

Education Report

December 2020



Local Plan Education Planning Report 2020

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The purpose of this report is:

1. To consider the potential impact associated with planned housing growth from sites allocated within the adopted Core Strategy and Development Plan (CSDP) and sites proposed for allocation within the draft Allocations and Designations Plan on the sufficiency of school places in Sunderland; and
2. To consider options for provision of school places.

1.2 The report is a live document and as such is subject to annual reviews. The report is not intended to address wider education matters relating to school organisation. It should also be noted that the data used within this report utilises the best available data, such as census data, birth rate data and does not take account of the average demand coming through the school system, which is expected to have an impact on the number of school places required.

Context and current position

1.3 Sunderland City Council is in the process of preparing their Local Plan for the City. The Local Plan will comprise of three key documents:

- Part 1: A Core Strategy and Development Plan, which sets out the overarching spatial strategy for development within the city over the plan period from 2015-2033, as well as containing more specific detailed Development Management policies and strategic allocations and designations. This plan was adopted in January 2020;
- Part 2: An Allocations and Designations Plan which will make the site-specific allocations necessary to deliver the strategic vision, and;
- Part 3: The International Advanced Manufacturing Park Area Action Plan, which has been prepared jointly with South Tyneside to enable the delivery of a new International Advanced Manufacturing Park on land to the north of the existing Nissan car manufacturing plant. This Plan was adopted November 2017.

1.4 The CSDP provides a strategy for the delivery of 13,410 new homes in Sunderland over the 18 year plan period (2015-2033). Together with a changing landscape of schools arising from central government policy, it will mean that the Council will need to plan appropriately for the future to meet our duty to promote choice, diversity and fair access and to meet our statutory duty regarding the sufficiency of school places across the city.

This is only possible when there are sufficient numbers of school places situated within the right location. Currently within the city there are 8 nursery schools, 83 primary schools, 18 secondary schools and 6 schools for pupils with special educational needs.

1.5 The following table sets out the location of school provision within the city.

Table 1: Number of schools within Sunderland

| | Sunderland North | Sunderland South | Central | Washington | Coalfield | Total |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------|------------|-----------|-------|
| Nursery | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 3 | 8 |
| Primary | 16 | 34 | 0 | 18 | 15 | 83 |
| Secondary | 3 | 11 | 0 | 3 | 2 | 18 |
| Special educational needs | 1 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 |

1.6 With regards pupil place planning the Council conducts a yearly sufficiency assessment, which involves identifying the number of school places required to meet the requirement of the normal admissions rounds (reception and year 7) for the following year of entry and subsequent years. This process identifies where there are pressures on existing places, where there may be surplus places and the period that high demand or surplus may be maintained. These calculations include a projected demand from the existing school age population combined with additional demand generated through new housing. As such, the current supply of places is balanced against the projected future demand for places.

2.0 Population Change and Pupil Numbers

2.1 Live birth rate data, published annually by the Office of National Statistics (ONS), is the primary data source used to calculate future demand for reception places. Where this data is unavailable (due to the timely release of data), birth rate data is calculated as an average of the previous 3 years of complete data. When calculating places, the Council identifies the number of new births across the city, analyses this using admissions data from the previous 3 years of entry and this is then applied to planning area, wards and schools.

2.2 The table below sets out future projections for reception places based on birth rate data:

Table 2: Primary school places required short term city-wide

| | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2022/22 |
|----------------------------|---------|---------|---------|
| Published admission number | 3409 | 3409 | 3409 |

| | | | |
|-----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Birth rate data | 2920 | 2898 | 2908 |
| Surplus | 489 | 511 | 504 |

- 2.3 Current data sets indicate that based on short term birth rate projections there are sufficient primary places across the city to meet demand in the immediate future.
- 2.4 In terms of local secondary school places, previously the decrease in the city's birth rate pre 2010 resulted in surplus places in the majority of the city's secondary schools and academies. This resulted in increased ability for parents to secure a secondary place outside their child's traditional primary/secondary feeder relationship. However, the position on this has since changed.
- 2.5 Using average primary to secondary transfer trend data, the following table sets out the anticipated demand for year 7 places in future years and it clearly indicates the surplus places decreasing over time due to the increase in projected demand.

