

Warwickshire County Council



Warwickshire
Education Sufficiency
Strategy
2024 - 2029



Foreword



Welcome to the Education Sufficiency Strategy.

I am proud to introduce this refreshed Education Sufficiency Strategy, which supports our overarching ambition for Warwickshire to be the best it can be, sustainable now and for future generations. Supporting this ambition, are our goals of delivering a Child friendly Warwickshire, where children are happy and safe; through education, improve life opportunities for children, young people and those with special education needs and disabilities and support them to have good quality jobs and skills for life.

This strategy will help ensure that children and young people are able to access the right setting for them across all stages of their education, at the right time, and in the right place. It ensures that there will be sufficient places to meet current and future needs. This strategy supports these ambitions and sets out our approach to ensure there are enough places in the right areas at the right time whilst enabling every child and young person in Warwickshire to access the provision that best meets their needs now, and in the future.

It should be read in conjunction with the most recently published **Annual Sufficiency Update** which outlines the forecast pupil numbers for each area of the county and the proposed solutions or projects needed to ensure sufficiency of education places is maintained.

We do this by working in partnership with education settings, providers and wider stakeholders to fulfil our statutory duties and to deliver the best possible education for all our children and young people. This strategy was developed with the active engagement of our key stakeholders; schools and settings, elected Members and relevant services were invited to engage and work with us and this, together with our robust forecasting on future needs for education places, has helped inform this strategy. Our planning will ensure the future need for education provision across the county is identified early allowing the development of a clear pipeline of projects that can focus on achieving value for money and timely delivery. In so doing, it contributes to our ambition to make Warwickshire the best it can be.



Councillor Kam Kaur
Portfolio Holder for
Education

Infographics



248

state-funded schools in Warwickshire

Including:



6 nursery



194 primary phase



36 secondary phase

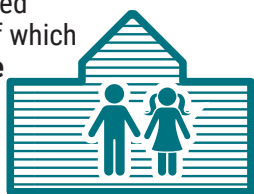


1 all-through



11 special schools

89,106 pupils being educated in Warwickshire's state-funded schools of which **1,723** are in Special Schools



3,497 children with an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan and **11,596** children with SEND support being educated in Warwickshire's state-funded schools



Approximately **5,510** children and young people with an EHC Plan supported across the 0-25 age range

In Warwickshire

94.9% of 16-17 years participate in education and training



4.3% of 16-17 year olds undertake an apprenticeship



In Warwickshire

there are **993** Early Years childcare providers

with a **73%** uptake of places for eligible 2 year olds

101% of children accessing 3 and 4 year old entitlement*



50% of children and young people with an EHC Plan attend a mainstream school



Warwickshire has a higher number of Children in Care (CiC) achieving a strong pass in English and Maths compared to the national figure.

A greater proportion of young people in Warwickshire (95%) aged 16 – 17, participate in either education or training, which is higher than both the national and regional averages.

A high number of eligible parents/ carers (97%) access their entitlement to 3- and 4-year-old Early Years provision.

The majority of families (97%) were awarded one of their first three choice preferences of reception primary school place; and 94% were offered one of their top three choices of secondary school – above the national average.

In the past year, 535 additional school places have been delivered as part of our Capital Programme.

Data correct as of April 2024

*101% data taken from national DfE metric



Strategy Purpose

Warwickshire County Council is committed to ensuring that education places are provided in the right place at the right time.

The council has the statutory duty to ensure sufficient education provision and viable local supply exists to meet local need and demand, from childcare and early years to mainstream school years, for children and young people with special education needs and young people aged 16-19 years.

The strategy is intended to help housing developers, planning authorities, all early year's providers, schools, governing bodies, parents, and local communities, and other providers of education, understand our approach to sufficiency planning and meeting our statutory duties.

This strategy sets out:

- our approach to education sufficiency planning across all phases of education provision, covering early years (age 0 – 4 years), mainstream primary and secondary (age 4 – 16 years), special educational needs and disabilities (SEND, age 0 – 25 years) and mainstream post 16 (age 16 - 19 years)
- how we strategically plan and work across this system with all relevant providers and stakeholders, including Elected Members, Warwickshire's schools and partner agencies.
- the role of our pupil forecasting data and the methodology we use to accurately predict the future need for places.
- how we commission and support education providers for early years, childcare and school places, to deliver high-quality and accessible places for all learners.

This strategy should be read in conjunction with the most recently published Annual Sufficiency Update which outlines the forecast pupil numbers for each area of the county and the proposed solutions or projects needed to ensure sufficiency of education places is maintained.



