

DRAFT

School Place Provision Strategy

The right number of school places, in the right areas, at the right time to meet demand

2017/18 to 2019/20

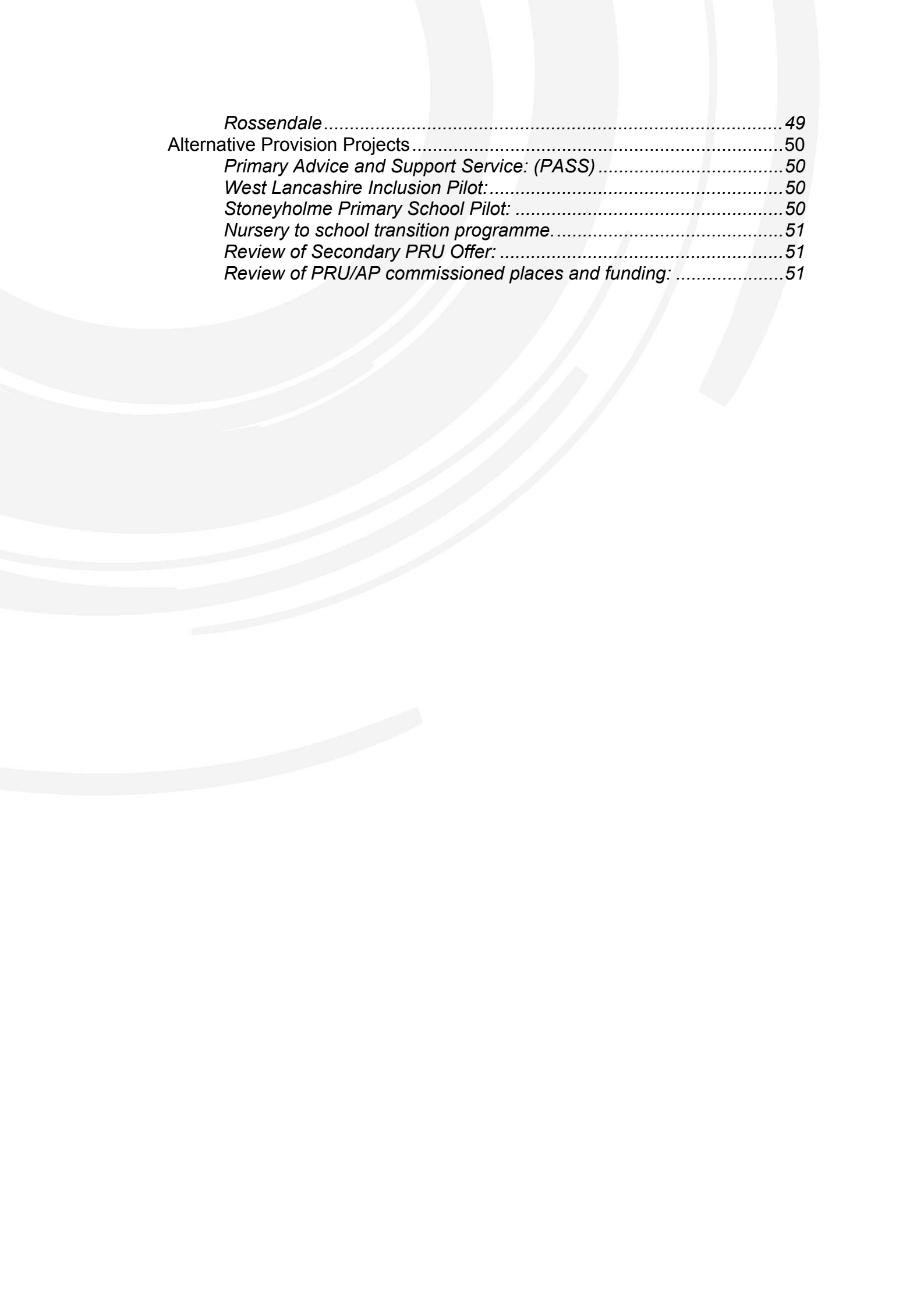
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Executive Summary

Purpose of Document

The County Council is the Strategic Commissioner of Education Provision in Lancashire. The School Place Provision Strategy sets out how we will carry out our responsibility for ensuring there are the right number of school places, in the right areas, at the right time to meet demand. This Strategy should be read in conjunction with the Capital Strategy for Schools 17/18 to 19/20.

The School Place Provision Strategy is a live document which underpins our process of ensuring there are sufficient places for Lancashire children in Lancashire schools, for every child who wants a place; therefore the strategy will be updated when required.

Lancashire Context

Lancashire is a diverse county. Schools in Lancashire are varied, with different providers from faith and non-faith organisations, community and foundation schools, academies and free schools.

Parents have a choice of schools with high standards, with over 93% of schools rated as Good or Outstanding by Ofsted. A high proportion of parents receive an offer for either their first choice school or one of their three preferences for both primary and secondary schools, a higher proportion in Lancashire than both the national average and the North West average.

Projected Demand for Places

Lancashire County Council primary schools have been through a period of intense growth in pupil numbers since 2010, and the Council has responded by providing an additional 3449 places in primary schools and 300 places in secondary schools. The birth rate has now stabilised, but there will still be pockets of high demand largely due to unprecedented levels of house building in certain areas of Lancashire.

Generally, Lancashire County Council secondary schools have been experiencing falling pupil numbers between 2007 and 2015, but now the secondary aged population is expected to rise significantly over the next 7 years as the increased primary aged population works through to secondary schools. Across Lancashire up to 9000 additional pupils may need to be accommodated within 5 years. This rise in secondary pupil numbers is already being experienced in some areas of Lancashire.

Significant housing development is coming forward in Lancashire, especially in large schemes such as City Deal in Preston and South Ribble, and this is significantly increasing demand for school places across the County.

Strategy to meet demand

Demand for school places continues to rise at a time when there is significant financial challenge to Local Government. As capital available to local authorities reduces, there are a number of challenges which will affect how Lancashire County Council may deliver places going forward.

Lancashire County Council will aim to provide additional places at existing schools, wherever possible and appropriate, rather than commission new provision. The rationale for this approach is to maintain stability in the existing school system; to provide the places in the shortest timescale possible; and to achieve best value for money, within a reduced capital allocation.

As demand for places has continued to rise and places have been provided in numerous areas of the county, the options available for the Council to commission new places have reduced, meaning that alternative options must be considered.

To comply with the Section 77 of the 1998 Standards and Framework Act, schools must have sufficient site and playing field area to support physical expansion. In some areas there are limited options available due to Section 77 constraints, so it may be necessary to look further afield for solutions or to consider a new school, or to find alternative solutions such as exemption from Department for Education on the section 77 constraint for appropriate schools.

In some areas, there are schools which have the physical capacity to take more pupils, but maintain lower admission numbers or use rooms for alternative uses. In a time of financial constraints, officers will work with schools in areas of need to unlock existing capacity within these schools before committing to expansion projects.

Where new housing development creates a demand for school places in excess of those available, the Council will expect district councils to work with us to seek a financial contribution from the developers, which is proportionate to impact, in order to mitigate against the effect on education infrastructure. With reduced capital available to the Council, in areas where housing development contributions are secured from developers to mitigate the impact of their development, the authority will be able to be more responsive to emerging need and able to provide additional places more quickly than in areas where this is not the case.

Section 1 – Our Responsibility

The political, environmental and economic landscape has changed dramatically over recent years, affecting all areas of Lancashire County Council responsibility including its role in relation to school organisation. School organisation is integral to facilitating school improvement and striking the right balance between supporting schools and championing the interests of children and families is vital.

Education Act

The Education and Inspections Act 2006 placed a duty on local authorities to act as commissioners, rather than providers, of school places. Local authorities are under a statutory duty to:

- Ensure there are sufficient school places in their area
- Promote high educational standards
- Ensure fair access and equal opportunity
- Promote the fulfilment of every child's educational potential
- Promote diversity in provision
- Expand popular and successful schools
- Increase opportunities for parents to access schools of their choice

As commissioner of school places, Lancashire County Council will be the 'proposer' for the majority of proposals that address strategic need in an area. With the move toward academy and free schools, there is also a [Regional School Commissioner \(RSC\) for Lancashire and West Yorkshire](#). The Council remains the commissioner of school places, however where this involves a free school, we will work with the RSC. We will maintain open dialogue with academy trusts, including Dioceses and Church Authorities.

Mainstream schools may also make and determine their own proposals and the School Organisation Regulations 2013 provide measures for mainstream schools to expand or alter the age range (except for adding or removing a sixth form) without needing to undertake statutory consultation. The School Organisation Unit website at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/school-organisation> contains full guidance on making changes to school organisation and provides links to relevant statutes.

The County Council has produced guidelines for schools wishing to make changes which include Lancashire County Councils position statement in terms of future impacts on accommodation and schools' capital. The guidelines can be found at:

https://schoolsportal.lancsngfl.ac.uk/security/login.asp?page=/view_sp.asp?siteid=4471&pageid=42022&e=e

Strategy to provide additional school places

The overall aim of this strategy is to ensure that the right number of school places are in the right areas, at the right time to meet demand. How we do this:

Expand popular and successful schools

Lancashire County Council will seek to provide additional places, when needed, at existing schools that provide outstanding or good standards of education, as judged by Ofsted. Particular attention will be paid to the effects of proposals on groups that tend to under-perform including children from certain ethnic groups, children from deprived backgrounds and children in care, with the aim of narrowing attainment gaps.

In addition to high education standards, we seek to expand schools that have high levels of parental first preferences for admission, in particular, schools that are regularly oversubscribed. This approach provides parents with increased opportunities for obtaining a preferred school place for their child.

New schools

If expansion of an existing school is not possible or not appropriate, and a high number of additional school places are still required, Lancashire County Council will propose to commission a new school. The Education Act 2011, and non-statutory guidance, contains a presumption that the new school will be an academy or free school. The process for establishing a new school has been amended by section 37 of the Education Act 2011 which can be found at the following link: http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/21/pdfs/ukpga_20110021_en.pdf

Statutory Process

Proposals to significantly expand a school must follow a statutory process. Although informal consultation is not a stage in the statutory process, Lancashire County Council will conduct informal consultation before commencing the statutory process. Hence the four stages of statutory consultation are five stages in Lancashire:

- Informal Consultation (non-statutory)
- Stage 1: Publication
- Stage 2: Representation
- Stage 3: Decision
- Stage 4: Implementation

Further details on the statutory process are available on our website: <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/performance-inspections-reviews/children-education-and-families/school-organisation-reviews/the-review-process.aspx>

Factors in School Provision Proposals

Sufficient school places

It is desirable for schools to be at the centre of the communities that they serve in order to provide easy and safe access to the facilities by children, young people and their families, and the wider community. Lancashire County Council will seek to commission school places in areas that provide easy access in terms of travelling distance, time and nature of the journey, and aiming to facilitate sustainable modes of transport such as cycling and walking. However, this is not always possible, especially in a large county such as Lancashire with many rural communities. Some children routinely make long journeys to school due to the nature of the community in which they live. The Council will aim to ensure that disadvantaged groups are not adversely impacted by changes to school locations. A further, important consideration is that the Council will seek to commission additional places, when needed, at schools with high levels of parental preference in the local area, in particular those schools that are regularly oversubscribed.

