

This report is to note.

TITLE	Primary and Secondary Schools Roll Projections
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	Schools Forum on 10 July 2019
WARD	(All Wards);
LEAD OFFICER	Deputy Chief Executive - Graham Ebers, Director of Children's Services - Carol Cammiss

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

That there are sufficient primary and secondary school places, that are sufficiently close to homes to promote sustainable travel to school.

RECOMMENDATION

That Forum notes the contents of the report.

SUMMARY OF REPORT

The projections indicate that there are sufficient primary school places to meet needs. However, the borough's strategy for new homes, focused on a small number of large scale developments is expected to mean that there will be a mismatch between where children live and where schools are located. With the exception of the pressures seen in the Shinfield area (and possibly evidenced by the birth "spike" in Woodley) there has been no immediate surge in demand in areas with rapid housing growth.

In summary, to date the lower birth numbers per year after 2012 have been more important than the impact of migration related to the number of new homes built in the borough.

At secondary level, the primary bulge is working its way into the secondary sector. However, although the projections indicate that demand will outstrip the available places, the growth may not be so great as to create a requirement for a large-scale expansion programme. The greatest pressure is likely to be seen in the north of the borough, where school expansion could be challenging given site restrictions. There is no shortfall in places this year and the projection indicates this be the case next year (2020/21) too.

The council's plans for the primary sector are to align the availability of places with the new residential geography by creating new primary schools. The schools planned in the next phase of school development may not be viable immediately though, and proposals are set out to ensure that new facilities are used effectively, even if there is no immediate need for additional school places.

Additional capacity may be required in the secondary sector, but not until 2021/22 at the earliest. Sixth form capacity may be a longer-term need too, noting that from 2021/22 two 11 to 16 schools will be feeding post 16 students into the local education market.

One very large-scale scheme is in development in Grazeley on the western edge of the borough. If this proceeds, it will need both primary and secondary schools.

Background

Primary Phase:

Primary phase planning is based on seven planning areas, Earley, North, South East, South West, Wokingham Town East and West and Woodley. For these purposes, the Wokingham Town East and West areas are treated as one, reflecting the ward geography and that the Matthews Green development (where the next potential primary school is sited) sits close to the boundary between the two areas.

There are four significant drivers determining the number of children requiring Reception places. These are:

- births in the borough,
- the number of children moving into (and out of) the borough after birth,
- the proportion of children educated in the state sector
- cross border movement of children

Not all of these can be assessed directly, so to understand the likely future need the analysis focuses on four key data sources:

- Birth data
- Roll projections
- 2019 admission round data
- Planned new housing impact

