schools – Deemed secondary	6	8	0	
<b>Middle total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>
Secondary Schools -10-18 years	1	0	0	
Secondary Schools -11-16 years	1	5	0	
Secondary Schools -11-18 years	2	13	0	
Secondary Schools -12-18 years	0	2	0	
Secondary Schools -13-18 years	1	5	0	
<b>Secondary total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>30</b>
Special Schools - primary	1	0	0	
Special Schools - secondary	0	1	0	
Special Schools – all-through	4	3	0	
<b>Special Schools total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>9</b>
Combined First and Middle	0	1	0	
Alternative Provision Schools	3	1	2	
All-through School	0	0	1	
<b>Other total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Total Number of Schools in Worcestershire</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>243</b>

**Table 3 – Number and types of schools by providers November 2018**

	Nursery	First/Primary	Middle	Secondary	Special	All-through & Alternative	Total
Maintained *	1	116	11	4	4	4	139
Stand-alone academies	0	7	2	15	1	3	28
Diocese of Worcester MAT (DoWMAT) *	0	10	2	0	0	0	11
The Rivers CofE Multi Academy Trust	0	10	0	0	0	0	10
Severn Academies Educational Trust	0	5	0	2	0	0	7
Advance Trust	0	0	0	0	3	1	4
Avonreach Academy Trust	0	3	0	1	0	0	4
Our Lady of Lourdes Multi-Academy Co.	0	2	1	1	0	0	4
Hanley and Upton Education Trust	0	2	0	1	0	0	3
St Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Co.	0	2	0	1	0	0	3
Victoria Academies Trust	0	3	0	0	0	0	3
Bengeworth CE Academy Trust	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Black Pear Trust	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Central RSA Academies Trust	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
Holy Family Catholic MAC	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Mercian Education Trust	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
RSA Academies	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
The Spire CofE Learning Trust	0	1	1	0	0	0	2
Tudor Grange Academies Trust	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
The Villages Multi Academy Trust	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Redditch West School Trust	0	2	0	0	0	0	2
Alvechurch C of E Multi-Academy Trust	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Bishop Anthony Trust	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Gloucester Learning Alliance	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Oasis Community Learning	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Ormiston Trust	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
The Griffin Schools Trust	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
The Hill Trust	0	0	1	0	0	0	1

\* One maintained school is combined middle/high and one DOWMAT school is combined first/middle but split for the purposes of this table.



**Table 4 - Number and types of specialist education provision February 2018**

Type of provision	Number
Special schools	9
Special School Nursery / Nursery Plus	5
Early Years specialist language classes	4
Mainstream school with nurture group funded by LA	16
Mainstream schools with language bases for children with language disorders	5
Mainstream schools with mainstream autism bases for children with ASD	14

**Table 5 - Number and types of post-16 providers September 2018**

Type of provision	Number
Further Education Colleges	4
Active training providers offering apprenticeships	208

## School size

The size of a school is usually defined by its published Pupil Admission Number (PAN), which sets out the maximum number of pupils a school will admit at the point of entry to the school. This is sometimes represented by the number of Forms of Entry (FE) in each year group. Alternatively, the physical capacity of the school could be used, which refers to the maximum number of pupils that can be accommodated within current school facilities.

Another measure of school size is the current number on roll at the school. The numbers on roll (NOR) is the number of individual pupils a school has on roll (either full time or part time) at any one time. School Census' are undertaken termly in October, January and May to record the number of pupils on roll at a given time; these are referred to as school census days. Please see table 6 for a summary of the range of school sizes by number on roll in October 2017.

**Table 6 - Type of school by number on roll (NOR) October 2017**

Type of school	Smallest NOR	Largest NOR
First	38	442
Primary	43	777
Middle	179	662
Secondary (including sixth form)	329	1342
Special School	63	251

The Council has no policy on the optimum size of schools in the county. In provision planning terms we often use Forms of Entry (FE) as the basis of planning. Each FE is assumed to be 30 pupils. Accepted practice within the Council is that any new first/primary school would ideally be at least 2FE, middle school 3FE and a secondary school 6FE. This provides the best position for long term viability. However, it is recognised that in some circumstances this may not be achievable. In these situations the Council will work with any potential provider to ensure that potential smaller schools are viable, produce high quality appropriate education and deliver a varied curriculum for all their pupils.

The maximum size of a secondary school is best decided on individual circumstances and in consultation with partners. The Council is committed to ensuring that every school in Worcestershire is able to offer the best possible education for all its children and young people, irrespective of size.

**Table 7 – Type of school by forms of entry (FE)**

	Nursery	First/Primary	Middle	Secondary	Special	All-through & Alternative	Total
Up to 0.5FE	0	31	0	0	0	0	31
Up to 1FE	0	74	0	0	0	0	74
Up to 2FE	0	59	0	0	0	1	60
Up to 3FE	0	13	3	1	0	0	17
Up to 4FE	0	1	3	1	0	0	5
Up to 5FE	0	0	10	1	0	0	11
Up to 6FE	0	0	4	7	0	0	11
Up to 7FE	0	0	0	6	0	0	6
Up to 8FE	0	0	0	5	0	0	5
Up to 9FE	0	0	0	4	0	0	4
Up to 10FE	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Up to 11FE	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Up to 12FE	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
N/A	1	0	0	0	9	6	16

## Small schools policy

Worcestershire has many small schools, particularly in villages or rural areas, which are monitored annually by the Council. Should there be the need to review a small school the [Worcestershire's policy on conducting an officer review of small schools](#), lays out the criteria and process for such a review.