Education standards

Guidance on school organisation is clear that outcomes should lead to school improvement and increased attainment levels. The Government wishes to see a dynamic system in which weak schools that need to be closed are closed quickly and replaced by new ones where necessary; and the best schools are able to expand and spread their ethos and success.

Standards information used in planning school place provision includes:

- Ofsted evaluations
- Attainment at key stages 2 and 4

This information is coupled with information on deprivation, as measured by entitlement to free school meals and the Indices of Multiple Deprivation, and the amount of pupil progress between key stages in order to set attainment in context. Where a review of school provision proves necessary, the Council will seek to reshape provision or provide the additional places so that pupils are able to access schools that offer improved opportunities for achievement and attainment.

Fair access and equal opportunity

In making proposals to alter school provision, the Council will be mindful of its impacts on access to school places for different sections of the community. The aim will be to maintain a coherent education system where children are not disadvantaged in terms of education opportunity because of where they live or because of their individual circumstances.

Promote the fulfilment of every child's potential

Lancashire County Council has a role as children's champion in the widest sense. The implication for school organisation is that the Council must secure places at popular and successful schools, at the same time as supporting schools in challenging circumstances to improve. The Council must provide advocacy for parents and also hold schools to account for the use of public resources. In doing so, the relationship between schools, the Council and elected members needs to be maintained as a strong and positive one.

Lancashire's school improvement strategy is based upon the following principles:

- Raising achievement for all through supporting the development of effective self-managing schools
- Working in partnership with schools in Lancashire
- Promoting and developing school to school support
- Offering a traded school improvement service to all schools to support effective self-evaluation, innovation and development
- Providing intensive support and intervention where there is low attainment and/or underachievement

We challenge schools to have high expectations and provide a collective determination to do the best for every child. Rigorous and far-reaching self-evaluation should impact on pupil achievement as well as personal development and well-being. Schools are responsible for their own performance and the impact of initiatives designed to lead to these improvements. Lancashire County Council closely monitors the impact of school improvement support, and will support schools in improving pupil achievement and the leadership of teaching and learning. Where schools are not improving quickly enough, the Council (via the School Improvement Challenge Board) will firstly challenge school leadership teams, and if necessary, use the full range of statutory powers of intervention to bring about improvements.

The Council will consider the likely impact of school reorganisations on outcomes for children and young people. Schools will provide or have swift and easy access to a wide range of extended services, providing opportunities for personal development; academic and applied learning; training; addressing barriers to participation and supporting children and young people with particular needs, for example, looked after children or children with special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities.

Promote Diversity

Lancashire has always had a diverse pattern of school provision, owing largely to the significant proportion of voluntary aided schools in the county, and is accustomed to positive working relationships with the nine Diocesan/Church Authorities. Over

recent years new providers have been established, including Trust schools and Academies. The Council is working in partnership with an increasing number of providers in order to develop a school organisation and capital investment strategy that delivers optimal solutions for local areas. The policy of the Council is that all categories of school are of equal value and this principle will be applied when planning and delivering the strategy.

The Council seeks to maintain or increase levels of diversity and choice for parents wherever possible. However, due to the remoteness of some small communities it must be recognised that a choice of schools is not always possible and that, if parents seek a particular type of provision, it may involve travelling out of the local community. In addition, due to the fact that any new school will be a free school, with the final decision taken by the Regional School Commissioner (RSC) or Secretary of State, it would not always be possible for the Council to determine the type of new school.

In reorganising school provision, the aim will be to maintain the balance of denominational provision, unless parental preferences via the admissions process provide evidence that change is required. In considering places at voluntary aided schools, the Council works in partnership with the appropriate Diocesan and Church Authorities, from inception to completion of the review.

Surplus place removal

On the opposite end of the scale, when demand for school places falls significantly there can be surplus school places within the school provision. Too much surplus can cause problems, with financial issues becoming problematic for multiple schools. Where this occurs, the Council will seek to remove surplus places for the protection and security of all schools. However, surplus place removal bears a cost and in the current climate when demand is rising, there is likely to be less focus on surplus place removal for the duration of this strategy.

Closing a School

Section 68 of the 2006 Act enables the Secretary of State to direct a local authority to discontinue a maintained school, where that school is eligible for intervention, on a date specified in the direction. This will usually be done where there is no prospect of the maintained school making sufficient improvements. Before this power can be exercised the Secretary of State must consult various parties, but any such direction means that the statutory process does not need to be followed.

The Council can propose the closure of any category of maintained school. The governing body of a voluntary aided, foundation or foundation special school may

also publish proposals to close its own school. Reasons for closing a maintained mainstream school would normally be too many surplus places, amalgamation, standards, failure (and no viable sponsor to convert to academy status), to acquire or lose religious character or replacement by another school. The statutory process for proposing a school to be closed is as listed on page 7.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

Within Lancashire (and nationally) there is an increasing number of pupils within special schools.

Within the SEND Code of Practice, it is clear that all children have a right to mainstream education and many pupils who previously would have attended SEND schools are attending mainstream schools, with relevant support. This will be taken into consideration when planning new mainstream provision and the School Place Provision Strategy will link closely with the emerging Strategy for SEND provision which will seek to find solutions to the lack of capacity, particularly for pupils with Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) needs (and increasing pressure on Post 16 and Post 19 places within the 0 to 25 agenda.)

The S31 Special Provision Fund, which came into effect in January 2017, provides an opportunity for the authority to address some capacity issues within the SEND sector, creating new places (within good or outstanding settings) or improving facilities. This grant may be used at a range of settings, including:

- Mainstream schools or colleges
- Special unit or resourced provision
- Special school or academy
- Pupil Referral Units
- Nursery/Early Years
- Other provision

The authority is currently undertaking a series of site visits in order to fully understand the capacity issues and develop a more detailed strategy accordingly.

Alternative Provision (AP)

Local authorities are responsible for arranging suitable education for permanently excluded pupils, and for other pupils who – because of illness or other reasons – would not receive suitable education without such arrangements being made.

Under the Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities 2013 for Alternative Provision, the Local Authority has a statutory responsibility to:

- Provide education for pupils of statutory school age who are permanently excluded from their school. Provision is required to be in place by the 6th

school day following the permanent exclusion and be full time. Authorities must have regard to the statutory guidance "Promoting the Educational Achievement of Looked After Children: Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities" when carrying out their duties in relation to the education of looked after children. In addition, where a pupil has a statement of SEN, the local authority must ensure that an appropriate full-time placement is identified in consultation with the parents, who retain their rights to express a preference for a school that they wish their child to attend, or make representations for a placement in any other school. There is revised guidance being published in September 2017.

Under the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011; the School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012; the Education and Inspections Act 2006; and the Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, to:

- Provide education for pupils of statutory school age with medical conditions which prevent them from attending their home school, and when the school is unable to make the necessary adjustments to enable education to continue to be accessed on their site. Provision should be in place within 15 days of an appropriate referral. Provision should be full time unless the medical condition prevents the pupils from accessing full time and in these cases appropriate adjustments can be made.

Under Section 19 of the Education Act 1996 and the DfE Statutory Guidance 'Ensuring a good education for children who cannot attend school because of health needs' 2013 and the Equality Act 2010:

- Provision of alternative education for pupils who would not receive suitable education for other reasons than above.

Until April 2014-15 the demands for alternative provision places was met by a network of Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) across the county. Prior to April 2012, PRUs were managed by Local Authorities. From April 2012 PRUs ceased to be managed by LAs and became maintained schools. Consequently, the relationship between the LA and the PRUs changed from managing the provision to one of commissioning places to meet Lancashire County Council's continuing statutory duties. The majority of AP places continue to be commissioned from these maintained PRU/PRU academies. However, due to increased demand a growing number of AP places have been commissioned from other providers.

Indications are that the trend of increased demand will continue to rise. Options for the County Council are:

- To grow capacity in the existing PRUs/academy PRUs where possible.

- Increase the number of commissioned places from other existing providers with capacity to do so.
- Identify additional providers.
- Consider the establishment of additional PRUs- Free Schools and /or academies.

As the sector continues to develop rapidly, the County Council will progress the development of a strategic approach both to respond to a predicted growing demand and also, to align with, and support the County Council's wider strategy to prevent exclusions.

Proposed Strategy for Primary AP:

- Focus on high quality support to schools that increases knowledge, skills and confidence within the school, to enable staff to support pupils exhibiting emotional, social and behavioural needs.
- Local area models to provide outreach and in house intervention places that retain children in their community.
- Local models in which mainstream schools; PRUs; alternative providers; and special schools work together to provide an offer to meet needs and prevent exclusions.
- Increase in AP commissioned places to meet demand.
- Review of PRU/AP funding.

Proposed Strategy for Secondary AP:

- Focus on high quality support to schools that increases knowledge, skills and confidence within the school, to enable staff to support pupils exhibiting emotional, social and behavioural needs.
- Review of current PRU buildings to assess ability to provide requirements.
- Identify local solutions to capacity/building issues.
- Increase capacity to provide short term, in house intervention programmes- especially at Key Stage (KS)3.
- Identify area options to increase provision of KS4 alternative provision- full or part time- to support pupils at risk of exclusion through personalised curriculum and wrap around support.
- Increase commissioned places as required to meet demand.
- Review of PRU/AP funding.

Post-16 Education

With regard to young people over compulsory school age, the Education and Skills Act 2008 requires all young people in England to continue in education or training until at least their 18th birthday. As a result, the local authority has broad duties to encourage, enable and assist young people to participate in education or training and must promote the effective participation of 16 and 17 year olds in their area. Lancashire County Council has further statutory duties under the Education Act 1996 to secure sufficient and suitable education and training provision to meet the reasonable needs of all young people in their area by influencing and shaping provision through local partnerships and by identifying gaps, enabling new provision and developing the market. If it is determined that the market needs to be developed in the county, the local authority will work alongside the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Education and Skills Funding Agency to progress this.

Young people have a range of options in terms of continuing their education or training at a wide range of post 16 providers, such as at college; school sixth form; or following an Apprenticeship. Therefore, the local authority does not have a duty to ensure that a specific number of places are available at specific institutions but rather to have a strategic overview of the provision available in their area, hence the provision of post 16 school places is not within the remit of this strategy.

Early Years

Within many mainstream schools, there is associated early years provision, however the type of provision varies from independent providers co-located within the school or in adjacent buildings, to the school themselves offering early years education as part of an extended age range of the school. The arrangement of early year's provision within an individual school is usually outside of the County Council's responsibility and as such the provision of early year's education is not currently within the remit of this strategy.

Section 2 – Demographics

Profile of Lancashire

Lancashire County Council is a large, diverse local authority covering an area of [2,903 square kilometres](#). [1.18 million people](#) live within the Council's administrative boundaries, making it the fourth largest council in England and Wales. There are an estimated 277,000 children and young people aged up to 19 years living in the county (2011 Census data). Lancashire's defining characteristic is its size and diversity, with urban, rural and coastal communities spread across 12 districts. Within the broader 14-authority Lancashire area, there are also two unitary authorities, operating independently from Lancashire County Council. These are Blackburn with Darwen and Blackpool.