Where does the strategy fit:

The Warwickshire Education Strategy 2024-2029 sets the foundations on which all current and future work within the Education Service will be delivered over the next 5 years. **It outlines four priority areas:**



Priority 1 - Best Start

We will secure the very best start for all children in the county



Priority 2- SEND & Inclusion

We will encourage ambition, create opportunity and support all learners to be the very best they can be



Priority 3 - Sufficiency & Admissions

We will ensure Early Years and school places are provided in the right place at the right time



Priority 4 - Strong System

We will operate as a systems leader to influence, facilitate and develop high quality education provision that is inclusive and accessible to all

Warwickshire County Council



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The Education Sufficiency Strategy seeks to deliver Priority 3 - 'Sufficiency and Admissions', ensuring that school places are provided in the right place at the right time.

Development of the Strategy

This strategy was developed with the active engagement of our stakeholders, through workshops to discuss key challenges and themes, which were held during September and October 2022.

This included:

- Area focused workshops for elected members
- Workshops with council officers across a range of related services
- Workshops for schools and Early Years providers



Our Role

The education landscape within Warwickshire has a diverse mix of accountabilities and responsibilities with community schools, academies, free schools, voluntary and private early year providers, and independent special schools. In this context the council is required to effectively plan for school places where the schools and settings have varying levels of autonomy and control with respect to areas of education such as admissions, school term dates, and curriculum.

The council have a statutory duty to ensure there is sufficient education provision and viable local supply exists to meet local need and demand. In order to deliver on this responsibility, we work in partnership with and rely on the support of school leaders, headteachers, governors, academy trusts, education providers and the private, voluntary and independent sector. Within this context our role varies across the differing education sectors:

- We undertake strategic planning and forecasting to assess the future need for education places for all phases and for pupils with SEND and share this information with providers, schools, and other partners to support the commissioning and delivery of education provision.
- Early education and childcare provision in Warwickshire is available through a large market of maintained, private, voluntary, independent and school run providers, childminders and academies who operate as individual businesses and are therefore subject to market forces. The Council is not, in most cases, a direct provider of early years and childcare places but we work with local providers, to facilitate and support a range of flexible provision available in the right geographical areas.
- For primary and secondary school provision we will fund and commission the expansion and reorganisation of provision where appropriate, to ensure that sufficient capacity is available. Where pupil growth is anticipated to exceed current options within existing provision, we will commission the creation of new schools, all of which will be free schools.
- For post 16 our duties are for those aged 16-19 and for those young people aged 19-25 who are the subject of an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP). We regularly meet with post-16 education and training providers across Warwickshire who receive funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) (this includes the Sixth form college, three FE colleges and the Association of Training Providers). Where a lack of provision is identified, we work in partnership with the ESFA to fill the gap identified. The ESFA will either consider requests from existing providers or it will seek new provision from independent learning providers (ILPs).
- For special educational needs, we work with mainstream and special schools to increase inclusion, with particular focus on delivery of resource provision in mainstream schools. We make additional specialist places available that can meet the needs of children in those identified areas and support schools to adapt to changing needs and work with independent providers to ensure the right provision is available to meet the varying needs of our children and young people.



Our challenges and considerations

This strategy seeks to address the following key challenges and considerations in planning for education places and to help achieve better outcomes for children and young people.

Population changes and housing growth:

The 2021 census highlighted that Warwickshire's child-age population increased by almost 7% between 2011 and 2021, an increase of nearly 10,000 pupils.