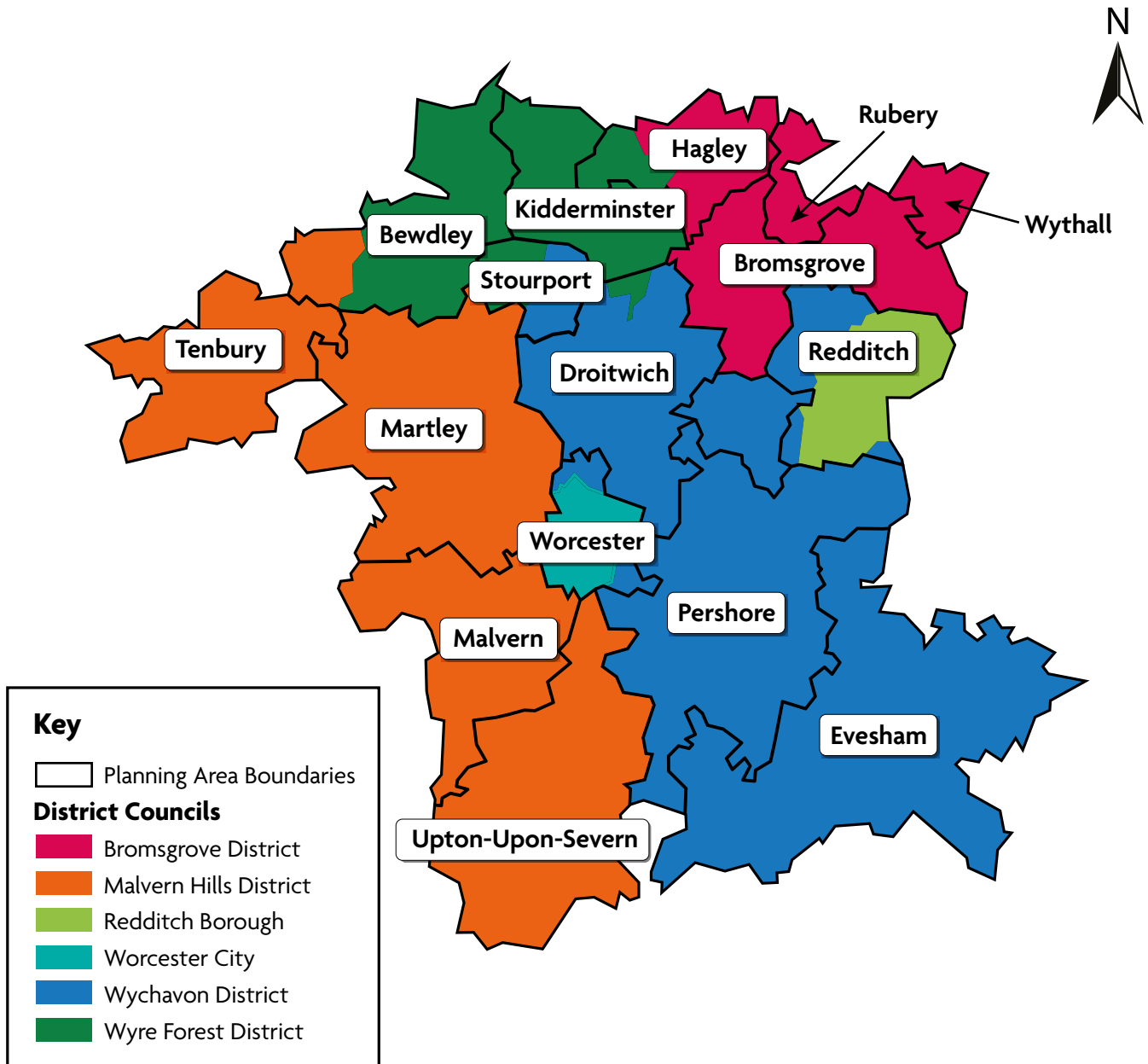
## Education planning areas

Effective pupil place planning is a fundamental element of the local authority's role as strategic commissioner of good school places. Most local authorities divide their geographical regions into smaller areas for pupil place planning purposes and pupil planning areas should align with these smaller areas. Schools located in close proximity where pupils could reasonably attend, should be grouped together in one planning area. The educational planning areas (EPA) within Worcestershire are used by the Council for the purposes of assessing current and future pupil demand for school place provision.

Pupil place planning is a dynamic process in which factors such as school re-organisation, evolving local demographics or changing geographical factors can mean existing structures are no longer fit for purpose. Changes to EPAs are therefore sometimes necessary.

The Council operates 16 Education Planning Areas, based around the main population centres.

**Figure 1- Education planning areas in relation to district council boundaries**



## Tier structure

There are both two-tier and three-tier education systems in operation in Worcestershire. In areas which operate a two-tier model, children enter primary school at reception before transferring to a secondary school at the start of year 7. In areas which operate a three-tier model, children enter first school at reception, transfer to a middle school at the start of year 5 or 6 depending on the age range of the middle school, and then transfer again to high school at the start of year 8 or 9 depending on the age range of the high school. Some schools have sixth forms and some do not. The table below summarises the predominant model in operation in each EPA as of June 2018:

**Table 8 - Tier areas in Worcestershire**

<b>Two-tier model</b>	<b>Three-tier model A</b>	<b>Three-tier model B</b>	<b>Three-tier model C</b>
<b>Primary Years R-6 (Age 5 – 11)</b>	<b>First Years R-4 (Ages 5 – 9)</b>	<b>First Years R-4 (Ages 5 – 9)</b>	<b>First Years R-5 (Ages 5 – 10)</b>
<b>Secondary Years 7 – 13 (Ages 11 – 18)</b>	<b>Middle Years 5-8 (Ages 9 – 13)</b>	<b>Middle Years 5-7 (Ages 9 – 12)</b>	<b>Middle Years 6-8 (Ages 10 – 13)</b>
	<b>High Years 9-13 (Ages 13 – 18)</b>	<b>High Years 8-13 (Ages 12 – 18)</b>	<b>High Years 9-13 (Ages 13 – 18)</b>
Bewdley	Bromsgrove	Droitwich	Evesham
Hagley	Redditch	Pershore	
Kidderminster			
Malvern			
Martley			
Rubery			
Stourport			
Tenbury			
Upton			
Worcester			
Wythall			

A small number of schools in the three-tier areas operate on a primary / secondary basis. This includes catholic school provision and some other schools that have sought to change their age range away from the three-tier model.