Each district has its own unique demography and geography. Almost one quarter of Lancashire's population live in the districts of Lancaster (12%) and Preston (12%) whilst at the other end of the scale 5% live in Ribble Valley and almost 6% live in Rossendale. Approximately 19% of the population of Lancashire live in rural areas.

The components of [mid—year population estimate for 2015](#) revealed population rises in Chorley of 1350 or more, and more than 1000 in Lancaster and Wyre. All areas of Lancashire have been estimated to have had a population rise in 2015, although in Burnley this rise was estimated at 80 and Hyndburn was estimated to rise by 20.

As well as some of England's most prosperous communities, Lancashire also has pockets of very severe deprivation. The 2015 [Index of Multiple Deprivation](#) indicates that Burnley falls into the 10% most deprived areas of England. The districts of Pendle and Hyndburn are within the top 20% of most deprived authority areas in the country. In contrast, Ribble Valley is in the top 20% least deprived authorities in the country.

The 2011 census revealed that 7.7% of the county council area's population were from [minority ethnic backgrounds](#), much lower than the national average of 14.0%. However, the four districts of Burnley, Hyndburn, Pendle and Preston have ethnic minority proportions greater than 10%. The most significant ethnic group is "Asian or Asian British" who comprise 6.1% of the resident population in the county council area, a proportion lower than the national average of 7.5%.

The 2011 Census usual resident population figure for the county council area shows an [increase of 3.2%](#) since the last census in 2001. That was well below the England and Wales increase of 7.8%. Preston recorded the largest numeric increase in usual residents of more than 10,000 people since the last census. It also had by far the highest growth rate within the county of over 8%.

Future population projections reveal that the county council area's population is expected to grow by [5.8% between 2012 and 2037](#) to 1.24 million. This rate of growth is expected to be well below the average for England of 16.5%. At the district level, Burnley and Hyndburn are expected to see minor population decreases while in contrast, rates of above 18.2% are predicted for Chorley.

In the Lancashire County Council area, the [number of households](#) is expected to increase by 11.7% between 2011 and 2037, which compares to a national increase of 23.1%. The highest growth rates in household numbers are projected to occur in the districts of Chorley (24.6%), Lancaster (15.2%) and Fylde (16.6%) and the lowest in Hyndburn (3.6%) and Burnley (3.4%).

The [UK fertility rate](#) has risen from an average of 1.7 children per woman of child-bearing age in 2002 to 1.82 in 2015. Patterns of fertility in the Lancashire sub-region have largely followed those nationally with a fertility rate of 1.85 for the county council area in 2015. There are, however, marked variations between districts. For example in 2015, the fertility rate for Ribble Valley was 1.57 whilst in Pendle it was 2.18.

Review of School Planning Areas

The School Planning process currently operates with 68 primary planning areas and 12 secondary districts, as agreed with the Department for Education (DfE). In their present format, these school planning areas provide fairly rigid barriers that are tied to district boundaries and which do not reflect parental preference and choice in making school place applications.

We will take the opportunity to consider school place provision within the wider context of Lancashire taking into account the characteristics and needs of communities in order to establish natural catchment areas based on population and enabling access to good schools.

Following the outcome of this review of the school planning process, the County Council will then consult with stakeholders on the proposed pattern of School Planning Areas.

School Organisation

The education provision in Lancashire exhibits many strengths, but there are two key features which parents value when seeking a school place for their child:

- the ability to secure a place at a school with high education standards
- the diversity in the types of schools available.

In September 2016, the Ofsted grades of Lancashire County Council maintained schools were as follows:

	Schools	Outstanding	Good	% Outstanding or Good
Nursery	24	18	6	100.0%
Primary	474	96	357	95.6%
Secondary	60	8	39	78.3%
Special	30	13	16	96.7%
Alternative Provision	9	2	3	55.6%

Overall, over 93% of schools are graded either good or outstanding by Ofsted compared to 85% two years previously. There has been significant improvement in the Primary and Secondary sector, with over 95% of primary schools now good or outstanding compared to 86% two years previously and almost 80% of secondary schools now good or outstanding compared to 72% two years previously.

At September 2016 there were 29 academies and 5 free schools in Lancashire. Lancashire County Council will continue to work closely with academies and free schools in terms of planning for the provision of school places.

There are a wide range of school categories in Lancashire providing parents with an element of choice, depending on place availability, in most areas of the County. There are: 206 (36.3%) community schools, 269 (47.4%) voluntary aided, 49 (8.6%) voluntary controlled, 34 (6.0%) Academy and Free schools and 10 (1.8%) foundation schools. Ten Dioceses and Church Authorities are important partners in the provision of schools in Lancashire. These are:

- Blackburn Church of England Diocese
- Bradford, Ripon & Leeds Church of England Diocese
- Lancaster Catholic Diocese
- Leeds Catholic Diocese
- Liverpool Catholic Diocese
- Liverpool Church of England Diocese
- Manchester Church of England Diocese
- Salford Catholic Diocese
- The Methodist Districts of Lancashire & Liverpool
- United Reformed Church

A full breakdown of the types of mainstream schools is provided in the table below:

School Category	Primary	Secondary	Total
Academy - Sponsor led	3	4	7
Academy – Converters	5	17	22
Free	2	3	5

Community	176	30	206
Foundation	2	5	7
Foundation (Trust)	2	1	3
Voluntary Aided	1	1	2
Voluntary Aided (C)	103	18	121
Voluntary Aided (CE)	138	3	141
Voluntary Aided (CE/Methodist)	3		3
Voluntary Aided (Methodist)	1		1
Voluntary Aided (Muslim)		1	1
Voluntary Controlled	6	1	7
Voluntary Controlled (CE)	33		33
Voluntary Controlled (Methodist)	8		8
Voluntary Controlled (CE/Methodist)	1		1
All Schools	484	84	568

Source –LCC Internal Records September 2016

For further information on the different types of schools please see <https://www.gov.uk/types-of-school/overview>

The diversity across Lancashire is further demonstrated by the varying school sizes. Primary schools currently range in size from under 20 pupils to 630. Secondary schools currently range in size from 66 to 1,710. Many, but not all, of the small schools serve rural areas, with 158 primary schools currently designated as rural by the Department for Education. Of these schools 15 are over 2 miles from their nearest neighbour, 37 are over 2 miles from the nearest school of the same denomination/type and 106 are within 2 miles of a school of the same denomination.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

In the year to January 2016 just over 5,200 (2.9%) of young people aged 0-25 years had a statement of special educational needs or Education Health and Care Plan. 9.1% of children and young people received SEN support. Educational achievement of those with SEND in Lancashire is better than the national and regional figures, rating the county council as 'outstanding' for this indicator. The authority is also ranked as 'good' for the percentage of young people with a SEND not in employment, education or training (NEET).

Lancashire County Council provides a flexible range of provision and support for pupils with additional needs that can respond to the special educational needs (SEN) of individual pupils and parental preferences.

The County Council will help to ensure that children and young people with additional needs are able to access mainstream provision, wherever this is preferred and practicable. In addition, there are 30 Special Schools across Lancashire, each are able to provide for a wide range of additional needs:

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/education/schools/special-schools-and-short-stay-schools.aspx>

Alternative Provision (AP)

The County Council maintains nine short stay schools across Lancashire:

<http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/special-educational-needs-and-disabilities/education/schools/special-schools-and-short-stay-schools.aspx>

Serving Primary aged pupils, are three Pupil Referral Units or Short Stay Schools providing 114 places across Lancashire in:

- Lancaster: serving Lancaster, Fylde and Wyre.
- Leyland: serving Preston, South Ribble and Chorley
- Burnley: serving Burnley, Pendle, Rossendale and Ribble Valley.
- One unit within a primary special school serving West Lancashire district.

Serving Secondary aged pupils are six maintained Secondary Pupil Referral units across Lancashire, situated in:

- Lancaster
- Poulton le Fylde
- Preston
- Chorley
- Ormskirk
- Oswaldtwistle

This secondary provision is supplemented by one academy short stay school at Coal Clough in Burnley: <http://www.coalclough.org/>, which brings the available secondary places up to 750 places across Lancashire.

The **Lancashire Hospital Education Service** is a centrally run service to provide education to pupils of statutory school age who are inpatients in hospitals in Lancashire (namely Royal Preston and Lancaster), day assessment patients at Burnley Hospital ELCAS (child and adolescent mental health) unit and inpatients at the Cove, Heysham (a Tier three Child and Adolescent mental health- age 13-18).

The service also provides home teaching for pupils too ill to attend any educational provision.

There are also additional providers that are currently commissioned based on user demand:

- One Independent Alternative Provision School providing places to Lancashire pupils.
- Four Further Education colleges, who are commissioned to provide places via year 11 programmes.

Access to these services is dependent on current vacant places.

Numbers of new statutory alternative provision pupils in each academic year from 2013-14 to 2016-17:

Statutory group	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17 (to date)
Permanently excluded	335	414	473	541
Medical Needs	155	238	194	155
'Other' reasons	137	215	204	149
Above referred to Non-PRU providers i.e. college	No data	No data	80	111
TOTAL	627	867	951	956 (to May 15th 2017)

Number of commissioned AP places for permanently excluded pupils and others, when local PRU commissioned places were at capacity:

Provision	2015-16	2016-17 (to date)
One to One Tuition	5	21
Independent AP school.	0	15 (inc 10 primary in East)
		5 Secondary in East

Post-16

Young people have a range of options in terms of continuing their education or training at a wide range of post 16 providers, such as at college, school sixth form or following an Apprenticeship. As at June 2017, in terms of Lancashire based institutions, 30 academies and maintained schools with sixth form provision or Further Education (FE) colleges were available to residents of Lancashire:

	Institutions	Outstanding	Good	% Outstanding or Good
Academies with Sixth Form Provision	7	5	2	100.0%
Maintained School Sixth Forms	14	0	10	71.4%
Further Education (FE) Colleges	9	4	2	66.7%

The table below shows the number of Lancashire residents aged 16-18 and 19-24 with high needs who are participating in provision which is funded by the Education and Skills Funding Agency:

		Lancashire	National
2013/14	Further Education 16-18	21,916	790,600
	Further Education 19-24 LLDD	178	
	SSF and Academies	5,444	429,500
	16-18 Apprenticeships	3,307	119,800
	Total 2013/14	30,845	1,339,960
2014/15	Further Education 16-18	21,218	765,740
	Further Education 19-24 High Needs	201	
	SSF and Academies	5,281	429,410
	16-18 Apprenticeships	3,301	125,900
	Total 2014/15	30,001	1,321,050
2015/16	Further Education 16-18	21,150	748,696
	Further Education 19-24 High Needs	238	
	SSF and Academies	5,015	437,207
	16-18 Apprenticeships	3,641	131,400
	Total 2015/16	30,044	1,317,303
% change from 2014/15 to 2015/16		0.14%	-0.28%

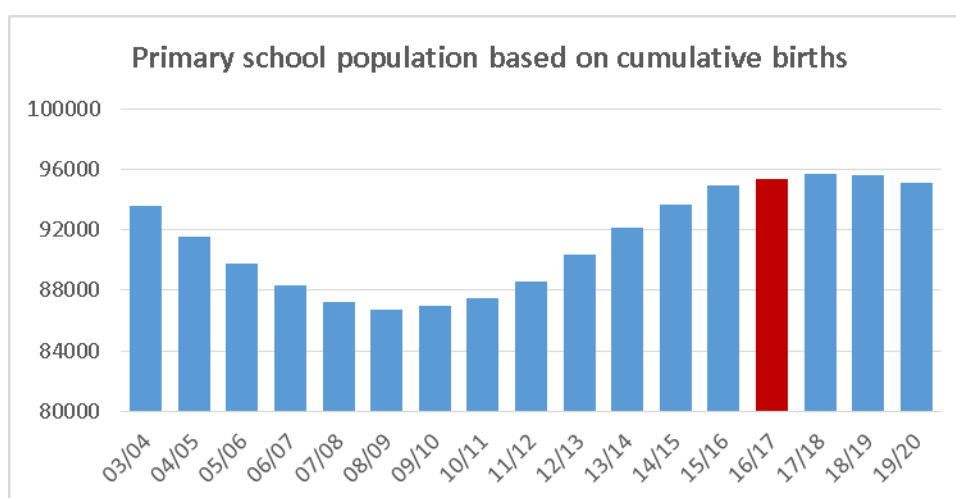
Pupil Demographics

Live Births

Since 2001/02, there has been a rising birth rate in Lancashire which peaked in 2010/11. This peak number of births started primary school in 2015/16.