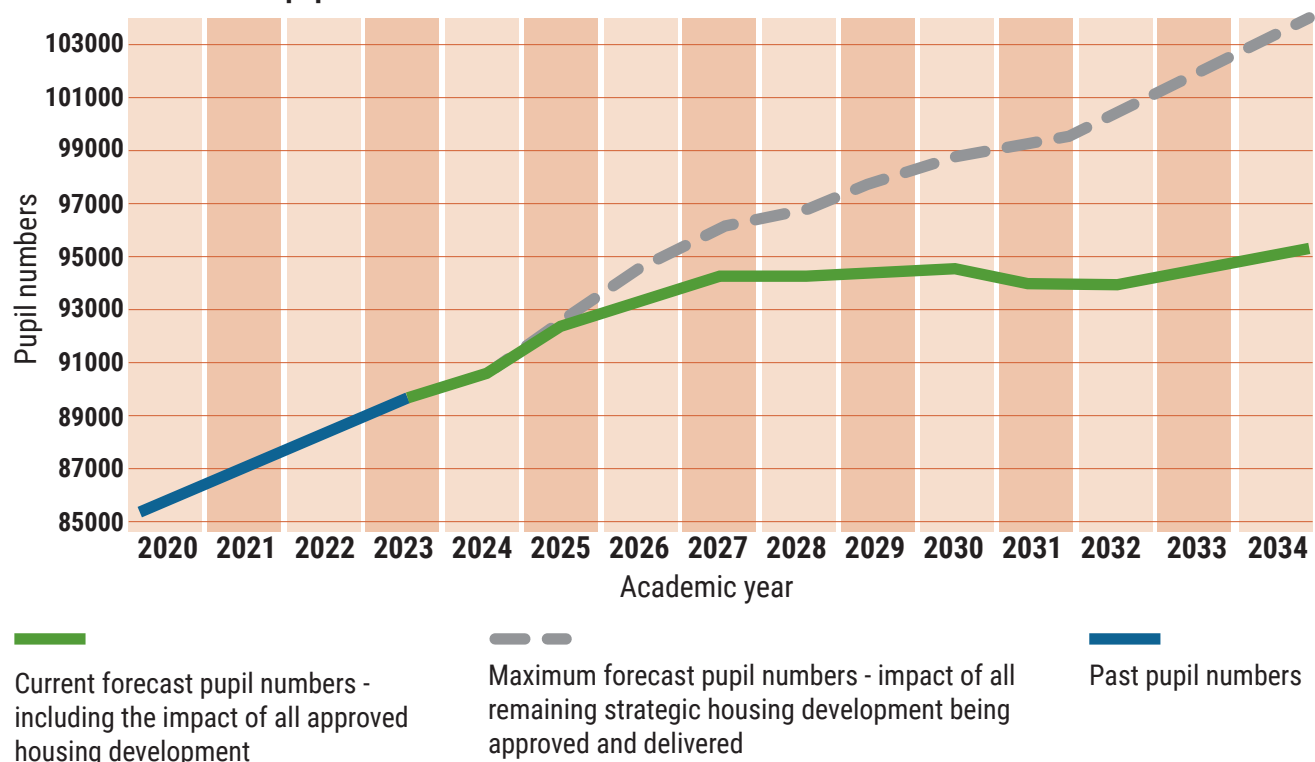
To accommodate this growth Warwickshire County Council has delivered over 10,000 new permanent school places in the last ten years through numerous school expansions across the county and the opening of 11

new schools, comprising six Primary, two Secondary, one All-through and three special schools.

Warwickshire has experienced increased demand for specialist education provision year on year with the number of children with EHCPs increasing annually by 9% over the past 5 years. This trend for increased need for specialist education provision is anticipated to continue particularly in areas of housing and population growth.

Future school population growth:

Warwickshire forecast pupil numbers



Over the next 10 years we expect a further increase in the total school age population (age 4-16) of over 5,000 more pupils as a result of the housing developments that have received planning permission or are building out at present.

If further housing development sites that are already identified in our partner District and Borough councils' strategic plans also receive planning permission and are built as proposed, over the next 10 years we can expect the number of additional pupils in



Warwickshire to increase to over 13,000. This highlights the complexity of place planning and all of the differing factors that can feed into and change the forecast position from the initial local plan strategic stage.

The number of places needed for early years and childcare provision is also expected to increase as more families move into Warwickshire due to the growth in housing development. Alongside this, recent Government initiatives to increase the funded entitlements for working parents for children aged 9 months plus in early years is expected to increase the demand for those places as more families return to full time employment.

Ensuring the right places are available in the right areas:

The county is a diverse mix of urban and rural areas with housing growth in some areas of the county meaning new provision will be required, whilst changing populations in other areas of the county may mean settings are facing sustainability concerns. Our challenge is therefore to help maintain sufficient provision to meet current need and maintain the right level of surplus for future needs at a local level whilst remaining conscious of the financial viability of providers.

Increase in number of children with recognised SEND:

The number of pupils with an EHCP in Warwickshire has increased annually by 9% over the past 5 years, which is in line with national growth. This increase in pupils with SEND can be attributed to a number of factors including improved awareness and understanding, training and changes in assessment and diagnostic criteria. There have also been changes in the complexity and type of need. Our challenge is to continue to respond to these changes and ensure the right provision exists to meet the needs of all learners.

In-year admissions:

There can often be pressure for school places when families apply outside of the statutory deadlines or part way through the academic year and schools are already at capacity. Similar challenges can be presented when pupils require a school place in year groups outside of the normal points of entry (reception, year 7). The allocation of school places is administered in line with the School Admission Code published by the Department for Education (DfE).

Under the admissions code, parents have the right to choose to apply to the schools of their choice, not necessarily the closest to where they live. Schools are required to offer a place when available. Where particular schools are experiencing a period of high demand for places this will not necessarily result in that school being expanded if there are sufficient places available in other schools in the area.

We will work with schools to ensure vacant places from the year of entry remain available for further year groups where possible, create additional classes where appropriate and use the Fair Access Protocol to ensure all children can access places.