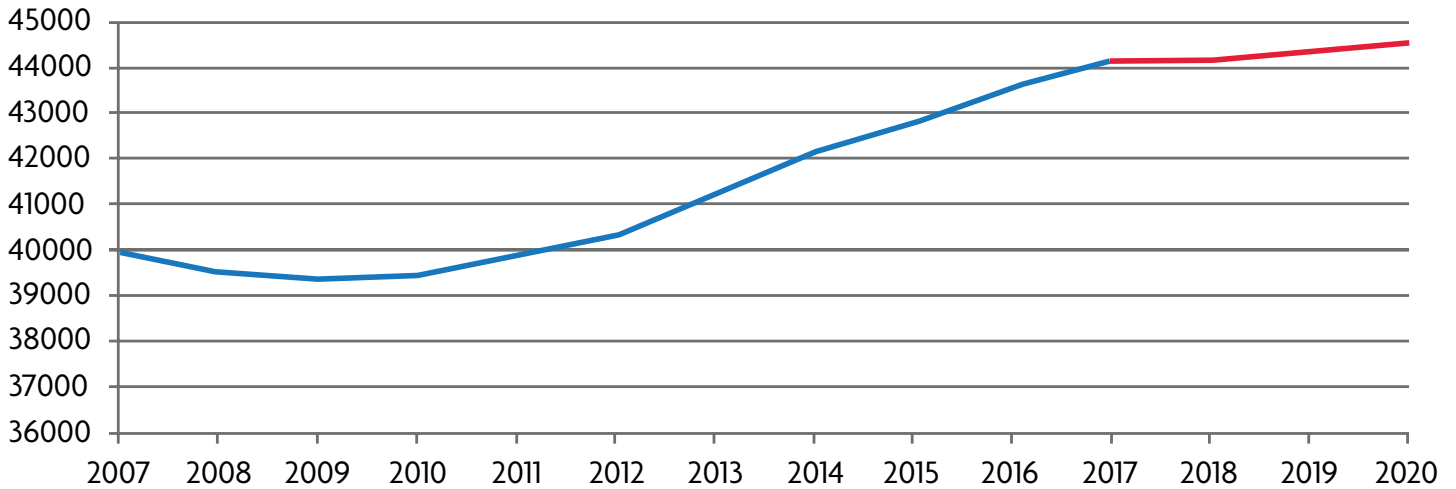
## 5. Demand for education provision

### Demographic growth

The landscape of education provision in Worcestershire is changing. The number of primary age children (reception to year 6) in Worcestershire has altered significantly over the last several years and provision has had to adapt to ensure we are able to meet the demand for primary school places across the county. After several years of growth, we are now expecting the birth rate of children in Worcestershire to stabilise and the number of children in primary school derived from demographic growth is set to maintain at between 44,000 and 45,000 for the foreseeable future.

**Graph 1 - Numbers on roll in reception to year 6 2007-2020**

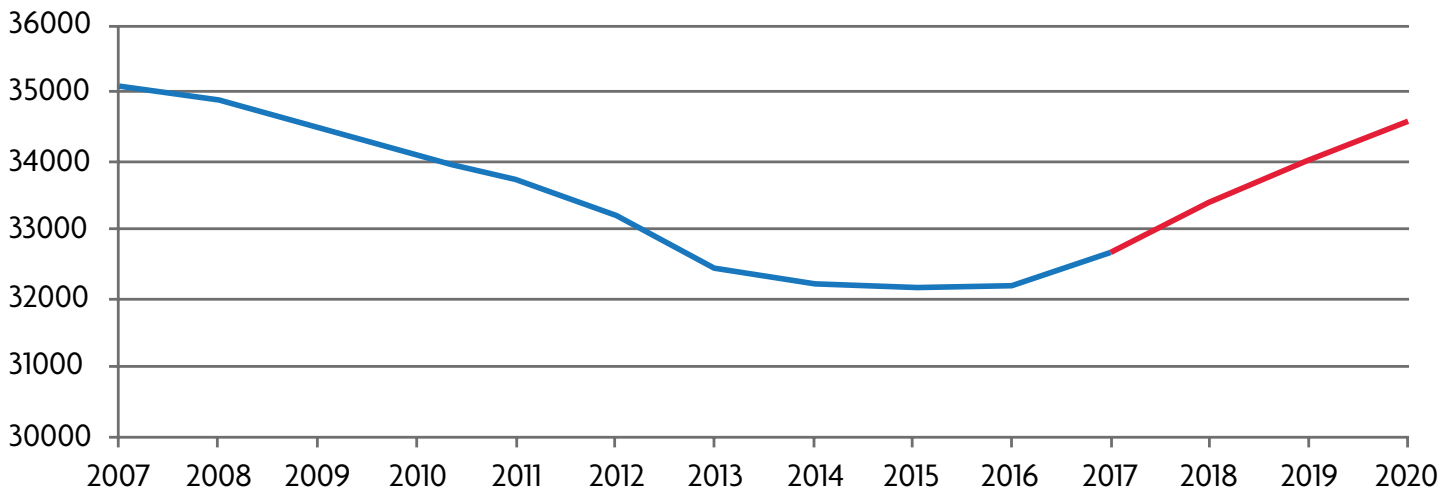
### Total Number On Roll - Primary



Higher numbers of children entering primary and first schools in the county began to affect the total number of children on roll in key stage 1 and 2 from 2011. As a result, we started to see the number of secondary age children (year 7 to 11) in Worcestershire begin to rise sharply in 2017.

**Graph 2 - Numbers on roll in year 7-13 2007-2020**

### Total Number On Roll - Secondary



Worcestershire has a mix of urban and rural areas. An increasing number of families are moving into urban areas, a trend

seen nationally, which is supported by housing growth. The challenge of ensuring there is a sufficiency of places within our urban areas, where land and space are becoming increasingly sparse, as well as ensuring small village schools are able to remain sustainable as a result of falling catchment area pupil numbers, will be a greater challenge moving forwards. This will be the case particularly over the next 5-10 years as a number of large housing developments are expected to greatly increase the numbers of families with school age children in towns and cities. At the same time, smaller developments, will see the potential for villages to increase by large percentages.

Forecast pupil numbers shown overleaf are based on children currently living in Worcestershire, new housing will generate additional demand above that which is shown above. Additional provision at primary and secondary level will therefore be required directly as a result of new housing. The Council will need to build on existing relationships with schools, developers, and neighbouring councils to tackle these challenges and ensure all children are able to access good education provision.

The housing development plan for the south of the county was adopted in spring 2016 and includes significant housing forecasts in and adjacent to the Worcester EPA. Plans for the north of the county are not yet fully adopted and will be affected by a planned Green Belt review in the early 2020's. However we are expecting a significant number of new housing in the north of the county, particularly as a result of unfulfilled housing need from Birmingham. Large new housing developments are expected to expand the Bromsgrove, Redditch, Malvern and Worcester urban areas in particular.

## **Migration**

Migration is generally modest with some movement across county boundaries. In general, outward migration impacts on Birmingham, Dudley, Sandwell and Solihull councils to the north and on Gloucestershire and Warwickshire councils to the east.

Inward migration into Worcestershire schools is not currently considered a major factor and is not a cause for concern as, in the majority of cases, school admissions policies give priority to pupils living within the school catchment areas. Some schools are very dependent on migration from authorities outside Worcestershire particularly in the north of the county with pupils coming from Birmingham and Dudley to serve the Hollywood area, from Shropshire to serve the Tenbury area, and schools serving the Upton area with pupils coming from Gloucestershire. Isolated cases of seasonal working are a factor but there is no statistical evidence that this is putting pressure on provision.

Within post-16 education, Worcestershire has historically had a net migration out of the county and increased provision within the county is seeking to maintain higher student numbers. At the moment it is too early to identify the reasons for this. Further outcomes will be monitored as part of the post-16 sufficiency report.

None of these patterns are currently forecast to cause any major pressures on the overall provision across the County.

## 6. Growth as a result of new housing

### The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Paragraph 95 of the NPPF 2018 lays out education's role in the planning framework. It states:

It is important that a sufficient choice of school places is available to meet the needs of existing and new communities. Local Planning authorities should take a proactive, positive and collaborative approach to meeting this requirement, and to development that will widen choice in education. They should:

- a) Give great weight to the need to create, expand or alter schools through the preparation of plans and decisions on applications; and
- b) Work with school providers, delivery partners and statutory bodies to identify and resolve key planning issues before applications are submitted.