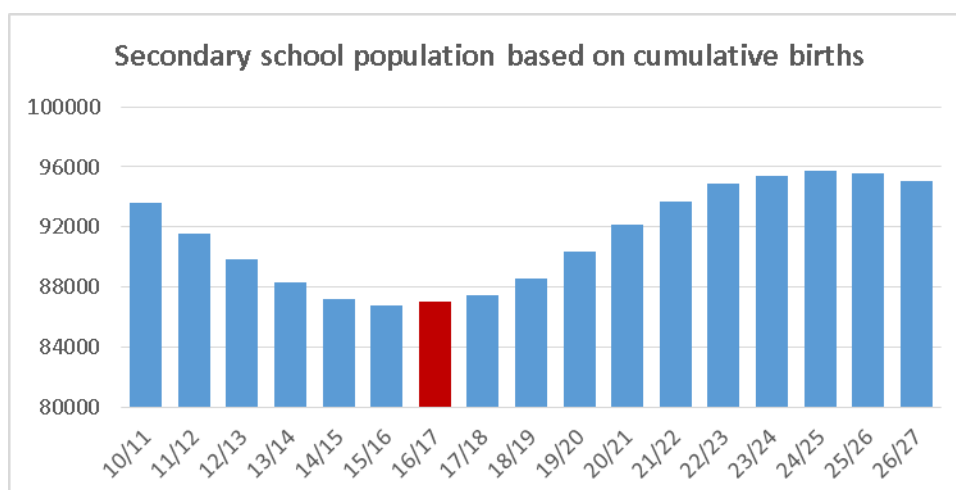
Primary

Based on the rising birth rate between 2001/02 and its peak in 2010/11, the primary school population in Lancashire is currently at its highest level for over 10 years. There are up to 9000 additional children putting pressure on primary school places compared with 9 years ago; this represents a 10% rise in demand for places from births alone:



Secondary

The secondary school population is currently low due to a low number of births in 2001/02. However, based on the rising birth rate between from 2001/02 to its peak in 2010/11 and the subsequent increasing primary school population, the secondary school population is due to rise significantly over the coming years:



School Preferences

In 2016, 90% of primary school pupils and 86% of secondary school pupils received offers for their first preference school. Overall, 95% of pupils received offers for one of their preferred schools.

Lancashire County Council maintains a high percentage of parents whose children attend their first choice school. Although this percentage is now lower than 6 years previous, this is more a reflection on significantly increased pressure for places as detailed above. Without the additional places provided up to now, this percentage of first preference offers would be much lower.

Section 3 – Projected Demand for Places

Pupil Projection Methodology

Lancashire County Council publishes a guide to our Pupil Projection Methodology on our planning obligations website, which explains the forecasting methodology in more detail: <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/planning/planning-obligations-for-developers.aspx>

Primary schools are forecast in 68 groups known as Primary Planning Areas; which are agreed with the Department for Education (DfE). For primary school projections, the Council combines live birth information from Office of National Statistics (ONS); migration derived from past pupil on roll numbers; and housing yield from future housing to be built within the next five years. The main outputs being monitored are projected reception year intake numbers vs published admission numbers to identify shortfall, and the overall school population in the area vs net capacity in the area to ensure there are enough places in all year groups.

Secondary schools are forecast within their relevant district authority boundaries. For secondary schools projections, the Council combines primary school number on roll from the catchment area, migration derived from past pupil on roll numbers and housing yield from future housing to be built within the next five years. The main outputs being monitored are:

- The projected year 7 intake numbers vs published admission numbers (PAN) to ensure there are enough places for primary school leavers.
- The overall school population aged 11-16 in the area vs net capacity for 11-16 year olds in the area, to ensure there are enough places in year groups 7 to 11.

Forecasts are updated twice a year, with the first forecast produced in December based on the October School Census information, latest live birth numbers and new housing land supply information. The forecasts are then updated in April, based on the January School Census information and updated live birth information.

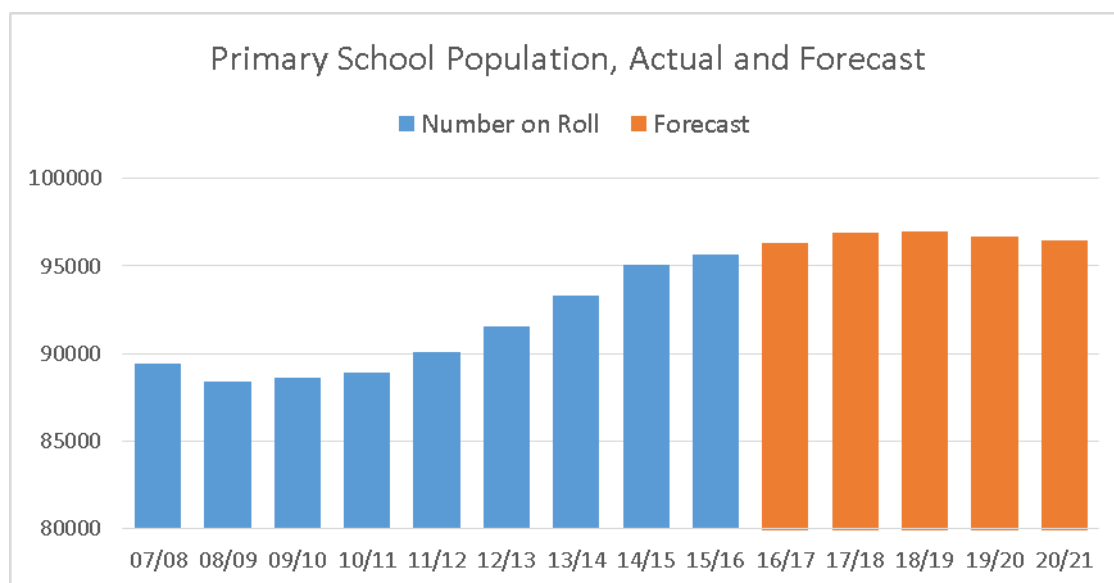
Forecast Primary Demand

Birth Led Demand

Based on the rising birth rate between 2001/02 and its peak in 2010/11, the primary school population in Lancashire is currently at its highest level for over 10 years. In response to the recent high number of births in particular, Lancashire County Council has already commissioned 3449 additional primary school places since 2010.

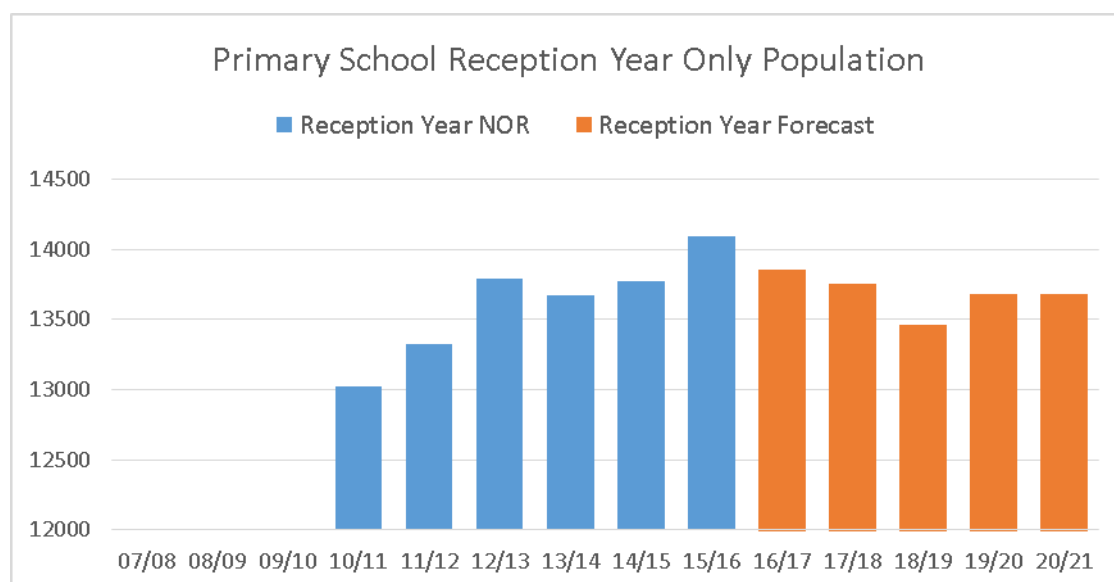
Unprecedented levels of house building is also putting pressure on primary schools with additional children entering an area, There is also inward migration to

Lancashire from outside its borders, which is bringing more pressure. Forecasts show that overall the Primary School population is due to continue to rise:



This chart shows a high level of demand on primary school places over the coming five years. The rise in primary school population is forecast to continue to rise until 2018/19, before dropping slightly in 2019/20 and 2020/21. Forecasts will be constantly reviewed and updated as described above.

At present, the peak in reception year intake into Primary Schools, based on birth data alone was in 2015/16. The total reception intake across Lancashire is expected to be lower in 2016/17 and the subsequent four years.



However, this chart represents Lancashire as a whole, which is a large and diverse county, and trends are not uniform across the county. While birth rates overall have currently stabilised leading to a net total forecast fall in reception year intake, in reality, some areas still face real challenges with continual birth rate rises creating pockets of high demand.