Rising number of exclusions and need for Alternative Provision:

Recent data shows an 129% increase in exclusions from pre-pandemic levels with increasing demands for Alternative Provision to be available in the right areas of the county. We will work proactively with schools to reduce exclusions and ensure Alternative Provision is available and flexible in local areas to meet demand.



Ensuring capacity in Early Years:

New statutory requirements are being rolled out between April 2024 and September 2026 for additional funded early years entitlement places and wraparound care for primary school aged children via all school sites. We will need to work closely with schools and the Private, Voluntary and Independent sector to ensure sufficient capacity for the future. This will involve supporting different innovative delivery models and recruiting more Childminders, particularly in rural areas.

Meeting cost pressures:

The economic climate is continuing to see a continued increase in construction costs which will have an impact on the delivery of new housing across the county as well as increasing the costs in delivering new early years and school places. The uncertainty relating to the timing and amount of funding received from central government will influence our future approaches to prioritising projects, procurement routes and delivery options. We will endeavour to secure the appropriate contributions from developers to support the provision of education infrastructure and where applicable look for the delivery of new provision as part of the education requirements of a housing development. We will produce an early pipeline of feasible projects to ensure value for money can be achieved and timely delivery.

Building a sustainable future:

The Council recognises the need to adapt to and mitigate climate change and meet net zero commitments. As part of the delivery of new education provision, environmental implications and making our schools more sustainable will be assessed and considered against the available funding, nature and limitation of the works, and current building regulations designed to strengthen sustainable solutions.

Our Priorities



Warwickshire
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**1. Strategic
planning/Right
places at right time**



**2. Effective
commissioning**



**3. Partnership
and collaboration**



**4. Manage and
support change**

What we do to deliver this strategy

To support the delivery of this strategy, we will focus our efforts on the following priorities:



Strategic planning/Right places at right time

We will plan for the needs of our population by producing annual forecasts of the number of places required over the 5 years for early years and primary places, and 7 years for secondary school and specialist places across the county.

This includes working strategically to understand and anticipate the impact of future potential changes in birth rates, early years funding entitlement, migration trends, changing needs, and housing development.

This data will inform the commissioning of education places across all phases and underpin our education capital programme. Each year this data will be shared with all providers across the education system to provide the most up to date information to inform and help their individual provision planning.

Working with the District and Borough councils we will accurately assess the impact on Warwickshire's education infrastructure of any changes to strategic housing allocations across the county.

We will look to minimise home to school transport distances through the delivery of new schools and school expansions.



Effective commissioning

We will commission additional early years and school places to meet identified demand and do this in a way which achieves best value for money, pursuing opportunities to achieve economies of scale, including utilising existing accommodation effectively or building new provision in such a way that it can be expanded in future.

We will identify any opportunities and work with early years providers and schools to deliver additional places without the need for capital investment and work with admission authorities to ensure admission arrangements are fit for purpose and assist the council's sufficiency duties as well as ensuring all families can access education provision in their local area.



Partnership and collaboration

We work with our partners through early engagement with the highways and planning authorities, schools, early years providers and external stakeholders to address delivery challenges and enable the most feasible options for expansions or delivery of new provision. When the Council is unable to provide capital funding to support a school or provider's individual capital strategy plans, we will look to provide support in bids for funding from alternative sources.

We identify and communicate regularly with stakeholders and partners and engage in honest and open discussion on proposals, ensuring always that the council's sufficiency duties take precedence.



Manage and support change

As well as planning for additional places, we will work with education providers to help reorganise existing places to support the long-term sustainability of our schools and early years providers. We will focus not only on growth but also on rebalancing or reducing any unsustainable surplus of places and this will include delivering short-term solutions where the data does not show sustained need.

All education sufficiency plans will seek to build a long-term sustainable and viable education economy to ensure Warwickshire's education system is well placed to respond positively to future changes. We will look to future proof provision, delivering buildings that are accessible for all and can easily be expanded.

All plans and proposals will be flexible and responsive to changing legislation, unexpected pressures and demands, such as new refugee schemes or early years funding entitlements introduced by Central Government, whilst at the same time seeking to maintain a level of surplus places appropriate to the need of the particular area and any expected growth.



How we will deliver this strategy

- The delivery of this strategy is overseen by Access to Education and each autumn we will produce a report to Cabinet through an **annual update**, detailing the current pupil number forecasts, sufficiency plans, and an overview of the pressures expected over the forthcoming five-year period. Appendix A sets out the detailed steps taken and considerations included in producing pupil number forecasts and planning for education sufficiency in Warwickshire.
- Engagement with schools, early years settings and providers regarding sufficiency and place pressures will continue through one-to-one discussions and consortia/area network meetings.
- We will maintain a comprehensive Education Capital pipeline working to ensure accurate cost estimates take account of a changing construction market and delivery timeframes are matched against forecast need for places. Any additions to the education capital programme will be progressed through initial feasibility stages in collaboration with relevant stakeholders.
- We will continue to seek the maximum levels of capital funding from Government through the annual School Capacity return and make best use of any other central government grants. We will work to secure the maximum possible funding contributions from housing developers.
- We will proactively seek best practice and reflect on successes and challenges, amending our commissioning approach as needed to seek the best strategic solution and value for money.