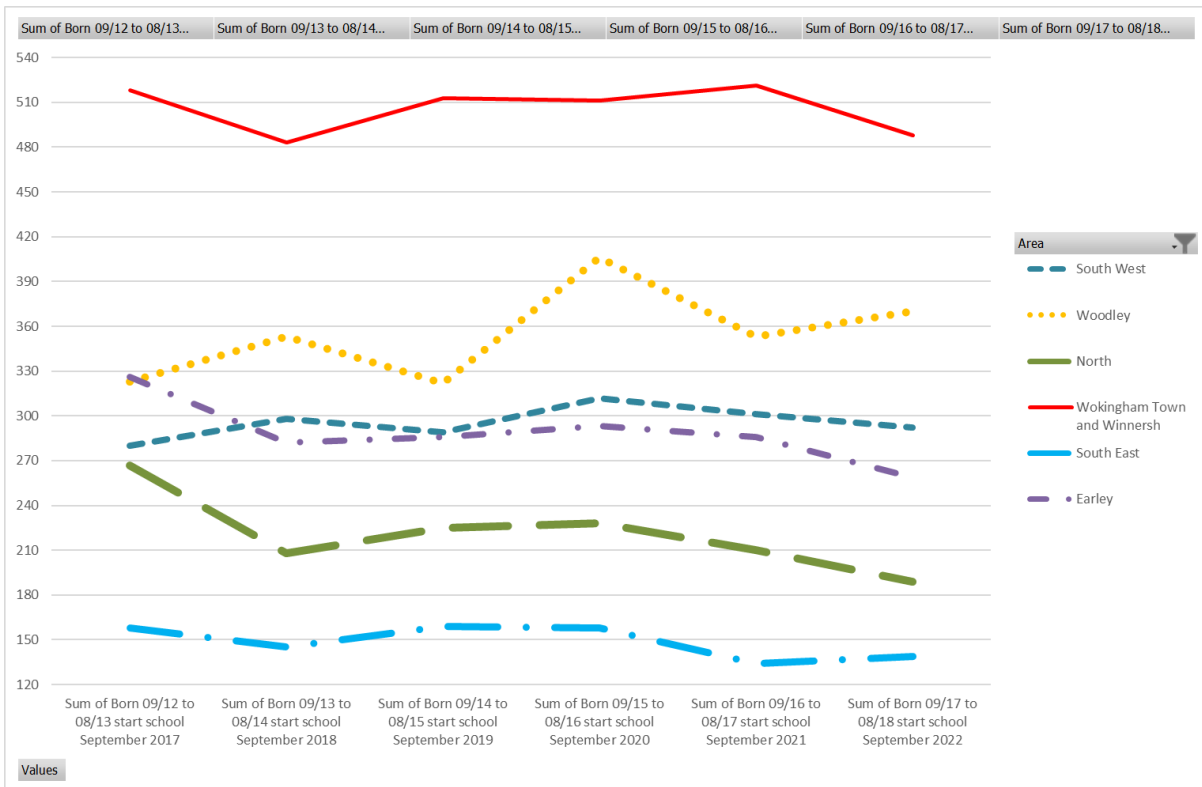
These four data sources are considered individually, and then the individual results are brought together, to create the needs analysis.

The projection, summarised by planning area is appended to the report. School level projections will be circulated separately.

A) Birth Data: At a borough level, births in the cohort starting school in 2020 are up 6% (114), compared to the cohort starting school in 2019, but this reversed again in the cohort starting school in 2021 (down 5% or 103 fewer births).

The graph below (created from aggregated ward data) shows births by academic year (with the year of admission to a Reception class) for different parts of the borough.

Although not shown below, the years before 2012 were characterised by higher birth rates than those seen from 2012.



Woodley shows an increased number of births, with a sharp spike in 2020. **Wokingham Town / Winnersh**, the **South West**, and the **South East** are relatively static, despite very high levels of house building in Wokingham Town / Winnersh and the South West (with both the Arborfield and South of the M4 SDLs being active in the area).

Earley and the **North** areas exhibit a declining number of births over this period. As with other areas no strong trend has been found over the 2012/13 to 2017/18 period. In **Earley** the major fall was in the Hawkedon ward, while in the north Remenham and Wargrave and Twyford have seen 60% (47) of the fall in births (78) in this area between them.

B) Roll Projections: The Borough projection (table below) indicates there is likely to be sufficient capacity in all years, **but with a very low surplus (and so a significant risk of a shortfall) in 2020.**

This is based on current capacity and does not take account of the planned provision in Alder Grove. With 30 places at Alder Grove the projection is for a surplus of 44 places in 2020.

This projection does not expressly model the impact of new housing, it simply takes historic arrival and transition rates and applies them to more recent birth and school roll data. These figures therefore include the immediate impact of new housing completed in 2018.

School Year	Year R*	Total	Reception Places	Net Capacity	+ / - Reception places	+ / - Net Capacity	% R + / -	% NC + / -
2018/19	2,097	15,143	2,326	16,287	229	1,144	10%	7%
2019/20	2,202	15,328	2,326	16,287	124	959	5%	6%
2020/21	2,304	15,686	2,326	16,287	22	601	1%	4%
2021/22	2,214	15,827	2,326	16,287	112	460	5%	3%
2022/23	2,138	15,830	2,326	16,287	188	457	8%	3%
2023/24	2,138	15,800	2,326	16,287	188	487	8%	3%
2024/25	2,138	15,785	2,326	16,287	188	502	8%	3%
2025/26	2,138	15,836	2,326	16,287	188	451	8%	3%

R is Reception places

NC is Net capacity

Area projections can be grouped into three broad groups.