Net forecast demand by area

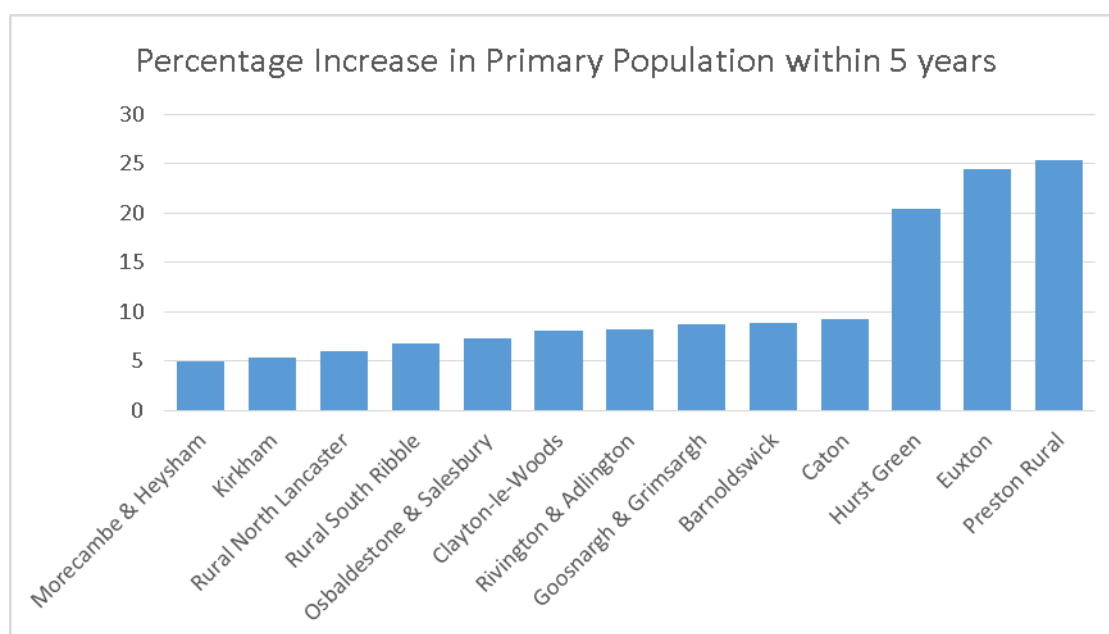
Whilst births may have stabilised or fallen in some areas, this needs to be considered alongside the fact that planned housing is expected to bring forward additional pupils in many areas. For example, in Pendle, total birth figures have fallen but this must be put into context with significant housing development planned for the area, at the same time as there is inward migration into the Pendle primary schools due to a number of factors.

With the addition of housing yield and migration, the main growth is still in Chorley, Fylde and Lancaster but also includes Pendle, where we are closely monitoring demand.

Yet, within districts, there are stark contrasts. There may be areas where housing development is creating significant pressure whilst, at the same time, more outlying or rural areas may be seeing falling numbers.

As the authority seeks to ensure that pupils have access to a quality primary school within reasonable access to their home, the authority uses 68 primary planning areas to reflect groups of schools which reflect patterns of parental preference and travel to school movement in a district. When we consider growth within these planning areas, as opposed to districts as a whole, there are a number of specific planning areas which show levels of significant growth, particularly as a result of planned housing, which would be otherwise masked by the district level figures.

Examples where this is more acute are:

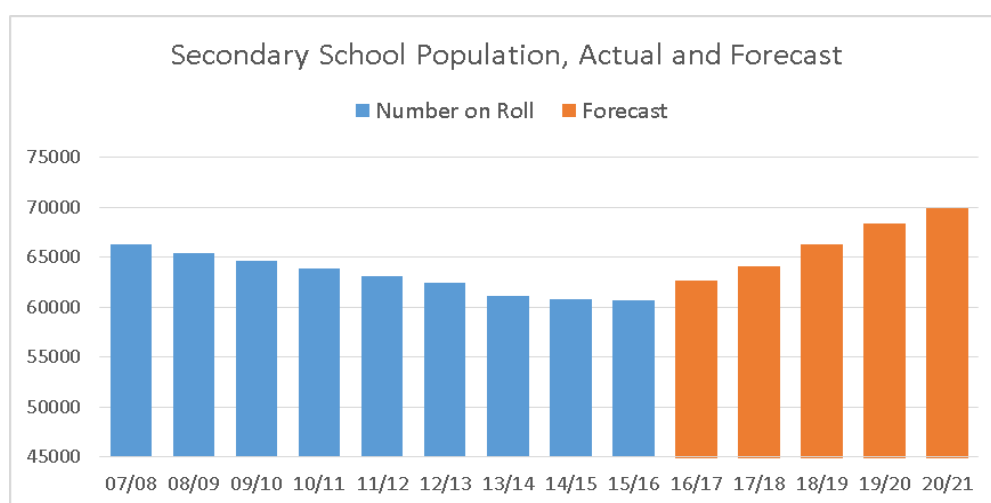


Forecast Secondary Demand

The number of secondary aged pupils is currently at its lowest level for some years and the latest Year 7 intake is based upon the lowest Lancashire birth rate for 20 years.

However, this is set to change, as total intakes are expected to rise for the next 9 years, in line with the increases we have experienced in the primary sector.

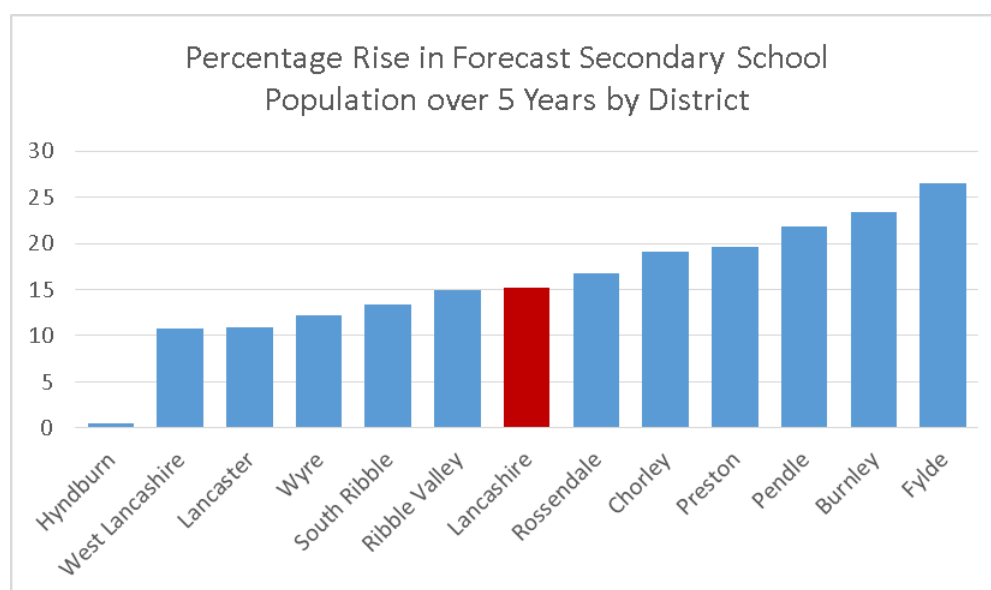
When the additional yield from planned new housing is factored in, the overall secondary population could rise by over 9,000 pupils over the next 5 years, an increase of between 10 and 15%.



This shows that secondary numbers are on an upward trajectory for the next 5 years and this is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

However, the chart shows Lancashire as a whole and, again, the growth is not uniform across the county.

The following graph shows the position by district:



This shows the scale of the issue facing secondary school provision over the next 5 years in Lancashire. Only one district, Hyndburn, has a low level of pupil growth; all other districts are forecast for the secondary school population to grow by over 10%, with over 25% growth forecast for Fylde.

However, this needs to be considered against the fact that some schools are carrying surplus capacity.

Alternative Provision

The trend in recent years has indicated that demand for places in alternative provision will increase in the following groups:

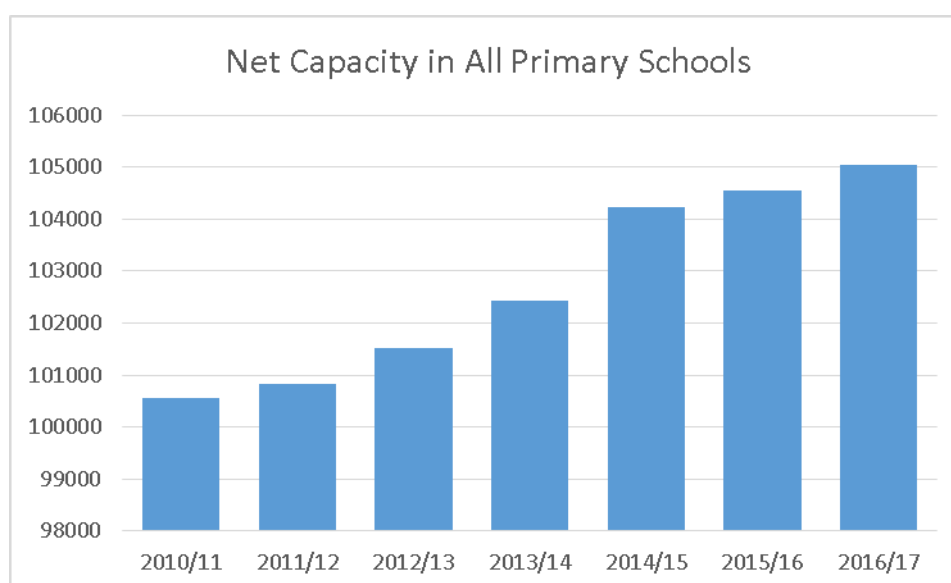
- **Permanent exclusions.** These are increasing nationally and growing pressure on school budgets, potential impact of poor pupil attainment and progress data and Ofsted judgements, and the apparent increasing complexity of pupil's needs, suggest strongly that this trend will continue. Even if we are able to prevent exclusion through increasing intervention support and places, in the short term demand on places will continue to grow.
- **Medical Needs:** Numbers fluctuate more than permanent exclusions but the complex nature of the young people referred with mental and emotional health conditions result in pupils staying longer in AP.
- **'Other ' referrals.** This group has grown significantly in recent years. Although the numbers referred to the PRUs have decreased, this is sometimes as a consequence of PRU's being at capacity or because a PRU would not be the appropriate placement for a young person and college would better meet needs. There has been an increase in this group from 80 in 2015-16 to 111, to date in 2016-17.
- Through numbers for Home Teaching has increased each year, in part due to a growing number of children and young people with significant mental health needs which prevents them from leaving their home for a period.
- Growing pupil numbers in the general population will also have an impact on demand for AP- as a percentage of pupils will require alternative provision at some point in their school life.
- Intervention support placements. Requests from schools- in all phases, for access to short term intervention places and longer term KS4 personalised curriculum placements, has increased significantly, with a high proportion not being met due to PRUs being at capacity. In a number of cases this results in a permanent exclusion at a later date.

Section 4 – Existing School Capacity

When assessing a need for additional places, projected demand for places is compared with the existing capacity of the local schools, measured by the Net Capacity process (as determined by the Department for Education).