Appendix A. Pupil forecast methodology

Overall approach to pupil forecasting

Warwickshire is divided into 'planning areas', that is, clusters of schools which benefit from being considered together when forecasting and planning for pupil place provision.

These planning areas are used to underpin assessments of current and future pupil demand for school place provision. A full list of planning areas and their schools can be found in the Annual Sufficiency Update.

Planning for sufficient education provision in Warwickshire is based on robust pupil forecast data, the components of which are outlined below, which underpins priorities for expansions, new schools, or any reorganisation of existing provision.

Each autumn a sufficiency update will be published outlining up-to-date pupil number forecasts, an overview of the forthcoming pressures expected, and details of how those pressures will be met, including current planned capital schemes.

Early Years and Childcare Place forecasting

Each autumn a sufficiency update will be published which will provide an evaluation of the supply and demand of early years and childcare provision across the County, including where there might be over supply and a deficit in provision. The Council's Early Years and Childcare Entitlements, Sufficiency and Business Team work with providers and potential providers to encourage the establishment of additional provision where it is required.

Mainstream school forecasting

Reception intakes:

Warwickshire forecasts for reception (YR) are

based on NHS GP registration data for each primary planning area for children aged 0 to 4. Allowance is made within the YR forecast for the expected additional pre-school aged children who will move into housing development approved in the county.

We review past trends to take account of those children who do not go on to attend a mainstream, maintained, Warwickshire primary school but instead attend special or independent provision, or a school outside of Warwickshire.

Year 7 intakes:

Year 7 intakes are based on NHS GP Registration data in the same way as for reception intakes.

Past trends are applied to account for children who do not attend a mainstream, maintained, Warwickshire secondary school, and the expected number of additional pre-Y7 aged children who will move into approved housing development across the county is included.

Accounting for Parental Preference:

Parental preference trends are averaged from the previous three years using school census data and applied to reception and year 7 cohorts to account for movement between planning areas in these intake years.

Changes during the school year:

Forecasts for Years 1 to 6 and Years 8 to 13 are based on the actual number of pupils in each year group in the previous academic year taken from the October school census "rolled forward".

School census data for the past three years is used to calculate the average number of children that join or leave a school during the school year for each year group in each planning area (known as in-year applications).



Impact of housing development:

Working with our District and Borough Council partners we track the progress of each new housing development across the county. Our pupil forecasting model includes a database of housing developments with the expected number of new homes built each year and the estimated numbers of additional children that will move into those homes.

Warwickshire operates a different pupil yield rate for each of the five Districts and Boroughs using pupil yields produced by the Department for Education based on prior housing development in each area.

Forecasting Specialist School Places

The County Council produces forecasts of demand for specialist provision to support and better identify the location and number of specialist school places that may be needed in the future.

Local Authorities are asked to provide to the DfE, through the annual SCAP return, forecasts for the demand for specialist school places and other specialist provision defined as the number of pupils in their local authority who have an education, health and care plan (EHCP) and will require a placement in specialist provision (ie other than a mainstream school place).

The main components to developing the specialist school places forecasts include:

- Determining the current and future resident child population: using GP registration data, incorporate cohort progression rates and the impact of housing.
- Establishing the number of pupils with EHCPs and specialist pupil yields based on historical patterns.

Post 16

WCC use a number of techniques to obtain a picture of future Post 16 need in Warwickshire:

- In terms of school Sixth form numbers, secondary school pupil number forecasts are combined with previous patterns of transition from year 11 to school sixth forms to provide an estimate of future sixth form populations by District and Borough over a 7-year period.
- The number of pupils forecast to be in year 11 together with recent trends in type of education participation can also provide insight into what might be required from post 16 providers in future years.



Appendix B. Funding

The Council plays a key role in securing funding to provide sufficient education provision in Warwickshire. Delivery of the additional school places needed in the County will rely more than ever on an appropriate level of funding from Government and securing the maximum possible contribution from housing developers. We receive funding principally from the following sources:

Basic Need Grant

Capital allocations to meet projected shortfalls in provision are provided by the DfE to all local authorities based on the data provided in the annual School Capacity return (SCAP). This return informs the DfE of the expected change in pupil numbers over the next five years at primary and over a seven-year forecast period at secondary, the current capacity of schools to meet those numbers, and the planned changes to that capacity.