Table 3: Secondary school places required short term city-wide

| | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 |
|-----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Published admissions number | 3354 | 3354 | 3354 |
| Projected demand | 3074 | 3151 | 3197 |
| Surplus | 280 | 203 | 157 |

- 2.6 However, as with Primary places, the demand for secondary places is not equally allocated across the city. Therefore, there are now a number of schools in the city with a current or projected deficit in secondary places. This is most prevalent in North Sunderland, South Sunderland (schools adjacent to South Sunderland Growth Area- SSGA), Washington and the Houghton/Shiney Row area of the Coalfields.
- 2.7 Sunderland's pupil projection methods follow a format recognised nationally using guidance provided by the Department for Education (DfE) (DfE Guidance to forecasting pupil numbers in SPP, January 2010). Effective pupil place planning is a fundamental element of the Council's role as strategic commissioner of good places. It is underpinned by strong use of relevant data drawn from a variety of sources which includes birth rate data and school census data to reflect the latest school numbers on roll and also reflect parental preference trends. Projection outcomes are monitored against actual figures with variances between projections and actuals incorporated into future years projections.

3.0 Impact of Local Plan proposals on school spaces

3.1 The Education and Inspections Act 2006 requires local authorities to adopt a strategic role, with a duty to promote choice, diversity and fair access to school provision. This is only possible when there are sufficient numbers of school places situated within the right location. The Council identifies need for places based on the statutory walking distances from home to school, which is no more than 2 miles for primary schools and 3 miles for secondary schools.

3.2 It is anticipated that most new housing developments will generate additional pressure on the existing demand for school places, with the size and nature of developments varying the number of pupils generated by a development. Where it is identified that additional school places are required as a consequence of new developments, the following S106 contributions¹ are required per place:-

- Nursery - £13,115
- Primary - £13,115
- Secondary -£17,050

3.3 Based on local trend analysis² the Council has identified the following pupil per new housing ratio;

Table 4: Pupil per new housing ratio

| Dwelling size | 1-2 Bed | 3 Bed | 4+Bed |
|--|---------|-------|-------|
| Average primary aged pupils per dwelling | 0.05 | 0.24 | 0.29 |
| Average secondary aged pupils per dwelling | 0.03 | 0.12 | 0.15 |

3.4 In order to determine the impact of planned new housing on school spaces within the city, the number of annual housing completions projected from the CSDP allocated and housing sites proposed through the draft A&D Plan are applied to the pupil ratio at Table 4. The projected number of additional children requiring a school place as a result of new housing developments is then added to the birth rate data outlined above at Tables 2 and 3.

¹ Further details set out in the Council's Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document June 2020

² New postcodes registered between 2010-2014, cross referenced with school admissions data.

Table 5: Pupil places required city wide when incorporating projected housing completions

| | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/24 | | 2024/25 | |
|---|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| | Primary | Secondary | Primary | Secondary | Primary | Secondary | Primary | Secondary |
| Published admission number | 3409 | 3354 | 3409 | 3354 | 3409 | 3354 | 3409 | 3354 |
| Birth rate data/projected demand | 2920 | 3074 | 2898 | 3151 | 2908 | 3197 | 2885 | 2953 |
| School places required based on projected housing completions | 27 | 20 | 64 | 46 | 108 | 77 | 145 | 104 |
| Total places required | 2947 | 3094 | 2962 | 3197 | 3016 | 3274 | 3030 | 3057 |
| Surplus | 462 | 260 | 447 | 157 | 393 | 80 | 379 | 297 |

- 3.5 Current data sets indicate that when taking on board projected housing completions for both primary and secondary schools there is surplus places in both primary and secondary provision over the next four years.
- 3.6 However, notwithstanding the fact that Table 5 indicates there will predominantly be surplus school places in both primary and secondary other factors can influence school place sufficiency, often beyond the Council and its partners' control. This may include the impact of national policy changes, mergers between existing institutions and the discontinuation of provision. Other factors which can impact on projections include changes to Published Admission Numbers (PAN), age range or location.
- 3.7 In the current education environment, the relationship between the local authority and local schools to meet pupil place planning requirements is changing to meet the expectations of new Government policy. In the past the local authority has increased pupil numbers where required through a process of consensus with local schools, with additional school places created only where there is demand and as part of a wider strategy. Changes to the school admission code give own Admissions Authorities (such as Academies, VA schools and Free schools) the freedom to establish their PAN outside of the Council's wider planning process, providing extra places in schools and the development of new free schools in areas where capacity is already either sufficient or demonstrating a surplus. This has resulted in children moving out of their existing school places at times for no obvious reason, which can potentially destabilise the existing schools in the area.