These are those with significant Reception place deficits (or no surplus capacity) from 2020 onwards:

- **Woodley**, 40 Reception place **deficit** in 2020/21, low (16 in 2021/22) or zero surplus Reception capacity from 2021 onwards and a significant deficit overall.
- **Wokingham Town / Winnersh**, 14 Reception place **deficit** in 2021/22, increasing shortfall in capacity from 2022/23 onwards.

In Woodley this points towards a need to plan for additional capacity in 2020 (up to 60 places) and a continuing need for additional Reception capacity, from 2022/23 onwards. In Wokingham Town / Winnersh this points to the need for capacity from 2021/22 onwards. Needs would be met by the planned 1 FE Matthews Green School opening in 2021/22.

Areas with possible challenges in one or two years from 2020 onwards:

- **Earley**, with a 9 Reception place surplus (2%) projected for 2020/21.
- **South East**, with a 10 Reception place surplus (4%) in 2020/21

Neither projection indicates a need to take further action at this stage. At worst this points to a small number of children diverted out of area – possibly to the new Alder Grove School (in Shinfield West) if this opens in 2020.

Areas where no shortfalls are projected:

- **South West** (where Reception and Net capacity surpluses are just over 10% until 2025/26).
- **North** (where Reception and Net capacity surplus places are projected to range from 7% rising to 21% (Reception) and 5% rising to 14% in the period until 2025/26.

Of these only the South West area is expected to see significant residential growth

C) 2019 admissions round: This is used here as a way of calibrating the most recent roll projections. Although the roll projections are more recent than the admissions data, the roll projections follow a standard methodology (so can be compared across the years) and are driven by older data sets (2018/19 admissions round). Significant variances could indicate that historic relationships have changed. Most specifically, if the 2019 offers are significantly lower than the projection for 2019, this could indicate reduced migration of children into the borough.

A note of caution is that the “outcomes” are the position in May 2019, while the projection is for January 2020. Children will move into the borough in the May 2019 to January 2020 period, reducing the discrepancies.

Area	Reception Places	Projection	Offer May 2019	Variance - offers V projection	% ge var from offers
Earley	475	445	404	-41	-10%
North	260	241	233	-8	-3%
South East	241	248	210	-38	-18%
South West	255	228	224	-4	-2%
Wokingham Town / Winnersh	690	680	612	-68	-11%
Woodley	405	360	364	4	1%
Borough	2326	2202	2047	-155	-8%

- No area shows a significant increase compared to the projection.
- The **North**, **South West** and **Woodley** area outcomes are within 5% (+ or -) of the projection.
- The **Earley**, **Wokingham Town and Winnersh** and **South East** areas show markedly lower allocation numbers compared to projections.

These figures therefore help *validate* the projections for the **North**, **South West** and **Woodley** areas but indicate that **the Earley**, **South East** and **Wokingham Town** projections are overestimates (at least for 2019/20).

They do *not* therefore support the case for additional capacity in 2020/21 in the **Wokingham Town / Winnersh** area.

They indicate that the projected rolls in the South East and Earley will be overestimates of need, so it is very unlikely that additional capacity will be required in these areas. They indicate that places may be available in **Earley** to meet the needs of **Woodley** resident children. The projection indicates that circa 30 places could be available to help offset the projected Reception place deficit in 2020/21. Based on 2019 outcomes it is likely that surplus capacity will be available at Loddon Primary school, which is within walking distance of homes on the western edge of Earley (The Oakwood Centre, for example, is 1.8 miles from the Loddon Primary School).