The SCAP return asks local authorities to provide forecasts of pupil numbers that exclude pupils brought to the area by new housing developments; there is an expectation that provision for these pupils will be funded through contributions provided by the developers.

In order to inform the SCAP return, we will liaise with schools to ensure all plans and Net Capacity records and assessments are accurate.

Developer Contributions

The Council is committed to ensuring the best solution regarding the provision of additional school capacity. When this additional capacity is required as a result of housing development and when planning with the District and Borough Councils, we are mindful of their need to meet the housing demand, versus our need to provide the

associated education infrastructure.

Warwickshire County Council's Education Sufficiency Team is responsible for assessing the estimated additional demand for early years, primary and secondary school, post-16 and special educational needs places generated by development in any given area, against the current available and forecast capacity within the relevant planning areas. WCC's approach to collecting developer contributions is laid out in the **following guide**.

Where new housing development creates a demand for school places in excess of those available, we will work with District and Borough Councils and developers to ensure that the appropriate contributions for the provision of additional school places are given. We will seek the maximum contribution from developers to support the provision of additional places that we believe is proportionate to the impact of the development, ensuring all requests for contributions are compliant with the relevant legislation.

We will seek to secure financial contributions and/or the provision of land from developers towards providing additional education provision, either through the expansion of existing schools or the opening of new schools, when the predicted impact of a new housing development creates a shortfall. It is critical that developers make a contribution to school places as, without it, we will be unable to deliver the required provision. Further information on the County Council's approach to developer contributions is available from the Infrastructure Delivery team.

The two forms of developer contributions that operate across the planning authorities are Section 106 (S106) obligations and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). A local planning authority usually operates either S106 or CIL.



Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, commonly known as S106 agreements, enable a development proposal to be made acceptable in planning terms, and are focused on site specific mitigation for the impact of development.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a charge set by the local planning authority, based on the size and type of the new development. The money generated through the levy will contribute to the funding of infrastructure to support development growth. As the County Council is responsible for the delivery of key strategic infrastructure, such as roads and new school buildings, close collaboration is needed with the local planning authorities to ensure priorities can be identified and funded appropriately.

Other sources of capital funding

Other funding streams that may be available to ensure sufficient education provision include:

- Other capital grants from the DfE such as the High Needs Grant (to support the provision of places for children and young people with SEND and those pupils requiring alternative provision).
- Central Government funded new schools via the Government's Free School programme.
- Earmarked capital Receipts – proceeds from the sale of former education settings deemed surplus to requirements.

- Capital contributions from individual school budgets and/or bids by Academies for 'Condition Improvement Funding' from the DfE.
- Bids by schools, academies and Further Education colleges to other DfE capital schemes e.g. expansion of selective education places, expansion of sixth form places

Pupil increase revenue funding

Warwickshire's Schools Forum has agreed to retain centrally a level of revenue funding, referred to as The Growth Fund, for schools which are required to provide extra pre-16 places in order to meet basic need. The Growth Fund is also used to provide the pre-opening and post-opening costs associated with new schools opening via the LA presumption route. The criteria for allocation and the budget for each year is agreed with Schools Forum as part of confirming the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) budget for each forthcoming year.

Maintaining available capacity

There is a need to maintain a certain amount of capacity within a given area to allow for flexibility to enable in-year movement of pupils and other unexpected pressures, allow families moving to an area to be able to secure a place at a local school or for each of their children at the same school, and to meet parental preference as much as possible. At the same time, however, our approach aims to avoid an oversupply of places.



Appendix C. Our approach to sufficiency – additional information

The level of surplus capacity available in Warwickshire's schools varies from area to area and the appropriate level of surplus will be dependent on the levels of in year movement that characterise an area and any expected growth.

It is anticipated that schools will respond to a significant reduction in applications for places at their school by proactively looking to reduce their admission numbers. Schools must consult to do this and the authority will have to coordinate any reductions as far as possible to ensure that sufficient capacity remains to cope with inward migration as cohorts move up through the year groups.

Current and forecast capacity across Warwickshire's planning areas is published in our annual sufficiency update.

Increasing capacity

Where applications for school places exceed the combined admission numbers of schools in an area, then additional school places need may need to be provided.

If the shortage of places is expected to be temporary, it may be sufficient for one or more schools to admit above their usual admission number into "bulge" classes – either using existing accommodation or in temporary accommodation. If the shortage of places (circa 30 places plus) is forecast to be sustained, a permanent expansion of capacity will be required, either through new schools or expansions of existing schools.

Expansion of existing provision

Where the increase in demand is more dispersed, for example a general underlying increase in the population, expansions

of existing schools are likely to be more appropriate. In many cases, expanding existing schools can create additional capacity more quickly than building new schools, and at a lower cost.