- 3.8 As more schools in Sunderland convert to academy status, with new free schools developing, the relationship between schools and the Council will continue to change. However, to ensure that provision is sufficient and strategically managed there will be a continued need for local schools and the local authority to work together to develop new school places that best meet the needs of local children and schools themselves.
- 3.9 In doing so there is also a need to provide balance, particularly in developing new school places that respond to future housing need. As noted, increased parental mobility gives those wishing to access a place at a popular school outside their traditional catchment the ability to do so. The introduction of further capacity within a development area, before the development has fully matured can result in parents moving their child out of their existing school place which may in turn prevent families moving into the area from accessing those places.

4.0 Area impacts of new housing on school places

- 4.1 The surplus spaces identified in Table 5 above are based on city-wide figures, when the projected housing completions are considered in a local context it is expected to impact on the sufficiency of local school places, resulting in those areas where large-scale new housing is planned needing additional school places to meet requirements.
- 4.2 **Coalfield**
While individual schools within the Coalfields are subject to over subscription, this is a consequence of parental preference of particular schools as opposed to a wider shortfall of places.
- 4.3 Of the 4,165 primary places in the Coalfield area there is currently a surplus of 504³ places. However, housing allocations within the adopted CSDP and the draft A&D Plan will provide an additional 1,849 dwellings within the plan period (2033), with an additional 75 dwellings outside the plan period. It is anticipated that this will result in a requirement for an additional 442 primary places. The 1,033 dwellings currently under construction are projected to require 237 primary school places. This leaves a projected shortfall of 175 primary places.
- 4.4 In order to assist in meeting this need, the Council has secured S106 contributions from housing developers and is in the process of negotiating further monies for a number of other housing schemes.

³ Data taken from number of pupils on-role as of October 2020 Census data, deducted from total number of primary school places.

- 4.5 In order to meet this need in primary education, within the southern Coalfield area it is anticipated that S106 monies from housing schemes within the Hetton/East Rainton area will allow a primary school within the Hetton area to be extended by 70 places, at a cost of approximately £800,000- £1.0m, within the next two years. Leaving a shortfall of 105 places.
- 4.6 In the northern area of the Coalfield, to accommodate this remaining shortfall due to the impact of new housing developments, a 210 place extension to Newbottle Primary Academy is planned for 2023. This extension, which is expected to cost in the region of £4.9m will be financed in the main by S106 contributions from housing developments within the area, however basic need funding from the Council may also be required.
- 4.7 Notwithstanding the above, this will not necessarily result in surplus spaces within the northern coalfield area. As indicated in paragraph 1.2 above, the data used within this report utilises the best available data, such as census data, birth rate data and does not take account of the average demand coming through the school system so the places required are most likely to be higher.
- 4.8 With regards secondary places, additional places will be required due to the amount of new housing planned for the area. This will require the extension of an existing school in either the Coalfields or a neighbouring area. It is estimated that the creation of an additional 150 secondary places would require between £2.5m - £4m which would accommodate the majority of this shortfall. With regards the small remaining shortfall, this would be accommodated within existing provision by increasing class sizes of the relevant year group.

Table 6: Coalfield surplus/deficit primary places

| Surplus/deficit places | | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|---|---|
| | Under construction | Under construction/CSDP and A&D plan within plan period | Under construction/CSDP and A&D plan within and outside plan period |
| Primary school places | 267 | -158 | -175 |
| Secondary school places | 123 | -153 | -162 |

4.9 **Washington**

The total number of primary school places available in Washington is 4,760 and there is a current surplus of 364⁴ places. However, the distribution of demand is not evenly spread, with surplus spaces predominately in North Washington.