D) New housing impact: New housing is focused in SDLs, with significant build programmes in Woodley and Winnersh. The council conducts an annual survey of new homes. This confirms that new homes are occupied by families with young children. The following table (derived from the 2019 returns) shows the number of children per home, per year, for pre-school and primary school age groups identified through the new home survey.

	0 to 4 year olds	5 to-10 year olds
Child yield per home per year	0.05	0.03

The primary figure would give 30 children per 1,000 homes (consistent with a long-standing “rule of thumb” figure for long-term child occupancy levels of established areas). The 0 to 4 year old rate is significantly higher though (50 children per year per 1,000 homes), indicating there is likely to be a delayed additional impact of new homes on primary rolls, as already resident children age into the primary sector.

It is likely that areas with additional housing will see some additional growth (over the projected rolls) due to the additional housing, because of the very high rates of housebuilding seen recently, compared to historic rates. For these purposes, only 1/3 of the calculated child yield is taken as being a potential addition to the standard roll projection. This is on the basis that 2/3 of the planned homes are required to meet demand consistent with the household projections, the household projections are based on the ONS population projections, and these are near flat for the primary school age group in the borough.

The following table shows the number of homes planned.

Area	Earley	North	South East	South West	Woodley	Wokingham Town / Winnersh	Grand Total
Parish							
2018/19	20	53	55	769	77	875	1849
2019/20	0	28	15	753	115	612	1523
2020/21	0	13	0	661	73	279	1026
2021/22	0	0	0	590	50	184	824
2022/23	0	0	0	499	0	108	607
2023/24	0	5	0	410	0	255	670
2024/25	0	0	0	455	0	205	660
2025/26	0	0	0	352	0	205	557

On this basis the number of additional children per area would be:

Area	Earley	North	South East	South West	Woodley	Wokingham Town/ Winnersh	Grand Total
Parish							
2018/19	0	1	1	8	1	9	18
2019/20	0	1	1	15	2	15	34
2020/21	0	1	1	22	3	18	44
2021/22	0	1	1	28	3	20	52
2022/23	0	1	1	33	3	21	58
2023/24	0	1	1	37	3	23	65
2024/25	0	1	1	41	3	25	72
2025/26	0	1	1	45	3	27	77

Note though the number of children recorded in this table is significantly less than the children expected to be resident in the new communities. This could mean that areas with a high proportion of new homes will, in time have significantly more children. Conversely, the number of children in areas without high numbers of new homes could decline.

Analysis of Issues

There is no evidence of sufficient additional need to justify additional capacity in **Earley**, the **North**, and the **South East** areas.

All the data for **Woodley** indicates a high number of births in the area and therefore a need to engage with the local community and stakeholders on how to be prepared to manage this next year, if this does occur. Taking account of the projected surplus in Earley, the need is for 30 additional places (with contingency plans for a further 30 Reception places). Given there is a one year birth “spike” the reasonable presumption is that this is a single year bulge.

The data for **Wokingham Town** is less conclusive. The projection shows a very small surplus next year (2020/21) and a deficit in 2021/2, but this year’s low outturn (compared to the projection) indicates that children are not moving to the borough as would be expected from data from earlier years. This may reflect a down turn in the housing market in established residential areas. Combining the adjustment to reflect this year’s actual offers (down, compared to the projection) and additional housing led growth, would still leave a significant surplus in future years.

The picture for the South West is clearer. The schools in this area are in Shinfield and around (but not in) the Arborfield Garrison area. The Shinfield area will see a new school open in 2020 (Alder Grove / Shinfield West Primary School), adding up to 60 places in the planning area (albeit not within walking distance of Arborfield). All projections indicate that, taking account of the Alder Grove (Shinfield West) capacity, there will be sufficient capacity in this area in 2020. In the Arborfield area, despite improving results, the Coombes School is expected to have a significant number of surplus places this September.

Therefore, although the impact of new housing might in future be much greater than seen to date, at the moment the most important factor seems to be the impact of the fall in birth rates since 2012, and there is no clear case for additional capacity (above the Alder Grove capacity) in the immediate future.

