



# School Place Planning

## Update to Scrutiny

November 2023



## 1 Introduction

School place planning in Lancashire continues to perform well overall in terms of sufficiency of places, quality of places and the number of place preferences allocated to pupils. This can be seen in the Department for Education (DfE) annual [scorecard](#) for Lancashire and a recent independent review of the function. However, the focus on performance at a county level masks some local areas where demand for places is greatest.

To address sufficiency in Lancashire, the [School Place Planning Strategy 2022-25](#) (Cabinet, December 2021) frames the approach to school place planning and is updated by the [School Place Planning Delivery Programme 2023-25](#) (Cabinet, October 2022) which sets out an ambitious programme for the delivery of additional places. This has been updated in [February 2023](#) and [June 2023](#)). The school planning dashboard was the subject of a Bite-Size briefing (October 2022) to members and provides insights into school planning priorities in local areas. The [Dashboard](#) has been updated with the Spring 2023 forecast. In addition, the service continues to facilitate the conversion of schools to academy status.

The capital strategy for schools [condition led capital investment programme](#) was approved by Cabinet in February 2023. This sets out the plan for investment of approximately £14m capital grant allocated to the council by the Department for Education.

This report provides an update following the Annual Report 2022 and information provided to the Inquiry Day held in July 2023.

## 2 School Place Planning Strategy 2022-25 Update

The Strategy considered areas of activity which could be improved, a summary of progress against each area is set out below:

Delivering Better Services		Progress
a	Improve the accessibility of information available to stakeholders.	The strategy and programme have been presented to Lancashire Association of School Governors and further meetings with governors. Building on the engagement with schools, diocese and academy trusts, the service is improving its approach to working with partners.
		The School Planning Dashboard was updated in August 2023 with the Spring forecast.
b	Warranted variation to school place delivery.	Projects are now scoped to consider whether additional places are required in all year groups or via the traditional approach to implementing an expansion project from Reception, or Year 7.
c	Working with the DfE and other responsible bodies to	Regular meetings in place with DfE across programmes including school place planning, academy conversions,



	use the available levers and funding to deliver additional places.	school rebuilding programme etc.
d	Constraints in the school estate	The Department for Education Net Capacity Assessment Programme 2023/25 is underway and will provide assessment for all secondary and SEN schools. The council continues to assess Net Capacity where required in relation to sufficiency or estate issues.
e	Emerging surplus places	An initial review of surplus places has been carried out in preparation for engagement with the education partnership to determine the approach.

<b>Caring for the Vulnerable</b>		<b>Progress</b>
a	Children Missing Education	Continuing challenge as in-year and new to area applications continue in areas where limited spare places. New admissions system now in place and close working with schools to secure admissions.
b	Support for families moving to Lancashire.	East Lancashire Learning & Information Exchange (the ELLIE project) continues to operate from Burnley Campus.

<b>Protecting our Environment</b>		<b>Progress</b>
a	Carbon reduction strategy	New projects will consider whether building regulations standard or DfE model specification provides the most appropriate and cost-effective solution.
b	DfE guidance for education land transactions	Regular engagement with the DfE continues as the council follows guidance Secretary of State approval is sought where appropriate.

<b>Supporting Economic Growth</b>		<b>Progress</b>
a	Understanding the local context with school place forecast	Work is underway with Business Intelligence and Equalities, Cohesion and Refugees teams to identify data/intelligence that can be used to inform planning. Recently Public Health England birth data has become available, meaning the latest year of births are used to inform planning than using just Office of National Statistics birth data.
	Developer contributions	Consultants are due to be engaged to support a review of the council's approach with a focus on Local Plan and strategic sites and the education contributions methodology. This will engage with district councils to better understand their experience and improve collaboration with local planning authorities.



b	Pace of delivery	Update reports on the delivery programme were provided to Cabinet in February and June 2023. Temporary programme manager appointed to improve the pace and coordination of delivery across workstreams including construction, appointment of sponsors and reporting.
c	Ageing school building portfolio	<p>The council continues to deliver the Schools Conditioned Programme. There is ongoing collaboration with DfE regarding the School Rebuilding Programme. Confirmed Lancashire projects announced include:</p> <p>2021</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lytham St Annes High School, Fylde</li> <li>• Tarleton Academy, West Lancashire</li> <li>• Whitworth Community High School, Rossendale</li> <li>• All Saintes' RC High School, a Voluntary Academy, Rossendale</li> <li>• Seven Stars Primary School</li> </ul> <p>2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lostock Hall Moor Hey School, South Ribble</li> <li>• Penwortham Girls High School, South Ribble</li> <li>• Wellfield Academy, South Ribble</li> </ul> <p>2023</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Hyndburn Academy, Hyndburn</li> <li>• Lancaster Royal Grammar School, Lancaster</li> <li>• Haslingden High School and Sixth Form, Rossendale</li> <li>• Colne Primet Academy, Pendle</li> <li>• Castle View Primary Academy, Lancaster</li> </ul>

The strategy set out areas of growth in primary and secondary planning areas and identified short and medium terms delivery plans. These plans have been updated in the School Place Delivery Programme 2023-25.

### 3 School Place Delivery Programme

#### 2023-25 Update

The annual forecast of school place demand across Lancashire has identified several school planning areas where additional places are needed. Whilst some additional places in primary phase are needed, the growth in places is predominately in the secondary phase due to rising cumulative births, peak population in primary schools, housing development and migration.

The Delivery Programme identifies the areas where additional places are needed and where they will require a range of building projects (such as reconfiguring how accommodation is used or more intensive works) and consultations to deliver as set out in the School Place Planning Delivery Programme 2023-25 update at Appendix 'C'.