- 4.10 While currently there are school places across Washington in Reception-Year 6, they are not available universally across one individual school or academy. Schools that have places in Reception are unlikely to have available places in year 1 and as a consequence families moving into the area are unlikely to successfully enroll siblings in multiple year groups at the same school.
- 4.11 The schools in closest proximity to the larger housing developments (North of Pattinson Road and South East of Pattinson Road), are either at capacity or over capacity in the later of year groups (years 4,5 and 6). The schools within Washington demonstrating the greatest proportion of surplus places fall outside the statutory walking distance from these development sites.
- 4.12 There remains a deficit in primary school places in the areas served by Holley Park Academy, Oxclose Primary Academy and Lambton Primary School and any further increase in pupil numbers in the area will require an increase in primary places.
- 4.13 In terms of future housing within the Washington area, the CSDP allocations and proposed A&D housing allocations provide capacity for 1,090 dwellings by 2033 (and an additional 1,100 post 2033). Including those dwellings under construction, this will result in a requirement for 503 additional primary school places, resulting in a projected deficit of 154 places.
- 4.14 Options are available to assist in meeting this deficit by creating extra spaces at two existing primary schools, one in the Washington North area which will increase school capacity by 105 places and one in the south area to ensure demand for school places is adequately accommodated. The costs associated with these extensions (£800,000-£1.2m and £1.37m) are anticipated to be met through S106 contributions from planned housing developments and expected to be delivered within the next 5-10 years.
- 4.15 Secondary places in Washington are also insufficient for future projected requirements. As such an extension to an existing secondary school can be made at a cost of £2.5m - £4m, which is anticipated to be delivered through both S106 contributions and basic need funding from the Council within the next 5-10 years.

⁴ Data taken from number of pupils on-role as of October 2020 Census data, deducted from total number of primary school places.

Table 7: Washington surplus/deficit primary places

| | Surplus/deficit places | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---|---|
| | Under construction | Under construction/CSDP and A&D plan within plan period | Under construction/CSDP and A&D plan within and outside plan period |
| Primary school places | 349 | 99 | -154 |
| Secondary school places | 99 | -39 | -162 |

4.16 **Urban Core**

Within the Urban Core the CSDP allocations and draft A&D housing allocations will provide a total of 1,230 dwellings within the plan period and a further 280 after this. This will create the need for an additional 347 primary school places and 180 secondary places, the majority of which will require places at schools in either North or South Sunderland.

4.17 The Urban Core does not contain any schools, however there are a number of schools just outside the area that fall within the catchment of development sites. It is anticipated that S106 contributions will be sought as part of planning applications to assist in meeting any shortfall in school places.

4.18 **North Sunderland**

There are currently 4,760 primary school places within North Sunderland.

4.19 The area has an overall surplus of 512⁵ places. However, the spread of surplus places are not in areas where they are needed, with surplus places in schools to the east of Newcastle road (Redby Primary) and not enough places in schools to the northern coastal area and to the west, (Southwick), where large scale regeneration has taken place over recent years and a number of planning permissions are in place.

4.20 Schools bordering the Southwick redevelopment area demonstrate the greatest deficiency in places, with the majority currently at capacity or over published admission numbers in at least four year groups.

4.21 Within North Sunderland, the allocations within the CSDP and the draft A&D plan provide for an additional 781 dwellings. This is projected to require an additional 179 primary places and 93 secondary places, resulting in a surplus of 333 primary places. However, this number reduces to 258 when current sites under construction are included. This will also

⁵ Data taken from number of pupils on-role as of October 2020 Census data, deducted from total number of primary school places.

put pressure on current secondary places, which are projected to be oversubscribed in future academic years. There are currently greater numbers of pupils attending North Sunderland primary schools than there are in the area's secondary schools.

- 4.22 Given that the housing developments are not necessarily in areas with surplus school places, it is anticipated that in order to service these requirements increased primary capacity will be required. The Council is currently rebuilding Willow Fields Primary School at the former Maplewood School site. In addition to being more appropriately located to meet the needs of ongoing and future developments, the new Willow Fields Primary School will have an increased capacity, with the potential to deliver an additional 175 primary school places from the new site. The cost associated with a new primary school is approximately £4.9m, it is anticipated that this will be financed through S106 contributions, Council capital and basic need funding and complete in September 2022
- 4.23 In addition to this an extension to an existing primary school by at least a half form entry within the coastal area of Sunderland North will also be required. This will be financed by S106 contributions from the housing development sites in this area and is expected to be delivered within the next five to ten years.
- 4.24 With regards secondary provision, Table 8 indicates surplus places, however as indicated in paragraph 1.2 above, the data used within this report utilises the best available data, such as census data, birth rate data and does not take account of the average demand coming through the school system, so the places required are most likely to be higher. Within North Sunderland they are more pupils in primary schools than there are places in secondary and a such a deficit in secondary is expected.
- 4.25 In order to account for this deficit in secondary provision, an extension to an existing secondary school within the north area will be required, at a cost of £2.5 –£ 4M, which is expected to be financed via S106 monies and provided in the next five to ten years.