The Provision Planning and Accommodation Team will support this by working with developers, district councils and schools, to create bespoke assessments taking into account pupil yields, local circumstances, the availability of good school places, costs, and potential impact on other local schools.

The following development plans operate in Worcestershire.

### South Worcestershire

- Malvern Hills District Council – predominantly incorporating the Malvern, Martley, Tenbury and Upton EPAs.
- Worcester City Council – predominantly incorporating the Worcester City EPA.
- Wychavon District Council – predominantly incorporating the Droitwich, Evesham and Pershore EPAs.

The [South Worcestershire Development Plan](#) (SWDP) was adopted in February 2016 and covers the period 2006 – 2030. Worcestershire County Council contributed to the plan and set our requirements in terms of the education provision and the supply of school places as a result of the proposed housing developments.

Current proposals under the SWDP are likely to require the expansion of existing primary and secondary schools. Two cross boundary urban expansions named the South Worcester Urban Expansion and West Worcester Urban Expansion are likely to require the provision of new free schools. Further information on these and other large scale developments can be found via the [South Worcestershire Development Plan](#).



St. Andrew's First School

## Bromsgrove

Bromsgrove District Council to the north of the county predominantly covers the educational planning areas of Bromsgrove, Hagley, Rubery and Wythall. The [Bromsgrove District Plan](#) 2011 – 2030 was adopted on 25th January 2017 and sets out the Council's vision and strategy for the area until 2030.

Three large scale housing developments are proposed for the Bromsgrove town area: Brom1 at Norton Farm for 316 dwellings; Brom2 at Sidemoor, known as Perryfields, for 1300 dwellings; and Brom3 at Whitford Road for 490 dwellings.

There are two further cross boundary urban expansions proposed in the Bromsgrove District to support demographic growth from Redditch. The expansions at Foxlydiate and Brockhill will see a new school at Foxlydiate and the relocation of Holyoakes Field First School for Brockhill.

## Redditch

The [Redditch District Plan](#) 2011 – 2030 was adopted on 30th January 2017. The plan provides a framework approach for the growth of the Borough with cross boundary major developments as identified above.

## Wyre Forest

The current Wyre Forest District Council adopted the [Core Strategy Development Plan document](#) which covers the plan period from 2006 – 2026.

A [Wyre Forest Local Plan Review](#) (WFLPR) is currently being undertaken across the Wyre Forest District Council which will span the period 2016-2036 which will cover the educational planning areas of Bewdley, Kidderminster and Stourport. Worcestershire County Council has been consulted on the Wyre forest Infrastructure Delivery Plan (WFIDP) and has provided a response to the options put forward in terms of education provision. The plan is scheduled to be published in the first quarter of 2020.

The extent of the development proposed under the WFIDP is likely to require additional primary schools, expansion of existing primary schools and additional school places in the secondary phase. Expansions proposed for the north and east of Kidderminster will see the largest increase in school places.



Wychbold First and Nursery School



## 7. Forecasting sufficiency

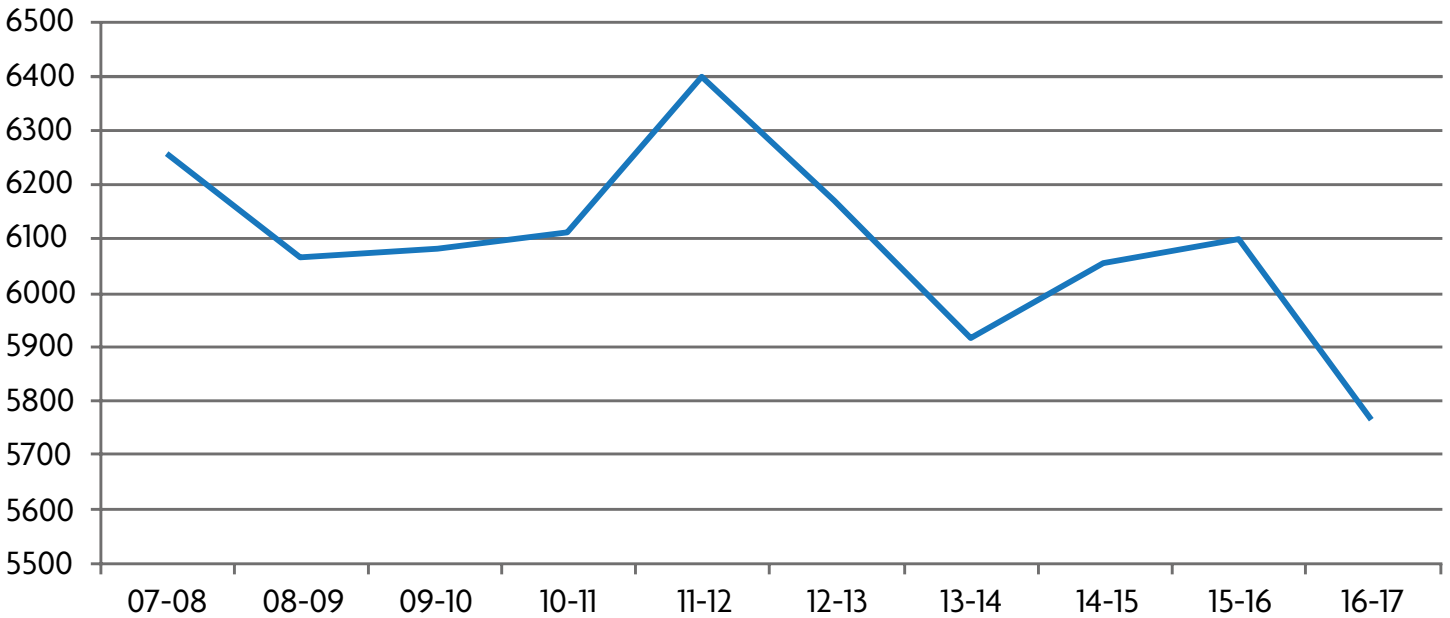
### Childcare

The Council has a duty to ensure that all eligible 2, 3 and 4 year old children in Worcestershire are able to secure access to 570 hours of free early education. In September 2017 this offer was extended for families where both parents are working for 3 and 4 year olds to access an additional 570 hours a year, known as “30 hours extended entitlement”. This has increased the demand on early year provision across the county over the 2017/2018 academic year.

During this period, the total number of 2, 3, and 4 year olds in the County has fallen after a peak in the 2014/2015 academic year following a higher than average birth year in Worcestershire in 2011/2012, a trend which was also seen nationally. There has since been a decline in the number of births with 5765 children born and registered in Worcestershire between 1st Sep 2016 and 31st August 2017, a fall of 10% since 2012/2013.