Where the Council thinks a new school needs to be established, it has a duty to seek proposals to establish an academy/free school, also known as the 'presumption' route. The type of new school to be delivered should be determined in consultation with Education and Children's Services, as part of the development of the specification for the new school. Potential academy trust sponsors should evidence that they meet the school specification via their application to operate the new school which would provide part of the information against which the proposals would be judged.

It will be for the Council to decide how to consult on the proposed new school and with whom. The Council should be clear about the type, age range, gender, and capacity of the new academy/free school they wish to see established, and the expected cost.

The Secretary of State will make the final determination in respect of the successful proposer to operate a new school. However, the local authority has a critical role to play in operating the assessment and selection process that will generate a recommendation from Cabinet to the Secretary of State for consideration.

Where an expansion project to an existing school constitutes a significant change, the Council, and/or governing body where it is an 'own admission authority school' must follow DfE Guidance in managing the project which will also incorporate a public consultation. A series of consultations relating to the Delivery Programme are due to be launched later this year.

#### **Emerging Priorities 2025 - 27**

The primary phase forecast indicates a need for additional places in Tarleton, Banks and Rufford (West Lancashire); Kirkham (Fylde); Freckleton, Warton & Wrea Green (Fylde); Goosnargh and Grimsargh (Preston) and Longridge (Ribble Valley). At secondary phase the focus is Preston and Burnley.

#### **4 DfE Scorecard 2023**

Education Authorities are required to submit the School Capacity Survey (SCAP) to the Department for Education (DfE) annually and most recently in June 2023. The return is used to generate Basic Need funding for additional places and generates a benchmarking scorecard for all Local Authorities in England.

The local authority scorecards include information on:

- how many places have been delivered for the academic year 2021 to 2022
- the quality of places delivered for the academic year 2021 to 2022
- how many places are planned to be delivered for the academic year 2024 to 2025
- the estimated number of additional places still needed to meet demand for the academic year 2024 to 2025



- the forecasting accuracy of local authorities
- how well parental preference is being met
- the cost of providing places

Scorecard 2022 continues to suggest that Lancashire performs well at county level where 0% (+/- 1%) is considered an accurate forecast, and the Lancashire position is in line with other local authorities (within the 25<sup>th</sup> to 75<sup>th</sup> percentile). The need for places forecast one year ahead are based on the SCAP 2021 return, two years ahead are based on the SCAP 2021 return. A SCAP return in 2020 was not completed because of COVID-19, therefore three year ahead forecast accuracy was not provided on the 2022 Scorecard.

The focus on forecast accuracy for SCAP at a county level does not necessarily allow for the provision of sufficient spare places in areas where demand outstrips the forecast when using existing national data sets. Examining the forecast at district level, we can see that the accuracy of the forecast varies more widely:

Primary %			Secondary %	
One-year ahead	Two-year ahead		One-year ahead	Two-year ahead
-0.40	-0.6	Lancashire	+0.10	+0.20
+0.24	-0.04	Lancaster	+1.55	+2.91
+0.22	+1.60	Wyre	+1.39	+0.82
+1.34	+4.17	Ribble Valley	Longridge: +1.95 ERV: +1.58	+2.82
+1.92	+4.00	Fylde	+4.00	+6.99
-0.75	-0.79	Preston	+2.59	+2.79
-0.14	-0.46	South Ribble	+0.24	-1.65
+0.07	-0.30	West Lancashire	+0.87	+0.39
+0.24	+0.71	Chorley	+2.45	+4.37
+0.15	-1.48	Hyndburn	-0.88	-3.66
-0.41	-1.20	Burnley	-0.29	-1.26
-0.07	+0.12	Pendle	+2.22	+2.35
+0.69	+0.81	Rossendale	+0.79	-1.35

The following table shows performance in creating quality new school places:

	England (%)	Lancashire (%)	Rank
	Good/outstanding		
Primary	94.7	100	1/77



<b>Secondary</b>	<b>87.5</b>	<b>93.1</b>	<b>61/85</b>
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Lancashire performs well in the proportion of applicants who received an offer of one of their top three preference schools for September 2023 entry. At primary phase, this was 98.9% (England 98.3%), and at secondary phase this was 96.6% (England 94.1%).

## **5 School Place Allocations for September 2023**

The Schools Census October 2023 is underway, this will provide an update on pupil numbers in schools and the uptake of places allocated for September 2023. Performance will be reported by DfE in the Scorecard 2024. As the information collected from the Autumn Term census 2023 is still going through a process of checking and data cleansing, spreadsheets have been provided in respect of the allocated places for this year's intake to the primary and secondary in Lancashire. Where the number of pupils, allocated places, exceeds the admission number, this is normally as the result of successful admission appeals. A small number of children may also have joined schools, that are full, as a result of the child's Looked After status or Special Educational Needs. September 2023 admissions were reported to the scrutiny inquiry day held in July 2023.

## **6 Forecasting Improvements**

Lancashire County Council maintains a specific forecasting methodology for Pupil Projections, which is used for planning and education contributions assessments, with a [published methodology](#). There have been no changes to the planning areas since the last annual report however we are currently reviewing primary planning areas in Preston.

## **7 Developer Contributions**

The Department for Education has updated its guidance [securing developer contributions, August 2023](#). The guidance recommends using cost data in the latest scorecard to help establish developer contributions per school place.

The council is in the process of engaging consultants to improve the approach to working with local planning authorities (district councils) in the development of Local Plans and assessment of planning applications with the aim of improving the overall approach to securing developer contributions.

## **8 Academy Conversions**

Set out at Appendix 'B' is a summary of the conversions completed since July 2020 and those currently awaiting confirmation.