When reviewing a shortfall in a planning area and exploring where additional places could be provided a number of decision-making criteria will be considered, including:

- *Location:* it is preferable for children to be able to walk or cycle to attend an early years provision or school no more than 2 miles (for infant children) or 3 miles (for older children) from home;
- *Quality of provision:* Consideration of the quality of the early years and education provision available in any area must be included when planning for sufficient places. Ofsted reports and school improvement analysis will be reviewed to ensure that the places provided are of a high quality and that schools and settings have the capacity to take on additional children while maintaining high educational standards. We will also look to support those schools and settings aspiring to raise standards, ensuring all are part of the solution to ensure sufficient capacity moving forward.
- *Choice and diversity:* Faith/selective/maintained/academies are considered equally with any proposal presenting the most cost-effective solution that meets the sufficiency needs for the local area.
- *Existing accommodation and site area:* in some cases, a school's existing accommodation may already support a higher number of pupils (for example, it may have a large hall, or a large total site area, or existing space that can accommodate additional pupils.



- **Reorganisation of school structures:** may also be necessary to support a sustainable expansion, for example restructuring from infant and junior schools to primary schools, or extending the age range of an existing school to become an all-through school.

Feasibility studies and the design and development of capital schemes are progressed in collaboration with relevant stakeholders through WCC's governance process. This includes oversight from the Council's Capital, Access and Organisation Working Group and Capital, Access and Organisation Board before being put forward for County Council Member approval.

Establishment of new schools

New schools are likely to be more appropriate where there is a localised and relatively predictable, permanent and large-scale increase in demand, for example as a result of large-scale housing developments where land for additional provision has been secured.

New schools (mainstream, SEND and alternative provision) can be delivered via Local Authority Presumption Competition or by the Department for Education via the Central Wave Free School Programme.

School Size

Primary Schools

The preferred size for new primary schools is within the range of 420 places to 840 places (2 forms of entry to 4 forms of entry) and WCC will only seek to open new primary schools of full or half forms of entry. However, it is recognised that in the response to the location and build out of housing development, 1 form entry (1FE) schools (210 places) may need to be established.

Where a new primary phase school is required, this will be built as an all through primary school, rather than separate infant

or junior schools. The County Council will continue to seek opportunities to amalgamate separate infant and junior schools where the sites lend themselves to a single setting.

Secondary Schools

The preferred optimum size for opening a new 11-16 secondary school is 6FE (900 places). The minimum size WCC would look to open a new secondary school is 4FE (600 places), with the expectation this would be as part of an all-though provision or with the intention to expand to 6FE in the near future. Depending on the location and build out of housing development or the growth of secondary school cohorts it may be necessary to open a secondary school smaller than its build capacity to ensure the demand for school places can be met in the short term whilst also minimising the impact on existing provision if too much capacity is introduced to an area too soon.

WCC do not have a maximum size that they would expand a secondary school to. With effective leadership and curriculum planning it is not anticipated increased school size should have an adverse impact on educational standards or financial viability. Increasing the size of a secondary school will be largely dependent on-site capacity as well as surrounding infrastructure, such as highways.

Special Schools

The size of a new special school will predominantly depend on the range of needs being catered for but could range between 60 to 100 places.

Alternative Provision

Alternative provision (AP) is educational provision for children of compulsory school age who are unable to attend mainstream or special schools and who would not otherwise receive suitable education for any reason, for example, due to illness or exclusion. Schools can use such provision to try to prevent exclusions, or to re-engage pupils in their education.



Key Responsibilities

- 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.
- Governing bodies of schools are responsible for arranging suitable full-time education from the sixth day of a fixed period exclusion.
- Schools may also direct pupils off-site for education, to help improve their behaviour.

Key Expectations from Alternative Provision

All pupils must receive a good education, regardless of their circumstances or the settings in which they find themselves. Provision will differ from pupil to pupil, but there are some common elements that alternative provision should aim to achieve:

- Appropriately meet the needs of pupils and enables them to achieve good educational attainment on par with their mainstream peers;
- Good academic attainment on par with mainstream schools – particularly in English, maths and science (including IT) – with appropriate accreditation and qualifications;
- Specific personal, social and academic needs of pupils are properly identified and met in order to help them to overcome any barriers to attainment. This may involve good working arrangements with other relevant services;
- improved pupil motivation and self-confidence, attendance and engagement with education; and clearly defined objectives, including the next steps following the placement such as reintegration into mainstream education, further education, training or employment.

SEND and Inclusion

We want to support children, young people and their families by encouraging and challenging schools and settings to cater for as wide a range of needs and abilities as is possible. We want education providers to nurture positive attitudes to children and young people with SEND, both in their own setting and in their wider community.