**Graph 3 - Numbers of children born in Worcestershire 2007-17**

### Children born and registered in Worcestershire 2007-2017



Despite this, the number of children seeking early education is expected to slowly increase as more families move into Worcestershire, particularly into urban areas where we see a large number of new housing developments. Housing growth is focused on the main settlements where there is existing infrastructure to support new households, however there is likely to be a need to encourage and support additional pre-school provision both from existing and new providers in areas where existing provision is insufficient.

Coupled with the new “30 hours” policy, there will likely be a higher number of early education hours being taken across Worcestershire. In order to ensure children are able to access early education hours, the Council will work ever-more closely with providers.

For further information and reports please refer to [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/childcaresufficiency](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/childcaresufficiency)

### Mainstream provision

School place planning is crucial to ensuring the Council is able to meet its responsibility and support children within Worcestershire to access a good education. Forecasting is at the forefront of this process and ensures that we are able to work with key partners to build our education provision around the demands of a changing demographic landscape.

The Provision Planning Team carries out an annual forecast of pupil places requirements based on information from the NHS known children numbers, school census information, admissions, and district council's five year housing land supply. This forms the basis for our School Capacity Return (SCAP) and is benchmarked by the DfE in the form of the **Basic Need scorecard**, last undertaken in 2017.

For September 2017, our primary forecast was 99.2% accurate (0.8% over forecast) for one year ahead and 99.8% (0.2% over forecast) for three years ahead. This compared to a range of -6.2% to +8.5% for other Councils at one year, and a range of -4.9% to +12.5% for three years.

Our secondary forecast was 97.9% accurate (+2.1%) for one year ahead and 97.4% (+2.6%) for three years ahead. Again this compares to other Councils' ranges from -9.3% to +4.8% for one year, and -11.3% to +16.6% for three years ahead.

The team will continue to produce a forecast based on demographic growth at countywide, education planning area, and at school level. We will also produce a second forecast model that takes into account housing trajectory information from the District Councils.

Evidence from the latest birth data is that in 2017/18, primary numbers peaked in most areas. Action has been taken to provide additional places in primary and first schools over recent years, with some further expansions still to take place to ensure sufficiency of places in Key Stage 1 and 2. Large scale housing developments will also require new schools and additional accommodation. It is currently anticipated that planned housing developments could result in the need for four new first/primary schools across Worcestershire.

Whilst growth has been felt across the county, the urban areas have experienced a much higher rate than rural areas. Most notably Worcester City, Bromsgrove, Evesham, Kidderminster and Redditch have all experienced a greater amount of pressure. Higher primary intakes from the last several years are now approaching secondary transfer and areas with three tier systems are already seeing higher numbers transferring through to middle. In most areas there is capacity to absorb the first waves of increased numbers but action will be needed to increase capacity in the long term.

It is currently forecast that in 2018 numbers in the secondary phase will start to increase, which coincides with the increase anticipated due to housing growth. Discussions have already started with secondary schools in priority areas, most of whom are academy schools. The Council has entered into agreement with four secondary academies to provide additional places, however further expansions will be needed over the coming years to support further growth. Numbers entering secondary schools are expected to peak in 2023 from demographic growth, around the time we can expect a large number of new housing developments to generate additional demand.

A significant challenge for the Council moving forwards is managing the impact of changes in school age ranges. Since 2015, permission has been given by the Regional Schools Commissioner for six changes, affecting mainly the Redditch and Evesham three-tier systems. The Council is working with local schools impacted by the approved changes to find appropriate ways forward and ensure sufficient places in a stable and viable education pyramid. At the current time we do not expect very significant changes in forecast numbers, simply a redistribution of the projected pupils across the various schools.

For mainstream forecasting reports, detailed countywide and district mainstream figures and pre-school children numbers please refer to: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mainstreamsufficiency](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/mainstreamsufficiency)

## **Process to ensure a sufficiency of places should an academy cease**

Academies are independent of the Council but the a duty to ensure a sufficiency of school places remains with the Council. Should an academy cease to provide places in Worcestershire for any reason we will follow the below process and work closely with the RSC to ensure we meet our statutory duties.

### **Process for ensuring a sufficiency of places should an academy close**

## Specialist provision

### Education inclusion policy

The policy informs the practice of all Worcestershire County Council employees and those working in education settings for which the Council has a responsibility or commissioning role, as well as the standards by which the Council will be monitored against.

**Table 9 - Number on Roll at special schools in Worcestershire January 2018**

SPECIAL SCHOOLS	Age range	Categorisation	TOTAL NOR
Chadsgrove School & Specialist Sports College	2-19	Physical Disability	129
Fort Royal Community Primary School	2-11	Generic	188
The Kingfisher School	7-16	SEMH	67
Pitcheroak School	4-19	Generic	141
Regency High School	11-19	Generic	176
Riversides School	7-16	SEMH	58
Rigby Hall School	4-19	Generic	132
The Vale of Evesham School	2-19	Generic	159
Wyre Forest Special School	3-19	Generic	231
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1281</b>



Russell House sensory room



Wyre Forest School

## Special school sufficiency

The number of pre-school children being referred to specialist early years provision including special school nursery places continues to rise in Worcestershire. There has been a 37.5% increase in the number of pre-school age children being referred to Pre-School Forum since 2007/08. On average between 2010 and 2016 8% of pre-school age children (3 & 4 year olds) in Worcestershire were referred to Pre-School Forum. Between January 2010 and January 2017 there has been a 42% increase in the number of children on roll in a special school nursery. The Council has supported accommodation and resources to expand the number of places available in EY specialist provision. The implementation of 30 hour early entitlement for eligible 3 and 4 year olds in September 2017 has extended the demand for places and has had a direct impact upon the sufficiency of early years specialist places.

The increase identified above will continue to have a significant impact upon the sufficiency of school-age places in special schools. The largest recorded primary need in pre-school age children in Worcestershire is Speech Language and Communication Needs. Cabinet has committed to offer Early Years Specialist Language provision in each district to support pre-school age children identified with specific speech and / or language disorder / impairment as a primary need. The areas of need showing the most significant increases in Worcestershire secondary schools have been in Moderate and Specific Learning Difficulties. Speech, Language and Communication Needs and Autistic Spectrum Disorder and Other Difficulties are also on the increase.

The number of pupils being referred for a Worcestershire special school place is continuing to increase. This has risen from 1.66% of pupils accessing a Worcestershire special school place in 2016 to 1.75% of pupils in 2017. Between January 2010 and January 2017 there has been a 17% increase in the number of children on roll in Worcestershire special schools. This does not include the numbers of children and young people also accessing Independent, non-maintained special schools or out of county provision. We have supported expansions at several of our special schools to enable more places to be available. We are now working closely with our school colleagues to assess the full time equivalent capacity of all Worcestershire special schools to further assess the requirement for places. Currently, based on the previous year forecast and the 5 year average forecast projections there is a requirement for additional special school places across all districts.