Secondary Phase

The recent Ofsted inspection delayed the preparation of the secondary roll projections. The analysis is therefore less comprehensive than the primary equivalent. A commitment to write a revised secondary places strategy this summer has been given, and this will be shared with the Forum once complete.

Secondary planning is carried out for two planning areas – north and south, with Earley (Maiden Erleigh, Woodley (Bulmershe and Waingels) and Wargrave (Piggott) in the north area and other schools (Oakbank, Bohunt, St Crispins, Emmbrook, Holt and Forest) in the south.

The key data sources are similar to those for the primary sector, but with Primary Year 6 projections substituting for birth data in the secondary roll projection.

- Roll projections
- 2019 admission round data
- Planned new housing impact

As with the primary sector analysis, these are available data sets, but behind them sit other less accessible data, including:

- Migration
- Cross border movement

- Independent and home education percentages

Historically, it is known that Wokingham's early years and KS1 population tends to grow (with their parents) population has tended to grow, but older children and young people populations have tended to be relatively static. The scale of the house building programme across the borough may though lead to some growth from children and young people moving to the borough.

Cross border movement has always had a significant impact, in part because the geography of the long standing secondary schools was inherited from Berkshire County Council. Maiden Erlegh and Bulmershe serve parts of south Reading, while most of Wokingham Without is served by Edgbarrow in Bracknell Forest. Given that the pattern of movement is to and from different areas and schools there is no good reason to think that historic patterns will necessarily stay the same.

The secondary projection, summarised by planning area is appended to the report. School level projections will be circulated separately.

Borough projections: The table below shows the borough projection until 2025/26, the current 2019 outcome and the Year 7 position if all Year 7 projections are adjusted to reflect the 2019 outcome variance.

The main projection indicates a shortfall in Year 7 places in 2021/22 (with a higher surplus in 2020/21 than expected to be seen in the 2019/20 year). The adjusted projection indicates a very small deficit (less than one class) in 2022/23

On this basis, it is likely that increasing rolls can be accommodated in existing schools, with contingency planning for bulge classes (rather than by planning for permanent school expansion or new schools).

Academic year	7	School Roll	Y7 Surplus / Deficit	School Surplus / Deficit	2019/20 offers	Y7 adjusted	Surplus (+) / Deficit (-)
2018/19	1,941	10,897	222	1,986		1,941	222
2019/20	2,143	11,318	20	1,565	2,037	2,037	126
2020/21	2,061	11,730	102	1,153		1,958	205
2021/22	2,220	12,127	-57	756	%ge of projection	2,110	53
2022/23	2,295	12,533	-132	350		2,181	-18
2023/24	2,316	12,954	-153	- 71		2,201	-38
2024/25	2,307	13,225	-144	- 342	95%	2,192	-29
2025/26	2,223	13,431	-60	- 548		2,113	50

Looking at the north and south area projections it is apparent that the north area is likely to be under pressure:

North:

	Year 7	Total NOR	Y7 + /1	School + /-
2018/19	921	5,566	40	287
2019/20	962	5,678	-1	176
2020/21	947	5,759	14	94
2021/22	988	5,877	-27	-23
2022/23	1,045	6,068	-84	-214
2023/24	1,030	6,208	-69	-355
2024/25	1,068	6,351	-107	-497
2025/26	1,010	6,431	-49	-578

South:

	Year 7	Total NOR	Y7 + /1	School + /-
2018/19	1,021	5,342	181	1688
2019/20	1,182	5,651	20	1379
2020/21	1,114	5,981	88	1049
2021/22	1,233	6,261	-31	769
2022/23	1,250	6,475	-48	555
2023/24	1,286	6,756	-84	274
2024/25	1,239	6,884	-37	146
2025/26	1,213	7,010	-11	20

These are the “raw” projection figures, but they do reflect pressures in the 2019/20 admissions round, in that nearly all unfilled places are in schools in the south.