Primary Capacity

Since 2010/11, there has been a significant rise in demand for Primary school places, and in some Primary planning areas, the Council has taken action to increase capacity and address shortfall. Since 2010/11, the Council has added 3,449 primary school places across the County, specifically focussed on areas of need including 995 places in Lancaster, 870 places in Chorley and 743 places in Pendle. The following chart shows the rise in net capacity since 2010/11:



At the same time as places have been put into Primary schools, there has been an additional challenge to school capacity as some schools have lowered their age range to meet the Government's call for additional early years places, and include pre-school aged children. The Council will advise maintained schools where a demand for statutory places should be considered before taking this step, especially where this can impact on the available capacity for statutory aged children.

Secondary Capacity

As stated above, secondary demand for places across Lancashire as a whole has been in a trough, but is due to rise significantly over the next 8 years. However in some districts increased demand has already started to materialise, especially where significant housing development has occurred. Where it is not possible to accommodate additional pupils by expanding existing schools, consideration may be given to the commissioning of a new school.

Schools' use of capacity

In addition to the Council's commissioning of additional places via expansions, the schools themselves can alter their intake, capacity and undertake building works themselves, using their own finances if they choose. This means that there will have been many additional schemes renovating, expanding or changing schools buildings across the county which will have also had an impact on the overall net capacity available in Lancashire. Asset management team conducts an annual update of the schools' net capacity and encourages all schools to inform the team when they are considering schemes and to inform on completion of such schemes, in order that the capacity available within an area can be monitored.

Future Capacity

Where expansions schemes are certain to proceed, in other words have final cabinet member approval, the future net capacity* is included within our forecasts rather than the current. The same is true of reductions in capacity; where a school may be lowering their admission number or lowering the age range, the resultant capacity after these changes have occurred will be used in the forecasts.

**The net capacity assessment only applies to mainstream schools*

Section 5 – Areas of Need

Using the evidence above, the forecasts consider the births, intake, migration and housing development against the future capacity of the schools on a primary planning area or secondary district basis, and identify areas of shortfall. In areas where there is a significant and sustained shortfall in available places or capacity, these areas are identified as "hotspots".

For each hotspot there is a continually updated plan to monitor or address the shortfall.

Current Hotspots - Primary

It should be noted that while this list represents the actual hotspots at the time of writing; this list is likely to change over the course of this strategy as new information becomes available:

District	Primary Planning Area
Lancaster	Rural North Lancaster
Lancaster	Morecambe & Heysham
Wyre	Poulton-le-Fylde & Staining
Wyre	Over Wyre
Fylde	Kirkham
Fylde	Lytham St Annes
Ribble Valley	Longridge
Preston	Preston Rural
Preston	Preston West
South Ribble	Leyland
Chorley	Rivington & Adlington
Chorley	Chorley Rural West
Chorley	Chorley Rural North
Chorley	Clayton-le-Woods
Ribble Valley	Clitheroe Town
Ribble Valley	Langho & Whalley
Pendle	Colne
Pendle	Barrowford & Rural
Rossendale	Ramsbottom
Rossendale	Rawtenstall

Inclusion in this list is an indication that an area is being monitored, rather than an intent of future action.

Current Hotspots - Secondary

At the time of writing there are five hotspots in secondary districts:

- Ribble Valley

- Fylde
- Chorley
- Pendle
- Rossendale

As with primary hotspots, inclusion in this list is an indication that an area is being monitored, rather than an intent of future action.

Long Term Planning

The list of hotspots covers areas where the need for additional places is expected to occur within 5 years. However, the authority is engaged in ongoing dialogue with the district councils in relation to more long term planning across the county.

District councils have either adopted or are working towards the completion and adoption of Local Plans, which set out the longer term aims for housing and employment growth within their areas.

An intrinsic part of this longer term planning is the need for supporting infrastructure to be provided to enable the growth to take place. Education places are a major element of this infrastructure planning.

In addition to individual district plans, Lancashire County Council, South Ribble District Council and Preston City Council are currently working together on an Infrastructure Delivery Plan for City Deal, which will take into account the impact of the scale and accelerated delivery of new housing in accordance with the City Deal programme. This work will help to inform where there may be a need for new school place provision sooner than the normal forecast methodology might suggest.

In accordance with the latest information from City Deal, the accelerated rate of development proposed for the City Deal area will add the following hotspots to the previous list, where shortfalls may start to emerge over the next five years:

District	Primary Planning Area
Preston	Preston North
Preston	Preston West **
Preston	Preston Rural
Preston	Goosnargh & Grimsargh **
South Ribble	Penwortham **
South Ribble	Rural South Ribble

*** Indicates a possible need for one or more new schools within the period of City Deal.*

In addition, the City Deal is expected to bring forward a scale of development which could require the provision of a new secondary school in the Preston area over the period of the City Deal.

Given the challenges around school place provision, in comparison with the delivery of other types of infrastructure, the need for school places will be assessed on an annual basis and adjusted accordingly.

The timing of the commissioning of new school places within the City Deal area will be crucial; the addition of places too soon can destabilise existing schools and, in the case of a new school, could fail to attract a sponsor because of viability issues. However, the Council must be mindful to commission sufficient places in a timely fashion, to ensure new housing is suitable for families with school aged children. Balancing this situation will be challenging.

Currently, there is a difference between the need for school places based upon the current district 5 Year Housing Land Supply (HLS) for each of the Preston and South Ribble districts, and the need for places based upon the planned delivery schedule of City Deal developments. The differences are below:

Primary Planning Area	Need for places within 5 Years:			Need for places within 10 Years:		
	based upon HLS	based upon City Deal delivery profile	Difference	based upon HLS	based upon City Deal delivery profile	Difference
Goosnargh & Grimsargh	23	40	17	192	211	20
Preston Rural	76	77	1	201	202	1
Preston West	23	272	249	198	722	524
Preston North	26	27	1	183	170	-13
Rural South Ribble	95	132	36	138	178	40
Penwortham	-1	51	50	-51	183	233
Leyland	160	140	-20	105	382	277

In some instances, the difference is quite significant and, in the case of Preston West, is a difference between a need for one and 3.5 forms of entry by year 10. Therefore, it is crucial that the timing of housing delivery is monitored very closely.

Alternative Provision

Primary: Based on numbers of permanent exclusions in recent years, the two areas where demand is consistently greater than capacity has been the South (Preston, South Ribble, Chorley) and the East of the county (all districts). A number of factors can impact on the pupil referral unit or provider's ability to offer intervention:

- A reluctance of some mainstream schools to re-admit or re-integrate pupils from the pupil referral unit. This can be affected by the changing demands on schools in relation to progress and attainment measures.
- The number of pupils in the pupil referral units who require a statutory assessment. The needs of pupils appear to be becoming more complex; this is a national observation. A number of pupils required EHCP (Education Health and Care Plans) and may need special school provision. This process increases the amount of time a pupil remains in the pupil referral unit.

Secondary: Permanent exclusions have increased across the county, and in the East area significantly resulting in the pupil referral unit and Academy alternative provision School that serve the east reaching capacity on a number of occasions. The County Council has commissioned a small number of places, as available, from an independent alternative provision school

Other areas which have experienced pressure on places for excluded pupils in 2015-16 and 2016-17 are Lancaster, Fylde and Wyre and Preston.

Medical Places: Referrals for medical places increased in some areas in recent years. There appears to be a reduction in some areas in 2016-17. Medical referrals are primarily related to mental health conditions and this has increased each year. There are a small number related to physical medical conditions. Main stream schools find it more challenging to adapt their provision to meet the needs of pupils with a mental/emotional health diagnosis. These may often be long term conditions and subsequently the County Council is under pressure to maintain these places for significant periods.

'Other' referrals: Pupils requiring the local authority to commission alternative provision places for reasons other than exclusion or medical needs have increased over several years. There are a number of factors impacting this:

- Numbers of looked after children from other local authorities who are placed in independent care homes in Lancashire.
- Number of young people who were previously home educated whose parents wish to return to school, and a lesser number of children found to be previously missing from education.

- Number of unaccompanied refugees and those with little or no English language skills, who require specialist programmes delivered in some further education colleges.

The capacity of the majority of pupil referral units to provide fully for commissioned places and to increase that capacity, is often restricted by the nature of their buildings.

Areas of provision that require increase/review.

- In house primary places
- Medical places for significant mental health needs.
- Increased secondary capacity in Preston/South Preston, North and East.

Section 6 – Strategy to meet demand

Commissioning New Places

In areas which have been assessed as requiring additional places, the commissioned school places will be selected according to the following criteria:

- Pupil attainment levels as determined by:
 - Latest judgement by Ofsted is Outstanding or Good*
 - Pupil attainment and progress scores at Key Stages 2 and 4
- High levels of parental first preferences ** (in particular, oversubscribed schools)
- The current size of the school
- Location of the school relative to population
- Practicalities of expansion on the existing or nearby site
- Costs of expansion
- The governing body's wishes***
- Access for pupils by public transport and other sustainable modes with the aim of reducing travel by private car and commissioned transport

* Where there is a shortage of schools meeting both these criteria in an area of increased demand for places, a 'direction of travel' report will be assessed by the authority's School Improvement Team to determine if any schools with a category of 'Requires Improvement' may be suitable candidates for expansion, subject to current DfE guidance.

** It should be noted that meeting parental preference comes at a significant cost. Therefore, where pupils are able to access a reasonable alternative, it may not always be seen necessary to provide additional places in a more popular school. Consideration will also be given to whether additional places would provide places for Lancashire children or whether the quality of Lancashire places may be drawing pupils in from other areas.

*** Lancashire County Council will always seek to arrive at a negotiated solution with governing bodies. However, on occasion, Lancashire County Council may need to utilise its school place commissioning powers if an alternative solution is either not available or not considered to offer the same quality of educational opportunity to local children.

It is sometimes not possible to arrive at a proposal which directly matches all of the commissioning criteria and in these circumstances, Lancashire County Council will either seek best fit; commission new provision; or invoke its commissioning powers.

New School Challenges

Where a new school is required, section 6A of the Education Inspections Act 2006 places a local authority under a duty to seek proposals to commission a free school.

Where a new primary school is required, (normally as a result of a significant new housing development) the preference will be for school sizes of one form of entry (30 pupils per year group) and above.

Where there is an identified need for a new school to be commissioned, the commissioning process for a new free school (which any new school would be under current Regulations) means that a longer lead-in period is required before places can be made available. In areas of significant housing development and where a new school is required, the commissioning process may start when only one year's evidence of increased demand is available. By taking this action, it will enable the authority to have more influence over the size and type of provision which may be provided by a new free school.

Challenges to delivery of places

Local Authority Challenges – Budgetary Challenges

Lancashire County Council has a proven record of ensuring that sufficient, good quality places are provided for the children of Lancashire (illustrated by the high proportion of Good and Outstanding schools in Lancashire as rated by Ofsted and the high levels of satisfied parental preference in comparison with other authorities). However, the level of financial challenge facing all Local Authorities over the next three years means that the Council must seriously consider what can be delivered within the resources available. As the demand for school places continues to rise at the same time as capital available to local authorities reduces, there are a number of challenges which will affect how the Council may deliver places going forward.

Lancashire County Council will aim to provide additional places at existing schools, wherever possible and appropriate, rather than commission new provision. The rationale for this approach is to maintain stability in the existing school system; to provide the places in the shortest timescale possible; and to achieve best value for money, within a reduced capital allocation.