In both mainstream and specialist SEND provision in Worcestershire, there continues to be a gender gap, with more males than females with identified SEND.

Resource bases and SEN Units have a critical part to play in the education provision in Worcestershire for children and young people with SEND. The Early Years Specialist Language provision forecast projects a future need for full time equivalent places to remain consistent across the districts to those commissioned currently. Service Level Agreements details the recommended hours of input each week, therefore the implementation of 30 hours early entitlement should not directly impact this type of provision.

School-age Language Units forecasts have not identified sufficiency needs but the data as currently recorded does not show the full picture of demand for Specialist SLCN provision. Geographical gaps remain a concern to the Council, most notably in the South of Worcestershire. We are committed to further work, as part of the High Needs Commissioning Implementation, to determine provision requirements across the county.

Autism base data and immediate projections show insufficient places at Mainstream Autism Bases (MAB) in Bromsgrove, Malvern, Worcester, Wychavon and Wyre Forest. The numbers of children and young people being referred for MAB provision is increasing. Analysis of the pupils accessing the Medical Education Team, independent, non-maintained special school and out of county provision also supports the view for the need to increase MAB places.

SEND pupils attending Alternative Provision are predominantly identified with Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) needs. A high proportion of pupils with SEND accessing the Medical Education Team, choosing Elective Home Education, and those attending independent or non-maintained Special Schools are also identified with a primary need of SEMH, along with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD). 25% of pupils with SEND attending other Councils' schools (out of County) have a primary need of ASD recorded. Further analysis is required to determine whether more in-county ASD provision and/or more SEMH provision are required.

As part of the Council's obligations in relation to central funding from the Special Provision Fund, we have developed a SEND Investment Plan 2018-21 and spreadsheet, that identifies how we will use the Special Provision Fund and other Council resources to support places for children with Education Health and Care Plans. This can be found on the Local Offer page of the Worcestershire County Council website: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/SENDupdates](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/SENDupdates)

For SEND Sufficiency information and reports please refer to: [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/SENDSufficiency](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/SENDSufficiency)

## Post-16

The Council has a duty to secure sufficient suitable education and training provision for all young people in their area who are over compulsory school age but under 19 or aged 19 to 25 and for whom an Education, Health and Care (EHC) plan is maintained. This is a duty under the Education Act 1996. To fulfil this, councils need to have a strategic overview of the provision available in their area and to identify and resolve gaps in provision.

Current places for Post-16 provision in Worcestershire are on the whole sufficient. Since 2014 on average 51% of year 11 pupils progress into mainstream school sixth form provision. Since the introduction of "Raising the Participation Age" in 2014, the number of post 16 providers has diversified and expanded with a significant increase in training providers and apprenticeships, rising from 48 to circa 208. A reorganisation of the further education sector also took place in December 2016 which has resulted in the amalgamation of establishments and a review of the delivery of course programmes.

There are however, isolated instances of demand within sixth forms at popular schools across the county. The individual schools have responded to pressure by providing additional places and have sought funding from government funding streams. Numbers are expected to continue to rise in line with current predictions for secondary places. Funding to increase places is currently available from the Education Funding Agency via the Demographic Capital Growth Fund.

For information and reports please refer to [www.worcestershire.gov.uk/Post16Sufficiency](http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/Post16Sufficiency)

## 19-25 SEND places

Worcestershire County Council believes that post-19 SEND students, where possible, benefit most by being supported to enter college, training or work. The Council receives no education capital funding to support the provision of places in 19-25 facilities. For these reasons the Council does not support from within its education capital budgets the costs associated with this type of provision. The Council is currently engaging with partners to ensure a sufficiency of places for those aged 19-25 who require educational support.



## 8. The Council as a strategic commissioner

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### How we stimulate the market and ensure provision

#### Revenue funding

Revenue for provision is funded based on allocations agreed by the Council. For further details on these please contact Andy McHale, Service Manager – Funding & Policy [amchale@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:amchale@worcestershire.gov.uk)

Specifically for schools expanding at the request of the Council the following revenue support may be available:

#### Pupil growth fund

Where schools increase their Pupil Admission Number (PAN) at the direct request of the Council they may be entitled to support from the Pupil Growth Fund. This is designed to enable them to meet upfront costs such as recruiting additional teaching staff and additional resources prior to the pupil-led funding coming into their budget in the following April.

Funding is paid when the number on roll in the school increases above the current census numbers and is paid throughout the life of that cohort.

#### Capital funding

The Council receives two main capital grants for education:

Basic Need - To increase pupil places at all tax funded schools where the need for those places is identified by the Council.

Condition Programme – For highest priority condition work at maintained schools based on condition surveys. This is an annual grant which reduces as schools become academies.

Link to [Capital Maintenance Programme 2018-19](#)

As the Council seeks to meet the additional places required as a result of demographic and housing growth, the pressure on these grants in the next five year period will be very high. Whilst the use of s106 will support the provision of additional places, the amount received and the timeframe for payment, means the Council will often have to put in places ahead of any or all s106 receipts and also supplement them with basic need.

As such the Council will only be in the position to address the highest priorities and funding will be prioritised to creating new places. We will seek to work with our partner schools to best utilise space and maximise any grant funding available.

#### Early years capital funding

Capital funding was allocated by the DfE in 2017/18 to support the increase in places available for 30 hours places. The Council was able to bid for up to six providers and Worcestershire was successful with its six bids resulting in additional capital funding of £860,949.

#### Education capital programme

The Education capital programme currently consists of a number of funding sources:

- County Council's capital programme;
- Basic need;
- Capital maintenance;
- Special provision fund;
- Locally Controlled Voluntary Aided Programme (LCVAP) - this will cease in 2020;
- Section 106 / Community Infrastructure Levy (Developer Contributions); and
- Devolved Formula Capital (DFC) – School specific allocations.

The Government has occasionally released capital bidding rounds to support specific initiatives. Some of these have, in the past, included early years, Universal Infants School Meals, 14-19, and the Primary Schools Building Programme.

Further information on the principles and priorities set out and agreed by Members in December 2011, and revised in February 2015, in determining the use of capital funding in schools and settings can be found in Worcestershire's [Local Investment Plan 2018-19](#).

Other Projects - requests to support other projects will only be considered in schools where all current priority one and two needs have been met. Proposals will need to have a robust business case and where required, be supported by contributions from the school. This will be subject to approval by the CFC Leadership Team.

Any significant changes to the programme of investment are approved initially by Children Families and Communities Senior Leadership team and where necessary, will be approved by the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills, within the confines of the overall budget approved by Council.

## Condition Improvement Fund (CIF)

The Condition Improvement Fund is aimed at academies and sixth form colleges and can be used for condition or expansion. This fund replaces the Academies Capital Maintenance Fund and the Building Condition Improvement Fund for sixth form colleges and is managed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA).

## Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Where proposed new housing will impact on the sufficiency of school places, Worcestershire County Council can request a Section 106 (s106) contribution or apply for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding. Further information on housing contributions can be found by following the link - [School planning obligations](#)

Worcestershire currently uses a figure of 0.028 pupils per year group per dwelling, which for ease, is usually rounded up to 3 pupils per year group per 100 houses or 30 (1 form of entry) per year group per 1000 houses. Schools deemed to be related to the development will be named, as the Council seeks to provide places at a local school.



Burlish Primary School

## Section 106 funding

**Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990** (as amended), commonly known as S106 agreements, are a mechanism which are used to make a development proposal acceptable in planning terms, that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on site specific mitigation for the impact of development. S106 agreements are often referred to as 'developer contributions' along with highways and district council contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

The County Council works closely with the district councils to produce a fair and comparable system of obligations throughout Worcestershire. Copies of the Supplementary Planning Documents for each district council are available on their websites.

The current **table of charges** is available for further details.

Any funds collected as part of the Section 106 process are used to support Basic Need provision in tax funded schools in Worcestershire. The Council retains the decision making authority on where any allocation is spent in line with CIL Regulation 122, but will consult and work with eligible schools to identify appropriate projects.

In administrative areas where CIL is in operation Section 106 obligations will continue to be collected where the development site has been specifically listed on the regulation 123 List and additionally, where it has been identified that the impact of the development will create sufficient demand for an expansion of an existing school by 0.5FE or greater, or the requirement for a new school.

## Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a locally set charge (levy) that came into force on 6 April 2010 through the CIL regulations 2010 (as amended). The CIL is a charge that planning authorities in England (known as "charging authorities") can place on new development in their area. The money generated through the levy will contribute to the funding of infrastructure to support development growth. CIL has been introduced in the three South Worcestershire District Councils and came into effect in Malvern Hills District Council and Wychavon District Council on 5 June 2017 and in Worcester City Council on 4 September 2017.

CIL is intended to supplement other funding streams to ensure that new community infrastructure can be provided to support local growth and to give councils and communities more choice and flexibility in how infrastructure is funded. Infrastructure proposed to be funded by CIL is established through a Regulation 123 list. The primary purpose of the list is to ensure that there is no duplication between CIL and other infrastructure payments such as Section 106 agreements.

## 9. Supply of education provision

There are currently sufficient places for reception children entering school in most areas of Worcestershire following the expansions of a number of first and primary schools over the last several years to meet demographic growth (see Table 11). However, some areas of the county will be under more pressure for places and individual schools, due to their popularity, may not have sufficient places for all children who wish to attend.

The Council has provided capital funding to early years providers, mainstream and special schools to increase the number of places they are able to provide. This funding may have been used to enlarge premises or refurbish existing accommodation.

**Table 10 - Additional places provided in early years providers in Worcestershire 2017/18**

Area	Provider	Number of New 30 hour places created
Kidderminster	Chaddesley Corbett Primary	45
	Franch Primary	161
Redditch	Abbeywood Primary	40
Stourport	Lickhill Primary	40
Evesham	Evesham Nursery	26
Wythall	Wendy House Nursery	32
<b>Total Number of New Places Created</b>		<b>344</b>

**Table 11 - Additional places provided in mainstream schools in Worcestershire since 2012**

Area	School	Additional Forms of Entry per year group	Number of New Places Created
Worcester	Lyppard Grange Primary	0.5	105
	Nunnery Wood Primary	0.5	105
	Stanley Road Primary	0.5	105
	Red Hill CE Primary	1	210
	St Joseph's RC Primary	1	210
	Northwick Manor Primary	Bulge year	30
	Warndon Primary	1	210
	Nunnery Wood High School	1	150
	Christopher Whitehead Language College	1	150
	Tudor Grange Academy	1	150
Redditch	Abbeywood First	0.5	75
	Batchley First	0.5	75
	Matchborough First	1	150
Kidderminster	Blakedown Primary	0.5	105
	Heronswood Primary	0.5	105

Area	School	Additional Forms of Entry per year group	Number of New Places Created
Bromsgrove	Millfields First	0.5	75
	Catshill First	0.5	75
	Blackwell First	8 places	40
Evesham	Bengeworth First	1	180
	St Andrew's First	1	180
Martley	The Chantry School	1	150
Malvern	Leigh & Bransford Primary	0.5	105
	Callow End Primary	3 places	21
	Somers Park Primary /Malvern Vale	1	210
	Rushwick Primary	0.5	105
<b>Total Number of New Places Created</b>			<b>3076</b>

**Table 12 - Additional places provided in special schools in Worcestershire since 2012**

Area	School	Number of New Places Created
Worcester	Fort Royal Primary – Early Years (Temp)	20
	Fort Royal Primary – Key Stage 1	21
Redditch	Pitcheroak School	10
Wyre Forest	Wyre Forest School – Early Years	5 FTE places
Bromsgrove	Rigby Hall School	8
	Chadsgrove School	9
Wychavon	Vale of Evesham School	9
<b>Total Number of New Places Created</b>		<b>82</b>

The following details the current proposed school expansions for 2019/20.

**Table 13 – Proposed school expansions 2019/20 and 2020/21**

<b>Summary of proposed additional school places for 2019/2021</b>			
Area	School	Forms of Entry	Number of New Places Created
Bromsgrove	Rigby Hall School (Special)	N/A	25
Redditch	Holyoakes Field First	0.5	75
Pershore	Pershore High School	1	120
Stourport	Hartlebury CE Primary	5 places	35
	Stourport High & Sixth Form Centre	1	150
Worcester	Blessed Edward Oldcorne Catholic College *	1	150
	Christopher Whitehead Language College *	1	150
Upton	Kempsey Primary	5 places	35
	Hanley Castle High School *	0.6	90
<b>Total Number of New Places Created</b>			<b>680</b>

\* Subject to consultation and approval to funding from Council



## 10. School organisational changes

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In January 2014 the DfE implemented proposals to amend the existing legislative and policy requirements governing school organisation changes.

### Academy presumption

Should the Council identify the need for a new school in Worcestershire, the Council has a duty to seek proposals to establish an academy (free school) via the free school presumption. This will be in line with the guidance provided by the DfE in "Opening and closing maintained schools – statutory guidance for proposers and decision makers – April 2016"

The guidance about making [school organisational changes to local-authority-maintained schools](#), including school closure is published by the DfE.

The Council has developed a process for [opening a new school](#) that it will follow based on the current DfE guidance. Whilst the Council can identify a preferred proposer for the new school, the final decision will be taken by the Secretary of State upon the recommendation of the Regional Schools Commissioner.

### Academies / Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs)

The Council believes schools should find the best local solution to meet its development. The DfE is supportive of Multi-Academy Trusts (MATs) as Ministers feel they offer the best options for schools, especially in relation to peer-to-peer support.