As part of the Delivering Better Value (DBV) programme of work, the Council is seeking to increase the number of Specialist Resourced Provision places commissioned over the next five years, from the current position of just under 200 places to over 500 places by 2028.

The continued development of specialist resourced provision across the county enables pupils with an EHCP, who are cognitively able to access the curriculum, to have their needs met and benefit from being located on site alongside a mainstream school environment.

School Admissions

All aspects of school admissions are based on the School Admissions Code. This governs the way all schools set their admissions oversubscription criteria, ensures compliance with local coordinated schemes, makes offers of places and allows for school admissions appeals. It also identifies the local authority as a regulator for all other admission authorities within its boundaries, with the expectation that the local authority reports those admission authorities whose admission arrangements are not in line with the School Admissions Code to the Schools Adjudicator.

The School Admissions Code places a requirement on all local authorities to publish a 'coordinated scheme' and manage the admissions process for: entry into reception, the transfer from infant to junior school (Years 2 to 3) and the transfer from primary to secondary school (Years 6 to 7). Further information on Warwickshire Admissions can be found [here](#).



All approaches to ensuring sufficiency of school places must be clearly aligned to the Admissions Code and take into account the practicalities of how school places are allocated, factoring in distance to the school, priority areas, and over subscription criteria. This ensures that when planning for sufficient school places to meet demand in a particular area, children residing within the local area will be able to access those places and will be allocated under the coordinated scheme.

Admission to specialist provision at reception year is determined via a County panel which considers the needs of the child and whether these can best be met in mainstream or specialist provision. The expectation remains that the majority of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities can be supported in their local mainstream school. After reception year, admission is agreed via the Warwickshire Specialist Provision Admissions Panel. Further guidance on admission to specialist provision is available via our SEND local offer, available [here](#).

Home to School transport

We provide home to school transport to pupils in accordance with statutory legislation and as outlined in the WCC Home to School Transport policy. Free home to school transport assistance will be available to pupils of compulsory school age (5 to 16) attending their qualifying school, as defined in the WCC home to school transport policy,

where the distance from home to school by the short available walking route, exceeds:

1. Two miles for pupils under the age of 8 years
2. Three miles for pupils aged 8-16

An extended rights criteria applies to low-income families.

Where possible, it is our intention to provide 'local places for local children' reducing the need for pupils to access home to school transport services and reducing the number of car journeys being made at school pick up and drop off to support Warwickshire's continued promotion of **active travel** to schools and the wider community. Further information about home to school transport in Warwickshire is available [here](#).



Appendix D. Engagement

Securing and delivering sufficient education provision that meets the needs of communities and promotes the highest education standards for all children across Warwickshire requires and relies on partnership working across many levels and between many different organisations.

In engaging and working with the many stakeholders involved in ensure education sufficiency in Warwickshire is successful we will:

1. Be proactive

We will proactively seek out stakeholders and provide relevant information freely and regularly, highlighting strategic goals or project milestones.

2. Listen

We will actively listen to the concerns and views of our stakeholders, seek feedback on all proposals and consider all comments before presenting a solution.

3. Be transparent

We will be open and honest with stakeholders, outlining any issues and challenges faced and share all data used to inform our evidence-based decision making.

4. Operate in partnership

We will engage with all stakeholders in good faith, make decisions together and work to align our strategic goals with those of our partners wherever possible.

These principles will underpin our approach to stakeholder management and we will encourage and expect a reciprocal arrangement from our stakeholders to ensure this approach is successful, generates meaningful discussion and clear decision making.

How we will engage

Education Sufficiency Strategy

The published Warwickshire 0-25 Education Sufficiency Strategy sets out our overall approach to education sufficiency planning, including the underpinning principles and how we plan, commission and organise delivery for school places. It sets out our pupil forecasting methodology. It exists to help all of our stakeholders and partners understand our approach to sufficiency planning.

Annual sufficiency update

We will publish our sufficiency update document annually, outlining the most recent pupil forecast data, details of how the county is divided into manageable planning areas and providing a summary of the upcoming issues and challenges for each area of the county.

Meetings

We will meet with stakeholders regularly, using existing forums where possible, to discuss ideas, challenges and upcoming changes in their local area.

Provide updates

We will provide regular updates aligned to project milestones using the variety of communication channels available to the council to maximise awareness.

Working groups

When developing a new strategic approach, we will invite relevant stakeholders and partners to share ideas and engage in discussion in a focused and constructive working group environment.

Consultation

We will undertake all statutory consultation activities in a timely manner, ensuring as wide a group of stakeholders are informed as possible and opportunity for all stakeholder to provide comments on the proposals.

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