However, as the demand for places has continued to rise and places have been provided in a number of areas around the county, the options available for LCC to commission new places have reduced, meaning that alternative options must be considered.

Section 77 / Site Size Constraints

Significant constraints to providing places in existing schools are the requirements to secure planning permission and also to comply with the Section 77 of the 1998 Standards and Framework Act. Many schools have insufficient site and playing field area to support physical expansion under section 77. However it is possible to apply for exemption from section 77 constraints from the Secretary of State, and with limited options in some areas, this exemption may need to be sought where appropriate. In some areas where expansions have already taken place and limited options remain, it may be necessary to consider the establishment of new schools or

look further afield for solutions. This would always be undertaken in consultation with the existing schools in the area.

Specific Primary School Challenges

Whilst Lancashire County Council would not normally seek to expand primary schools beyond two forms of entry (60 pupils into reception year forming two classes), the increased pressure and reducing solutions over recent years has led to a number of schools being expanded to 3 forms of entry. This will only be undertaken where this is the most realistic option in the area; school leadership is strong and good practice is embedded; standards are high; and there are few or no significant challenges in the local area served by the school.

The planning window for additional primary places is short, so birth information and planning applications are constantly monitored in order to plan ahead effectively. Lancashire County Council will normally wait until at least two, or preferably three years, of increased demand in the area is evident before it makes proposals to permanently expand a school, to ensure that permanent places are not created where temporary places would be sufficient. This helps to maintain stability of provision in neighbouring schools and reduces the risk around unnecessary capital expenditure. Therefore, schools that are commissioned to provide additional places will sometimes have a temporary expansion followed by a permanent expansion once statutory consultation has been completed.

Where the need for places is significant but not sustained the authority may provide an expansion or remodel of existing accommodation that can then be converted to other purposes once the large year group has left school. Alternatively there may be the provision of a temporary classroom on site.

The provision of the required additional places must take top priority in terms of strategic delivery and expenditure from the schools' capital allocation. Therefore, the vast majority of the schools' capital allocation over this three year period will need to be used for additional place provision, leaving very little for projects that address the suitability of premises. The authority will apply standardised design solutions wherever possible, to minimise timescales of delivery and costs.

In taking previous steps to provide additional places in primary schools, in some instances places have been made available by bringing back into general teaching use. For example, rooms which had been previously utilised for other purposes such as community rooms or used by a private nursery provider, are re-designated class bases. Some schools have also reclassified rooms used specifically for Art or music or ICT rooms for general teaching. This, and other flexible use of space, are options which we may need more schools to consider going forward.

Lowering the age range

Statutory places are being put under pressure where schools are extending their age range to include two and three year olds. Therefore, when schools are considering such proposals, feedback will be given on the impact of the proposal on future provision of statutory places in the area, so that the head teacher and Governors can make an informed decision. Should a need for statutory aged places emerge in the future, the Council reserves the right to request that the age range be returned to statutory school age only.

School led changes

Schools adding or removing capacity should be aware of the implications on both the level of surplus places and the admission number of the school, and **must** inform the authority of any changes to their accommodation which may affect the net capacity. A net capacity survey will be undertaken annually to ensure that schools report all changes to the Council.

Specific Secondary School Challenges

As the demand for additional places moves into the secondary sector, the authority needs to ensure that use of existing building capacity is optimised. However, when secondary pupil numbers were low, many schools reduced their admission numbers to a level below the number which the building can reasonably accommodate (as determined in the Net Capacity assessment as the 'Indicated Admission Number'.)

As places are required in an area, officers will undertake initial discussions with schools which already have the physical capacity to take more pupils before any major building projects can be undertaken in an area, thus 'unlocking' capacity. In such cases, it may be possible to address minor suitability issues which directly enable this to happen. By providing additional places, it is anticipated that this will also assist schools struggling to meet their own increased costs going forward.

In a move to make school places locally accessible to all Lancashire residents, Geographical Priority Areas (GPAs) for secondary schools were introduced by Lancashire in 2008, in response to the 'Equal Preference' rules introduced by the government. This ensured that the authority could fulfil its statutory obligations and to reflect the diverse nature of the Lancashire county area. However, a number of areas of Lancashire are going through unprecedented levels of growth and change which means that the GPAs require regular review, particularly in areas where major housing developments have changed the geography of an area. For this reason, the GPAs will be considered as part of the wider School Planning Areas review and so may be subject to future change.

School led changes

Schools adding or removing capacity should be aware of the implications on both the level of surplus places and the admission number of the school, and **must** inform the authority of any changes to their accommodation which may affect the net capacity. A net capacity survey will be undertaken annually to ensure that schools report all changes to the Council.

Small Schools

Small Primary Schools

In urban areas, Lancashire County Council preference is for primary school sizes of one form of entry (210 pupils) and above. There are currently 100 primary schools in Lancashire that are below half a form of entry (105 pupils) in terms of pupil numbers, the majority of these being designated rural schools. It is acknowledged that many of these schools provide good or outstanding standards of education and are a vital part of the community they serve.

Where school size is significantly below one form of entry (210 pupils) Lancashire County Council will promote collaboration through to setting up a federation with other appropriate local schools. When a head teacher vacancy occurs or there is already an executive headship, a move towards hard federation with a single governing body and opportunities for pooling budgets and streamlined management structures will be encouraged.

Collaboration and federation provides opportunities to improve standards and parental preferences. Where pupil numbers in the area are expected to increase in the future, collaboration and federation can help to sustain viability until any upturn in numbers occurs and increases the opportunity for schools to capture first preference applications.

If, ultimately, a school becomes either educationally or financially unviable and a move to reorganisation remains the only option, an established collaboration or federation with another local school can facilitate continuity in governance and staffing, with the reshaped provision being representative of both schools where appropriate.

Other sustainability solutions for small primary schools include collaboration or federation with secondary or special schools which may or may not include colocation; or foundation status with a Trust shared amongst other schools (primary, secondary or special).

Infant / Junior Schools

There are a number of separate infant and junior schools in Lancashire and we believe that primary schools offer better opportunities for the continuity of learning for

pupils. When the opportunity arises we will seek to open up discussions with schools and partners with a view to reorganising provision to make one all through primary school.

Small Secondary Schools being supported

Lancashire County Council's preference is for secondary schools of 4 forms of entry - 600 pupils and above. It is recognised that in some exceptional circumstances small secondary schools are a necessity, due to factors such as geographical isolation, and a small number of small secondary schools successfully deliver high quality education and are popular with parents. However, pupil numbers across the secondary sector have fallen significantly over recent years and the effects have not been experienced evenly. The general pattern on an area basis is that the most popular schools have maintained their pupil numbers, whilst the majority of schools have experienced and managed some decline. However, there is a small proportion of schools that have had far higher pupil numbers in the past but are currently experiencing low and declining pupil numbers because many of the available pupils are able to obtain places at other preferred schools. Many of these schools are experiencing difficulties in maintaining and improving education standards whilst, at the same time, managing a declining budget.

Overall pupil numbers at secondary schools are not expected to begin to rise until at least 2018, though intakes are expected to begin to increase in some areas with effect from 2015. In the meantime, strategies are being developed and action plans are being formulated around the small number of secondary schools that are in challenging circumstances. The solution will be different in each case, including supporting the leadership in developing a different curriculum model which is deliverable within a smaller staffing structure; exploring possibilities around partnerships with other high quality education providers; co-location with a local primary school or special school, where appropriate; and collaboration, federation, and foundation status with shared Trusts may offer a suitable solution.

In brokering viable solutions with schools and Diocesan/Church Authorities Lancashire County Council will consider the balance between the need to maintain an educational presence in the area, including the need for particular categories of school, against the need for sustainable and high quality provision.

In circumstances where a robust and sustainable solution cannot be identified, the County Council may have to move towards a structural solution, such as closure. This option will only be taken after all other options have been explored and discounted.

Small Schools Summary

Not all small schools present challenges or are a cause for concern. Indeed, many of Lancashire's small primary schools and some small secondary schools provide good

or outstanding standards of education and are a vital part of the community they serve. The commonly held factor for such schools is that they are intended to be small – they occupy small premises and serve small, often rural, communities. However, there is another group of small schools that face significant challenges.

The Audit Commission, in its publication 'Trading Places' states the following:

Such schools can be grouped under the heading 'schools in difficulty' and can be identified with reference to a basket of measures, such as the near-failure of an Ofsted inspection, declining admissions, high levels of unfilled places, poor and unimproving performance in GCSE exams and high levels of absence by both pupils and staff.Many such schools enter financial, social or educational spirals of decline –or a combination of all three.....The reduced funding that accompanies the loss of pupils makes it harder for a school to address its failingsThis fate compounds the problems of poor intake, poor staff morale and performance, and poor educational quality. Until such schools close or recover, their pupils suffer an unacceptably low quality of education.

Such schools are of concern not merely because of the poor education they offer. They have an adverse impact on an LEA's ability to manage the supply of places and school admissions effectively, since the majority of parents become desperate to avoid sending their children to such schools. This lack of popularity leads to high levels of unfilled places in the schools in difficulty, with a few such schools often accounting for a significant proportion of the LEA-wide problem of unfilled places. It also creates problems of oversubscription and possible overcrowding at other more highly regarded schools, where parents seek sanctuary.

Contributory factors to the 'spiral of decline' described by Ofsted, with particular reference to education standards, are difficulties in attracting and retaining high quality staff; increased staff workloads; and the ability to deliver a broad and balanced curriculum. It can be particularly difficult for small schools to attract and retain the right calibre of individual to lead a school in these challenging circumstances, particularly if it faces additional complexities such as high levels of deprivation, high rates of pupil transience or a disproportionate number of children with English as an additional language.

As schools face their own challenges to manage a budget and to continually raise standards, where feasible the authority will consider ways of supporting small schools via access to intervention support, particularly where pupil numbers may be temporarily low so that the places already in the system are not lost.

Capital Investment Programme

The current Strategy for the Provision of School Places and Schools' Capital Investment 17/18 to 19/20 contains three main strands for capital investment:

- Supporting growth in pupil places
- Targeted investment in mainstream and special schools
- Strategic maintenance of the building stock

These priorities remain relevant for the foreseeable future. As in previous years, it is anticipated that the majority of the capital allocation will need to be utilised to provide additional primary school places, though in the forthcoming period, additional secondary school places will also be needed. Targeted investment is intended for special schools, mainstream and short stay provision with an emphasis on additional provision.

It is proposed that the emphasis for local authority expenditure over the next three years will be as follows:

- Provision of additional mainstream primary and secondary school places, including regularising (by increasing) admission numbers at primary schools in areas of high future demand to make them compatible with class size 30 requirements;
- Targeted investment on identified projects in special and alternative provision schools, including the provision of additional places and addressing serious suitability and condition issues.
- Projects in community schools to improve access for pupils with disabilities in and around the school buildings. These are generally brought forward on a needs led ad hoc basis and authority is requested for the Director of Corporate Commissioning to approve these individual projects.
- Targeted investment to replace time limited temporary buildings with permanent, build where their deteriorating condition could jeopardise the schools ability to maintain current numbers on roll in an area of increasing demand. This could also include the refurbishment of RoSLA buildings on secondary school sites.
- Condition led projects that address serious condition issues at community, voluntary controlled and foundation schools
- To develop a managed programme of localised repairs and treatments to High Alumina Concrete (HAC) frame buildings, based upon specialist condition survey information.
- To develop a managed programme of repairs and maintenance of bridges and retaining structures on County Council owned land and premises, which fall outside of the remit of the Highways Asset Management responsibility.