The Council will continue to work closely with any school which transitions to an academy in the best interest of all children and young people in Worcestershire. Where new school places are required due to demographic growth or housing development, the Council will work with all schools in that area to achieve its statutory responsibility.

Where additional places are required to meet Basic Need, the Council will retain control of the strategic policy in its statutory role to ensure a sufficiency of places. The Council will commission additional places from schools in the area, including academies. Resulting changes in the PAN of academies will be the responsibility of the individual schools, in line with DfE guidance. Funding for these places will be provided by the Council from with its Basic Need Grant or any appropriate Section 106 or CIL contributions.

### Federations

Federations offer a supportive environment for non-academies offering many of the same partnership benefits including:

- Cost savings, by the sharing of purchasing;
- Collaborative working and peer-to-peer support;
- Sharing of specialist resources;
- Opportunities for staff development across the federation; and
- Potential for Executive Head across two or more sites.

Worcestershire supports schools seeking to form federations when they are in the best interests of the children and help support the long-term viability of the schools involved.

### Free Schools

Free Schools are a type of academy established when either a new school is set up, or an independent school transfers into the state system. The Council is always interested in any free school proposals for Worcestershire and is happy to discuss any proposals to ensure they align with our statutory duties. Proposers should make contact with the [Provision Planning and Accommodation Team](#).

The Council will work with free schools in the same way as other academies in the best interests of the children and young people in Worcestershire.



New Malvern Vale School

## UTCs/Studio Colleges

Worcestershire does not currently have any taxpayer funded 14-18 education provision in the form of University Technical Colleges or Studio Colleges. The Council is interested in working with partners to explore options to further our aims within the Corporate Plan, "Shaping Worcestershire's Future", and our "Open for Business" priority: To improve the skills of local young people.

Any provision is likely to be for countywide learners and will be developed as part of the matrix of provision the authority has to meet the increased demand in this phase of education.

## Responding to school initiated consultations

The Council will respond to school initiated consultations, such as those seeking:

- Changes to age range;
- Changes to nursery provision;
- Changes to school capacity;
- Changes to school pupil admissions number (PAN);
- Changes to sixth form provision; and
- Changes to catchment areas and other admissions changes.

Responses will be in line with our statutory duties, such as ensuring a sufficiency of school places, and in our role as parental champion. In October 2016, Cabinet agreed that change of age range proposals would be assessed on the following criteria:

- Open and fair consultation has taken place with parents and other relevant stakeholders and the school can clearly demonstrate how any objections or issues raised will be managed;
- The school has a good or outstanding Ofsted judgement, or can demonstrate how the change would support improvement at the school;
- The school involved can demonstrate the capacity to manage any curriculum changes or has secured appropriate support to do so;
- The school involved can demonstrate that appropriate facilities, staff, and systems will be in place, including how they will manage additional revenue costs;
- There is no detrimental impact on other schools i.e. it does not undermine the quality of education provided by other good or outstanding schools in the area by creating additional places where there is already surplus capacity;
- There is an agreed, clear, and practical pathway for children to move on from each school affected by the change;
- Funding for any necessary accommodation changes has already been secured;
- Any reduction in the published admission number or change in admission criteria required has been consulted upon and agreed; and
- Appropriate planning permission and any other consent required have been secured.

Where proposals relate to academies and other providers outside of the Council's control, then we will work closely with the Regional Schools Commissioner (RSC) to give contextual information and other advice to enable decisions to be taken.

## **School driven PAN changes**

Where schools seek to increase or decrease their published admission number (PAN) we would request they make contact with the [Provision Planning and Accommodation](#) team. This will allow appropriate advice in respect of school organisation and admissions being provided. It will also allow us to provide contextual information on the sufficiency of places in an area to avoid oversupply or undersupply and places, and potential detrimental effect on the viability of other schools in the area.

# 11. Monitoring effectiveness of plan

Overall performance of the plan will be reported annually to the Director of Children, Families and Communities and the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Education and Skills under the following criteria.

## Sufficiency of places across all plans

The Council has a statutory function to ensure a sufficiency of places in schools, has a statutory duty to ensure, as far as practical, a sufficiency of childcare places, and a statutory responsibility to have a strategic overview of post-16 place planning.

From these statutory duties, the first monitoring point for the plan can be drawn. Simply put, if the Council has a sufficiency of school places for both mainstream and SEND pupils, has a sufficiency of childcare places and produces a strategic overview of Post-16 provision, then we are meeting our strategic duties and the School Organisation Plan can be said to be meeting its core function and in that respect, successful.

## Sufficiency of places to meet housing growth

Housing developments will be monitored by the Provision Planning and Accommodation team and the impact on local schools clearly identified. Officers will work in partnership with developers and district councils to find appropriate solutions and ensure these are in place to meet the number of houses constructed.

## Number of additional places created in a timely fashion

Worcestershire seeks to operate a 5% surplus in any educational planning area. This is to allow for parental preference and in-year moves. Where the Council anticipates that a given area or school will be under pressure for places due to demographic growth or housing developments, they may seek to expand schools to meet this need.

Any consultations on expanding schools and the construction of additional accommodation should be achieved to allow the change to be made in time for the September intake, and ahead of the forecasted pressure point. This will be rag-rated as part of the DfE dashboard.

## Number of additional places created in good provision

Worcestershire will prioritise expanding 'good' or 'outstanding' early years providers and schools to meet pupil growth. This is to offer parents the choice of the best provision in line with government objectives. This will be rag-rated as part of the DfE dashboard.



Rigby Hall School - Extension

## 12. Future challenges

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Provision Planning in Worcestershire faces many challenges throughout the lifetime of this strategic plan and beyond. These include, but are not limited to:

- Identifying sufficient capital funds required to meet our statutory obligations.
- Reaching physical capacity of some school sites and therefore being unable to expand existing schools further. This is particularly an issue for schools in rural areas and at secondary level.
- The creation of new schools as a result of housing developments.
- Uncertainty of housing trajectories and how CIL will become established within Worcestershire.
- Over or under supply of places following school organisation changes which are outside the remit of the Council.
- Supporting small schools, especially in rural areas, to remain viable.
- Supporting early years' providers to meet the needs for flexible provision.
- Creating an appropriate balance for the need for special school places and supporting mainstream schools to meet their obligations to pupils with SEND.
- Changes to the Apprenticeship Levy which has seen a decline in the offer and take-up of apprenticeship. Any reduction in the availability of which may impact post-16 provision



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**Contact Information:**

Robert Williams

Manager Universal Provision & Planning 0-19  
Provision Planning & Accommodation  
Education & Skills

Tel: 01905 844505

Email: [rjwilliams@worcestershire.gov.uk](mailto:rjwilliams@worcestershire.gov.uk)