Note too that Bulmershe (in the North area) has historically had a significant number of out of designated children admitted from the Reading BC area. This year, on offer day, 34 children were admitted under criterion F (children living outside the designated area, with no older sibling at the school) with the furthest living 2.102 miles from the school. Although this is only one school this does give a measure of protection (for parts of the North area) because a high proportion of Wokingham BC homes in the north will be closer to Bulmershe than the out of Designated Area Reading resident children.

The analysis is not yet complete, but even allowing for new homes it is expected that there will be sufficient capacity in 2020/21 at least, at a borough level, but with continued pressure in the north of the borough.

Future Growth Plans

Primary Schools

Three new schools are planned to open in the period 2020 to 2021:

- Alder Grove (Shinfield West)
- Matthews Green (North Wokingham)
- Arborfield.

These schools are required to meet the needs of new communities. Wokingham’s strategic approach, to focus development in a small number of large-scale developments, each provided with essential infrastructure, requires new schools to minimise traffic congestion. This approach is known to be supported by the existing

Wokingham community, as well as by residents moving into new residential areas. As noted above though, it is not clear there will be sufficient additional demand to fill all places available in existing schools in the planning areas in which these schools are sited. The current plan is to open the Alder Grove School in Shinfield in 2020, noting there were insufficient school places in Shinfield to ensure all families could be offered a local school place, in 2019. In the case of the other schools, it is less certain that the new school will be required. The current Matthews Green proposal (to be ratified) is that although the school will be ready for 2021, so enabling the associated Community Centre to open, the school will only open if it has sufficient roll to be viable. The current Arborfield proposal (subject to further development) is that the Farley Hill primary school relocate to the new site. This would ensure that additional places would only become available once demand had risen sufficiently to require additional places on top of both the places at Farley Hill and the Coombes Primary School. This move would require a statutory consultation process, and, as most Farley Hill pupils come from the Arborfield / Arborfield Garrison area, would help reduce car movements and end school run congestion in Farley Hill village.

In the longer term further new schools are planned in Spencers Wood, Arborfield (Finchwood Park, formerly Hogwood Garden Village) and South Wokingham (south of the railway line to Bracknell), reflecting the likely long term needs of these very large scale developments. None of these is programmed yet.

Apart from the large-scale housing developments, Woodley is expected to require at least one additional Reception class in 2020. This is expected to be a bulge class (so not leading to permanent school expansion). It is presumed that some of the Woodley growth will be absorbed in Earley schools.

Secondary Schools

The most recent projections indicate that additional Year 7 capacity will not be required until 2021/22, at the earliest. It is likely that this can be created in partnership with existing schools, rather than through the creation of a new school. That said, the council is currently bidding (in a local partnership) for a new settlement in Grazeley. If this does proceed, it is sufficiently large and separated from existing communities to require new primary and secondary schools.

It is known though, that school expansion may be challenging in some areas. In the north Maiden Erlegh and Bulmershe School sites are known to be constricted and Waingels is a large school (by Wokingham standards). While pressure may be less in the south, a number of schools in this area are thought to have the capacity to take additional roll, either into existing buildings or through on site expansion.

Sixth form capacity.

The Council has a limited set of responsibilities around post 16 education, with a particular duty for sixth form education. There is no likelihood of any shortfall in the immediate future, but there is a need to consider how the needs of Wokingham resident young people moving on from the 11 to 16 Bohunt and Oakbank schools will be met, from 2021/22 onwards (when the 2016 entry pupils will need post 16 places). There will be sufficient infrastructure at that point; the key questions will relate to the funding and

organisation challenges to schools and colleges that might inhibit their ability to create sufficient capacity at that point.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council continues to face severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of reductions to public sector funding and growing pressures in our statutory services. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions of approximately £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	N/A	N/A	N/A
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	N/A	N/A	N/A

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

Cross-Council Implications (how does this decision impact on other Council services, including properties and priorities?)

Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

List of Background Papers

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