Table 8: North Sunderland surplus/deficit primary places

| | Surplus/deficit places | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---|---|
| | Under construction | Under construction/CSDP and A+D plan within plan period | Under construction/CSDP and A+D plan within and outside plan period |
| Primary school places | 333 | 258 | 258 |
| Secondary school places | 437 | 361 | 361 |

4.26 **South Sunderland**

There are currently 10,178 primary school places in South Sunderland, of which 1,297⁶ are currently surplus places. However, the South Sunderland area covers such a large geographical area, having the greatest amount of primary schools within it (34), that these surplus spaces cannot be considered for South Sunderland as a whole. School places for South Sunderland need to be considered in smaller geographical areas, such as clusters of wards and individual school place planning areas.

- 4.27 The largest development area in South Sunderland is the South Sunderland Growth Area to the south of the city, which is anticipated to provide around 3,000 new homes. It is estimated that this will generate 690 new primary places and 360 secondary places. While secondary places can be met through the re-establishment of former teaching space at Farrington Academy, there will be a requirement to create new primary places. The Council has negotiated sufficient S106 funding to facilitate the extension of Benedict Biscop CE Academy and St Paul's CE VC School to each provide an additional 105 places from September 2021 and to create a new 1.5 form entry primary school within the development area, which will be provided within the next 5-10 years.
- 4.28 In addition to the growth area, a number of sites within the same school catchment area are under construction or have valid planning consents, with a number of these developments nearing completion. These additional developments are projected to require an additional 185 primary school places and as such the Council has requested S106 educational contributions to meet this requirement. It is proposed that this demand will be accommodated by providing extensions to existing primary schools in the area at a cost of around £800,000- £1.2m for each school, which are anticipated to be delivered in the next five to ten years.
- 4.29 Recent housing developments in the Nookside and Pennywell area are not expected to require any additional school places given the existing surplus school places in both primary and secondary in this area.
- 4.30 Development sites at St Luke's, The Forge and Ford Estate have put pressure on Diamond Hall Infant and Junior Schools, Highfield Primary School and St Joseph's RC Primary School, however expansion potential at the schools is limited. The development of the Groves site will put further pressure on the places at these primary schools and as such a new 1 form entry provision is required within the locality, which will need to be delivered within the next 5-10 years. The total cost of providing this new school at current costs amounts to around £5m, however, this amount will increase with inflation. Contributions are being sought from the Groves development site to facilitate the development
- 4.31 Secondary provision in this area is currently undersubscribed and as such there is projected to be sufficient places available to fully meet the requirements of the new

⁶ Data taken from number of pupils on-role as of October 2020 Census data, deducted from total number of primary school places.

developments. However, as mentioned above, when taking into account average demand and the number of primary pupils requiring secondary places, it is anticipated that secondary will be oversubscribed in certain areas of South Sunderland Growth Area.

Table 9: South Sunderland surplus/deficit primary places

| | Surplus/deficit places | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|---|---|
| | Under construction | Under construction/CSDP and A&D plan within plan period | Under construction/CSDP and A&D plan within and outside plan period |
| Primary school places | 535 | 68 | -65 |
| Secondary school places | 715 | 422 | 353 |

5.0 Conclusion

- 5.1 When considering the impact of new developments across the city as a single planning area for both primary and secondary school places, the overall number of places looks to be sufficient to meet demands. However, due to the nature of school admissions and statutory walking distances and the fact that in most areas the surplus places are not located near to development sites, this city wide surplus does not give a true reflection of each of the sub- areas and therefore, in some instances a smaller geographical area needs to be considered.
- 5.2 Consideration also has to be given to the fact that as this report can only present information derived from current available data, such as the census and birth rate data and a number of other factors influence school provision and have an impact upon whether an area has a surplus or deficit of school places, the report is intended to give an overview of the impact that housing allocations are expected to have on school provision within the city, and not a detailed account.
- 5.3 The provision of new school places as a consequence of new housing developments is, and will continue to be, heavily reliant on S106 contributions from planning applications and as such it is vital that going forward, contributions are sought for school places from developers for both primary and secondary provision.