Housing demand and education contributions

Where new housing development creates a demand for school places in excess of those available, Lancashire County Council will expect district councils to work with the Council in seeking a financial contribution from the developers that is proportionate to impact, in order to mitigate against the effect of any new development on education infrastructure. This is an approach endorsed by the Minister of State for Housing and Planning and the Under Secretary of State for Schools.

Further details on Lancashire County Council's planning obligations are available on our website: <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/council/planning/planning-obligations-for-developers.aspx>

Statutory proposals to alter school provision cannot be published without the necessary capital funding being identified and secured. Therefore, with reduced capital available to the authority, in areas where housing development contributions are secured from developers to mitigate the impact of their development, the authority will be able to be more responsive to emerging need and able to provide additional places more quickly than in areas where this is not the case.

Statutory Process

As the commissioner, Lancashire County Council will make the final decision on the majority of school organisation proposals; with the exception of new academy schools (see section on Diversity). In doing so Lancashire County Council will consider the views of all those affected by the proposals or who have an interest in them including: pupils; families of pupils; staff; other schools and colleges; local residents; diocesan bodies and other providers; neighbouring local authorities; any other relevant local partnership or group that exists in the area. This includes the consideration of comments submitted during the statutory representation period.

Lancashire County Council will not simply take account of the numbers of people expressing a particular view when considering representations made on proposals but will give the greatest weight to representations from those stakeholders likely to be most directly affected by the proposals, for example the parents of children who might be eligible to attend proposed new or expanded provision.

Alternative Provision Strategy

The Alternative Provision Strategy for Primary aged pupils is to develop local areas models that promote and support inclusion.

Schools report a growing number of younger pupils with significant emotional or complex needs at a time of increasing pressure on budgets. Reducing budgets can impact on those resources that traditionally are used to support more challenging pupils, such as additional support staff and the commissioning of external services to support assessment or support programmes for groups or individuals.

The proposed strategy for primary inclusion is to develop local models where there is a clear and consistent system of support, based on partnership with schools (mainstream, pupil referral unit and special), the providers of specialist advice and support, local authority services and third sector services. Areas could be based on one or more Lancashire districts depending on size and number of schools.

Key elements of this model are access to:

- High quality training for schools.
- Advice and sign posting that is responsive to requests and ensures early intervention.
- Staged offer of outreach support to schools.
- Time limited, part or full time intervention programmes away from the school site, to support assessment, identify strategies and deliver specific programmes.
- Family Support.
- System to support managed moves.
- Systems to develop and monitor the model – i.e. a local panel or strategy group.
- Support for re integrations into main stream school from alternative provision and when required, for admissions under fair access when there are identified risks of exclusion.

The West Lancashire pilot based on the above elements has implemented this model successfully and will continue. Other areas are to be identified to develop their own area model based on these principles.

The strategy is funded currently through School Forum from the High Needs budget. Future sustainability will be dependent on the continuation of this funding, on the grounds that it prevents exclusion and meets needs of children, or there may be the need to have a part funding arrangement with schools at some point.

The Alternative Provision Strategy for Secondary aged pupils is to develop local areas model or offer that promote and support inclusion; and to identify and support development of good quality alternative provision that can be commissioned by schools and/or the local authority.

Schools report a growing number of pupils with complex needs, often related to emotional and mental health. Growing pressure on school budgets may have particular impact on those pupils who require additional support, if support staff are reduced and the ability to commission external services or alternative provision reduces. A number of secondary schools have developed alternative provision budgets over recent years, however this may be one budget area that is at risk in order to continue to provide their core provision. This together with changes to measure of attainment is predicted to increase the risk of the number of permanent exclusions continuing to rise.

Key elements of the strategy:

- Review of capacity numbers in existing Pupil Referral Units/Short Stay School- to include building capacity issues and needs.
- Review of Local Authority commissioned places from pupil referral units and other providers.
- Review of pupil referral unit funding, in particular top up rates and how adjustments could be made to increase use of intervention support by school and reduce exclusion, and how pupils with the most complex needs can be supported.
- Increase access to intervention programmes, especially for Key Stage 3 (11-14 years) by adjustments to commissioning and funding arrangements if appropriate and approved.
- Review of alternative providers other than pupil referral units to encourage , where appropriate, registration as schools and to go through the Personalised Education Curriculum Standard process If not registered as a school.(Quality Assurance Tool)
- Review of current PRU buildings to assess ability to provide requirements.

Section 7 – Projects completed or in progress

Mainstream School Place Provision

Lancaster

There has been significant demand in Lancaster due to population rises and the impact of significant housing development, and Lancashire County Council has responded to the rising demand in primary schools in the area.

Since 2010, an additional 995 places have been provided in Lancaster district primary schools. Following an additional 140 places provided at Bowerham Community Primary School from 2011, nearby Moorside Primary School underwent an expansion to provide an additional 210 places from 2014 onwards. North of the river Lune in Morecambe, Lancashire County Council has opened its new building at Lancaster Road Primary School which provided an additional 210 pupils from 2015:

Fylde

365 additional primary school places have already been created in Fylde by Lancashire County Council, including significant construction at Heyhouses Endowed Church of England Primary School and Lytham Hall Park Primary School. There is expected to be significant demand pressures on secondary schools in Fylde and the Council is monitoring the situation carefully and working with Fylde Borough Council to seek solutions. It is anticipated that new primary schools will be commissioned on a number of significant housing sites in the future.

Wyre

In Wyre, 25 additional places were provided at The Breck Primary School in Poulton-Le-Fylde in 2014. However there is significant housing development across Fylde and the Council are seeking housing developer contributions to mitigate the impact of these developments and there is likely to be expansion planned in Wyre as a result of these developments.

Ribble Valley

Ribble Valley has had 15 places commissioned by the Council in primary schools in 2013, but there is significant demand coming due to population rises and significant housing development. The Council is working closely with Ribble Valley Borough Council to secure housing developer contributions to address the impact of their housing developments on education provision, and continue to monitor the area closely in relation to both Primary and Secondary places.

Three projects were approved in 2017 to create an additional 105 places in Langho and Whalley, by 2019. Approval has been given to consult on additional 70 places at Barrow Primary School in 2019, subject to outcome of the consultation.

Preston

The Council has already provided an additional 65 primary school places in Preston prior to 2017. In 2016, the Olive School, Preston opened as a new free school, which will provide an additional 420 places when fully open. The most significant project in Preston for some years is the City Deal (which also includes the South Ribble area) and the Council is working closely with strategic partners on City Deal in respect of future education provision.

South Ribble

The Council has already provided an additional 94 places in primary schools in South Ribble prior to 2017. The most significant project in South Ribble for some years is the City Deal (which also includes the Preston area) and the Council is working closely with strategic partners on City Deal in respect of future education provision.

Chorley

There has been significant demand in Chorley due to population rises and housing development, and Lancashire County Council has responded to the rising demand in both primary and secondary schools in the area.

In response to the development at Buckshaw village, a new school was provided in Buckshaw Village in 2010 and this school has been expanded to 3 forms of entry since. A further 210 places have been commissioned at Primrose Hill Primary School in 2016 and an additional 140 places at Balshaw Lane Primary by 2018. By 2018, the Council will have created an additional 1080 primary places in the last 10 years in Chorley. This represents almost a third of the primary places provided across the county.

In Chorley secondary schools, an additional 150 places were created at Southlands High School in 2015, and an additional 150 places have been approved at Holy Cross for 2017 with works ongoing at present. We will continue to closely monitor secondary provision in Chorley as further demand is expected within 5 years.

West Lancashire

A decline in pupil numbers in parts of West Lancashire means that no additional places have been required since 2010.

Hyndburn

The Council has already provided an additional 127 places by providing small increases across a number of Hyndburn primary schools since 2010.

Burnley

The Council has already provided an additional 135 primary places in Burnley prior to 2017.

Pendle

Demand has now stabilised in Pendle following a period in which demand for primary school places rose significantly. There is now sufficient capacity within the Pendle primary schools to meet demand, after an additional 799 places were created in primary schools between 2009 and 2012. This included the re-siting and complete rebuild of Whitefield Infants' and Nelson St. Paul's CE Primary.

Rossendale

15 places have already been provided via a temporary expansion in Bacup, Rossendale in 2014. We continue to monitor these areas closely in light of new housing development generating significant future demand

Alternative Provision Projects

Primary Advice and Support Service: (PASS)

Launched in June 2016, funded by School Forum and managed by LA Alternative Provision, this is an advice and support service available to all Lancashire primary mainstream school. Requests for support are allocated to a range of providers, including primary PRUs, special schools, other schools, LA services and private providers. A staged model ranging from telephone advice (Stage 1) to intensive in school support or off site intervention programmes (Stage 4). Providers meet with Lancashire AP lead regularly to monitor progress and discuss issues and developments. Outcomes are:

- Quick response to requests- phone call within 2 working days.
- Growing number of providers identified.
- Accessed by over one third of primary schools.
- Reduced permanent exclusions to date:

Area	Primary Exclusions 2015-16 (3 Terms)	Permanent Exclusions 2016-17 (2 Terms)
NORTH	8	3
EAST	31	21
SOUTH	36	17
TOTAL	85	41

West Lancashire Inclusion Pilot:

A pilot in West Lancashire established in September 2016, funded through commissioned alternative provision places (in house places) and Primary Advice and Support Service: (PASS) funding for outreach work (see above).

Outreach support and a number of in house intervention places based from Elm Tree Primary Special School. All primary schools in West Lancashire involved, and the outcome is no permanent exclusions in district 8 in academic year 2016-17 9 to date). The service is to continue in 2017/18 academic year.

Stoneyholme Primary School Pilot:

This project started in April 2017, as a pilot funded by School Improvement. It is a Forest School / Nurture programme to modify behaviour and increase resilience. Which is part time programme, run every afternoon for 6 weeks. 6 places have been made available. Referrals direct from schools or through PASS. The project is to be evaluated end of summer 2017 term.

Nursery to school transition programme.

Joint project between Lancashire Early Years, Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) and Golden Hill pupil referral unit in the Preston area, to support pre-school pupils with apparent behaviour issues to transition successfully into reception.

Review of Secondary PRU Offer:

Advisor consultancy time funded to lead on review via meetings with all pupil referral unit head teachers and Secondary head teachers in all districts. Current provision is being explored and gaps or needs identified. Working groups are being set up in each area: for pupil referral units, mainstream schools and special schools, to develop a local model based on needs.

Review of PRU/AP commissioned places and funding:

A review of capacity numbers of PRUs and commissioned numbers is underway including a review of proposed funding adjustments with modelling to follow.